

Catawba Monument Dedication
Fort Mill Times,, Aug 1, 1900

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Paul R. Sarrett, Jr. Aug. 11, 1998 (prsjr@aol.com)

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From: Jean W. STRINGHAM (Zojea@aol.com)
To: Paul R. Sarrett, Jr. (PRSJR@aol.com)

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The Columbia State, Columbia, S.C., August 1, 1900, page 2, columns 1 & 2.

Catawba Indians Will Be Remembered
Monument to Those Who Fought for the Confederacy
Dedicated at Fort Mill
Fifty Indians From Reservation Present,
Speech by Ben Harris, Monument Town

Special to the State:

Fort Mill, July 31. -- For the fourth time in the history of Fort Mill the citizens have assembled for the purpose of unveiling a monument.

The first, to the Confederate Soldier, on December 22, 1891; the second, to the women of the south, on the 21st day of May, 1895, when Col. J. P. Thomas of Columbia delivered a scholarly address;

the third, to the faithful slaves of the south, unveiled on the 21st day of May, 1895, when Col. Polke Miller delivered a scholarly address.

Today, in the presence of a large crowd, consisting of numbers of Indians and many citizens of the surrounding community, the monument to the Indians was open to inspection. And Ben Harris, a son of John Harris, one of the bravest members of the Twelfth South Carolina, delivered the speech. The speech was written by himself and is a specimen of what an Indian can do.

The Indians were given a fine dinner and deported themselves well. The exercises opened with prayer at 11 o'clock. The introductory speech giving a history and reason for the monument was delivered by the Rev. J. H. Thornwell. Ben Harris, son of Confederate veteran, then spoke.

He said love was the greatest thing in the world; illustrated the love of God in creation and providence. While other things fail love lasts until the millenium. Mortals attain much in life by love. Paul says completion only beyond where ear not hear nor eye not see. Love makes the Indian a friend of the white man. The Catawbas never took part against him but helped him in all life, in all wars - in the Revolution, and they send 20 braves to the Confederate war. "Love prompted White and Spratt to build a monument to the Confederate Indians. Much thank them good men. Indian love them. If white man had don Indian justice like White and Spratt good many of them would have been educated and able to make good speech. He declined to speak at first, but wanted to express thanks for the monument.

Was glad Indian is now getting education. Fifty years from now if wanted, Catawba he make good speech as white man. Much thank to people for love shown us. My forefathers show love by fighting and give life; I show love try to make a speech. All Indians grateful. Long remember this day." 1

Billy Harris then spoke as follows:

"Thank ladies for much big trouble done been take to give Indians good dinner. Catawbas never fight against white man but once since creation; never fight no more against him. Wish to thank everybody for all kindness. Takes grit for Indian to make speech. No more take up time. Much thank." 2

Rev. A. L. Stough said May 26th, 1756, the first prohibition petition on record, was sent by Chief Hagler to Justice Henley. In 1652 the Catawbas had a population of 10,000; 3 now it is 75.

In 1802 to 1820 the State spent \$900 for teaching and preaching to Indians.

Ben Harris told a joke of a fisherman to illustrate how the Catawbas have shrunk.⁴ A photograph was taken of the Indians standing around the monument.

Mr. Spratt sent conveyances to bring the Indians to Fort Mill. Every attention was shown to them by citizens.

The monuments to the women of the Confederacy and to the faithful slaves were erected by Captain S. E. White.

The Confederate monument was erected by Jefferson Davis association and is largely due to the efforts of J. M. Spratt, who for his efficient services (being too young to be in the army) was unanimously elected honorary member of a camp and of its executive committee. The monument to the Catawba Indians was erected by S. E. White and J. M. Spratt.

In the corner-stone was placed a list of all the Indians on the reservation, some 75 in number, also arrowheads, arrow points, pots, jars and Confederate relics.

The monument to the Indians is of limestone, 10-1/2 feet high, on a brick foundation 4 feet high. The die has carved on bass relief on one side a prairie scene, with a buffalo in the foreground, and on the opposite side a woodland scene, with a drove of wild turkeys feeding in their blissful forest home, the whole surmounted by an Indian statue crouching by a broken stump with drawn bow, as if in the act of felling the stag.

The following inscription is on the front of the die:

1600
Erected
to the
Catawba Indians
by
Sam'l Elliot White
and
James McKee Spratt

The latter is a descendant of Thomas "Kanawha" Spratt and the former a descendant of William Elliot, two of the first settlers in this portion of the Indian land (1755).

On the rear die is the following:

"The Catawba Indians, though a war-like nation, were ever friends of the white settlers. They aided and fought with the Americans in the Revolution, and the Confederates in the Civil War. Tradition says they immigrated to this portion of South Carolina from Canada about 1600, numbering some 12,000. 5 Their wars with the Cherokee, Shawnee and other nations, together with the smallpox, depleted their numbers greatly. In 1764 the province of South Carolina allotted them 15 miles square in York and Lancaster counties. About 1840 a new treaty was made, the State buying all their land, and afterwards laid them off 800 acres on the west bank of the Eswa Tavora (Catawba River), six miles south of Fort Mill, where the remnant, about 75, now live, receiving a small annuity from the State.

This is on the east base:

Some noted Carawbas: -

King Hagler,
Gen. New River,
Gen. Jim Kegg,
Col. David Harris,
Major John Joe, Capt.
Billie George,
Lieut. Phillips Kegg,
Sallie New River,
Pollie Ayers,
Peter Harris.

From the epitaph on the tombstone:

"The latter was made an orphan by the smallpox scourge; raised by "Kanawha" Spratt; received pension for services in the Revolution. At the age of 70 he returned to the Spratt homestead to die, and at his own request, was buried in the family graveyard.

The west base bears the following: Some of the soldiers in the Confederate Army: --

Jeff Ayers,
John Brown,
William Canty,
Bob Crawford,

Billy George,
Gilbert George,
Nelson George,
Bob Head,
Epp Harris.
Jim Harris,
John Harris,
Peter Harris,
Robert Marsh,
Bill Sanders,
John Sanders,
John Scott,
Alex Timins,

Here is a list of the Catawba Indians living on the reservation near here at the present time:

Lewis B. Gordon,
Sally Gordon;
Ruth Gordon,
Lewie Gordon,
Nora Gordon.
Margaret Brown.
John Brown,
Rachel Brown;
Early Brown,
Sally Brown,
Argada Brown.
Samuel Blue,
Louisa Blue;
Nelson Blue,
Lilly Blue,
Herbert Blue.
Tom Stevens.
Frank Canty,
Henry Canty.
William Sawyer.
John Sanders;
William Sanders,
Joseph Sanders,
Dora Sanders,

John Idrel Sanders,
Lewis Sanders.
James Watts,
Mary J. Watts.
David Ayers;
Annie Ayers,
Wade Ayers,
Mary Ayers,
Johnnie Ayers.
Ben P. Harris,
Sally H. Harris,
Robert W. Harris,
Nancy C. Harris,
William Harris,
Robert Lee Harris,
Nancy Harris,
Mary Harris,
James Harris,
Sarah Harris,
[David A. Harris,
Lizzie J. Harris,
Edith Harris,]
Vinia Harris,
Richard Harris,
Rhoda Harris,
Betsy Harris,
Epp Harris,
Martha J. Harris,
Margaret Harris,
Jesse Harris,
James Harris,
Luther Harris**, [** Luther Harris was white.
Gus H. Harris,
Edward Harris,
Wesley Harris,
Emma J. Harris,
Allen S. Harris,
Theodore Harris,
Bettie Harris,
Rose Harris,

Lottie Harris,
Emily George,
James M. George,
Della George,
Artemus George,
Carrie L. George,
Taylor George,
Margaret J. George,
Lucy J. George*, [* Lucy Jane George d/o Polly George b. 1886]
John P. George.

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