

The following life sketch was presented by John C. Jarvis in memory of his grandfather, Harry Lyle Hicks, at the occasion of his funeral August 12, 1978.

A LIFE SKETCH  
OF  
HARRY LYLE HICKS

My only worry and concern as I take the stand this day is that I will be able to do justice to the man I'll be speaking of, my grandfather, Harry Lyle Hicks.

Grandpa Harry was born January 14, 1916, on a ranch in the upper Pahsimeroi Valley of South Central Idaho. He was raised there until he moved to Salmon, Idaho, as a young boy in the 1920's. When he became of working age, he found a job in the CCC camps of the area. In Salmon, he met the young lady who was to become his lifetime companion, Doris Brown. On April 19, 1935, they were united in a marriage that was to bind their lives as one for the next 43 years.

Coming out of a true pioneer setting in the rough country of Idaho, Harry Hicks was a man who knew how to work. He became a known and respected figure in mining camps and towns stretching from Kellog, Idaho, to the Butte-Anaconda area of Montana, to the Salmon-Cobalt country of Idaho, and as far south as Arizona.

During his lifetime, Grandpa Harry was the father of four children. Carla Ellen was his oldest, followed by Sherry Ann, Roulon Delyle, and Michael Colin. Harry had the joy of seeing these children add 22 grandchildren and 12 great grand-children to the Hicks clan over the years.

Though a large and powerful man, Grandpa suffered many, many illnesses during his lifetime. He overcame them all, however, until in later years he developed heart trouble. This he battled for over a dozen years, overcoming numerous strokes, heart attacks, and even open heart surgery. Finally, at the age of 62, his time came to leave this world as heart problems ended his life.

These are some of the facts behind the life of Harry Hicks. Now I would like to spend a little time in talking about the man behind the facts.

Dear family and friends, today we are gathered in memory of a truly wonderful man. It is only natural that this be a sad occasion. But at the same time this is an occasion for us all to learn something by looking at the footsteps that Harry Hicks left behind him in this life. For the next few minutes, I would like to take you on a little walk down the path he forged in this world and we will look together at the imprints he left.

The first and most far reaching imprint Grandpa left for us to follow is the mark of a family man. To put it simply, his children and his wife were his life. Through thick and thin, good and bad, his family never once doubted his love for them. He cared and he dared show that he cared. In younger days, scarcely a weekend passed without finding the Hicks family together out picnicing, prospecting for gold, hiking, or fishing. Grandpa was a faithful, dedicated father and husband. He was as devoted to his family



during hard times as he was in the good times. I have often heard my mother talk of the time that the young Hicks family was traveling through Arizona on their way home to Idaho, broke and down on their luck. Grandpa was driving, in the back seat were four hungry kids, he and his wife hadn't had a bite to eat for a long while, the car was almost out of gas, and they didn't have a penny to their name. Well, Grandpa stopped in a town and found a place to hock his watch. That gave him enough money to fill the tank up with gas, buy the kids each a hamburger, and to keep going. To keep going, that is the kind of man Grandpa was. When it came to his family, he never gave up. He always kept going. Somehow he always found a way to make ends meet.

Grandpa was determined to teach good principles to his children. He was willing to go to whatever length he had to in doing this. One example that comes to mind of his dedication to showing his children how to face life is the time he felt it necessary to teach the kids about bears. About the time little Mike was around four years old and the other children just a little older, the Hicks family was living back in the Cobalt country. Some of the miners there had put the idea into the Kids' heads that if they weren't careful, the bears would get them. It wasn't long until Harry Hick's four young children were scared of their own shadows. He knew he had to put an end to that so he gave them a good, strong lecture about bears in which he not only told them that bears were harmless, but he promised that the next time they saw a bear, he would give it a good kick in the get-along to prove his point. Well, that's a thing a lot of men might say, but there aren't too many men who would actually keep their promise. But Grandpa did. A few days later, his chance came. The family was driving down Panther Creek when suddenly a big ol' black bear came romping across the road in front of them. The cry immediately went up, "Go get him, Dad! Kick him in the behind." Grandpa stopped the car, jumped out, and spent the next little while chasing that black bear up and down the hillside taking swipes at his backside with his boot. That is the kind of father Harry Hicks was.

Grandpa was a stern, strict disciplinarian, yet this sternness was tempered by love and gentleness. The story is told of the time the family was on a picnic when a skunk was discovered with his little head stuck firmly in a tin can. Grandpa gently gathered up the bewildered little fellow, held him in his lap, and carefully cut the can off with his knife. All this he did without even ruffling the skunk's disposition, because of his gentleness. Another time Grandpa had the chore of calling his son Mike, who was away from home in the army, to break the news to him of the death of a dear friend of the family. As he talked to his son, alone and away from family and old friends, Grandpa broke down in tears. Mike recalls that he was crying not so much for the passing of a family friend but rather because he was worried that his son would be deeply hurt by the news, that all alone he wouldn't be able to take it. Grandpa was the kind of father who cried over his children. What greater token of love could a man offer?

Perhaps most important of all as a family man, Grandpa loved his wife. He really loved and honored his wife. They went side by side through this life for over 43 years. They were united to the point that Grandpa couldn't stand to be away from Grandma. Every time they were separated, even for just a couple of days, Grandpa would worry and fret so much that he would actually get sick. The love he had for <sup>his</sup> lifetime companion pushed Grandpa to take her to the Salt Lake Temple where he made her his eternal companion as they were sealed together in June, 1964.



All of these things mentioned point out the kind of family man Grandpa was. He has left us with the example of a man who loved his family and, most important of all, who wasn't afraid to show it. Can you imagine the kind of world this would be if we all could follow in just this one footstep?

Another footstep Harry Hicks leaves behind is the imprint of a man of faith, the mark of a sensitive, spiritual, man of God. Grandpa lived a rough life among rough, coarse men in and out of mining camps and wide open towns. Yet he never doubted in his God. He always remained strong to the teachings and principles he held to be true. He wasn't a bit afraid to stand up for and defend what he knew to be right. There are many men who found themselves minus a few teeth or with flattened noses when they tried to downgrade his principles. Though he was strong in the face of opposition, Grandpa was also a humble sort of man who often cried when he spoke of the things dear to him. When it came to religion, he used it the way it should be used--to gain wisdom and humility, not pride or a "better than thou" attitude. Probably the greatest sign of the kind of spiritual man that he was is that Grandpa left this world at peace with his Maker. There is an example for us to follow.

Other footsteps traced out for us by Grandpa include being a hard, honest worker. His sons never lacked for a job when young. The only recommendation they needed was "I'm Harry Hick's boy." and they were hired without further question. Grandpa was a strong man of strong emotions. Back in the 1930's he was boxing champion of the CCC camps in the Salmon area. These camps contained over 600 men and Grandpa went undefeated among them all. He was so proud of that. Grandpa used his fighting ability to teach his sons and even his grandsons how to fight. But not only did he teach them how to fight, he taught them how to win, to win not only in a fist fight but in life itself. He taught them to fight for their principles, to never compromise and to never give up when in the right. When a problem needed to be set straight, his example was to wade into the middle of it, do what was right, and let the consequences follow.

As I look at myself and at our family, I see that we are just an extension of the kind of man that was Grandpa Harry Hicks. We know how to work. We try to be faithful to our principles. We cry when we talk of those things dear to us. We are quick to fight when in the right...and we are just as quick to make up when the fight is done. Most important, thanks to Grandpa, we are quick to love and aren't afraid to show it.

Though this is a sad occasion, all who knew Grandpa have every reason to rejoice. We should rejoice because he was a man who used his time well on this earth. His life wasn't wasted! It was a success because he loved and was loved by those around him. This love came because he gave of himself and he worked for the good of others. He has left 38 of us children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren to follow in his footsteps. We have the shadow of a giant man with a giant heart to live up to. Our lives are before us; the example is behind us. We have every reason to be thankful and to rejoice for the life that Grandpa led.

To quote a phrase from scripture, Harry Hicks "did much good among this generation." I testify to you in the name of The Lord that where he is now, he is continuing to do much good. This talk I leave in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.