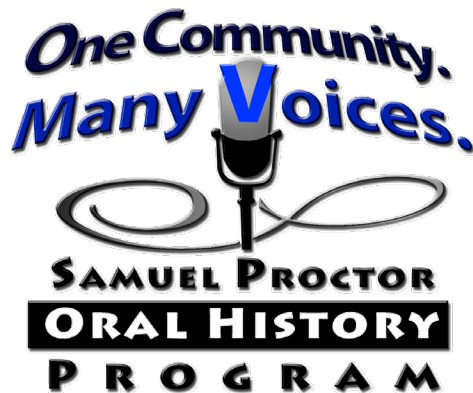


Jeffrey Travis Blue

**Southeastern Indian Oral History Project (SIOHP)
CAT-198**

Interview by:

**Emma Reid Echols
March 5, 1993**



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CAT 198 Jeffrey Travis Blue
Southeastern Indian Oral History Project (SIOHP)
Interviewed by Emma Reid Echols on March 5, 1993
8 minutes | 6 pages

Abstract: In this brief interview, Jeffrey Travis Blue (the great-grandson of Chief Samuel Blue) talks about how he is living with his father, Carson Blue, after graduating from high school. He discusses his future plans to go on a mission trip for his church and then go back to school. He talks about his time in high school, including his favorite classes and his experience as a Catawba Indian student. He shares his favorite parts about being a Catawba Indian and then details the specific beliefs of his religion. The interview wraps up with a brief discussion of music and relationships.

Keywords: [Catawba Nation; South Carolina--Rock Hill; Education; Religion]

SAMUEL PROCTOR
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CAT 198

Interviewee: Jeffrey Travis Blue

Interviewer: Emma Reid Echols

Date of Interview: March 5, 1993

E: This is Emma Echols, 5150 Sharon Road, Charlotte, North Carolina, March 5, 1993. I'm visiting the home of Leroy Blue, and I have an unusual experience because his grandson just came in. This is Carson Blue's son, and I had not seen him before. But I'll let him tell you. Give us your full name and your address.

B: My name is Jeffrey Travis Blue, 1863 West Baskins Road, Rock Hill, South Carolina.

E: And you're living with your father?

B: Yes.

E: Now, where are you going to school?

B: I'm not going to school right now. I've graduated from Rock Hill High School, and I'm just in between right now.

E: What are you planning to do? Are you going to another school? Another college?

B: I'm going to go on a mission for my church first that will take two years, and then after that I'll go to school after that.

E: And you'll be in Michigan for three years?

B: No, I'll go on a mission for my church.

E: Oh, a mission for your church.

B: Uh-huh.

E: Where will they send you? Do you know where all you'll be going?

B: They'll send me wherever they need me.

E: Anywhere they need you?

B: Uh-huh.

E: What did you think about the way that you were treated as an Indian in schools in Rock Hill?

B: Most people didn't know that I was an Indian, and then when they found out that I was, they just thought it was more interesting. I never received any of the persecutions or any of the hardships that my ancestors received for the fact that they were an Indian. I was treated better than they were.

E: Who was your principal in high school?

B: Eric Lessmeister.

E: I have on tape here what he said about the education because a little Jenne Trimnal was a graduate, and I have her speech here. Eric Lessmeister said that every boy and girl received the same education and that he really did not know how many Indians he had on the roll that day, and that was interesting, so I have his, and I'm going to also see the superintendent of the school chair, and he's going to put what he thinks about the Indians. I'm sure he's proud of what you have done. Do you have any idea to how many Indian friends you had at the high school? A good many worthy?

B: Maybe twenty at the most.

E: What teachers at high school did you like especially?

B: I took chorus under Mary Ann Helton, and I really enjoyed that. I had other classes, but I think that that was probably my favorite class was under Mary Ann Helton.

E: You like to write?

B: It was a chorus class, singing.

E: Yes. Do you know your own history, and do you write some of your Catawba history?

B: I don't write it. I know some of it, but I don't know as much as I should.

E: Tell me, what do you think about being a Catawba Indian? What's the most interesting thing to you about being a Catawba Indian? What's the history you know?

B: Well, I'm the great-grandson of the late Chief Samuel Blue, and I'm grateful for the fact that I am, that I have such a proud heritage. And I'm just glad that I have the chance to be a part of it. Like I said, I don't know as much as I should, but I try to learn as I go along what I can.

E: The recent settlement, will it affect you young people and give you money for education, you think?

B: Yes, it should.

E: It should do it?

B: It should.

E: What do you want to do when you—have you any ambition of what you will do when you finish this three years traveling for your church?

B: I want to start out at Ricks Junior College in Rexburg, Idaho, and then from there I don't know where I'll go. But that's where I want to start out my schooling.

E: Now, I've never asked this question before and you don't have to answer it, but I'm interested. What do you believe in your religion of your church? What are your basic beliefs? Can you tell me?

B: Well, we believe in the God head: our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost. We believe that they are three separate beings, not one as a trinity as some religions believe. We believe in the Bible to be the word of God, as long as it's translated correctly. And we also have the Book of Mormon, which is a second—which is another testament of Jesus Christ. It's not a replacement for the Bible, it's a companion for the Bible, and it just explains more of what went on on the American continent during the times that Christ was on the Earth, rather than just what went on in Israel and those countries. It tells more of what went on in the American continent, and we do believe in the Bible as long as it is translated correctly.

E: Another thing that I get from your grandmother here: that you look after your own people, that you are very social-minded to care for the needs of your own people even as Jesus did in the Bible times.

B: Right.

E: You don't take relief in social services, do you?

B: That's usually a last resort.

E: And I noticed that you have—

B: We believe first that you should first go to your family, and your family should take care of you. And if your family can't do it, then you go to the church, going through your home teachers, which will go back through the bishop and go into the stake and eventually out to the West. And if you need any type of aid, whether it be financial aid or help with food or clothing or anything, then it comes from the West. The church is set up and is able to give you anything that you

need if you need it, and the church will not turn you down. But you have to be worthy in your own mind of the support that they would give you. And if you take the support that they give you unworthily, then eventually you'll regret it.

E: You are saying it very, very well, and I like what you are saying. I've been to a number of Mormon funerals. I was at Idle Sanders's funeral, and I like the way it is brought out that you are special in God's sight, that he has—you came from out beyond, and you have a special work to do on Earth, and you're going to rejoin the Heavenly Father in the home. I noticed you don't use the word "Lord" much. You use more "Father," "Heavenly Father."

B: Right.

E: I like that expression.

B: "Heavenly Father" seems to be more respectful than "Lord" or "God." To me, that just seems a little harsh. It's not as respectful to our Supreme Being.

E: Do you remember any songs you sing? Some of them on the reservation have sung a song for me that I liked. Do you know any special songs you like? Religious songs?

B: There are different songs. I'm the pianist, an organist in my work, so I know more the music. I don't know as much words as I should. So I can play about anything, but I couldn't tell you much to the words.

E: Now, you're nineteen, you're hoping to get married sometime soon. Have you picked out a girl yet?

B: No. Like I've told a lot of other people, I don't have the time, the money, or the energy for a girlfriend right now.

E: Well, let me say this for the record. You're the youngest one I've taped in a long time, and I'm very much impressed. And I'll be anxious to have this typed up and be sent back to you as your own copy. So you've added to the oral history of the Catawbas today by this interview, and I thank you very much.

B: Thank you.

[End of interview]

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