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Miss Ella Robinson  
Research Field Worker S-149.

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Oliver Hazard Perry Brewer  
Written for  
Miss Ella Robinson  
By  
Oliver Hazard Perry Brewer, Jr.

Oliver Hazard Perry Brewer was the son of John Brewer and Elizabeth Brewer, nee Taylor, who began their married life in the old Cherokee Nation on the Chickamauga, near the Georgia and Tennessee line. The offspring of this union were Oliver Hazard Perry Brewer, Thomas Fox Brewer, George Brewer, William S. Brewer, Richard Brewer, Ella Brewer and Eleanor Brewer. The father, John Brewer was a leader in the community where he lived in the old nation; took an active part in the affairs of his people and after his removal to the Cherokee Nation in the Indian Territory in the '30s was prominently connected with the affairs of his government and was elected District Judge in the Canadian District in 1841, where he made a splendid record as a jurist. He was also a member of the Cherokee Confederate Convention representing Canadian District in 1862; was elected a senator in 1867 and a Circuit Judge in 1879.

The subject of this sketch, the oldest child of John and Elizabeth Brewer, was born on May 6th, 1829, and in early childhood received the benefits of whatever educational

opportunities existed in the old Nation in the community where he lived and after the removal of the Cherokees to the Cherokee Nation in Indian Territory he attended the Tribal Public Schools, the Academy at Cane Hill, Arkansas, and subsequently the Male Seminary at Mount Comfort, four or five miles northwest of Fayetteville, Arkansas. He was a methodical, studious, constant reader and having in his possession a good many volumes of valuable literature which he studiously read, he succeeded in becoming a well informed, capable and leading citizen of his country. When the gold fever arose in California, in company with other adventurous spirits, he made a trip across the plains to the gold fields in 1849 and returned to the Indian Territory in 1851. He made a second trip to California in 1852 and after spending two or more years in that locality he returned by water down the Pacific coast, thence overland through central America, thence by water to the United States and on to the Indian Territory over land.

In 1856 he married Delia A. Vann, daughter of Joseph Vann, a wealthy slave owner and Cherokee citizen, who lived at Spring Place, Georgia, prior to his removal to Webbers Falls, Indian Territory in 1838. Delia A. Vann was educated in the Tribal Schools of the Cherokee Nation; at Dwight Mission in what is now Sequoyah County, Oklahoma; at the Sawyer School

for girls at Fayetteville, Arkansas, and at Mount Holyoke Seminary in the State of Massachusetts. After the marriage of this couple, they established a home seven miles northwest of Webbers Falls on the Arkansas River in the Canadian District, in a locality which later became known as Brewer's Bend. To this union was born Mary Vann Brewer, John D. Brewer, Thomas Henry Brewer, Cherry J. Brewer, O. H. P. Brewer and two other children who died in infancy. The husband pursued the avocation of a farmer and personally helped to clear up the fertile bottom lands of the home place and pursued with diligence his consistent reading program during the years as his holdings expanded and his meager fortune increased. The splendid qualities he manifested as a boy and a young man reasserted themselves in a most flattering manner after his marriage and because of his inherent qualities of generosity, tolerance, leadership and native ability, his fellow citizens looked to him as their natural counsellor and representative, demanded his services as a public official and elected him to the Cherokee Senate in 1859. At the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 he was made 1st Lieutenant of Company C of the Cherokee Regiment under Captain Daniel Ross Coody and by reason of services well performed was promoted to a Captaincy within a short time and before the end of the war was made a Lieutenant-Colonel.

He made an enviable record in his official capacity as an able, devoted, courageous military leader and was universally loved and respected by his superior officers and the privates of his company. Perhaps no young officer in the Cherokee branch of the Confederacy was more undisturbed, daring or courageous under fire than he as was proven by his superior action on many a battle field and skirmish, yet, strange to say, he evidenced in equally high degree the important qualities of self-possession, discretion and solicitude for his men, to the end that he completely won the admiration and commendation of his superior officers, which results justified the promotion he secured and cherished.

During the latter part of the war the Confederate forces were greatly outnumbered in the Cherokee Nation and many of the Citizens were compelled to become refugees in the South and Colonel Brewer's family was moved to Preston, Texas, where they lived until the close of the war. At the end of the war he moved his family to Pauls Valley, in the Chickasaw Nation; made two large crops of corn in that section, selling his products to the Federal Government for the use of its soldiers at a handsome profit and purchased a herd of cattle in the State of Texas and returned to his old home where he had lived prior to the war. He again engaged in farming and added stock raising to his enterprises. He took a deep interest in educational work and helped

establish the first public school in his neighborhood for the benefit of his own children and the children of his community, making large donations thereto. He was elected Superintendent of Education for the Cherokee Nation in 1871 and after a short interim was again re-elected in 1876 and serving out his time in this capacity he was selected as President of the newly created Cherokee Board of Education in 1881, with Rob. L. Owen as secretary and L. D. Spears as member. Under the administration of Chief Dennis W. Bushyhead he was appointed tax collector for the Cherokee Nation with headquarters at Caldwell, Kansas, and after collecting many thousand of dollars from the Cherokee Strip Live Stock Association and other live stock companies operating in the Cherokee Strip, he returned to Tahlequah, the capital of the Cherokee Nation; made a complete report as such collector and delivered all money collected to the Treasurer of the Cherokee Nation. As a fitting climax to his distinguished and serviceable career and in recognition of his integrity and proven judicial temperament, he was, in the year 1890, elevated by his people to the Supreme Court of the Cherokee Nation and after almost two years of active, sincere devotion to the duties incident to this responsible place he fell ill with influenza, superinduced by a cold, and died

while in office at his home on December 20th, 1891.

Notwithstanding, Judge Brewer won signal honor and brought credit to himself and his people as an official in both field and forum, yet his greatest distinction was the splendor of his career as a husband, father, neighbor and friend while following the peaceful pursuits of a civilian life. His children who were the constant recipients of his living kindness, fatherly instruction and unlimited affection, adored him to the point of idolatry and under every condition of family administration subjected themselves most willingly to any direction or disciplinary action imposed upon them by him without hesitation or thought of objection. His generous hospitality, Christian tolerance and neighborly attitude toward all mankind made him the recipient of many tokens of regard at the hands of those who were, through the years, familiar with the nobility of his nature and also from the many who had become the objects of his favor and the beneficiaries of his bounty. With such an inspiring example of upstanding manhood to serve as both a memory and a benediction, all those who know his intimate personal history and fully appreciate the value of a life well lived in a primitive land, shall be justified in giving expression to this fitting sentiment; "He was a man, take him for all in all, I shall not look upon his life again".