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James R. Carselowey,  
Journalist,  
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An Interview with Mr. Homer Eugene Trott,  
Box 344, Marble City, Oklahoma.

On His Early Day Life at Vinita and the  
Marble City, Where He Now Lives.

My name is Homer Eugene Trott. I was born in Vinita, on March 18, 1873, in what is now the oldest house in Vinita.

My father's name was James Campbell Trott, but he was only known as Oce Trott. He got the name of Oce from the Cherokee word, O'co, meaning good morning.

My mother's name was Madora Stover Trott. My parents were both Cherokees and were living on a farm, one mile south of the Vinita Fair Grounds when Vinita was established. They were the parents of one son and two daughters.

My father built the first residence house erected in Vinita in 1872, and moved to town that same year. There were lumber yards in Vinita at that time, and he hauled the lumber from the pine mills at Spavinaw, a distance of twenty-five miles, crossing Grand River at the old

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Island Ford which was on a direct line between Vinita and Spavinaw.

There were no planing mills connected with the Spavinaw mills and every stick of weather-boarding and flooring was planed by hand after it reached Vinita.

It must have been saved from the best of pine logs, for the weather-boarding is still sound and has never been replaced. The old house was T-shaped with two rooms in front and two rooms in the back. It has been run down and photographed by every historical searcher who ever attempted to find the oldest residence house in Vinita. It was built in the east part of town, on the banks of Bull Creek, and is the first house north of the Old Hooley Bell place and is still owned by my sister and me.

#### Other Trotts Early-Day Settlers

Other Trotts, who were early-day settlers in Vinita, were my three uncles, Dr. John Trott, William L. Trott and Harden H. Trott, brothers of my father. Dr. John Trott was the first mayor of Vinita, after the name

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was changed from Downingsville to Vinita, about 1872. Prior to that time Johnson Thompson had been mayor of the town of Downingsville.

William L. Trott was Vinita's first lumberman and he had his lumber hauled from Spavinaw, where all of the early day lumbermen secured their principal supplies of lumber, except doors and windows. When the M. K. & T. came through the territory in 1872 towns began to spring up along the M.K.& T. and lumber yards were among the first things that were needed to build the towns. Lumber hauling from Spavinaw furnished work for many early-day settlers who had teams.

#### Adair and Choteau Old Towns

When the M.K. & T. was built through the territory towns were staked off every ten miles, but towns were not started at all of the points for several years. Adair and Choteau were two of the first towns to be built after Vinita was established. V. Gray, a pioneer settler at Choteau, established lumber yards at those two points and stock pens were built by the Katy for

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receiving and shipping cattle at those points.

Mr. Gray was a man of considerable means, and was a stockholder in Vinita's first bank, the First National, which was established in 192. He also helped to organize the First National Bank of Arroyo and in later years owned one of the largest general merchandise stores, at Choteau, along the M. & T. lines. He operated this store until his death, well after statehood.

#### Two brothers announce for same Office

It was in 1889 that two of my uncles made up their minds to run for district clerk of Cooweescoowee. They both wanted to run, and neither one would give up to the other and they decided to leave it to the convention that nominated the candidates and my Uncle Farden won and was elected, serving from 1889 to 1891.

I received my education at the Vinita Public School, the Haskell Institute, the Willie Haisell College and the Worcester Academy.

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One of the outstanding institutions of learning of the early days in Vinita was the Worcester Academy. It was established by the Congregational Mission board in 1882. Up to that time there were no other schools this side of the Male and Female Seminaries at Tahlequah.

In building and maintaining the Worcester Academy, the Congregation Educational Society spent more than \$100,000, which was used in building two fine buildings on the lots now occupied by the Vinita High School building. One was a three-story building, known as Aldrich Cottage and was used as a dormitory.

Named for the Reverend Mr. Samuel A. Worcester

This old school was named for the Reverend Mr. Samuel Austin Worcester, an early-day missionary to the Cherokees. I had the honor of attending a "Home-Coming" of students of this old school in 1929, where early-day memories were recalled and where some very interesting history was read during the program.

One of the articles read before the meeting was

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furnished by Mrs. Edith Walker, a granddaughter of the Reverend Mr. Worcester. The Reverend Mr. Worcester was the illustrious friend and benefactor of the Cherokee people for whom Worcester Academy, of Vinita, was named, and who was commissioned by the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions and sent to the old Cherokee Nation Mission station at New Echata, Georgia, in 1826, accompanied by his bride, Ann Orr, of Bedford, New Hampshire, a real "Daughter of the American Revolution."

#### Early-Day Teachers

The first principal of Worcester Academy was the Reverend Mr. Scroggs, who served for four years. Other early-day teachers in this school were: Miss Lizzie Webb, Miss Jessie Durham, John McCarthy, Miss Ada Durham, Annette Brown, Ella Boodkeeper, Kate Timberlake, Miss Emma Music, Miss Yancy, Miss Curry, Miss Brown, Miss Agnes Hubbell; music teacher, Miss Louise Graper, and Miss Emily Graper, also music teachers.

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Students Of Worcester Academy

A complete list of early-day students of the Worcester Academy was never kept, but a list made up from those present at the home-coming comprised the following:

E. M. (Lack) Landrum was the first graduate, now of Oklahoma City; T. A. (Bert) Chandler, Vinita; J. F. Whippin, Claremore; Richard Armstrong, Vinita; Carlos Hurd; John Oskinson, now a noted Cherokee author, Vinita; Miss Blanche Hall, Vinita, who became a well known actress; Clara James, Mattie Donnelly; Joe H. Butler, several times mayor and postmaster of Vinita; Bert Holderman, Chetopa, Kansas; Will Klause, Vinita; Will and Henry Cook, Vinita; Morris Knight, Vinita; Homer Eugene Trott, Vinita; Frank Will; Joe Little, Vinita; Fred Mitchell, Andrew Norwood, Vinita; Andrew Green, Vinita; John Barrett, Vinita; Emmet and Heber Skinner, Vinita; Hiram A. and Ella Williams, Vinita; Taylor Crutchfield, Vinita; Alva Butler, Vernon and Dana Bolton, Jess Choteau, Tulsa; Fred and Milton Ratcliff, Vinita.

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Some of the girls were: Little Hooley Bell, Vinita; Lena Carselowey, Vinita; Mary Strange, Chelsea; Hattie Gore, Bluejacket; Fannie Stafford, Sadie and Clarence Ashbrook, May and Lula Armstrong, Vinita; Pearl and Nana Drew, Vinita; Lannie, Bess and Claudie Little, Vinita; Ludie and Janie Hall, Jocie Crutchfield, Bessie Schrimshire, Claremore; Mattie Lindsey, Choteau; Grace and Lucille Fortner, Vinita; Lula Jennie and Eabe Skinner, Mable Cook, Vinita; Bobe Beatty, Vinita; Laura; Bess and Mable Choteau, Emma and Kittie Dixon, Big Cabin; Ella Warren, Vinita; Kittie Chandler, Adair; Fannie Hunt, Vinita; Lillie Burns, Vinita; Fannie Knight, Vinita; Belle and Florence Cook, Vinita; Nettie Duncan, Chetopa, Kansas; Myrtle Lucky, Vinita; Hattie and Dora Franklin, Vinita; Mollie Cooper, Celia Egan, Lula Gray, Ray Trott, Vinita; Lottie Mod, Vinita; Bertha Rogers, May Johnson, Bartlesville; Laura Lumbard, Maud Cox, Clive Allen, Vinita; Agnes Picklin, Vinita; Willie Trott, Vinita; Alice Youngblood, Vinita; Lina Curry, Delia Emmons, Frankie Weaver, Vinita; Cora

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Armstrong, Vinita; Mattie Walker, Vinita; Tommie Knight, Vinita; Jim Highland, Vinita; George Knapp, Harry Bagby, Vinita, Earl Walker, Vinita; Edgar Marrs, Vinita; Hurt Flippin, Claremore; Charles Martin, Vinita; Bert Curry, Fate Harlan, Carry Goodykoontz, Ethel Goodykoontz, Vinita; Jennie Cass, Tulsa; Bess Choteau, Kansas City; Birdie Ironsides, Oklahoma City; Jocie Crutchfield, Vinita, who married W. E. Halsell, and Chick Rogers, Pawhuska.

The average attendance at Worcester Academy was usually about one hundred. A few were boarding pupils but most of them were day pupils. All had to pay a tuition fee.

Two years of Latin were obligatory, the second year we read Caesar. In the senior year we also studied "James Brice's American Commonwealth," in two large volumes, this being a class in Civil Government.

#### Worcester Academy Sold To City

About the year of 1900 the Worcester Academy was sold to the city of Vinita and turned into the Vinita

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Public Schools. The old buildings were used by the city for several years and then razed and new school buildings erected after statehood.

The High School building, the Longfellow, the Irving-Riley building and the New Auditorium and Gymnasium now stand on the lots once occupied by the old Worcester Academy buildings.

The old Cherokee School, which stood between North Wilson and Scrapper on Sequoyah/<sup>avenue</sup> has also been replaced by the Eugene Fields Building and is used as a Ward School, as is Riverside in the northeast part of the city. The colored school, located in the southeast part of the city, has also been given a new brick building, with a new auditorium and gymnasium, built by WPA labor in 1936.

#### Willie Halsell College Sold

The Willie Halsell College was a Methodist college and was discontinued about the year 1909. The buildings and ground were sold to private parties, and turned into a residential section. It had a hundred and sixty acres of ground.

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Moved To Marble City In 1913

I was married on May 7, 1913, to Miss Sigrid Thompson, of Robinson, Kansas, and moved to Marble City, Adair County, where I had taken my allotment. My wife was a school teacher and began teaching near our allotment soon after we arrived there and for the past seventeen years she has been teaching the Anderson School, within a mile of our home.

The land in our section of the country is rough and rocky. I have a limestone quarry on my place that is said to be eight hundred feet deep, although we have only penetrated it to a depth of nineteen feet.

10 Acres Leased For 75 Years

The lime rock on my place is of such value that the Dunlap Company of Oklahoma City have leased ten acres from me for a period of seventy-five years. They ship from one to two loads of lime rock from their quarry each day, to be ground into lime which is used to purify the water that is used by Oklahoma City.

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I have one hundred and seventy acres of the same kind of lime rock that different companies want to lease because of its valuable properties. My farm is located one mile north of Marble City.

#### Valuable Marble Quarry

Located near my farm, and a mile and a half north of Marble City, is located a very famous marble quarry. It is owned by a man in Oklahoma City, named Westervelt. He is also owner of the Telephone building in Oklahoma City and had his plant at the marble quarry equipped with a planing machine, a polishing machine, a saw and cutter and everything that it takes to get out rock for the finest of buildings. This man furnished the marble for the Rice Institute at Houston, Texas, and also for his Telephone building at Oklahoma City. For these two buildings he had marble shipped in from Germany, Belgium, France and other European countries. This was to get different colors or shades of marble.

After these two buildings were completed he had a lot of odds and ends of marble from all of these

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different countries and I bought them and built a six room marble farm house. It is likely the most valuable and beautiful farm house in Oklahoma.

Marble Plant Burns Down

Westervelt shut his plant down in 1912 and would not lease it to anyone although he had many opportunities to do so. In 1914 the plant, which was standing idle, burned down with all its equipment and has never been rebuilt.

Oil, Lead and Jack Crop Out

Oil, lead and jack crop out of the ground a few miles northwest of my place. The oil comes out of the rock crevices in such quantities that four or five gallons can be gathered at a time and it is of such quality that you can set a match to it and burn it.

The Government maps show an oil stratum running from the northeast to the southwest through my place.

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