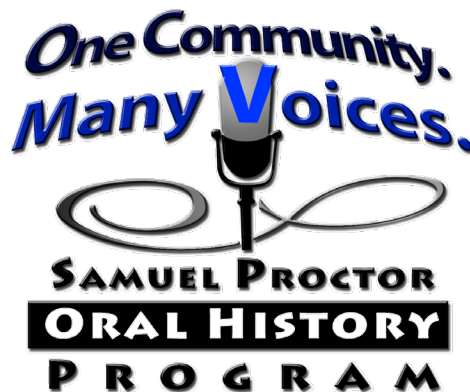


Paulette Cheryl Hallman

**Southeastern Indian Oral History Project (SIOHP)
CAT-183**

Interview by:

**Emma Reid Echols
November 13, 1992**



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CAT 183 Paulette Cheryl Hallman
Southeastern Indian Oral History Project (SIOHP)
Interviewed by Emma Reid Echols on November 13, 1992
13 minutes | 10 pages

Abstract: Paulette Hallman has taught at Oakdale Elementary School for twenty years and has been interested in the Catawba since she was young. She recalls seeing Chief Sam Blue performing his dances and doing different demonstrations around town. As a teacher she feels it's vital that her classes learn about the Catawba as part of the history of York County. She believes that they are an essential part of both Rock Hill's past and present. Together with her second-grade class, they tell Ms. Echols about the things they've learned about the Catawba, as well as their plans to host a Thanksgiving feast for members of the Tribe. Some of the children read stories they wrote about the Catawba, as well as a poem.

Keywords: [Catawba Nation; Chief Samuel Taylor Blue; North Carolina--Charlotte; Education; Meetings]

SAMUEL PROCTOR
ORAL HISTORY

P R O G R A M
University of Florida

CAT 183

Interviewee: Paulette Cheryl Hallman

Interviewer: Emma Reid Echols

Date of Interview: November 13, 1992

E: This is Emma Echols, 5150 Sharon Road, Charlotte, North Carolina. I'm working on the oral history of the Catawba Indians, and I'm visiting in Oakdale School today, a second-grade class. And my good friend is here, Ms. Hallman, and she's going to have a part on the program and so are the children. And first off, let me get all their names on there too, and each one of you can say, "My name is," and recite who you are. What's your name?

JD: My name is Jared Day.

AR: My name is Amber Richardson.

RS: My name is Ricky Shelton.

MA: My name is Myron Anderson.

RG: My name is Rosie Gilmore.

RA: My name is **Rashid** Anthony.

MS: My name is Mary Stuart.

E: [Whispers] Say it now.

K: My name is Key [inaudible 1:02]

E: [Whispers] Say it now.

JM: My name is Jim Moore.

JF: My name is Jenna Farmer.

MF: My name is Michelle Rideners.

AK: My name is Alicia Ken.

TA: My name is Timothy Allen.

WD: My name is William Dunlap.

J: My name is Johnny [inaudible 1:22]

BT: My name is Britney Thompson.

SW: My name is Shana Ward.

ED: My name is Edward Duluth.

KP: My name is Katherine Porter.

[Break in recording]

E: I'm glad to have your children's names on this, and now let me talk to your teacher. Will you tell me your full name and your address?

H: My name is Paulette Cheryl Hallman and I live at 647 Stratford Lane in Rock Hill.

E: And you're a—how long have you been in the Rock Hill School District?

H: This is my twentieth year teaching at Oakdale Elementary School.

E: That's quite a record. Now, how did you get interested, first of all, in the Catawba Indians?

H: Well, I was born in York County, that's probably the best way to get interested in the Catawba Indians. I can remember, when I was a child, Old Chief Blue would do different demonstrations and things around town and my mother would take me to see him. I remember one time there was an opening of a new grocery store and he was doing a dance and had on his ceremonial robes, and I was absolutely mesmerized by it. I thought he was so interesting. Then when I started teaching. I thought, "This is something that the children need to learn about, this is part of our culture, it's part of our heritage." The Catawbas are like a cultural heirloom for York County. Not only did it once exist but it still exists, and I think it's really important for all the children to learn about that. I think it's important to

learn about our past, about the Scotch-Irish settlers, about how York County and Rock Hill began, and the Catawbas are a very big, important part of our past and our present.

E: Then you have brought the past into your classroom with many visitors. What Catawba Indians have you brought into this classroom?

H: We've had a lot of people visit over the years. This year will be the twentieth year that Chief Blue has come out to visit with us. Not every year can he come. Some years he's been busy with Tribal matters, but over the years he's come just about every year, usually around Thanksgiving, to visit with the class, and he teaches them the friendship dance and talks to them about Catawba life long ago and Catawba life today. He is a wonderful example and role model for the children. He personifies to me dignity, and he has such a presence and such an honor to him. He talks to the children about being friends with everyone, about getting along, all kinds of values that I think are really important for children to learn.

E: Sometimes you've had Catawba children in your classroom, but you don't have any this year.

H: No, we don't have any this year. Oh, we've also had Ms. Florence Wade comes up and makes pottery with us for the last several years. And she brings her granddaughter Melissa. We've had Chief Blue's sister. Ms. Gale Blue has come out before with him, and this year he's going to bring his daughter, and Dr. Wenonah Haire is coming too for a special celebration we're planning in a few weeks.

E: You're looking forward to that big celebration, aren't you?

H: Yeah, we really are. It's going to be big. We've invited Gilbert Blue—Chief Blue and several of the other Catawbas, Ms. Wade and her granddaughter, and as I said Dr. Haire and several others are coming out. We're preparing a Thanksgiving meal for them, Ms. Echols. Boys and girls, can you tell Ms. Echols what we're going to have for Thanksgiving?

All: Turkey.

H: Turkey, what else?

All: Venison.

H: Venison.

All: Corn on the cob.

H: Corn on the cob.

All: Sweet potatoes.

H: We're having authentic Thanksgiving food, an authentic Thanksgiving meal. This is not going to be pumpkin pie and stove top stuff; we're having authentic food. We've also invited someone else very special, we talked about.

TA: Ms. Echols.

H: And Ms. Echols is coming right, that's true Timothy. We're—had talked a lot about the Indian land claim and we talked about the other person who was helping negotiate. That's a new word we've learned. That means what, Whitney? What is negotiation?

W: To work things out.

H: To work things out. We've learned that the other person who has helped work out the land claim with Chief Blue has been who? Could you tell me?

JF: Congressman Spratt.

H: Congressman Spratt, right, Jenna. So, we thought Congressman Spratt, since he and Chief Blue had been working at the negotiating table so hard and so long, might like to come sit down at the Thanksgiving table to have our feast. So, we're really excited about that, that's going to be the day before Thanksgiving in just a couple of weeks.

E: That's an amazing thing that you're preparing, and I hope I can be here. Now as you walk around the grounds here you remember that this used to be a part of the Indian land and deer and bears might've roamed here. They might've been shooting them with their blowgun and so forth. So, I walked around your ground and sometimes I picked up little stones that remind me of the Indians and I think you have a little poem that you can do for me about this land and the things you find here.

All: "Where are we walk and where we stay, Indian children used to play. All about our native land, where the shops and houses stand."

E: That's very good! And that's very true, isn't it?

H: We've learned a lot of things about the Catawba, Ms. Echols. Would you like to hear some more of it?

E: Yes, I want to hear some more!

H: We've learned that the Catawbas were very important because why? Who can tell me that? Britney?

BT: Their pottery.

H: Their pottery, very special. We said we had Ms. Wade come out and teach us how to make some pottery. What can you tell us about their pottery, Britney?

BT: They had to get their clay from...the bank of the rivers and they have to shape it with their hands. It's real pretty when it's done.

H: And it's in a lot of special places right now, it's at the Winthrop University Museum and it's in another place in Washington. Can you remember the name—we might not be able to remember that, the name of the big museum in Washington?

U: Smith...

H: The Smithsonian, right. The Smithsonian is a big museum there. Ms. Wade made pottery with us, that was fun. We felt like we were real Catawba Indians, didn't we? What did you make, Andy?

A: A pot.

H: A pot. We all made pots. All right, there were other things we learned about the Catawba too. Where did they build their village? William?

WD: They built their village right on the banks of the Catawba river.

H: That's true. What kind of homes did they have in their village? Shana?

SW: Log cabins.

H: Log cabins. And how did they earn their living? John, what did they do, how did they get their food? How did they live?

J: By planting and they grew their crops.

H: Their crops, and there was another way too, Andy, can you tell us about that?

A: They hunt with blowguns and bow and arrows.

H: What kind of animals did they hunt?

A: Deer and rabbit and squirrels.

H: Deer and rabbit and squirrels. Ms. Echols, we've been writing a book about history. Every time we learn something about the history of York County, we've written a story about it and we're putting all the stories together in a book. Three of the stories in our book are about the Catawba Indians. The first three because the Catawba Indians is the very beginning of our history, so we've picked some children to read their stories to you, to tell you what they've written.

E: I like that, who's the first one?

H: Let's start with, let's start with John. John's story.

E: Read out loud for me, John.

J: Catawba Indians. The first people to live in Rock Hill were the Catawba Indians. They built villages by the Catawba River. They lived in log cabins. They grew vegetables. They used blowguns to hunt. The Catawba were friendly Indians, they helped the settlers. Catawba still lives here today. Chief Blue is their leader.

H: Very good, John, thank you. Now Britney's going to read to you about the Catawba meal we already have.

BT: Our Indian meal. We ate Indian food just like the Catawbas. We cooked venison, sweet potatoes, and corn on the cob. We made Indian headbands. We went outside and ate. Some people told legends while we were eating. It was good.

H: And Shana's going to read the story about the day we made the pottery, that's been several weeks ago now but she'll read the story she wrote about it.

SW: Catawba Indians are famous for their pottery. Yesterday a real Catawba Indian came to our classroom. Her name is Mrs. Wade. She is a potter. She showed us how to make pottery. She let us work with her clay too. It was fun.

H: Right, and we're going to really have a big story to write after our big Thanksgiving feast with Chief Blue and Congressman Spratt and Dr. Haire and all the other Catawbas. We have enjoyed learning about the Catawba Indians, haven't we, boys and girls? And it's special because if we're going to learn who we are, we have to learn who the people were before us. That helps us know who we are—who we were helps us know who we are and helps us know where we're going because learning about the history helps you learn about the present, and it helps you move into the future. We're going to be good citizens of York County, aren't we, boys and girls?

[Multiple voices murmur in agreement]

E: I'm glad to hear that. Now one thing I want to add to your little history. A long time ago Mrs. Sarah Robinson was the teacher out on the Indian reservation. Thanksgiving was coming along, and they wanted to have a real part in that. So, their mothers made them costumes. Some of them was dressed as pilgrims, some of them was dressed as Indians, and they had a real Thanksgiving dinner out on the reservation in their school. That was a good many years ago.

H: And we're going to do the same thing here at Oakdale in a couple weeks.

E: Now I want to ask you one last question, what do you see of the future for the Catawba Indians?

H: Well, I hope that the Catawba culture will be preserved. And I think that once the land claim is settled, and the reservation is renewed—you asked me earlier how I got interested in the Catawba Indians and really it went to before I started teaching. When I was a senior at Winthrop, taking my education course we had to write a unit, which is basically helping us learn how we would teach children. We could pick any subject we wanted, and I thought Indians were interesting—a lot of people were doing their units on Indians, it's a real good kindergarten unit to do, and I decided that—well I thought, “You know, we have an Indian Tribe here, maybe I could do it on the Catawbas.” And I went to my professor at Winthrop, Dr. Allhouse, and told him that I was going to do mine on the Catawbas and she said, “Well, Paulette, I just don't think you can get enough on the Catawbas to do a whole unit.” And I said, “Well, let me see.” So, on Thanksgiving afternoon, that was right about Thanksgiving, I drove out looking for the reservation, and I couldn't find it. There was nothing to mark that this was the reservation. I saw a few trailers, I saw some little houses, there was no signs, there was no center, there was nothing to show that this was the reservation. And that has changed tremendously in the last twenty years, the big [inaudible 13:03] festival is wonderful to help preserve the culture, but there is so many people, particularly Chief Blue, who has fought so hard to regain the reservation and their land rights, and their Tribal status. Dr. Haire, who has worked on preserving the culture, Ms. Wade, Sarah Ayers and all the other potters, and people like you, who have worked to preserve the Catawba heritage for all of us. I see that continuing and I see it being even stronger thing so that not just a few

teachers here and there know about it, but that it will be a really important, significant thing that all the children of York County will learn about as part of their heritage.

E: And you have made a little bit of history today by the things you've written and the things you've said, and your names on the tape. I'm so proud that I've had a chance to visit with you today.

H: Thank you.

[End of interview]

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