

[Mrs. J. B. Mobley]

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[Work?]

Warren, Ivey G.

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Lubbock County

District 17 250

Pg.1 [The First Church Building In Lubbock?] Interview with Mrs. J. B. Mobley
Bibliography

Mrs. J. B. Mobley.

“I was teaching school in Virginia when I decided to come to Texas”, Mrs. J. B. Mobley said. “I always was adventurous and I said to myself, “Laurel Davis, I want to see a little of this old world”. Texas seemed, in those early days, a long, long way from Virginia, still the more I contemplated the trip, the more daring I grew, so I advertised in the Ft. Worth Gazette for a school to teach in Texas”.

“I got several offers and after carefully considering each one, I made up my mind to accept a position in a school at [?] [?], Texas. So in September, 1888, I left my native state and came to Texas.[?]

“My work was pleasant and I liked the country fine, though I have never considered the scenery of Texas anything comparable to that of Virginia”. Mrs. Mobley continued. “But I was well satisfied with my new location until my health began to fail and it soon became

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apparent that the climate of [Travis?] [?] County was not agreeing with me, so the next year I secured a school at Colorado City and came West.

“The rugged beauty of the west [enthralled?] me and I began to take places [?] out on the ranches as private tutor for the ranchmen's children. For several years I taught on ranches over the country then in 1897, I came to Lubbock and taught two terms here. About a month [after my school was out?] [??] in 1899 I was married to J. B. Mobley, who was at that time the Treasurer of Lubbock County. We had a very quiet wedding [.] Our ceremony was performed by Reverend Liff Sanders, who still lives in Lubbock. I was a Baptist and had never felt that I could have my [???] marriage vows administered by a minister of any other denomination and Brother Sanders was a Christian, but he was the only preacher there was in Lubbock at this time, so we asked him to read the ceremony[?].

[??] 2 “We located on Singer Street, which is now Avenue H. For awhile I busied myself with the affairs of my home and the social life and educational work of our village, then one day in 1900 while I was out in the yard working with my little flowers, I got to thinking about Lubbock not having any church house [?] we always had our religious services at the courthouse, and I came to the conclusion that it was time to start taking up a collection to build a church house. I was wearing a big shade bonnet and I just walked right on up town with that bonnet on [?] The first man I met was George M. Hunt, when I told him what I wanted to do, he gave \$10.00 for the church. That was the first donation on the Baptist Church, I collected \$70.00 that afternoon. I was so elated when I went home that I took my bonnet off and waved it triumphantly as I went down the street. It seemed to me [that?] [evening?] that the church house was in [sight?], I could just see how it would look, and I kept right on talking to people about it and asking for donations. I sat down and wrote to people who I thought would like to see a church built in Lubbock and who were able to [make donations?] contribute and would like to do so. [?]

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"I received a hearty response from most of those [from?] whom I had solicited [funds?]. C. C. Slaughter sent \$50,00. Fuqua and Smith of Amarillo, donated. J. M. Dupree of Mt. Pleasant and R. H. Lowry of Brady made donations. Then we received \$100.00 from H. L. [Kocenut?] of San [Antonia?] [Antoni?] with a request that [it?] be used on a parsonage for the preacher. Lester Lewis, Banker of Canyon gave \$50,00 for this fund also.

"We got a considerable sum of money". Mrs. Mobley went on. "We had the money, or at least enough to make a good [start?], but somehow it seemed that we just could not get the church up, and then one day I received word to [?]Let up on the church for awhile, we don't need a church built in Lubbock now["?]. I sent word back," Lubbock does need a church and I intend to keep on working for one untill we get it.

"It wasn't that I wanted to run things", Mrs. Mobley explained, "Where I grew up in Virginia we had old churches. In my childhood I had always gone to church and I learned when I was quite small to [take?] part in the services. After I came west I just couldn't 3 go on without some form of worship. When I taught on the ranches I used to get my bible down an Sunday morning and read to the little children and I taught them religious songs to sing[?].

"It was not long [after?] I received the request to let up on the church building that [?] [?] Lubbock County ranchmen came down to our house to discuss ways and means of getting the church started. This was in January 1901 and pretty soon the building was put up. These men were George M. Boles, J. W. Winn, E. Y. Lee, all of Lubbock and R. M. Clayton, who owned ranch property in Lubbock County, but resided in San Antonia[?].

"I have watched with great interest the building of all of the churches in Lubbock". Mrs. Mobley said, "For sometime after the Baptist church was built, it was a sort of community building[?] We were always glad for any denomination to have their services there, when we were not [having services?] ourselves.[?]

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“We had a good [Presbyterian?] meeting here in 1904. The Presbyterians did not have a church here at that time, but two Presbyterian preachers, Reverend Rev. Hammock and Reverend Rev. Anderson came to Lubbock from Colorado City to hold the meeting[?] they did not stay at the hotel, [but?] they [had?] brought a few quilts and a little camping outfit along with them and [were going to batch?] [batched?] . It so happened that at this time a house just below us was vacant, so the preachers [went down there?] [??] to camp. Mr. Mobley and I leanded them a feather bed, for we knew that they couldn't be very comfortable on a pallet of quilts. They had good services and we all enjoyed them so much. On saturday we asked the preachers to take dinner at our house. We had plenty of young frying chickens then and if I do tell it myself, I used to be complimented on making extra good salt-rising bread. We had an excellent meal [that day?] and the preachers talked over their work in the meeting and planned the services for the next day. Brother Hammock asked me if I would supply them with some salt-rising bread to use in their communion services. Ofcourse I was glad to do what I could in religious work and I readily agreed to provide the bread.[“?] 4 “But they did not get to have the Communion services the next day,” Mrs. Mobley stated. “It came the biggest rain that night that I think I ever saw in my life. Lubbock did not have any drainage system then and water stood everywhere all over town. When we got up the next morning and looked down at the house where the preachers were camped, we knew that they could not get out and cook their breakfast on a camp fire, so I hurried and fixed up a basket of hot food for them and Mr. Mobley put his old high top boots on and wadded down to the house and carried the basket to them. Later [up?] in the day, when the clouds had drifted away and the water had run off a little, we looked out of a window and saw the Reverend Anderson splashing up the muddy road/ coming to [our?] house, bringing the feather bed home on his back. The rain had broken up the meeting and the preachers were preparing to go home. Shortly after this one of the Presbyterian brethern arrived in his wagon and helped the visiting preachers load up their camping outfit and they left Lubbock[?].

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"I have been on the Plains for [40?] [41?] years", Mrs. Mobley concluded. "I have been happy here, and I have thrilled with the satisfaction of seeing Lubbock progress and grow from a few houses on the [prairie?] to an enterprising little city. I feel that both [my?] husband and I have [helped?] to make Lubbock what it is today, but now he is gone, and I can no longer take active part in the things that go on about me, so I just sit here and think and think. Sometimes I pass the time away [writing?][writing?]. I used to write [almost?] incessantly when I was in Richmond College in Virginia. After I started to teaching school I did not have so much time to write, but even then I wrote for a long time for "The Blue Ridge Echo" in Little Washington. Later I was a correspondant on the staff of a South Carolina paper. After I came to Texas I gradually put my writting aside, but after Mr. Mobley died [?] I became almost a shut-in following an accident and subsequent ill health [?], I turned to my [writting?][writing?] again to help me through the lonely hours. Since then I have written several articles for some of our leading magazines, and also some historical and geographical items for the Dallas News. But [writting?][writing?] tires me now and so sometimes I just sit and think of my childhood home in the shadows of the Blue Ridge mountains in old Virginia where the Mountain Laurels grow. That is why my parents named 5 me Laurel, because the Laurels grew all around our house and Father loved them so. After I started to school people began to call me Laura, but Father never did. Virginia seems far, far away indeed now, much farther than Texas seemed to me in these early years. All of my relatives are still [there?] in [Vaginia?] Virginia, and [now?] I am alone on the Great South Plains. Ofcourse I have friends, for whom I am very thankful and I have my memories, the most pleasant of which are the early years of my marriage, the years when the Plains was still a cattle country and Lubbock was only a village trying to build schools and churches.