

REID, CATHARINE DONNLEY

INTERVIEW

8575

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WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

8575,

Worker's name Amelia F. Harris.

Report made on (date) September 21 1937

Name Catharine Donnley Reid

Post Office Address Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Residence address (or location) 1712 North Indiana

DATE OF BIRTH: Month would not give Day Year

Place of birth Lincoln County Kentucky

Name of Father Edward Donnley Place of birth Cookstown, County Tyrone Ireland

Other information about father came to America at age of nineteen

Name of Mother Fannie Buford Donnley Place of birth Bourbon, Kentucky

Other information about mother

For complete narrative by the field worker dealing with the life and story of the person interviewed. Refer to Manual for suggested subjects and questions. Write on blank sheets if necessary and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached 6

Mrs. CATHARINE O'NEILLY. INTERVIEW. 8575

Amelia F. Harris,
Interviewer,
September 21, 1927.

An interview with Mrs. Catherine
Donahay Reid, 1712 North Lincoln,
Oklahoma City, Okla.

My father's courtship and marriage with mother transpired in Kentucky. They were very comfortably fixed in this world's goods, consisting chiefly of land.

They sold most of their property, and when I was twelve years old, moved to Missouri.

After finishing my education there, I married Mr. J. P. Reid, who was in the Life Insurance business. We moved to Victoria, British Columbia, to establish our new home.

I am going to give a few incidents from our associations with Indians in Victoria.

This was the Sandwich tribe. They lived in a settlement

in the town of Victoria B.C. This tribe of Indians

kept set-upon by the whites for many years. They were very honest and they could sell us a lot of things. They were very honest and they were very honest.

The Sandwich tribe of Indians in Victoria B.C.

to sell to us. The first time she came to see her

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the price. I had two little girls four and six years old. She pointed to their clothes, and then to herself. I brought out several dresses and some shoes. She picked out what she wanted, and pushed the others back. I told her to take them all, but she said, "No, next time." In a few days she came back with more berries and wanted clothes in exchange. She put the price on the berries, also on the clothes, and I was refused to take more clothes than what she thought would buy for the berries. I traded clothes for berries with this arrangement for three years.

The Sanwich Islands, the little islands, painted white, built by the Government. Their capital

ground was in the middle of the island. They are all

Christian and of the priest. They had their cemetery. The natives founded a school and a church over the grave. These would be the first. Their arrival was in the middle of the year, and was performed by a Catholic priest.



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We had the Cree Indians, too. They were tall and stately and the women were very beautiful. The Crees were a higher type of Indian than the Sanwich. Their mode of living was like the white people. They had their homes built modern, and furnished beautifully then.

I was quite friendly with Mrs. William, a full blood Cree. She had been married three times to sea captains, all high class men. Two had died, and she was living with her third, Captain William. Their home was beautiful and furnished lavishly but in good taste.

Mrs. William had lots of property, especially rent houses. This was handled through an agent. One of her tenants took the typhoid fever and was too sick to work for two months. He got behind with his rent. Then he went to work and took a relapse, was sick another month, and was unable to pay rent. The agent told Mrs. William that he was going to put them out, that they never would be able to pay the rent. But she said "No, wait a month".

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The next month he told her that he was not going to wait longer for rent. She said, "all right, no pay have to get out." That day Mrs. Willis drove down to see the white tenant and gave them sixty dollars for four months rent at fifteen dollars per month; and told the sick man to pay the agent when he came, but not to tell, and not to worry; "when you are well, man, you can work and pay me."

I wanted to relate this incident, for she was such a beautiful character. I could give many incidents that happened while we lived there.

Mr. Reid died, and I had to do something to provide a living for myself and two girls. Oklahoma was the most ~~known Territory in the Union. I decided to try my~~ luck out there. I sold all my belongings, and with my two children arrived in Oklahoma City, November 6, 1901.

I wondered what I could do to get rich quick. The people were full of pep and all seemed in a hurry. I caught the fever. I had a life certificate to teach, so I went to see the school board, and found they only paid small salaries, too small for three to live on comfortably.

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My newly made friends suggested that I start a dancing school as there was none in the city. I opened up a school first in my own home, then my class grew so large that I rented a store building on Grand avenue. I was very successful in this profession, and taught for thirty years. My pupils were mixed blood Chickasaw, Choctaw and white children. I could not tell the whites from the Indians, as there was very little difference in their complexions. Their ability to learn was about equal.

I had the opportunity to make the El Reno and Lawton drawing at that time. I didn't want a patent; didn't know what I could do with one if I was lucky in the drawing.

We drove ~~over~~ over to Kingfisher to see the Cheyenne Indians in their ceremonial Sun Dance. They swayed their bodies to the rhythm of the Tom Tom. Animal teeth and different kind of shells strung on buckskin strings were hung around their necks, wrists, and legs. The music was weird, but beautiful, and the dance was very graceful and colorful, too. Both men and women would have their faces painted. Their chiefs would have their feathered regalia on. Other men would have buckskin clothes. The women all

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dressed in bright colors, with red and blue ribbons hanging from a bow at their shoulders to the hem line of their dresses. The dances were well worth driving a long way to see.

May 30, 1930, I organized the Jeffersonian Club, was elected president and have held that office up to the present date. I organized the first Business Woman's Club in Oklahoma City, in 1920. I organized the first activities for Catholic women, and the first Catholic Needle Work Guild. I advocated and laid the foundation for the system of closing all stores at six o'clock. This practice has been adopted in the largest cities in Oklahoma.

I now hold the position of director of the Consumers Educational ... P. A. Project.