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EDITH WALKER, Informant.
Grand daughter of Samuel
Austin Worcester.

-Jas. S. Buchanan

SAMUEL AUSTIN WORCESTER.

So much has been written and put into print about Mr. Worcester and his printing activities since the "Oklahoma Press Association" gave recognition, and placed a permanent marker at Union, the site of his first printing operations in the new Cherokee Nation. His first location was Brainerd, Tennessee where Cyrus Kingsbury had opened a school and preaching station. As Kingsbury did not know the Cherokee language and realizing the inestimable value the printing of books in their own tongue would be to the Cherokees, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions were looking for a man of the necessary qualifications to continue the work already begun in a small way. John Arch and David Brown, two young Cherokees who had been sent to New England to be educated and had returned to their people were then trying to translate books of the Bible from the imperfect alphabet evolved by Mr. Pickering. In 1824 John Arch gave the Cherokees the gospel of John. David Brown, the other young Cherokee of much promise after finishing his education at Cornwall, came back to the Nation, serving as translator and interpreter and clerk of the Cherokee Council. He did not long survive such heavy duties and died young, after translating the book of Matthew, which was written in his beautiful handwriting and circulated in manuscript from to his people. These attempts, though imperfect, showed the willingness of these boys to make good use of their eastern schooling for the benefit of the people. The A. B. C. F. M. were looking for a man qualified to complete the work thus begun. Therefore, when Samuel A. Worcester, just out of college and Theological Seminary, specially gifted in Greek and Hebrew, presented himself to the board for work he was at once selected for this difficult task, learning the Cherokee language, and translating

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the Bible into Cherokee. Samuel Austin Worcester in 1815 walked the seventy-one miles from his home to enter Peacham Academy, Vermont, and while there, he united with the college church. Graduating in Theology in 1823, thus giving eight years of study to preparation for his life work.

He was ordained to the gospel of ministry in the old Park Street Church in Boston, his father, Reverend Leonard Worcester preaching the ordination sermon, the 6th, of seven generations of ministers in the Worcester family, Samuel becoming the 7th. Immediately after his ordination and assignment for work he was married to Ann Orr, daughter of John Orr of Bedford, New Hampshire. A woman of rare talents and strong personality. The journey started from Boston in August 1825, on his assignment by the board was ended without mishap six weeks later, landing them at the Brainerd Mission, Tennessee, where they found a warm welcome and three days later Mr. Worcester writing to the Board, said he had already set about learning the Sequoyah alphabet under the teaching of Mr. Reese a Cherokee speaking native, giving him an hours instruction each day. Among those who gladly welcomed Mr. and Mrs. Worcester, was a man of great influence among the Cherokees, a member of the Council, a delagate to Washington, a Christian, and a Gentleman, Charles Hicks, who was my grandfather on the Cherokee side, and who as Assistant Chief, was made Principal Chief at the death of Path Killer. Charles Hicks was a convert of the Moravian Mission, but was interested in all the schools and preaching stations in his neighborhood and a regular attendant at the Christian Services. His death was a national loss and his funeral was the largest ever mentioned in the History of his time. The genealogy of the Worcester side of the family is as follows: Samuel Austin Wor-

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cester, son of Reverend Leonard Worcester and Elizabeth Hopkins Worcester, born at Worcester, (So named for the Worcester family) Massachusetts, January 19, 1798. Died at Park Hill, Indian Territory, April 20, 1859.

Ann Eliza, daughter of Samuel A. and Ann Orr Worcester, born Brainerd, Tennessee, November 7, 1826. Died at Muskogee, Oklahoma, November 19, 1905. By nature and inheritance this daughter seemed specially fitted to work among the Indians, and she did for the Creeks what her father did for the Cherokees, gave them their Bible, many hymns and tracts, and a grammar. She was two years old when her father moved from Brainerd to New Echota, Georgia where he began his work of printing the Bible and religious literature for the Cherokees from the Sequoyah alphabet. When Ann Eliza was fourteen years of age, her mother died at Park Hill and she assumed the care of the three younger children until her father married Miss Ermina Nash to mother the smaller children. In 1841 Ann Eliza went to St. Johnsbury, Vermont, to school remaining four years, specializing in language and music. In 1846 she was appointed teacher in the Park Hill School and was married to Reverend W. S. Robertson in 1850 and entered her life work for the Creek Indians. After learning their language (not so hard to acquire as the Cherokee) she gave herself to translating the New Testament, numerous hymns, and a Creek grammar. For this intellectual work, Wooster Academy, Ohio conferred on her the degree of "Ph. D" The first time a woman was so honored. A former pupil, prominent among the Creek tribe, said of her at her death, "The Creek people have lost their Mother." She was buried in the Park Hill Mission grave yard where her husband, three children, one grandchild, her father and mother and step-mother repose.

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Sarah Worcester, born at New Echota, Georgia, September 30, 1828. Died at Park Hill, C. N. Indian Territory, June 30, 1857. Was educated at Mt. Holyoke Seminary, the first educational institution exclusively for women. After returning to Park Hill she was given a position in the (just opening) Cherokee Female Seminary in 1850. The beautifully constructed brick building adjacent to Tahlequah, the Capitol of the Cherokee Nation where the daughters of the Chief men of affairs were graduated, after finishing public schools. (List of first graduating class of this institution to be furnished.) "Miss Sarah" as she was known, was married to Dr. Daniel Dwight Hitchcock, February 15, 1853 in the Seminary Chapel, so, as she said, "Her girls might witness the ceremony". Sarah was said to be the most beautiful of the Worcester girls, tall and queenly, in appearance, with dark hair and eyes, and just enough natural curl in her hair to arrange it becomingly. Gifted in music, she was an ideal instructor, and example for a young ladies seminary and they were loath to part with her.

Jerusha Worcester, Born at New Echota, Georgia, February 27, 1831. Died August 14, 1831. Her stay in the home was of short duration. She died during her fathers incarceration in the Georgia Penitentiary for refusing to sign the Oath of Allegiance to the State and leave the Cherokee Nation, giving up his printing activities and his efforts to christianize and educate the Cherokee People, which experience, no doubt, had its bearing on the vitality of the baby, imposing so heavy a burden upon the mother in added labor and anxiety.

Hannah Worcester, Born at New Echota, Georgia, January 29, 1834. Died Ft. Gibson, Oklahoma, January 12, 1917. It fell to Hannah's lot to remain

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in the Park Hill home while the elder sisters were away in New England schools fitting themselves for teachers. Hannah helped in the printing office, setting type, reading proof, and binding books and pamphlets. In her eighteenth year she married a half blood Cherokee, Abijah Hicks, her father's former stockman and general outdoor overseer, a capable trustworthy man who took the place of a son and counselor while her brothers, Leonard and John, were away getting an education and because of the turmoil just preceeding the Civil War were never in the home much after graduation. Abijah Hicks bought in the Park Hill Mission property when it was given up at my grand-father's death in 1859, and having established a neighborhood store as a means of livelihood in 1861, he had gone to Van Buren, Arkansas, for some needed supplies, bringing the goods he had purchased home in a one-horse wagon, he was wal-laid and shot in the back, passers-by seeing the body, removed it from the dashboard where it had fallen and digging a shallow grave by the side of the road, they buried him, and, fearful of being caught at their task, they hurried on, stopping at the first house they came to and told the people of what they had found. One of the missionaries on Lee's creek came for Mrs. Hick's, bringing a mule for her to ride, and taking her baby boy in her arms, she rode the twenty or twenty-five miles but was never able to locate her husbands grave.

Thus, throughout the Civil War, Hannah remained in the Mission Building keeping her children together, through robberies, privations and nerve wraking experiences, coming to Fort Gibson as soon as peace was accomplished in 1863.

Leonard Worcester, Born at Union, Cherokee Nation, November 8, 1863.

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Died in Denver, Colorado, November 13, 1907. Buried in Denver. From Childhood he was gifted in music, playing almost any instrument. In school and immediately after graduation he found occupation as band master and band instructor in several large cities during the Civil War and later in Fort Smith, Arkansas. He was always in demand for church choir service and for specials in church music flute, cornet or violin, as well as organ, piano, or voice. He married Miss Mary R. Spooner, a talented teacher, brought in to the Nation by his father for some of the Mission station schools under his jurisdiction. It was always Grandfathers' desire to obtain college graduates from New England Ancestry of sterling Christian character, especially gifted in music, household arts, and with attractive personality.

Mary Eleanor Worcester. Born at Park Hill C.N. Indian Territory. May 23, 1840. Died in Cambridge, Mass. _____ In the home of her daughter-in-law, wife of her second son, Leonard, who was Professor of biology in Harvard when he met a violent death being crushed in an elevator in the school building. Mary was a teacher in the public schools of the Cherokee Nation when returning from school, and afterwards, she taught among the Creeks at the old Agency four miles west of Muskogee, at the time she met her husband, Mason F. Williams, of New Albany, Indiana, who came to the territory as a teacher in Tallahassie Mission. After their marriage they both gave up teaching and Mr. Williams studied medicine for which he was pre-disposed, since his father had been a practicing physician in Indiana, and settled in Muskogee, he soon had a lucrative practice. Seeing the scarcity of ministers in this new country, Dr. Williams took a course in Theology and became the Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Muskogee, also, keeping

his office as a physician, thus performing such strenuous duty he wore himself out and left Mrs. Williams a widow in 1909.

The property on Elgin avenue was sold and Mrs. Williams went to Cambridge, Massachusetts to live, where she passed away and her body was brought back and rests beside her husband and two sons that lie in Greenhill cemetery at Muskogee.

John Orr Worcester. Born at Park Hill, C.N. Indian Territory. March 13, 1838. Died St. Johnsbury, Vermont. January 15, 1861.

Shortly after his graduation in 1859 and when he was preparing to return to Park Hill, he was informed of his fathers death and remained in New England, and was married to Miss Julia Snow in 1860. His sudden and unexpected death followed after three months and he was buried in Vermont. I copy here a letter from his father, written to John not a great while after he went away to school, where he was homesick and discouraged and had so written his father.

Park Hill, Cherokee Nation,

July 9th, 1855.

My Dear Son John:

I am sorry that you have such a trial in regard to your health, but hope you are better now. To be sure, if you cannot get so as to study, it will be better for you to come home, but I still hope it will be better for you to stay where you are.

As to your homesickness, I suppose I am less able to sympathize with you from the fact that I never was homesick in my life, no, not for an hour, that I have any recollection of.

If you get better in other respects I presume your homesickness will wear home. It is a disease which I think time commonly cures. So take courage and expect to be well.

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As to sitting an hour at a time wondering whether you can go through college or not, that is about the worst thing you could do. All you have to do now is to get on while you can, do towards it what you can, and leave the uncertain future for the future to decide.

When I was on my way to college, I mean while I was preparing, a question arose about the means, (necessary money) whether I could get it or not. I could not tell, but just concluded to go ahead until I came up against a wall which I could neither dig through or climb over, and then I would stop. Just so, you do. Do not look forward into the mist to see the wall, but go ahead as there were no wall.

Then perhaps the wall will recede before you, or keep moving on before you like a rainbow, though not so pretty, just let it alone until you come to it.

When I say leave the future for the future to disclose, I do not mean to defy the future, I mean that you should leave it to him who orders the future, as the present. I mean as Jesus said, "Take no thought for the morrow, the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself, sufficient for the day is the evil thereof."

Nor do I mean that you shall have no desire for the future. I mean that you should be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving let your requests be made unto God. Thus that peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your heart."

Leave the future results and attend to the present duty.

Your affectionate father,

S. A. Worcester,

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This counsel to his son away from home, sick and homesick exhibits the sturdiness and wisdom with which S. A. Worcester gave his advise and help to any and every emergency.

The accomplishments of thirty-four years of busy life given to the Cherokee people, only eternity can tell.

In the "Old Nation" he first acquired the language, said to be as difficult as the Chinese. Three days after reaching the Brainers Mission he was giving an hour daily to study under a native Cherokee, Mr. Reese, and at the end of the second year he was conversant enough to use the language about the school, and had already completed plans to begin translating the Bible, and before the third year he was on his way to Boston to get type cast for his work, and he recommended the printing of a newspaper as a further means of hastening the civilization he came to encourage. He was commissioned by the Cherokee Council to purchase the necessary equipment, which he did as soon as he constructed a suitable house to place the machinery in. The National Council furnishing the money and he supervising the work. His mission press meantime was printing translations of scripture tracts, a primer for use in the schools, an almanac and a hymn book of notes and words, completed by Mr. Worcester. He supervised the eight schools with preaching stations, for which he sent monthly reports to the Board in Boston telling of their needs, appointing the teachers, advising the preachers and kept his own preaching through an interpreter going. In the midst of his work he was arrested and sent to prison, there to wear a felons garb for no reason, other than that he stood for the rights of the Cherokees in wishing to remain in peace in the country given them "So long as grass grows and water flows." When the Georgia authorities confiscated his publication, the Phoenix

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and the Mission Press there was nothing to do but seek a new field in a new country. Therefore the A.B.C.F.M. removed their labors in Georgia and sent Worcester to the Cherokee Nation, Indian Territory.

He was permanently located at Park Hill in 1836, continuing his same activities as in Georgia until his death in 1857, brought on by a fall caused by the breaking of a ladder that sent him to the bottom of a sixty-five foot mission well. Here, his work gave to the Cherokees the Bible, their hymn book, and almanac. He also organized a Cherokee Bible School, Temperance Society and eight parochial schools, with preachers and teachers. The Temperance meetings in every district were visited and speakers and music furnished, and a general rally was held once a year at the coming of the Council.

The only recognition given my grandfather for his life spent for them was a school at Vinita named for him, which has long been discontinued, and the title of D.D. conferred on him, but by his request was never used in addressing him. His remains lie in the Park Hill Grave yard among those he loved, a plain shaft of marble from New England marks his last resting place, and when the Books are opened he will shine as the stars of the morning and his works will have due recognition there.

Mrs. Edithe Hicks Walker.

Fort Gibson, Oklahoma.