

DORCHESTER, JOHN M. (Mrs.)

INTERVIEW

#8970

182

DORCHESTER, (Mrs.) JOHN M. INTERVIEW.

- 8 -

Form A-(S-149) 8970

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

Field Worker's name Maurice R. AndersonThis report made on (date) October 20, 1937.

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1. Name Mrs. John M. Dorchester
 2. Post Office Address Pauls Valley, Oklahoma.
 3. Residence address (or location) _____
 4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month x Day x Year x
 5. Place of birth Texas
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6. Name of Father Fred W. Miner Place of birth Connecticut
Other information about father Deceased
 7. Name of Mother Annable Faber Place of birth Georgia
Other information about mother Deceased
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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 _____.

An Interview with Mrs. John M. Dorchester,
Pauls Valley, Oklahoma.

By - Maurice R. Anderson, Field Worker.
October 20, 1937.

I came to the Indian Territory in 1890, long before my husband and I were married.

He and his father and brother came to the Indian Territory and settled at Lebanon and put in a general merchandise store and started the Dorchester ranch in 1882.

We were married in 1890, in Texas, and left for his ranch at Oakland right after we were married.

Our nearest railroad was at Ardmore, about thirty miles.

When I came to the Indian Territory there were lots of deer, turkey and prairie chickens.

My husband and his brother took care of the ranch while their father looked after the store. They raised lots of cattle as that was a fine place to raise cattle. The prairies were knee high in fine grass.

My husband and I moved to Pauls Valley in 1895 and in 1898 the Curtis Act was passed by Congress which permitted towns and cities to incorporate and establish free schools in the Indian Territory.

DORCHESTER, (Mrs.) JOHN . . INTERVIEW.

8970

2

Pauls Valley was the first town in the Indian Territory to establish a public school. The first school was established in 1891 with a board of education composed of the following five members; W. G. Hightower, J. C. Goodlove, Williams, Claud Weaver and J. B. Thompson. The President of the board was J. B. Thompson and the Secretary was Claud Weaver. J. W. Wilkinson was elected the first school Superintendant and served two years. He was re-elected for the third year but resigned. The second Superintendant of the school was Mr. James Osborn.

My husband, James M. Dorchester, was appointed postmaster in 1898 and served fourteen years as postmaster at Pauls Valley.

The first brick school building was built in 1907, at a cost of \$30,000.

In 1908 the Washita River overflowed Pauls Valley causing the business men a loss of several thousand dollars.

In 1911 the hot winds began to blow and the corn

DORCHESTER, (Mrs.) JOHN... INTERVIEW.

8970

3

and cotton just wilted to the ground; the corn was just in silk and tassels.

I still live in the same house that my husband had built in 1896.

Mr. Dorchester died in 1934.
