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Ida Conley Was Noted for Huron Cemetery Stand

(Transcriptions are presented without changes except to improve readability.)

Miss Ida Conley, who took part in a fight through the courts and congress to save the Huron park Indian burial ground from sale since 1906, died yesterday at the home, 1704 North Third.

Because of the 40-year fight she and her sisters, Lyda and Helena Conley, waged to protect the burial ground against sale, they were in the news many times.

Several times the city announced plans for purchasing the cemetery, after congress in 1906 authorized its sale by the secretary of the Interior. When an Oklahoma representative in congress introduced a bill to authorize the sale of the tract, with the proceeds to go to the Wyandotte tribe of Oklahoma, the proposal stirred the Conley sisters and many civic groups to take action to preserve the cemetery, which is the burial ground of several hundred Wyandott Indians.

Took over Cemetery

When commissioners appointed by the secretary of the interior prepared to remove the graves, the sisters, lineal descendants of the Wyandotts, whose father and mother are buried there, determined to save the graves of their ancestors.

They took over possession of the cemetery, and a little house or fort was built over the graves of their father and mother and death was avowed to any one who dared enter the cemetery to attempt to remove the bodies.

Her sister Lyda had studied law. She filed a suit in the federal court against the secretary of the interior to restrain him from selling or interfering with the cemetery. Slowly the case dragged its way through the lower courts to the supreme court. She was allowed to appear and present her case.

On January 31, 1910, there came the decision of the supreme court ruling she could not establish a legal or equitable title to the land or any right to have the cemetery undisturbed by the United States, but the defeat was not for long.

Law Repealed

Congressman Charles Curtis visited Kansas City, W.R. Honnell, and outstanding civic

leader in Kansas City, Kansas before his death, served as his guide. He took him through the cemetery and convinced him that virtually no one in Kansas City, Kansas wanted the cemetery destroyed. The congressman promised an attempt to get the law repealed, and did. The statute was repealed in June, 1913.

Her sister Lyda, died in 1946. Her other sister, Helena, is still living.

Funeral services will be held at 10 a.m. tomorrow at the Gibson funeral home. Burial will be in the cemetery she and her sisters fought so long to save, the Wyandotte National Burial Grounds.