

JAMES WILLIAM HOOK: HIS ELLER ANCESTRY AND DESCENDANTS

From the August 1989 "Chronicles"

Virginia Eller (grandmother of James W. Hook) was the first daughter and third child of Harvey Eller and Mary Caroline Vannoy. She was seven years of age and one of seven children when the family moved in a covered wagon from Wilkes Co., N.C. to Iowa in 1852. This story, told by James W. Hook in both his 1925 and 1957 books, is one of courage and fortitude undergirded by a deep Christian faith that sustained this family in their trek westward in a covered wagon and during the harsh early years of their existence in Iowa. It is a classic saga about strong willed people with deep convictions who choose to venture forth in pursuit of the American dream on the western frontier.

"Harvey Eller/5/ [Simeon/4/, John/3/, Peter/2/, George Michael Eller/1/1, was born in Wilkes Co., N.C., 24 Mar. 1819; d., at the home of his daughter Mrs. Delos Davis in Wapello Co., Iowa, 3 Nov. 1906. He married in Wilkes Co. N.C., 25 Nov. 1841, Mary Caroline Vannoy, b. in Wilkes Co., .N.C., 18 Feb. 1823; d. at the home of her daughter Mrs. Delos Davis in Wapello Co. Iowa, 18 Jan. 1904. Mary Caroline Vannoy was the daughter of Jesse and Mary (Kilby) Vannoy. Jesse Vannoy,/5/ [Nathaniel /4/, John/'-T/, Francis/2/, John /1/]. Both lie buried in the old section of Competine Cemetery located one half mile east of Farson, Wapello Co., Iowa." GME p.188.

"James Hook, (father of James W. Hook, the genealogist) recorded in his father's bible as James Hook and his own Bible as James Hook Jr., was born in Carrol Co., Ohio, 30 Sept. 1839 and died in Wapello Co., Iowa 30 June 1905. He married 21 Nov. 1867, in Wapello Co., Iowa, Virginia Eller, born in Wilkes Co., N.C., 15 Oct. 1845; d. in Wapello Co., Iowa, 30 Oct. 1897. Both are buried in the Hook family plot in the Martinsburg Cemetery located one and one half miles south of Martinsburg ., Iowa." GME p. 329.
(cont'd p. 80)



James W. Hook, the genealogist, "was born, 9 Jan. 1884, an parent's farm in Highland Twsp. of Wapello Co., Iowa." GME p. 340; and died 21 Oct. 1957. (pers. corr.,J.W. Hook, Jr.) "He married, 17 Sept. 1907, in St. Mark's Episcopal Church at Fort Dodge, Iowa, Hattie Rosemond Bechtel, b., at Fort Dodge, Iowa 16 Dec. 1885, dau. of Carl Philip Bechtel, b. at Nevada, Iowa 12 Nov. 1863; d. at Fort Dodge, Iowa 31 Aug. 1935 and his wife, Rose Belle Waldburger, b. at Davenport, Iowa 7 Jan. 1865, now living (1957) at Friendship Haven, Fort Dodge, Iowa." GME p. 340

"James William Hook graduated, 1905, from Iowa State College with the degree of Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering. In 1912 he was awarded a Master's Degree in Mechanical Engineering by Iowa State College and was admitted to membership in the honorary engineering fraternity of

Tau Bet Pi when it was established in the college. While in college he was a member of the Bachelor Debating Society, Editor of the college paper and member of the Athletic Council. He went to Cody, Wyoming in early Sept. 1905 where, with his brother-in-law as a partner, purchased the Cody Enterprise and became its editor. Returning to Iowa, because of ill health, the following May and soon thereafter sold the newspaper. Accepting employment with the Des Moines Edison Light Company, Sept. 1906, and the following December became sales engineer for the Globe Machinery and Supply Company of Des Moines, Iowa. Removed to Marshalltown, Iowa in Oct. 1909 where for seven years was, successively, sales manager and general manager of the C.A. Durham Company. Was elected president of the Alumni Association of Iowa State College in 1915 and served one year. Was vice-president, later president, of the Allied Machinery Co. of America, a foreign trading concern in New York City, 1916-1923, during which time he resided in Tarrytown, New York. Was prominently identified with the large war activities of the American International Corporation of N.Y., 1917-1919 and a director and officer of several of its subsidiary corporations. In 1922-23 was a member of the Board of Education of Tarrytown schools. He obtained an option to purchase the majority interest in the Geometric Tool Co. of New Haven, Conn. and in Sept. of 1923 moved to New Haven. Upon the death of the incumbent president of the company in Oct. he was elected president and treasurer. On 1 Dec. 1924 he exercised his option and became owner of the majority interest in the company which he retained until 30 Nov. 1944 when he sold the company to the Greenfield Tap and Die Corporation of Greenfield, Mass.

"During his residence in New Haven he devoted much time to public affairs. Mayor's Advisory Air Board, 1925-1929; Vice-Pres. Conn. Civil Service Association; director New England Council and in 1936-38 its president. Chairman of the Conn. Unemployment Commission, 1930-32; member of President Hoover's National Comm. for Unemployment, 1931-1932; member- Conn. Municipal Finance and Relief Commission, 1932-1935; Industrial Advisor to Natal Recovery Adm., 1933-1935 and member of its Industrial Advisory Board, also Vice Chairman of its Durable Goods Committee; member of the Business Advisory Council of the U.S. Dept. of Commerce, 1940 to present (1957); member Board of Trustees University of Conn., 1935-1953 and Chairman after 1949; declining an opportunity to become candidate for Governor of Conn. in 1938 and U.S. Senate in 1940; member of the National Republican Platform Comm., 1938-1940; elected president of the United Illuminating Co., electrical utility in New Haven and vicinity in 1939 when that company found itself in management difficulties. Established new management personnel and since 1942 has served as Chairman of the Board. A Trustee of New Haven Y.M.C.A. since 1938, director of Acme Wire Co. since 1928 and a former director of other New Haven corporations which he resigned because of pressure of other duties. Member of the Society of Colonial Wars in Conn. (Gov. 1946-1948), 32nd degree Mason; member of Tau Beta Pi and Pi Tau Sigma honorary fraternities and Kappa Sigma, social fraternity. Received Marston Medal for achievement in Engineering from Iowa State College in 1940 and the Alumni Merit Award in 1939. Author "Industry's Obligation to the Unemployed," 1931, published in 1938, and coauthor "The New Outlook on Business," Harper Bros., 1940. . . . He is a member of the New Havens Citizen's Action Commission, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Y.M.C.A. of New Haven and member and deacon of the First Church of Christ of New Haven, Congregationalist. (See "Who's Who in America," Vol. 29.)

"Children of James William Hook and his wife Hattie S. Bechtel:

1. James Philip Hook, b. at Marshalltown, Iowa 22 Jan. 1911; d. 15 Mar. 1911.
2. James William Hook, Jr., b. at Marshalltown, Iowa, -30 May 1912; m. 20 June 1942, Dorothy White Hawley, b. at New Haven, Conn., 2 Sept. 1914. She is daughter of George Shepard Hawley and Jessamine (White) Hawley of New Haven. She attended Mrs. Day's School in New Haven and Kendall Hall at Prides Crossing, Mass. James William Hook Jr. graduated from Taft School at Watertown, Conn. in 1930- and from Yale University B.A. in 1934. Took special work at Colorado School of Mines ' Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Columbia University after finishing Yale. Employed by J. Walter Thompson Co., 1935-1940-, and by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (A.A.A.) at Bozeman, Montana and Denver, Colorado, 1940-1942. Employed by the Geometric Tool Co. in New Haven until early in 1943 when he joined the U.S. Marine Corps at Parris Island training base. Later in the year he was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant and transferred to Camp Wright and later to Quantico, Va. where he was assigned to instructional duties. Was honorably discharged early in 1945. Removed to Albuquerque, New Mexico in May of 1948 for health reasons where, since that time, he has been employed by the Western Electric Co. at the Atomic Energy Project at Sandia Base where he and his family live.
Their children are:
 - i. James Hawley Hook, b. 21 Feb. 1945.
 - ii. Sally Bectel Hook, b. 2 Jan. 1947.
 - iii. Thomas White Hook, b. 4 March 1948.
3. Rose Virginia Hook, b. at Marshalltown, Iowa, May 1914; graduated from Mrs. Day's School, New Haven, Conn., 1932 and from Vassar College, A.B., 1936. Married, 22 May 1937, William Haunton Smith, b. 10 Nov. 1908u in So. Hadley Falls, Mass. He graduated from Dartmouth College, 1931, and from Harvard Business College, 1933. He joined the Springfield Institution for Savings at Springfield, Mass. in 1939, thereafter advancing to the position of Treasurer which position he held until Sept. 1953 when he became President of the Holyoke Savings Bank at Holyoke, Mass. which position he presently holds. Family lives in Longmeadow, Mass. where she is a member of the Junior League and Vassar Committee and where both are members of the First Church of Longmeadow, congregational.
Their children are:
 - i. Gertrude Hook Smith, called Trudi, b. 21 Aug. 1941.
 - ii. Rose Virginia Barton Smith, called Vicki, b. 1 Oct. 1943
 - iii. Cynthia Haunton Smith, called Cindi, b. 21 Feb. 1947.

" GME, 342-344.

References: "GME" - GEORGE MICHAEL ELLER AND DESCENDANTS OF HIS IN AMERICA, 1957. Additional information provided by James W. Hook, Jr.