

MAYS, J. H. (MRS.)

INTERVIEW

#9314

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FORM A-(S-149)

BIOGRAPHY FORM
 WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
 Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Maurice R. Anderson,This report made on (date) November 23, 19371. Name Mrs. J. H. Mays,2. Post Office Address Maysville, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month December Day 29 Year 1866.5. Place of Birth Texas.6. Name of Father William Burney Place of birth _____Other information about father died when I was very small.7. Name of Mother Mary Miller Place of birth _____Other information about mother Deceased.

Notes or complete narrative by the field worker dealing with the life and story of the person interviewed. Refer to Manual for suggested subjects and questions. Continue on blank sheets if necessary and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached Four,

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Maurice R. Anderson,
Investigator.
November 23, 1937.

Interview with Mrs. J. H. Mays,
Maysville, Oklahoma.

I was born in 1866 in Texas. I came to the Indian Territory in 1892 and settled at Lexington in old Oklahoma. I was a music teacher; I taught music in and around Lexington for two years.

Then, Lexington was a very small place with two or three stores and that many saloons. Lexington in those days was considered a very tough town but during the two years I stayed there I never saw but a very few drunk men on the street, not as many as I have seen on the streets at Maysville where there were no saloons.

I would go from house to house and give music lessons; I was paid 50¢ a lesson and some weeks I would be able to give from twelve to fifteen lessons.

The country surrounding Lexington was thinly settled at that time and sometimes I would have to ride seven or eight miles to get to give only two or three lessons.

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In 1894 I moved to Erin Springs in the Chickasaw Nation; I gave music lessons at Erin Springs and through the surrounding country. There were more people living at Erin Springs and in the surrounding neighborhood than there were at Lexington. I had more classes as there were more older folks taking lessons at Erin Springs.

There was quite a lot of farming going on around Erin Springs and the prairies were covered with cattle. Most of the farms were along the creeks and in the Washita River bottom. They raised lots of corn; there was very little cotton raised then.

Pauls Valley was the nearest railroad station then and everything that was shipped was hauled to Pauls Valley. Pauls Valley at that time was the leading trading place for this part of the country.

I taught music at Erin Springs and Beef Creek, now Maysville, until I was married to J. H. Mays in 1898. Mr. Mays had come to the Indian Territory in 1872. He had settled

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where Maysville is now with his two brothers and had started the Mays Brothers' Ranch. At one time they owned the largest ranch in this part of the country and had cattle ranging from the south bank of the Washita River to Wild Horse Creek along the foot of the Arbuckle Mountains.

My husband hauled lumber from Sherman, Texas, with ox teams to build his first house in the early days; he also owned the Beef Creek store and was postmaster at Beef Creek.

In 1902 when Maysville started to building he built the second store and was postmaster. The post office was located in his store. The town of Maysville was named for the three Mays brothers who settled at this place in 1872.

I have heard my husband say that in the early days he drove cattle and horses from Fort Sill to Texas. There were seven of the Mays boys; one died just before the Civil

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War. The six brothers served through the War together and after the War they started a ranch in Texas; all worked on this ranch until 1872.

At this time, three of the brothers came to the Indian Territory and started a ranch. The three brothers who came to the Indian Territory were John, David, and Bill Mays.