

TRANSCRIPT
#12
FLOWER
GI 2561

Carlisle Indian School Oral History Project

Narrator: Dr. Milton Flower

Tape # 1

Date of Interview: November , 1980

Place of Interview: Dr. Flower's home, West Pomfret Street, Carlisle.

Interviewers Name: Helen F. Norton

For: Cumberland County Historical Society

G
I
N884m

CUMBERLAND COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY and
HAMILTON LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

LOG.0029

Q I was ^{thinking} ~~thing~~ today... I know from Susan (Lott, Curator of the Cumberland County Historical Society Museum) that you and your family are long time residents of this area, but also that your mother and father must have been closely involved with the school.

A This is, as a matter of fact, my great grandmother's house, and my grandparents lived here. My mother was married in 1907. I was born in 1910. So you can ~~see~~ ^{subtract} very easily, and they lived for the first couple of years in Harrisburg where my father worked for the government. They would come up here in the summertime. ^{amend} → Meanwhile, ~~my~~ grandfather knew Colonel Pratt and all his successors. My mother, as people did, there was quite a lot of rapport between the heads - certain people in town. They lived in Harrisburg in the wintertime, about one block from the city line, so it put them in the country. Even though it was a row of houses. So it was decided that she could have someone come in and act as a nurse. Give her some free time - she was very interested then in women's suffrage. So I would think that in 1913 when my sister was born, she might have been born in '14, but I would say that it was about 1913, she through the Indian School, had a nurse come a oh - a woman come to learn how you kept house, be a kind of a nurse, and a live-in. There were three of them. One I don't know, one was Etta Saraceno, who later - something like Saracena, and I think she was a Laguna Indian, and became a nurse out in California, someplace in Los Angeles. I know that an uncle of mine looked her up one time. Another one, I guess, I don't know whether she was the first or second (Etta Saraceno). The next year, or maybe the next six months - I would say the next year - or the next nine months, she had another, another Indian girl came by the name of Emily Poudre, P-O-U-D-R-E, you can find those in the files, (CCHist. Soc'y records) and the last one must have been when I was four or five. Now this is - see, I don't know whether lived for six months or for a year - but I know there were three. And the last one must have been when I was four or five. Now, I don't know whether they were there for six months or a year, but I know there were three. and I may have been barely five, when the third one whose name was Florence Garlow came. Mother was particularly fond of - well, she was fond of all of them, she loved very much Emily Poudre, I don't know why, but ~~she~~ of course Florence Garlow, too. Now, Florence had a cousin and a sister both who came out here, and I remember very clearly sitting in that back room when my mother had Florence's mother and sister - her mother came down for graduation. And I can see this rather large Indian woman with a black skirt that she wore with a very white ~~scarf that she wore~~ starched shirt that she wore.

Q Where did she come from?

A Near Niagara Falls. She was a New York Indian. She later married - at that time she had married an Indian band leader - or something. And I remember mother saying, that "it was a disaster" according to Florence's mother, that she married this ^{man}, apparently very happily, and just in the last year, I've gotten in touch with Florence's daughter - and we had a film that was shown here. And in that film it was shown a young princess was being crowned, and her name was Florence Garlow. So I immediately wrote to Elizabeth Duran (d?), and said ~~that~~ "can you find me anybody by the name of Florence Garlow?" So, she found out - she's done a great ~~deal~~ deal of writing on the Indians - she went to see the girl, called her up, and she said, "You mean Milton Embick Flower!" She even knew my middle name. Well, it's astonishing, you know. So, now I'm now in contact with her which is nice. I remember when Florence left, I went to - then the railroad station was down on the northwest corner of Pitt and High, and we were seeing her off, and I wanted to go with her.

And I promised my mother I would come back. But I didn't go.

Q That was the final...?

A That was the final parting. And I think because of that I ^{could} have only ^{have} been four or five. It was very close. Now she did everything for example, take care of me, learned how to housework. One time my grandmother went down, now this was Florence whom I called, incidentally, 'Ponce-dio', I couldn't even talk well, so it must have been pretty early- and she graduated in '15. So I called her Ponce-dio, like dear Florence, or something, and my grandmother went down and visited her, and ~~my~~ she said when my mother came back from wherever she was, she said, "oh Laura, how can you stand it; Virginia, they just sit. -- No, These Indians, they just sit!" NO. She said, "I never said, " I never said, 'how can you stand these Indians just sitting?' And today, when I was sewing, Florence came in and suddenly, talked a blue streak, and never seemed to stop in one hour." Mother said "those are the characteristics, they waited to see whether they could trust you." And she had been there several times. So that's as much as I remember. She graduated in something like household arts. So this would be something like a college intern program.

Q And, this is the one who married the band leader? or...?

A The last one, yes, Florence, Ponce-dio was the one who married the band leader.

Q You know, it's interesting because I spoke with Mr. Garvie in Lebanon, and he mentioned forming various professional - you know - bands, in the area, after graduation from the school. And it must have been quite the thing at the time to do that...

A Of course, the band was one of the most important extra-curricular activities at the Post, and they were noted as a marching band for every parade.

Q But they must also have had some kind of dance band...

A I don't know, but my recollection is that there were practically no dances out at the post. At least not when Pratt was alive. I knew my grandfather knew General Pratt.

Q Were you at all familiar with what went on at the Post - the school- after the girls (mother's helpers) left.

A Oh, yes. My mother, well, you know, it was a small faculty there, and the director, but you see it was shortly thereafter that it was disbanded in 1917. So here you have just two or three years.

Q Would it have been, as you walked downtown, if you walked down to... would you have noticed that there were Indians in town?

A No. Not at all. They were really kept out at the barracks. What I can remember is that when I would walk to Sunday school, and be a little late, Sunday school began at 9:30, you would see ^{contingents} continually, and I would remember mostly, because I would go down Pomfret Street, perhaps eight marching, in two-by-two order,, in March order, down to Saint Patrick's (Catholic Church). In their uniforms. I can remember that clearly, nothing else.

Q It must have been a strange place - for them to be (Carlisle) although, perhaps

some of them had been to school before. Had this girl (Florence) gone to...?

A I don't know.

Q I'm learning that many times the people - you are the only person I've spoken to who knows anything about the women- but in referring to several of the men, the boys, and older ones than I thought they would be, I thought they would be young children, like eight or so,

A Some of them started as young children, you know, There were only two that I know of who stayed right in Carlisle or Cumberland County. There was a young orphan boy by the name of Dick Kasetta. And one of the matrons - I don't know what her husband did out there, was Mrs. Jack Culbertson. And she was so fond of this little boy who was an orphan, that when he was about six or seven and the school closed, she adopted him.

Q Legally adopted?

A Yes, I think so. And this must have been fairly early that she adopted him because, this must have been in the period before 1910, because he was just a small boy. And so I remember him living with them - the Culbertsons.

Q Did they live here in town?

A No, but after the Post closed they lived down the street from us.

Q That's interesting - when you mentioned orphan, because many times the people will say ... Mr. Flickinger whose brother-in-law is Mr. Yuda, whose children still live in town - and other people will say, "yes, they were orphans", and I wonder whether they were actually orphans or whether they'd been in the system of the Indian Schools so long that they were ...

A I wouldn't know, but I wouldn't think that they had that many orphans. I mean I think that that's not necessarily so. Because if you look at our photographs you will see that Indians were with their son or daughter. And you will also read in Pratt's account that - you'll remember how he persuaded the Indian chiefs to let their children come. So if you take those two things - well, I would say, not many orphans. Was Mr. Yuda an orphan?

Q Yes. He was an orphan. He's an Oneida. But, again, his brother-in-law, at this point in time does not really know whether he was a true orphan or ...

A What about George? Is George ^{Yuda} still living?

Q Actually, I think Jeff, Jeff Yuda has some kind of family genealogy. But how far back that goes... but it's just an interesting thing...

A Well, is Jeff Yuda a brother of George?

Q No, a son.

A Isn't George living.

Q Yes, he is, but I haven't spoken to him.

A I would think he would be the one rather than Jeff.

Q Yes, I'm speaking only of Jeff as the one who did a family history, getting in touch with the Bureau's (BIA) archives.

A I think the other thing that is - that we could get is that the trolley cars went out there.

Q No, I didn't know it went all the way out there.

A Yes, the trolley car went from the square out to the Army Post, to the Barracks, Indian School, and you know where the Church of God Home is? Well, there's a street, a lane, south of that, I think it's called Pratt Avenue, or Henderson Avenue. That was where the trolley car turned. And that was ~~where~~ the original entrance for the Indian School.

Q I wonder when they put that new one there, that big impressive lane...?

A That, I can tell you when that... I would think that that was put in right after the war. After World War II.

Q We've been here only seven years and I assume everything is older than it is.

A Yes, but even before the Indian School the original entrance, through the Civil War, until the Indian School, as a matter of fact, was down on East North Street. Garrison Lane.

Q That's where Mr. Flickinger's family had a store- on Garrison Lane.

A I don't know Mr. Flickinger.

Q His parents had a little store there, and they used to live in Bloserville, then moved there and opened a little store, and the children would come and buy pies and cakes. And he would sell pies and cakes to teams that were practising. And Pop Warner didn't want him to. He would mention to that in the winter there'd be skating on in the summer they would take a canal ride, a boat ride to soem ...

A Well, the pictures, even without a ^{dedication} dedication, would tell all. They had camped you know. Oh, yes, there was an Indian Camp. The girls had a camp and the men had a camp.

Q So the school was vacated for part of the summer?

A No, no Well, maybe there'd be a small group. Maybe they'd take them for weekends. But there are photographs showing that

Q I have seen that, with girls weilding axes and...

A I don't remember that, they were all in middy blouses as I remember.

Q Where was that camp?

A I always thought it was near Pine Grove (State Park), but I don't know.

Q I'm curious about Elizabeth Doran , (Durand)? A Mrs. Ruggles, who was secretary to the Clerk who was there at the end of the school's time, had, as friends who went out to California to work in Indian Schools, a pair who had been nurse and disciplinarian, whose name was Durand.

A No. No. Durand is the name of the woman who teaches (unintelligible- however, Dr. Flower is referring to a woman who spoke at the Historical Society in 1979 or early 1980 who teaches in upper New York State.)

Q Well, I was just wondering if she might, or if her husband might, be a descendant of....

A No, no, no, no, no. I don't think so. I don't think there's any relationship.

Q That's one thing I noticed too, the number of people who graduated from the school, who attended the school, who remained in the system and worked for the school or for other Indian Schools... The Old Indian network...

A I wonder if George Clippinger, call him up. His father was a pastor of a church here, and he was sort of an unofficial chaplain out there at one period of time. And George should be in his mid-seventies or late seventies. And maybe he has some stories. Tell him you don't want Pop Warner stories. You get too many of those.

Q I spoke to Mr. Martin, Arthur Martin.

A Call George. Why I was thinking about him... he gave a little notebook that his father kept when he went West. And he'd say, "so and so turned out to be a good Indian, he's teaching", or, "somebody else reverted to type", just very little, and kind of scratches. Probably just... to remind himself.

Q It must have been very different, well for the students, but also for the people who were involved with them when they just ended it, when they were just sent back.

A There were really quite a lot of relationships. They were very good. Carlisle really, I would say, took great pride in this, and there was, from people I know, it may be only the people I know, of a certain... type or... who were close to them, the Indian School. Who would go out there and be friendly. And you know the other thing is they did go into classes, summer school classes in the various churches in town.

Q Well now, you mention that people would go out there, would they go to visit faculty and the administration, or would they sit in on classes and the different shops or...

A I don't know.

Q What particular interest did your mother have ... the friendship with the Colonel or...?

A Yes, I think that would have been it. But of course, he left in 1904, didn't he? These would be subsequent ones. Well you see it's kind of a built-in something, I know that Marguerite, down at the Historical Society, she said, "oh yes, is this your mother, Mrs. Flower and Miss Richards, visiting

were guests at the Indian School, say last week?" Yes, I'd say. A lot of things like that.

Q I wonder what they would they would have done as guests at the School?

A Maybe they would be asked to listen to recitations, things like that. Maybe. I doubt at that time women might be debate judges. They had a debate society. My guess is as good as yours.

Q That's the first I've heard though other than musicals that would be performed in the evening or at special times, that people would have communion out there and take an active part in things... take part in the daily life of the school. Yes, all
Yes, that's right, all that, a-l those things.

A They must have done something, there must have been some reason for them to go out. You know, there was a Congressional Hearing, did you know that?

Q About the funds of the Outing Program?

A Well, I don't know whether it was about the funds of the Outing program, but I don't think it had anything to do with that because after all they went and they were paid a nominal sum, they were kept and given pocket money...

Q Sports?

A I don't know what it was, but they e-ven went so far, and I have one some place but I don;t know where it is, in . which they said what kind of food are you serving? And the Penrose sisters were among those who were active, and she said I want to know what they pay for this tea?" and it went something like this..."Well, would it be the kind of tea that you would serve?", "Oh, no." she said. "We serve only the very best tea." And you'll find that. It comes out in th4e Richards family also, a part of the family groups who... It's an eye-opener, in kind of a gossipy way.

Q I like that.

A I mean, like the Penrose girls, I remember as little old ladies. Ome a tiney little sparrow about this big, and her sister was about this much taller. There were four of them as a matter of fact. You know all that I know.

Q There's one more thing, I know that you were seven or so at the time.

A When. I wasn't seven.

(Unintelligible - BEKASUKE?)

A When?

Q When the school closed.

A Oh, I don't remember anything about tat.

Q Well, whether you would have have heard or noticed whether all the townspeople or several other kinds of townspeople, merchants, whether they would feel differently

about the students?, or who was responsible for keeping the segregation so tight or the supervision so tight, why that was?

A I think it was a boarding school, you know where you're housed, where you're kept in. Of course, they were allowed to go out and buy things, there's a very interesting letter in the collection (Hist. Soc'y) written by a Mr. Hefflefinger who had a general

erasure? - very brief
~~End of Side 1 of Tape 1.~~

clothing store here., in which Pratt, it's a letter from Captain Pratt, in which he said, "why I'm shocked that you send this bill to this young man. for this. You never should have let him charge anything. He's spends all the money he gets from home and all the money he gets as his allowance, it's not your own fault." You know, something like that, and, "you should have gotten in contact with me before you gave him credit." So it was very paternalistic, especially in the early years. And that means, in other words, I'm ~~trying to~~ drawing a conclusion here, but that they did come into town here, and they did buy things on their own.

Q Oh, they must have, I can't imagine any group of young people not devising ways of avoiding the system.

A. That's right. (Dr. Flower stands, the interview is terminated.)

End of Tape.