

NOTICE

This document is NOT a photo-reproduction of the original document. It was generated by manually entering text from the original into a word processor, and converting the resulting document file into the HTML and PDF formats for efficiency and clarity in display and downloading.

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
PUEBLO SECOND BRANCH PRESIDENCY
WESTERN STATES MISSION
PUEBLO, COLORADO

January 5, 1959

Elder Ezra Taft Benson
Washington, D.C.

Re: Catawba Indian Tribe
of South Carolina

Dear Elder Benson:

As you know the Catawba Indian Tribe is almost entirely Latter-Day Saint. Public Law 86-322 passed September 21, 1959, is an act to provide for the division of the tribal assets of the Catawba Indian Tribe among the members of the tribe according to the membership roll of the tribe to be prepared by the Secretary of the Interior with the assistance of the Tribe.

This morning Magdaline Garcia Croasmun, Dorothy Garcia Ong, and Irene Beck Garcia, all members of our Branch, came to my law office to see if I could help them make certain that their names, and names of members of their families, appear on the membership of the Tribe.

The story which they tell is most interesting. In the early days of the Restoration, Missionaries of the Church were sent to South Carolina where they contacted the Catawba Indian Tribe. Among those who were converted to the Gospel were James Patterson and Elizabeth White Patterson, both of the Tribe. Persecution against the Church was severe in the South at that time and finally in about 1887, Bro. and Sis. Patterson left South Carolina and journeyed West with a group of Saints and settled with the Mormon colony in the San Luis Valley of Colorado. Abbie Ellen Patterson, daughter of Bro. and Sis. Patterson, had been born on the reservation in South Carolina and was just 5 years of age when her parents took her from South Carolina to Colorado.

Interestingly enough, Abbie Ellen Patterson is still living, and she is one of those whose name we want to make certain is on the Tribal Membership Roll. She married Joseph Rufus Garcia and their children - all now adults - are Ben Garcia, Magdaline Garcia Croasmun, George Garcia, Labon Garcia, Elbert Garcia, Guy Garcia, Viola Garcia Schneider, Dorothy Garcia Ong, Martha Garcia Riedel, and Stella Garcia Erickson. Of this family, only Guy Garcia presently lives on the reservation in South Carolina, his address being Route 3, Rock Hill, South Carolina.

Irene Beck Garcia (wife of Ben Garcia) is a member of the Catawba Tribe in her own right, having been born on the reservation in South Carolina to tribal members Fletcher Beck and Sallie Brown Beck.

1/5/59

Elder Benson - page 2

These people are all members of the Church, and I want to do everything possible to make certain that their names appear on the membership roll of the Tribe so that they can share in the division of the tribal Assets.

Magdaline Garcia Croasmun is very active in the Church. Her son, Donald Guy Croasmun, is now laboring in the South Brazilian Mission. Dorothy Garcia Ong and her husband fullfilled [fulfilled]Stake Missions in the Denver Stake.

I am enclosing a copy of my letter to Supt. Darrel Fleming, Cherokee Indian Agency, Cherokee, N. C., and a copy of my cover letter to Secretary of the Interior.

If there is any way that you can assist these good people in obtaining their share of their Tribal inheritance, it would be appreciated. The key to the whole thing seems to be Guy Garcia who lives on the reservation. He is a son of Abbie Ellen Patterson Garcia and a brother of the others. He and the Tribal Chief should be able to provide the necessary information to make certain that all these names appear on the membership roll of the Tribe as finally prepared by Secretary Seaton.

Sincerely, your brother,

[signed Maurice A.Evensen]

President Maurice A. Evensen
225 Melrose Avenue
Pueblo, Colorado

MAE:hs