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No. 2187

Chauncey O. Moore, Supervisor
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Research Field Worker

Interview: Herbert W. Hicks
Vinita, Okla.

Name: Herbert Worcester Hicks, born at Park Hill, Indian Territory, May 16, 1861 and was married to Rachael Cardwell at Fayetteville, Arkansas, December 23, 1886. Rachael Cardwell was the daughter of James and Sarah Cardwell and was born on July 20, 1869, in Washington County, Arkansas. To this union the following children were born:

Ethel Inez
Homer Wilton
Clifton A.
Vera Clara
Ralph Conner
Herbert Morris

Vera Clara died November 28, 1900.

Father's Name: Abijah Hicks, born March 2, 1819, married January 30, 1852 to Hanna Worcester and she was born January 29, 1834, at New Echota, Georgia.

My father and mother came with the Cherokees from Georgia and Tennessee in 1838. My mother was a daughter of Reverend Samuel A. Worcester, one of the first missionaries to the Cherokees back in Georgia and my father was a descendant of Charles Hicks, a Cherokee chief in the old Cherokee Nation in Georgia.

In 1835, after serving a term in the Georgia penitentiary, because of his firm fidelity to the tribe, my grandfather, Rev. Worcester, was forced to leave Georgia. His notice to evacuate follows:

Receives Formal Notice

It becomes my duty to give you notice to evacuate the lot of land No. 125, in the 14th District, of the third section, and to give the house now occupied by you up to Col. William Handen, or whoever he may put forward, to take possession of the same and that you may have ample time to prepare for the same, I will wou until the 28th day of this month to do the same. Given under my hand

this 16th day of February, 1834. Signed, William E. Springer, Agent for the Cherokees, in Georgia.

Establishes First Printing Press

My grandfather, Rev. Worcester, arrived at Dwight Mission, Indian Territory in 1835, where he awaited the arrival of his printing press, which followed him from Georgia. When it arrived, he moved on to the old "Union Mission", which was located on the west side of Grand River, southeast of Pryor, where he established the first printing press in the Indian Territory.

Celebrates 100th Anniversary

One hundred years later, in September, 1935, I had the pleasure of seeing the State of Oklahoma set up a "Monument", at the spot where my grandfather set up the first printing press. All of my children and all of my brothers and sisters, now living, attended the day's celebration and we took pictures of the monument, with those present.

Moves Press to Park Hill

In 1836, my grandfather moved his printing press to Park Hill, a few miles south of Tahlequah, where he was assisted in the printing work by my mother. They published the "Cherokee Almanac", "Cherokee Hymn Book", "The Confession of Faith", "The Covenant of the Church at Park Hill", and other religious works. He continued his publications at Park Hill until his death in 1859. My father, Abijah Hicks, bought the old printing press for the sum of \$500.00 and I have an old letter written in 1861 revealing this fact.

My grandfather died with his ambition for a college among the Cherokees unrealized, but the old "Worcester Academy" at Vinita, established in territorial days by the American Home Missionary Society, was given his name. This school was taken over by the Vinita Public School about the year 1902 and made a part of the Public Schools of Vinita.

Father killed by bushwhackers

My father, Abijah Hicks, was murdered by bushwhackers during the Civil War and after our family had been robbed three times and left in utter desolation, my mother, Hannah Worcester Hicks, was forced to fly with her five children to Fort Gibson to seek protection by the soldiers who were located there.

Marries Army Physician

While living at Fort Gibson my mother married the second time to E. D. Hitchcock, an army physician. She died February 3, 1917 and was buried in the Officers Circle, in the Fort Gibson Cemetery.

Herbert Worcester Hicks

I received my education in the Fort Gibson public schools and the Male Seminary at Tahlequah. When I had finished school, the Nashes were operating a drug business in Fort Gibson and explained to me the possibilities of learning the drug trade. They said I would soon be a registered pharmacist and receive large wages. They hired me for 50 cents a day but I was never able to get a raise, so I went to Muskogee and worked a short while. I didn't think I was advancing fast enough so I quit and went to Texas, where I worked as a civil engineer with a railroad crew. In 1899, I located at Bluejacket, Indian Territory, where I entered the Hay and Grain Business, where I remained until 1920. While living at Bluejacket we organized a bank and I was named as the president of the Bluejacket State Bank. I also served as mayor of the town and president of the Chamber of Commerce.

In 1920 I moved to Vinita and opened a book store at the corner of Scraper and Canadian Avenue, which business I am still in at this writing. I have many old documents and books left me by my famous ancestors, some of which I have lost by loaning them out. I have lost so many things in this way that I have sworn off letting any of them out of my possession.