

The Conley Sisters



Lyda Burton Conley

"I will go to Washington and personally defend it,...If I do not then there is no cemetery in this land safe from sale, at the will of the government."¹

Lyda Burton Conley

Lyda, Helena, and Ida Conley were the sisters who made the famous defense of the Huron Cemetery between 1906 and 1913, when sale of the cemetery was proposed in Congress. The sisters erected a small fortified shed on the grounds of the cemetery and through their efforts were successful in saving the historic spot.

Lyda Conley, who defended the cemetery before the Supreme Court of the United States, was the first woman of Native American ancestry to appear before that high court and argue a case.

Further Reading

1. Dayton, Kim. " 'Trespassers, Beware!': Lyda Burton Conley and the Battle for Huron Place Cemetery," *Yale Journal of Law and Feminism*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 1996. pp. 1-30.
2. Morello, Karen Berger. "Rebels and Reformers," in *The Invisible Bar*, 1986. New York, NY. pp. 122-125.

¹Martin, I.T. "Living in a City of the Dead," *Kansas Magazine*, June 1909. Wichita, Ks. pp.51-52.