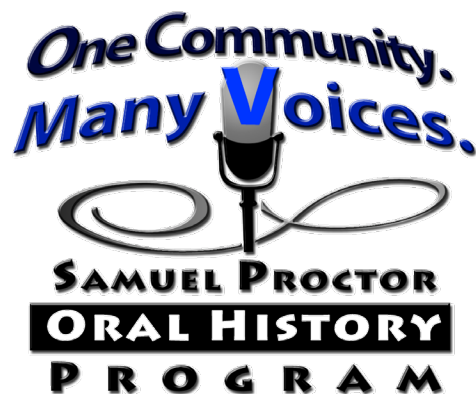


Nola Louella Harris Campbell

**Southeastern Indian Oral History Project (SIOHP)
CAT-087**

Interview by:

**Edith Frances Canty Wade
October 22, 1973**



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22 minutes | 13 pages

Abstract: Nola Campbell describes her life story first by talking about her family, especially her brother Douglas who served as Chief. She talks about some of the myths she heard growing up, such as one about the wild Indians as well as an old story about a white horse. Campbell describes her memories of Christmas on her father's farm and the kind of chores she had to do as a child. She then describes her childhood home and her experience attending school after her father died. In school, she remembers being fond of spelling matches and talking to her friends if she could avoid trouble. Then she talks about her marriage to Raymond Harris in 1933 and their seven children, one of whom died in the Vietnam War. She also talks about her next marriage to Willie Campbell in 1954 and her three children from that marriage. Campbell then talks about her pride in being an Indian. The interview continues at another time where Campbell talks more about Raymond's accomplishments as Chief and his battle with cancer before his early death. She ends by talks about his time in World War II and how much he loved serving his people as Chief.

Keywords: [Catawba Nation; Chief Douglas Harris; Chief Floyd Raymond Harris; South Carolina--Rock Hill; Education; Oral biography]

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CAT 087

Interviewee: Nola Louella Harris Campbell

Interviewer: Edith Frances Canty Wade

Date of Interview: October 22, 1973

W: This is Frances Wade. I live on Route 3, Box 304, Rock Hill, South Carolina.

Today is October 22, 1973. I'm gathering oral history of the Catawba Indians for the University of Florida. I'm in the home of Nola Campbell. Nola has a lovely home. She has six rooms in her house. It's very neat and clean. Nola, would you tell us your name, please?

C: Nola Louella Harris Campbell.

W: What is your address?

C: Route 3, Box 165, Rock Hill, South Carolina.

W: Nola, who were your parents?

C: James David Harris and Maggie Price Harris.

W: Who were your grandparents?

C: Well, Peter Harris was my granddaddy and Elizabeth—I don't know what her maiden name was, but she was a Harris.

W: What brothers and sisters do you have?

C: I have four sisters living: Vertie Sanders, **Reeola** Harris, and Viola Robbins.

W: **Reeola** and Viola are twins, aren't they?

C: Yes.

W: Do you have any brothers?

C: I don't have any brothers living. I got two brothers and they're dead. Douglas Harris and Louis Harris. Louis died in 1918.

W: At one time, was Douglas Chief?

C: Yes, but I don't remember the year.

W: What kind of work did your father do?

C: He was a farmer.

W: What kind of work did your mother do?

C: She worked on the farm and kept house.

W: Do you remember any old stories or myths that some of the older people told when you were a child, Nola?

C: Yes, they would tell us that we couldn't get out and play at night or not let your children get their feet on the ground, that the wild Indians would get them.

W: You heard about the wild Indians too, huh? [Laughter]

C: Yes.

W: Can you think of anything else that you might've heard? Old stories or anything that they might have told?

C: I remember when they said there used to be a white horse walked up and down that road past where Georgia Harris and Douglas Harris lived at. I never did see the horse.

W: Well, what kind of Christmas did you have at your house when you were growing up?

C: When I was a kid—I can remember Christmas very well. We would have our little ol' stocking, our little ol' shoebox, and we'd put it by the fireplace. We'd get two oranges, two apples, maybe four or five nuts and two or three pieces of candy.

W: Did you get any toys?

C: No, we didn't get toys back in those days.

W: Did you have a big meal such as we have today?

- C: No, not no big meals but we had plenty to eat, whenever my daddy was able to farm and raise his pigs. He always kept a cow in the yard for us to have milk from.
- W: When you were a child, do you remember some of the duties you had to perform around your house?
- C: Oh, we carried water in water buckets. We had to carry in wood that our daddy or brother would cut up on the yard.
- W: Do you remember what it was like in your home when you were a child?
- C: Yes, I can remember very well what kind of a house we had. It wasn't a living room like what we have now. We'd sit by the fireplace to keep warm and they'd have chairs in there and a bed in what you would call a living room. Maybe two or three beds in the other rooms. A table and chairs around in the kitchen and an ol' wood stove.
- W: Did you ever have to cook, Nola?
- C: No, not when I was real young, I didn't. I started cooking when I was about twelve years old, I guess. Somewhere's around twelve.
- W: Did your mama ever fix— [Clock chimes] Nola has a lovely clock here that's chiming and I'm sure you'll be able to hear it. When you were small, did your mama ever fix anything sweet or fix you a special treat that she knew you children would like to have?
- C: I remember very well she used to cook apple pies. She would cook maybe ten or twelve and stack them on top of each other and have a high stack of apple pies. She would cut 'em and that's when we would eat them.

W: Nola, your mother is not an Indian, is she?

C: No, she's not. She is from around **Chelsea**, South Carolina.

W: Did you attend church when you were small?

C: Yes, every Sunday.

W: I know that you attend church now. Can you tell us something about your schooling?

C: Well, we had to walk to school, I guess about a mile. I always loved to go to school when I was young, after my dad died. When he was living we didn't get to go to school because he would keep us out. He would say it was too cold for us to walk to school. After he died, my mother made us go to school. Well, we'd go to school, and we'd play ball. I would run home at dinner time, get my dinner, run back so I could play ball.

W: Can you remember who your teachers were?

C: When I first started to school, I can remember very well. There was two women and as far as I remember they were from Lancaster. And then Mrs. Hall Spencer taught us in school and went from that to J.C. Davis, and that was when I quit school and got married.

W: Do you have any memories of what it was like at school that you'd like to tell?

C: Well, there was two sitting in a desk together. We could whisper if we could get by with it and we'd talk to somebody in front of us and they'd look around if they didn't get caught. If they got caught, well, they'd be punished. One thing about school, I liked spelling matches in school. The whole school would have to stand up for a spelling match.

W: Did you like spelling better than any other subject that you took?

C: No, I liked arithmetic, too. That was my two subjects I liked. I didn't like history and geography. I said I didn't like geography because I didn't want to learn nothing 'bout the countries that I wouldn't know about. And I didn't like history because I didn't want to study about the people. Now, I wish I had learned all that. I wasn't interested in it at the time I was going to school.

W: Nola, you were not one of the young ladies that ran away from school and got married, were you?

C: No.

W: [Laughter] Did you get any more school other than grammar school? How far did you go in school?

C: I went to the fifth grade in school.

W: How old were you when you quit?

C: Well, I was fifteen in May. The second day of May I was fifteen, and I quit that year and got married the seventh day of June.

W: Well, that's why you quit, because you got married.

C: Yes, I quit and got married. I got married in 1933.

W: Have you ever had any special training other than the time you went to school?

C: No. Not any special training I did.

W: So many people think that all of the Indian women have stopped making pottery. Do you make pottery?

C: I can make it. I started making it when I was around twelve years old. I can still make it, but I'm working in public work right now and that's why I'm not doing it.

W: I have seen Nola's pottery and she makes lovely pottery. Do you work now Nola?

C: Yes, I do.

W: Where do you work?

C: Ostrow's Textile Company in Rock Hill.

W: Do you think you get a good salary for the work that you do?

C: No.

W: Do you own your own home?

C: Yes.

W: Now, let's talk about your family. Where were you married?

C: I was married in York. E. Gettys Nunn married me and Raymond when we were married in 1933. June the seventh.

W: How many children did you have?

C: Raymond and I had seven.

W: Would you tell us their names?

C: Betty Lou Harris, Carl Elbert Harris, Grady Crawford Harris, Martin Raymond Harris, Della Eleanor Harris, and Willard Leon Harris, and Deborah May Harris.

W: One of your sons was killed in Vietnam, was he not?

C: Yes, he was the first from Rock Hill to get killed over there.

W: Would you like to say just a little bit about Carl?

C: Well, Carl was my second child and my oldest boy. He went in the service in 1956, in the summer. I don't remember the month or the day. But he was making a career of the Army. They sent him to Vietnam, and he got killed over there

about a month or two right after he got over there. He served about a month or two over there.

W: Well, I know that you have other children. Would you tell us about them?

C: Well, there's not too much to talk about. They're not all alike. They're not natured alike, and they all married except Grady. He owns his own trailer and he stays down there on the old reservation.

W: Well, Nola, you married Willie Campbell, didn't you?

C: Yes.

W: You have children from that marriage?

C: Yes, I have three. Willie and I were married March 20, 1954. Edwin was born in December 24, 1954. We had Rita, she was born in [19]56. Our last baby was Wanda Denise and she was born in [19]63, she was stillborn.

W: Willie was not an Indian. And I remember well—I have fond memories of Willie. My son had got run over by a car and Willie, at the time, was the only one at the hospital that was able to give my son blood until other people came to donate. For that reason alone, I think very highly of that man. Nola, you had opportunities, but they were not great. Now, how do the opportunities for your children today differ from the opportunities that you had when you were growing up?

C: Well, children these days has a lot more than we had when we were growing up, 'cause we were very poor. We didn't have a lot of clothes. We had plenty to eat, but we didn't have a whole lot of fine things like they have back in these days.

W: I know that you real active in our community. I know that you attend church regular. Would you tell me what church you belong to, Nola?

C: I belong to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, better known as Mormons.

W: I know that you're interested in what goes on in the everyday life. Have you ever registered to vote?

C: One time in my life, but it's been so long I can't tell you when it was.

W: Did you vote after you registered?

C: Yes. Out at Lesslie School.

W: Why do you not vote anymore?

C: I don't know, I just didn't. No reason at all, I don't reckon, but I just didn't.

W: Did you ever think that when you don't vote and then somebody gets into office that you don't like that if you had voted it would have been different?

C: Well, I have thought about that at times, but I didn't vote so wasn't no use in me saying anything about it.

W: All right. Do you have friends among the Whites?

C: Yes, I do.

W: Do you have friends among the Black?

C: Yes, I do. I have one very dear friend that I work with, but I have other friends too.

W: I know looking around your home, Nola, that you've got a lot to be grateful and thankful for and you've accomplished a lot. How do you feel about being an Indian?

C: Well, I love being an Indian. I tell you one thing, if anybody talks about one, they're going to just have to fight me about one. That's all there is to it, because I liked to get into it up there at Hydro Prints when I worked in Charlotte about that. This one girl said something or other about an Indian and he was a man. I told her, I said, "You cuss him all day long for a man, but," I said, "don't cuss him for no Indian, because I sure will tear you up."

W: Well, I know from the things that you have said that you're real proud to be an Indian.

[Break in recording]

W: But the Catawbas, could you tell us what years he was Chief?

C: Around [19]46 and the summer of [19]47, I don't remember which, but he served around four to six years as Chief.

W: Would you back up a little bit and start with the time that you first married Raymond Harris?

C: Well, Raymond and I were married in June 7, 1933. We lived in a house with my brother Douglas Harris. And his first public job was on the WPA and he would work a half a week and Douglas would work a half a week. They had to do that because we lived in the house together. He also farmed some too right after we married, with Douglas. They raised corn and a little bit of cotton. Not much cotton.

W: Well, I know that Raymond accomplished a great deal while he was Chief. Would you tell some of the things that he accomplished?

C: When he become Chief, he had to take several trips to Columbia and I don't know what was going on, but he worked it out that the Indians could get the lumber cut off at the reservation to build 'em a house with, and there were several houses around and about built. And then he got the schoolhouse built down here at the church, which the church owns now since they closed the Indian school down and put the Indians out in public schools.

W: Well Nola, the lumber that the school has built out of, it came off of the reservation then?

C: Yes, and the church too, 'cause they got all the lumber that they needed to build a church out of and he was the one worked for that.

W: I'm glad you told us about that because I didn't quite remember where that came from.

C: Well, they thought the Indians wouldn't come up with their part of the money and the things to build it with, but they filled their pull with what they were supposed to have met by using as much lumber as they needed off the reservation for our church.

W: Your husband was still a young man, wasn't he, when he died?

C: Yes, he was thirty-eight years old. The third day of November 1951. And he died in January 23, 1952.

W: He had been sick for quite a while, hadn't he?

C: Well, he took sick long in the first of the summer and he complained with his back and his legs hurting. So long in September at the cotton mill down at the industrial where he was working at, they made pictures of the chest for a TB test.

So, what they found was spots here and there in his lungs and he developed a real bad cold and he was in and out of the hospital after Dr. Blackman got ahold to his records from that test and he ran off, told me that Raymond had cancer. And Raymond was in and out of the hospital up until the Monday after Thanksgiving that year in November and he came home, and then we put him in the Veteran Hospital which he stayed 'til about eight days before he died. We brought him home and he died in St. Phillip's Hospital in 1952.

W: Well, you talk about him being in the Veteran Hospital. He served in World War II, didn't he?

C: Yes, he went into the army in April of 1944 and he was discharged eleventh day of December 1955.

W: You told me also that he fought in some major battles overseas.

C: Yes, he fought in three battles over there in Germany before it surrendered. I have his battle stars in my trunk upstairs.

W: You had how many children during the time he was already in service?

C: We had five. We had Betty and Carl and Grady and Martin and Della.

W: You had a job here on the home front, didn't you? While he was fighting for his country.

C: I sure did. I had a lot of work to do and kids to take care of, and when one would get sick I felt a lot of times that I needed him home, but I guess our country needed him worser than I did.

W: Did your children recognize him when he came home from service?

C: Well, the older children did, but Della didn't 'cause she wasn't but about three months old—wasn't quite three months old when he left home. And she wouldn't have anything at all to do with him when he come back 'cause she didn't know her daddy.

W: Nola, you told me that Raymond was the youngest Chief I believe. Was that what you told me?

C: Yes, Raymond, as far as I can remember, he was the youngest Chief that ever served as Chief of the Catawba Indians.

W: And while he served, what were the feelings of the Catawbas toward him?

C: Well, he loved his people and he loved to do the work that he did for 'em and he worked in every way that he could to accomplish everything he could for the Indians.

[Break in recording]

W: Nola, I know that Floyd Raymond Harris was at one time the Chief of the Catawbas. Now I would like for you to tell us about Floyd Raymond Harris.

[End of interview]

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