

and municipal affairs of his township. He was highly respected in the community for his integrity and his honorable dealings.

For the first years during their residence in Howard county the family obtained their supplies from Decorah, it requiring about three days to make the trip with oxen. Mr. Cray always tried to lay in his supplies for the year between planting and harvest time, generally going to market during the long, pleasant days of June, and in this way he saved both time and money. In 1861, when the Civil war broke out and many young men were called into the service, the early settlers were hard pressed, as help was scarce and prices, especially for clothing, soared high, almost beyond the reach of the poor man. Mr. Cray was never one to complain of conditions but worked early and late on his own farm and then joined with neighbors in making a "bee" to help the less fortunate, especially those where the husband or sons had been called to the service of their country.

As the years went by, his family outgrew the little log house and he saw the need of erecting a larger and better one. In the summer of 1863 he began getting together material with which to build. This he bought at McGregor, about eighty miles away. He would take a load of grain to market and then return with a load of lumber, it requiring six or seven days to make the trip with oxen. A number of loads were on the ground the first year and in June, 1864, more material was brought and in the fall of that year the house was erected but not completed until the summer of 1865. All the material and furnishings were hauled from McGregor with ox teams. In August, 1865, the family moved into their new home, which was thoroughly appreciated and enjoyed by them. As time passed he kept adding to his stock until he was managing one of the largest dairy farms in Chester township. In the summer of 1867 Mr. Cray purchased his first team of horses, a span of sorrels, which were kept as long as they lived. The buying of these horses was put off until he had the cash ready to pay for them, one of his characteristics being never to go in debt, and this was well instilled into the minds of the family. He owned the first wagon that was made in Howard county. It was constructed by Alvarado Jones and A. A. Sage in a little log workshop on the bank of the creek, about a mile and a half from the farm, and was used for about forty years.

One of the strong points in the lives of Mr. and Mrs. Cray was their strict observance of the Sabbath day, no unnecessary work being permitted. While the hum of machinery and the voices of workmen were heard on adjoining farms, with the plea of the crops spoiling, Mr. Cray always said there was nothing gained by that, believing that both men and teams should rest for one day in the week. During the winter months he would cut and haul timber from Root river, a distance of from fifteen to twenty miles, for fencing and stove wood for the year. This was a hard and tedious job, as the weather was often extremely cold and the snow deep. He would start out long before daylight in the morning and often would not return until after dark, having nothing but a cold lunch at noon and this sometimes frozen. None but those who have experienced such things can realize the hardships endured by the early settlers in this new country.

Five more children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Cray in their prairie home, these being Rosa Matilda, William Washington, Eliza Emma, Albert Joseph and Seymour Romeo, making a family of nine who grew to manhood and womanhood on the homestead. On the 18th of September, 1882, the wife and mother passed away and her loss was keenly felt by all. Her life had been devoted to her home and family and much credit was due her for their prosperity. In early life both Mr. and Mrs. Cray united with the Episcopal church in England and continued members of that denomination during their residence in Canada but later joined the Methodist church at Lime Springs. They were always interested and liberal in support of Christian work and faithful in their attendance on church services. In December, 1884, Mr. Cray was again married, his second union being with Mrs. Mary E. Searles, the widow of an early settler, and they remained on the farm until 1892, when they removed to the village of Lime Springs. From a small beginning in 1857, his farming interests grew until he became the largest landowner in Chester township and one of the largest in Howard county. The fact that his children were loyal and faithful to the home and farm made this