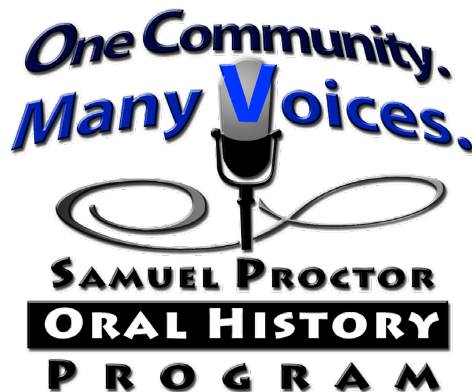
Doris Bulock Blue

Southeastern Indian Oral History Project (SIOHP)
CAT-014

Interview by:

Emma Reid Echols
December 13, 1971



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CAT 014 Doris Bulock Blue
Southeastern Indian Oral History Project (SIOHP)
Interviewed by Emma Reid Echols on December 13, 1971 and December 14, 1971
26 minutes | 30 pages

Abstract: The recording of the interview also contains a second interview with Doris Blue that was recorded December 14, 1971. Doris Blue speaks about her life living on the reservation, comparing her children's experience with education, housing, and employment to that of her own generation. She also discusses her family's pottery, recipes, and the general experience of Catawba pottery makers compared to the Cherokee. They then touch on the Great Depression, as well as doctors on the reservation and homemade medicines. Throughout the interview, Doris speaks about her father, a man with Indigenous ancestry from Wisconsin, and her mother, a Catawba woman named Rosa Wheelock.

Keywords: [Catawba Nation; South Carolina—Rock Hill; Family histories; History]

SAMUEL PROCTOR ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM University of Florida

CAT 014
Interviewee: Doris Bulock Blue
Interviewer: Emma Reid Echols
Date of Interview: December 13, 1971 and December 14, 1971

E: This is December 13, 1971. Mrs. Blue, you were telling us about the education of your children, and you've seen many changes from the early days. Can you tell me some of the changes you have seen?

B: Well, when my oldest daughter first went to high school, she had to get up at six o'clock in the morning and ride up with her father, as he went to work at the bleachery. She would stay in the car until eight or eight thirty, whatever time she went to school. She walked to school. After school, she'd come back to the car, and she would stay there until he got off from work. Which was sometimes eight o'clock at night. Little later on, one of the Indian families, Mrs. Canty, moved to town, and they had a place to go. They would go to her home in the mornings and stay until time to walk to school. And then back to Mrs. Canty's until time to come home.

E: Now what school were they attending?

B: This was Rock Hill High School.

E: That was a long walk from the—

B: It was a long walk, with all kinds of weather. Now our children have the buses coming by our home every morning and they have every advantage that other children have. There's not any difference now just because we're Indians. I have a little granddaughter that is graduating from high school. She's a senior now and two nights a week she goes to tech, and she takes typing so that when she graduates well, she'll be ready for a secretarial job. Back in those days when we were small, we never heard of such a thing. All of the children are taking

advantage, we just have a number of children graduating each year from high school and then a lot of them go on to college. I have two nephews. One of them graduated from Brigham Young University this summer. The other had one year in Brigham Young, then he decided to go on a mission for our church. So, he dropped out of school and he's going on this two-year mission among the Spanish people in California. And then when he's off of his mission, he'll go back to Brigham Young and finish his three years of college.

E: Things have certainly changed. Did the buses not come down to the reservation because of the roads or because of the feeling?

B: The feeling. It was the feeling. Because when they first would come near. They came up to here to what used to be the **capital** fuel place. But they wouldn't come down in here where the roads were bad, it was the feeling that the people had towards the Indians. And even back in the Depression days, that we spoke of a little before, the Blue Tree sent a bus out to pick up people that worked for the Blue Tree. And they didn't even want the Indians to ride on that, because we were Indians. So, it was a feeling rather than the hardship coming down here.

E: Now that wasn't true of all of 'em. I believe Mrs. Faye Conwell and Mrs. Brock, two teachers at this school—Indian school—used to pick up the kids themselves. Do you remember that?

B: They did. Yes, ma'am, I did. I remember. They were real interested in the children.

E: So, lots of people were concerned and were interested I know.

B: It wasn’t the feeling of everyone. Just like it is now. Some people have different ideas, we all have different ideas. And some people have strong feeling about one thing that other doesn’t. It was just the feeling of some people.

E: Now you’ve told me about a number of jobs that the men and the boys have. What about the women in your group? Do many of the Indian women work?

B: Just about all of the young ones.

E: What sort of jobs do they have?

B: Well, some of the girls are working at the hospital near Rock Hill, and some of them working at department stores, like [inaudible 4:43] or Belk. Any of the stores that a number of years ago it would be a disgrace to have an Indian working for them. But now they’re out everywhere, they just work everywhere. Some of them are secretaries, some of them work over at Westinghouse in the cafeteria. Just a number of places but all of the younger people work.

E: Any of them go into the nursing profession or the teaching profession?

B: Yes, yes. We have several nurses.

E: Are they at York County Hospital? York General Hospital?

B: Not right now. Rachel Beck graduated there at York General and worked there for a number of years. But she's married now, living in Columbia.

E: Most of them also involved raising families of little children. Do they take most of them to the Mormon Church?

B: Yes, ma’am.

E: What are some of the activities you have at your Mormon Church?

B: The activity or concern of our church is always the youth. They try to have activities to keep the young people at home. They know where they are, it's always supervised. We have a bishop and a few counselors. And there's always a number of them there. The activity is always supervised. There's no smoking or drinking in the auditorium where we have the activities. Our church has a standard of dress that they try to keep our young people on. They don't approve of the short dresses, and they don't approve of low-cut dresses. And we have a standard of dress that they try to keep the young people on.

E: You spoke of the auditorium where you have your parties, what auditorium is that?

B: That is the auditorium of the old school, it used to be the grade school here on the reservation. A number of years ago, they decided to send the children to Lesslie and they just use this auditorium. The old school now is Sunday school classrooms and the auditorium for activities.

E: Now do you Indians maintain that auditorium, keep it in repair?

B: The church does.

E: So, the church and the school are both owned now by the Catawba Indians?

B: Yes, ma'am.

E: Now tell me about the homes on the reservation. I'm interested in, are you able to buy the lot, to have a deed to the land now?

B: No. Down here on this reservation, which we call the old reservation. We don't have a deed; it's still held in trust by the state. We don't have to pay taxes on it. But we can own any amount of land that we can use. We have our own lot or

whatever amount of land you want to put your home on and it's ours. If you want to leave it to your children. But we don't have a deed for it. Any of the homes that are built down here, you have to build—we might as well sell it on our own because you can't get a loan. So, when they made this division, settlement in [19]62, they gave us a choice of a number of acres of land that the state had bought on the outside, somewhere here near tech industrial mill. Or taking money. Those that took money received six hundred dollars each. Well, when it was a big family, that **amount** added up. And for the most part, everybody that took money, they took advantage of it. They built homes. That's how we built this home. My husband had passed away at that time, but they made the division and closed the roads before he died, so we got his share. And then with the help of my children, I was able to build this home. And a number of others down here built new homes. Of course, those that took land, they have the deed to those and they can get a loan if they like or whatever. But for the first time in about [19]62 we were able to have water in our homes and bathrooms and things like that. When we built this home, it was the first time that we had indoor plumbing or anything. We always had to carry water. Part of the time from the spring that's down here near my sisters. And then later we had a well. But now we have a well and we have a bathroom and all of those facilities that I really appreciate right now because I'm getting older and all this bad weather I can stay here.

E: These electrical devices in your home are so good. I see you have a television. What other electrical things you have?

B: We have an electric sewing machine. We have a stereo. I have a freezer. I have a electric—well I have a furnace. And we just got that two years ago, and a refrigerator and a washing machine.

E: That's wonderful. During the hard years, some of the Indians were on relief I'm sure and got some public funds for themselves. What about now? Do most people on their own, or do some of them get help yet?

B: There's a few of them that still get. The real old people get into some that have maybe the fathers disabled. Our church has something they call a welfare plan. And this welfare plan is to keep all members as much as possible off of public welfare. We have our own welfare program. In the bigger places, not here, but they have welfare farms. And they can and they sew and keep a supply of food and clothes at these welfare houses. Storerooms. And also our church has—could you excuse me? I see a [inaudible 12:03]

[Break in recording]

E: The church did a great deal for the welfare program in your community, would you tell us a little bit more about that?

B: Well, we have our own welfare program at church. They want us to keep a supply of food, clothing, medicine, fuel, and everything like that use in case of a disaster or any kind of a—maybe someone gets sick in the family. But if we have this year's supply of food, which they want every member to have. Then when something comes up, maybe a member of the family gets sick and can't work. We won't be in need and we won't have to ask for help. That is what the church is trying to get started, it's already started. It's the members getting outside

assistance. There is a few members here that are on public welfare, but just a few. If every member would do as we were advised, we wouldn't have to have any help from anywhere. Because they want us to get our clothes and everything that we would need for one year. And have that supply and they want us to rotate it. When we buy new food, put that at the back and use some old food. That way, if we would do as we were told and advised, we wouldn't have to ask for help from anybody.

E: As I visited the reservation. I saw very few crippled children. Is that true that very few Indians, as far as you know, have been crippled here?

B: That’s right. It’s just very few children. I’m just thinking back over the years, and we have very few mentally retarded children, just very few. And no crippled ones. Once in a while you would find—well, some of the children have had polio that crippled them. But we don't have many. And we have—our children and our families are real healthy. I think the last time we had any epidemic of anything down in here was the year before last when the Hong Kong flu was around. Well then everybody was sick. But last year I don’t believe anyone was. Well maybe you know a cold or something like that, nothing that was serious.

E: You don't have many visitors down in the reservation so you’re not able to sell your pottery on your reservation. Tell me some of the patterns of pottery that you’re making. I see you have a whole box of those pipes, do people really smoke them today?

B: Yes, they do. The little smoking pipe that I make. They will get reeds off of the river, and use them for canes and they really smoke them and I also make an

Indian head pipe. A tomahawk pipe, and a chicken **cone** pipe. And I make little [inaudible 15:18] with **paperweights.** Sometimes I make a peace pipe, that is a bowl with four stems in it. Long years ago, the Indian Chiefs would get together and put the tobacco in the middle in the bowl, and then put four reeds around it, and they smoked it. That's why it's called a peace pipe. They would smoke that when they made peace. Well, I make those once in a while, but I don't make very many large pieces.

E: You have your own smoothing stones that you've had—

B: Yes, ma'am, I've had those for years. Some of them are three generations old. I made a few myself and some belong to my mother and some from my great grandmother.

E: And those kinds of things you wouldn't part with at all.

B: No, not at all. There was an archeologist here from Virginia several years ago. And he asked me if I would consider putting my molds, that's what I make my pipes with, in a museum in Virginia. Well, these molds are several generations old too, they belonged to my mother, and then to an aunt and then to her mother. And I wouldn't think of parting with them because they belong to my sister and I together. But then when we're gone, our children will treasure them. Because by then, I don't imagine people will be making these things.

E: Now what do those molds look like?

B: Well, they're just pieces of clay. And the head pipe that the molds are made of , you take two pieces of clay, and then you flatten them out. And then you take this pipe and you press it down in to the one half of that, and then you turn and

take the other half and press them together. And then when you pull them apart and you take the pipe out well there's your mold.

E: How many different molds do you have?

B: I have three. I have the—I have four. I have the chicken cone, the tomahawk, the Indian head and the little plain pipe.

E: What's the most popular piece of pottery that you sell?

B: The Indian head.

E: I don't reckon you have any of those made just now but when you find some, you're gonna have some made then?

B: Yes, I have one here. I don't believe I showed it to you.

E: Oh, that's a beautiful one. This one is all black and has a very high sheen to it. How's it get this gloss?

B: That comes with the rocks. The rocks leave that gloss on there and it don't wear at all.

E: Well, that's a very beautiful one. Now everyone you make will be this shape and this size?

B: Yes, ma'am. Mhmm. And I usually put my name down somewhere.

E: This has your name, Doris Blue. I'm holding in my hand now this pipe in the shape of a Indian head. And its feathers are decorated, and its eyebrows and so forth. Doris how did you put this in, with a what?

B: I use a shoe button. The kind that people used to use long years ago when they wore the high button top shoes. You'd use a little shoe button to pull the buttons up through the eyes. That's what I used to decorate those with, and I have only

one. I don't know where I would find another one or what I would do if I should lose this one.

E: Are you planning to make some more pottery between now and Christmas?

B: Yes, ma'am.

E: You used to burn them in a big fireplace and now that you don't have that you have to do it outdoors. That big fireplace you used to gather around with family, what would you do around the big fireplace in your home?

B: Well in the wintertime, there was always a supply of hickory nuts and walnuts and things like that. One of the things I remember most was sitting around cracking these nuts on the hearth. And then, they didn't even have brick, they'd have great big stones. They'd find a flat stone and they'd use that. And that's one of the memories I cherish is sitting around the fireplace cracking these walnuts or hickory nuts.

E: Did you like to sing? Would your family sing?

B: Yes, we would.

E: Do you remember any special song you used to sing as a young girl or child?

B: No, I don't, I don't remember any that special.

E: Did your mother sing to you?

B: Yes, ma'am. My mother sang alto, my father sang bass. Kinda like this song they have going now. And they could both sing real good. They were in the choir at the church.

E: What was some of the food you remember liking to eat, at night, or anytime?

B: Well back in those days, I don't know whether you remember this or not. When they used to roast potatoes, do you remember that? They'd scoop off a little place in the hearth and put sweet potatoes there, cover them with coals and roast them. Or we would have peanuts. Roast peanuts. Things like that.

E: What about popcorn? Did you ever do that?

B: Yes, I believe we had some, but not too often because in those days we had to buy all of that. Mostly the things that we had to eat were what we raised and I don't remember having popcorn too often.

E: How did your mother bake around this fireplace?

B: She had one of these iron skillets that had three legs and a top to it, and you would put the potatoes, bread, cake, pies. Anything she wanted to bake she put down in the skillet, put the top on it, and then put coals on top of the lid and then under the skillet. That's how she did her baking.

E: I bet she was a good cook, wasn't she?

B: She was, she was an excellent cook.

E: And you'd have to cook that very slowly.

B: Yes, ma'am.

E: Did she ever make corn pone in that skillet?

B: Yes. Back in those days, well, let me see what in the world they called it.

E: She would make that yeast with the corn pone and let it sit overnight.

B: Yes, and then too I remember they used to cook bread. I just can't exactly remember what they called this bread. But they'd sweep off a place in the fire. And put corn bread dough, the corn bread down in there. Then they'd cover this

up for ashcake, that's what it was. Cover this up and put coals on it. Well, that would bake in there. When they took it up, of course it had ashes all over then they'd take that and wash it. They take it and wash all of those ashes off. You just wouldn't imagine it would be good but it was. Ashcake that's what the—I couldn't remember what it was.

E: Did your mother ever make any corn hominy? The whole green corn?

B: Yes, ma'am. I had made that too. But she made hominy, and the way that we used to get the lye to make hominy, you didn't go buy it like you do now. They would have what they call an ash hopper. They would fix it up somehow or another, and you would pour your ashes, wood ashes, in this. And then you'd take a bucket of water and pour over that and somehow it didn't run right out. It would gradually drain out through these ashes. And that was the lye that we used to make our corn hominy.

E: That would be good, I'm sure. What about your own soap? Did you make your own soap?

B: We made soap the same way. Made soap out of this lye that they made out of wood ashes. And then take grease, all kind of scrap grease. When they killed hogs, they take the fat they didn't need and make some. I remember that.

E: Did your mother ever do any weaving or making cloth?

B: No, I don't believe she did. She made a lot of bead work.

E: Now bead work is completely gone from your Tribe.

B: Completely, yes, ma'am, we don't do any at all.

E: No one knows how to do it at all.

B: Well, there's a few of us that—I know how to make some things. I can't make them like the Cherokees. You know each Tribe has their own art. Ours was pottery, and the Cherokees' was basket and bead work. And then when the two Tribes, some of our people went up there and married Cherokees, some Cherokees came back down here to live. And that way, they got the two mixed up. Our people are to do the bead work, and now the Cherokees make more pottery than we did. And they have a better place, they can sell every bit of it there because they have these shops and tourists and everything.

E: Sometimes you send pottery up there to be sold, don't you?

B: Yes, ma'am.

E: Well, I hope the day will come and you'll be able to sell some of yours right down here.

B: I hope so too. If we could just get a place where we could be sure we're set. Right now, like I told you there's a number of people make it. But there's no point anyway, when they sit here in the way, so we just don't make it.

E: You've never put a glaze on your pottery, have you?

B: No, ma'am. Not anything at all. Not anything other than just rubbing it. We don't paint it. You know a lot of the Tribes out west paint their pottery. They have all kinds of pretty colored pottery. But we don't put anything at all on it after it's burned.

E: If there was a glaze on the inside of your pitchers and bowls, then it would be waterproof, wouldn't it?

B: Yes, ma'am.

E Would that help the sale you think?

B: No, I don't believe it would. Because I don't think that would. Lot of times, people will buy the pottery and if they're not sure of it, they will put a coat of shellac in it. You know, to waterproof it. But if it's burned like it should, it's very burned, it's not going to melt. It's not going to fall apart anyway. Because I have had pieces that I burned and maybe they'd pop or something and I'd lay them out there in the yard. And they would be out there with all kinds of weather and they never did [inaudible 26:25] they were just the same as they were when I put them out there.

E: Have you made the bowl that's shaped with the two little spouts to it, the little love bowl?

B: I have made them, I don't make them very often, but I have made them.

E: And you've been to the Cherokee Indian Reservation?

B: Yes, ma'am. We have relatives up there. Some of our people married the Cherokees and we go up there quite often. We were up there three times this past summer. Went twice during the summer to visit. And then we went back, when they have a festival. Used to be an fair, Indian fair, but now they've changed it to a festival, and we went to that.

E: That's interesting that you still keep in contact [inaudible 27:11]

[Break in recording]

E: This is Emma Reed Echols. I'm visiting in the home of Doris Blue and I'm recording the oral history of the Catawba Indians. This is December 14, 1971. Would you give me your full name and address?

B: Doris W. Blue. Route 6, Box 384, Rock Hill.

E: Have you always lived in this community?

B: Yes, ma'am. This is the house—not the house, but this was the homeplace I was born.

E: Who were your parents? And how many brothers and sisters do you have?

B: My father was Archie Wheelock, a full-blooded Omani Indian from Green Bay, Wisconsin. My mother was Rosa Wheelock from here at Catawba.

E: What brothers and sisters did you have?

B: I have one sister. Edna Wheelock Brown. No brothers.

E: Your sister lives close by, doesn’t she?

B: Yes, ma’am, she lives just a short distance.

E: First of all, I’d be interested in knowing your early school days. Was it here on the reservation for a while?

B: The first school that I attended was a small one room school here on the reservation. When I was about seven years old, my father moved to Rock Hill where he tried to enter my sister and I in public schools. And at that time Indians weren't allowed to go to public schools, so he had to hire private teachers for us.

E: He had to pay those teachers himself?

B: Yes, ma’am, he paid them. That’s the way we got our education until I was about twelve years old. They had a free Indian school at Cherokee, and I went up there for one year. Then I came back here to Catawba, and went to the seventh grade here at Catawba. And that was as far as my education went.

E: Your husband tried to take out citizenship papers, did he not, so that you could attend public school?

B: My father did. Yes, ma'am. They told him the reason they refused to let us go to school was because he wasn't a citizen. And he took out citizenship papers and thought maybe that would help, but they still wouldn't let us go. So, I never have attended a public school.

E: Now will you tell me what that first school was on the Indian reservation. That one-room school building. Where was it and what did it look like?

B: It was just about the center of the reservation here. And it was just one little room. Had just an old wood heater in it for heat. As far as I remember, I believe we had homemade desks for benches. Had one teacher, and she taught up through about the sixth or maybe the fifth grade, I don't remember.

E: Do you remember the teacher's name?

B: No ma'am, I don't remember.

E: During the day, did you bring your lunch or did you go home for lunch?

B: We came home for lunch. I believe I do remember this teacher's name. She was Miss Macey Stevenson from **Lacy**.

E: Later on, Miss Macey Stevenson became a missionary to Mexico under the Associate [inaudible 31:02] Presbyterian Church. It just so happens that she was a friend of mine. She was a wonderful teacher, wasn't she?

B: She was and that is, I remember the first teacher that I had.

E: Then you went to Rock Hill a number of years, then returned to attend school here at the second school on the reservation. Do you remember your teachers there?

B: It was my mother.

E: Really? Now, your mother was Mrs. who?

B: Rosa Harris.

E: Do you remember any—Was she the only teacher? Or was there another teacher?

B: Well, there were other teachers later, but she was the only teacher that I had.

E: And you went there past the sixth grade.

B: Yes, ma'am.

E: Then, tell me about meeting your husband and how did you happen to marry.

B: Well, he lived nearby. He was the son of Chief Blue and we were all living here close together. We all grew up together, so eventually we just got married.

E: Was there any celebration for your wedding? Or did you have a wedding party or done anything of that kind?

B: No, not anymore like they used to. They used to have all kinds of ceremonies for those things for just about every occasion, long years ago, but not anymore. We just had a civil marriage just like anyone else.

E: Where was your first home?

B: Right here on the reservation.

E: Right here on the reservation. How many children did you have?

B: I have four. I have two sons and two daughters.

E: Would you tell me their names and where they're living now?

B: Mildred Blue the oldest, living here at home with me.

E: And the next one?

B: The next one is Betty Garcia, now.

E: Where does she live?

B: She lives right here, right across the highway from me.

E: And the next one?

B: The next one is Harley Blue. He lives in Charlotte.

E: And works there?

B: Yes, ma'am, as a painter.

E: And you have one more boy, haven't you?

B: I have one more son. He lives here at home with me.

E: What's his name?

B: Jean.

E: Jean, and where does he work?

B: He works at Westinghouse shop.

E: So many of the Indians seem to want mechanical jobs, electrical jobs, things of that kind. Is that true?

B: Yes, it is. Going out to these different plants and getting jobs. They do seem to be more inclined for that kind of work. For years, you know, the only work they had, the only opportunity they had, was to go here to these cotton mills in Rock Hill. Seems like they were dissatisfied with that. And since there's these big plants come around, why, they'll go there.

E: Tell me anything you remember about your early days on the reservation. Do you remember anything? Do you remember the games you played, the food you ate? Just anything you happen to remember about your early life here.

B: About the first time that I remember, my mother and father moved to Washington, D. C. And I just remember little things that happened there. I was about three years old. I remember going to the zoo there in Washington, and just a very few things. But then when they came back home, and we lived here on the reservation for about four or five years. We weren't too different from other children; we played the games that other children play. None of us could speak or understand the Indian language.

E: What did your father do for a living?

B: Well at the first, he tried farming. When he first came down here. Him and my mother met at Carlisle, Pennsylvania. He came from Wisconsin there, and she went from here to Carlisle. And that's where they met. He was an All-American football player while he was there. And when mother came home, he came shortly afterwards. And they were married. The first few years he tried farming but he wasn't very successful with that. So, he moved to Rock Hill and he worked at the old **freight** depot as a shipping clerk. He stayed there for years. And then he worked at the passenger depot for a long while as a shipping clerk. And the last job that I believe he had, was down at the industrial mill as shipping clerk. And then he was getting on with age and he was sick, so he came back home.

E: Now your father and mother are both dead?

B: Yes, ma'am.

E: Where are they buried?

B: Over here at the cemetery.

E: The ancient cemetery? The old cemetery.

B: Yes, ma'am.

E: There are some other bodies I know at the new cemetery.

B: Yes, they have two. That one over there was getting kind of small and they started a new one up here right near the other church that was built.

E: I know you remember those years of hard times and Depression; how did those years affect you people in the Catawba Indians?

B: Well, it affected us just about as it did everywhere else. Because down in here we couldn't get gasoline. The people that would work in Rock Hill, they couldn't get gasoline so they had to have a carpool like they did everywhere. One person would get a certain amount of gasoline to take the others to and from work every day. And we had to have stamps to get shoes or to get sugar or coffee, just anything like that. So, it was pretty hard on us. Although we did farm. My husband had a farm and we raised a lot of things that we ate. We had our own meat, we always had cows to have milk and butter. We raised corn for meal, peas, sweet potatoes, and we had molasses. All of those things that people used back in those days that they raised you know everyone had their own. But it was pretty hard on us because we couldn’t get to go to Rock Hill unless you had a job and were working. I remember I used to have to write the groceries down and give it to my husband every week and he would have to get the groceries

because I couldn't go get there. If we had no good reason to go to town we just stayed at home. So, it was really rough on us.

E: I'm sure you must have done some preserving and canning and drying.

B: We did. We dried fruit, apples, and we canned all of the fruit that we could get. You know berries and apples, things like that.

E: Those fruits were grown here on the reservation?

B: Yes, ma'am. Now, we lived in the home that my aunt and great grandmother owned. And in this book that Mrs. Bryan wrote, you'll notice that there's a name of Rodda Harris and Allan Harris. Well, that was my great grandmother and great grandfather. And when grandmother died, well we had an aunt, a maiden aunt, she never married, and she lived in the home. And then when she died, my mother—it went to my mother. That is the home that we lived in. That was the home that all of my children were born in. I lived in it until about eleven years ago, when we built this new home.

E: This is a lovely home here. You have such a pretty view all around you.

B: It is directly in the same place that the old home was. And actually, this is the chimney that the old home had. When this man built it, he built the house around the chimney.

E: Do you have any idea how old that old old house was?

B: Oh, I know it must've been about a hundred years old when we tore it down. And it was in pretty good shape. The timber and everything in it was pretty good for that age. But I had never had a new home, I had always lived in this old home.

We had a chance to build a home so we just had the old one torn down and built this one directly in the same place.

E: I noticed when I visited the cemetery, the flu epidemic of 1918 must have been very severe because sometimes whole families were wiped out.

B: It was. That was the year that I was in Cherokee going to school. My mother would write to me, and she told me, "Well, the Brown family was one of the hardest hit." That was my sister's husband's family. While they would go to the cemetery with one, to bury one, by the time they got home another one would be dead. I think they just—I don't know, I think they lost about five children and one grandchild. Just one right after another like that.

E: Tell me about the doctors that used to serve the reservation. What ones do you remember?

B: Well, the only ones that I ever remember was Doctor Hill. He lived down here at Catawba. His daughter, Mrs. Thomas used to work in Belk for years and years, and she still lives nearby. But Dr. Hill was the only one that I ever remember. When anybody would get sick you would have to get in a buggy and go after him. He would bring him up. He would go from home to home. In those days we didn't know what a hospital was. So, if necessary, he would spend the night. If a person was real sick and he thought it was necessary, he would spend the night with them. That's the way he did with all of the children that were born. He'd have to come to the home and stay as long as he was needed.

E: Do you remember Dr. Blackman?

B: Oh yes, he was the next the one that we had that we had after Dr. Hill. He was just a wonderful doctor, we all liked him real well.

E: Now how did he come? Did he come in a horse and buggy?

B: Well, no he had a car. And then the people had—I guess got a little better off. Some of them had cars. If someone got sick, you get someone to take you to the doctor. But he did make house calls too. He would come out in the night if a person was sick or to bring a baby or something. He had a car.

E: Now I read the doctor bills were paid by a government grant, is that correct?

B: Yes, that's right.

E: But the medicines, you had to buy your own medicine?

B: We had to buy the medicines.

E: And that was very difficult.

B: It was. But even then, though that wasn't near like they are now. Because medicines are so high now.

E: Now when the Indians began going to the hospital, was the hospital bill paid for by the government?

B: No, no. If it was necessary to go to the hospital, we had to pay for it.

E: And that would be very difficult. Do you remember some of the old medicines that used to be used on the reservation?

B: Yes. I remember, for cough syrup, we used to have this horehound. I don't believe there's any around now. But there used to be a lot of it here in our backyard. They would get that and they would put sugar if they had sugar and if they didn't, syrup or some salt in it. And boil it till it thickened to a syrup. That was

our cough syrup. Maybe some put a few pine needles in the mix, you know, before it was strained. And for a poultice. Everybody made poultices back in those days. They'll take an onion and cook it, and put it with lard. When it would get cold, it would be thick. They would put that between two pieces of cloth and lay it on your chest, a poultice.

E: What about the mullein plant? Did you ever use the mullein plant before?

B: Yes. Some of the people used that. I don't remember exactly what for. And we have what they call a fireweed, I don't know whether that's the real name of it or not but that was good for kidney trouble. Anybody that had any kidney problems, they got fire weed and made tea. Yellow root was good for chills and fever. It was just as bitter as it can be, so I imagine it was something like [inaudible 45:35] And I remember my father-in-law used to go and get bear root. He said that was good for rheumatism, I would imagine arthritis now, but then it was rheumatism. He used to get that a lot for that one ailment. I know there's a number of other things that they got that I don't even remember.

E: Do you remember them ever getting the rosin from the pine and mix it to put aside on sores?

B: Yes. Mmhm. They used to have a little plant called ball root. And they would get that, that was good for sores. They would get that and mix it with—

E: Now this rosin from the pine tree. They would get it from the pine trees and they'd mix it with a little bit of turpentine and camphor. Isn't that right and cook it on the stove?

B: Yes, ma'am.

E And that made a salve very much like our present methylene. Is that correct?

B: Yes, ma'am.

E: Those medicines are very interesting. Did people come from very far away to buy them from Chief Blue?

B: They used to, yes, ma'am. He used to have, I believe, more sales than he could get because as he was getting old, it was hard for him to get around. But I remember seeing him pass here with a shovel and a little bag going to get bear root. I don't know what it looks like. I think Mrs. Bett does, Lola Bett, that's his daughter. But I never—I don't believe I've seen it. I remember them getting this yellow root, and giving it to people for chills or fever.

E: You heard the songs and you heard chants and you heard the language; do you speak any of it or do you understand any of it?

B: No ma'am. I don't speak any and I don't understand any. When Chief Blue was living, he would talk to us sometimes, say a few words. But I didn't know what he meant.

E: Chief Blue's wife died several years after his death, is that right? Where did she live after his death?

B: She lived with her children. She lived with Mrs. Beck a while and she was living with Vera, Mrs. Albert Sanders at the time of her death.

E: She was the one who made such beautiful pottery and I believe you do too. Tell me, how many Indians do you consider in the Tribe now? Do you have any idea?

B: No, I believe when the rolls closed in [19]62, I believe there was about six hundred.

E: Is anyone that has a roll of Indians now that you know of?

B: Albert Sanders may have.

E: He was the last active Chief.

B: Yes, he was the last active Chief, and he may have a roll.

E: Now where are the Indians scattered? I know a number are living here at the reservation, the old—new reservation in Rock Hill. Tell me where all them are scattered **here and now**.

B: There's some living in Columbia. There's some living in Charlotte, North Carolina. There's some in Utah. Some in up towards New York, New Jersey and all up in that section. They're just all over now. At one time, all of them lived here on the reservation, but now they're scattered around in every direction.

E: Who was the one that was called "Sky Eagle"?

B: I didn't remember that until recently when Gilbert called me that day and was asking me some questions. He said that he had always heard that it was my father. But I didn't—it's been so long I had heard that name that I didn't remember.

E: Do you know how the nickname Sky Eagle came?

B: No, I don't. But just about all of the Indians had Indian names and English.

E: What were some of those Indian names, do you remember any of them?

B: Well, I don't remember just right off. But every one of them had an Indian name and—

E: Did your father attend the Carlisle School in Pennsylvania?

B: Yes, ma'am.

E: And he was an All-American football player?

B: Yes, ma'am.

E: The reference that we found about him said that this was “Sky Eagle”. The newspaper reporters said that was true. So that would be real interesting, maybe you and I together can find some more things about it.

B: I know that there are ways that you can go find these things. In the early twenties, there was a number of articles published in T*he Herald* about my father, about his playing football and all those things. I’ve always intended to go and try and find those articles. And I never have, I just never have taken the time. And then there was a lot published about him when he was in Carlisle. They said once, he had broken some ribs and they wouldn't let him play ball. Their team was losing and they took him and fixed—I don’t know whether it was a [inaudible 51:36] it must have been **tin** at that time, **because I don’t believe they had aluminum then.** And they would tape him up, protected his ribs and let him go in there and play ball. There’s just a lot of things like that published back in those days that I know they got somewhere, but I don’t know where to find them.

E: Do you know of any Indian who ever acted out in the Daniel Boone series?

B: No, I don’t. I don’t know of any.

E: I think maybe there’s a Catawba, maybe we could find out about that too. Do you know of any of the old sayings of the Indians? Or superstitions? Now we say that we don’t open an umbrella in the house and we don’t go underneath a ladder, things like that. Do you have any things that you all said among your people like that?

B: They may have. I don't remember but I imagine they did. There's this one saying that I always thought that could be handed down from back in those days until now. It was about an old Indian Chief that was counseling his people about gossiping. He told them not to ever judge a person until they had first walked in their moccasins [inaudible 52:58] And then if you walked in their moccasins maybe you wouldn't have anything to judge them by. But I always thought about that and that's one thing that could be handed down today. It would apply right now just as well as then.

E: Talk about moccasins, reminds me of the animals that used to be here on the reservation. As a little girl do you remember the animals that were here, the wild animals that would be hunted?

B: No, I don't. I think about the time that I was small there wasn't too many wild ones because I think we were too closely settled. Now maybe over the river, there was always a big forest over there. I remember hearing those big owls over there hollering at night. But as for the animals, I don't remember any that were, you know, close around.

E: Will you tell me about the pottery that you used to make and you make today?

B: Well, it's just the same. We make it the same now as we they did way back when I was small. We go down here on the river and get the clay. And **prepare** it until it's about like dough. Then shape the pottery. Some of us had molds for the pipes, but most of it is just shaped by hand. When it's shaped up, you let it dry until it's dry enough to scrape and smooth off the rough places. Then you take rocks and smooth the pottery. Then let it dry again for about a week maybe, and

then burn it. The way we burned it, I used to make a fire out on the yard, and have a big bed of coals. I had my pottery heating in the stove. I heat it up till it's about five hundred degrees. Take it out and put it on these coals and then pile wood on it. We usually burn it for about two hours, that way it will withstand water or anything. It's not gon' melt no matter what you put in it.

E: How did you get the color to your pottery?

B: The color all comes out in the burning. Sometimes you can have the same clay and the same pottery, and you put them in the fire two different times. Some of it might come out all black and the next time you burn, it might come out light gray or red or something like that. It just all depends on the burning. I don't know whether there's different kinds of wood that you use or what makes it like that. But that's the way it comes out.

E: What about the outlet to sell this pottery?

B: Well, we don't have too much right now. There was a man here once from Pennsylvania that had real good sale going. He would come and he'd give different ones of us orders for different kinds. Then maybe a week or two later, he would come back and gather it up and ship it different places. But now, very few tourists come through because we don't have any attraction at all, not like Cherokee. But we have a pretty good sale and then sometimes we ship it out.

E: Do you remember Mrs. Renteree, the schoolteacher on the reservation, trying to help you all sell the pottery?

B: Yes, mmhm, I do.

E: She sent to Charleston, did your pottery go to Charleston?

B: I believe so.

E: How many people on the reservation that you know of are making pottery now?

B: Oh, there’s a number of people that can make it, but right now I don't imagine it’s any more than four or five. They kinda get discouraged by making it and having it here and nobody wants it.

E: Do the little children still try to make it with their hands?

B: No, there’s very few little ones that make it. I imagine when my generation is gone well there won’t be very many left.

E: And your mother made pottery too?

B: My mother made pottery. My sister makes. I make it. But the younger ones are not too interested. You see after they get through high school, and they can go out and get jobs that will pay as much in one day as we can make in a week with the pottery. So, they’re not too interested.

E: There’s one thing about your mother I was interested in. She taught school and you were one of her pupils. In those days, do you have any idea what your mother was paid by the month?

B: No.

E: Her check would come from the United States government, I suppose, would it?

B: No, it would come from the state. Then, we got an appropriation every year. I don’t remember exactly what we got, it wasn’t too much. And then the state provided our doctor and paid the school. So, you’d probably find out that way, from some of those.

E: Did you ever go to school to Mr. ... I lost his name. Just a moment.

B: Haynes?

E: Yes, Mr. Haynes.

B: No, my children went to him.

E: They liked him very much, didn't they?

B: Yes, they did. They really did.

E: And I read he had a Boy Scout troop, were your boys in it?

B: Yes. He was a real good teacher. I believe he was teaching school when my children started high school.

[End of Interview]

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