

Track 5 **Letha King Wheeler** (d/o **Margaret Belle Brown King Dowdy**, d/o **Sena Brown Porter**, s/o **Andrew Jackson Porter**) and her daughter **Eva Wheeler Owens**.

1981 Interview with **JC Porter** (s/o Don, s/o Everett, s/o Jasper, s/o Alex, s/o Andrew Jackson Porter) Marion, IN JCPorter@indy.rr.com

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JC Talking to **Letha King Wheeler**, d/o of **Margaret Belle Brown King** d/o Sena Porter Brown d/o Andrew Jackson Porter and Letha's daughter Eva Owens.

JC You never heard of **James Floyd Day**, (s/o **Martha Porter Day**, d/o **Andrew Jackson Porter**) did you, your grandma's cousin? He'd be your mom's first cousin.

Letha Yeah, I never did hear. (:0012)

JC Your grandma (**Sena Porter Brown**, d/o Andrew Jackson Porter) had a sister **Martha Day**. Her husband was **Daniel Day** and he died in the late 1870's and she took her family to Louisville to the Masonic Home, for Orphans and raised them there. You never heard em tell about that?

Letha No, I never did hear them tell it.

Eva Well, see grandma was born in '76', so she would have been mighty little when that happened. Yeah. So she probably never knew anything about that family, and we lived near grandfather Brown's (**Fleming Low Brown**, h/o **Sena Porter Brown**) and tell ----

Letha Well, I was about, well, I was six years old when mother married the second time and a year no, two years later we left Carter County and I never had any time I was eight years old when we left Carter County.

Eva In this point of time ----

Letha (1:00) Wasn't around the family much after that.

JC Yeah.

Eva Just what Grandma would talk about. That's what we'd remember. And mother thought an awful lot of her family. Sometime, when you, when you got the time we'll get those and I bet you they've got pictures of all of them having those.

JC Well, we went over, when we were down that time and you told us about one of them old pictures. And we went over and talked to, one of those Otis boys.

Letha Oh, you've already seen some of them then?

JC Over by **Owingsville**. He didn't know anything about it. It was one of their sons Huston – **Huston Flannery** or **Huston Otis**. His first name was Huston because that was (the) name of his grandpa. I remember I had it spelled wrong.

Letha Uh-Huh

JC It was over by **Owingsville**. I think that was where it was.

Letha Now **Vergie Brown** would know. Now she seemed to know better than anybody I talked to.

Eva She probably (was) the one that gave you their names, because I didn't really remember any of the first names.

JC Well, you told us the one who'd died. He'd died about 5 years ago and - -

Eva Yeah

JC We went over there asking. They said, yeah, he died, but his son lives up the road.

Eva Oh well. Now, I thought that maybe **Virgie (Brown)** had give you more information than that.

Letha She was the one who told me that Otis was a Flannery.

Eva Yeah. My step-grandmother was a Flannery. (**Molly Flannery**, 2nd wife of **Fleming Low Brown**)

JC Huh? Was she any relation to any of them other Flannery's?

Eva or Letha I don't know and I didn't –

Eva She was the one grandpa married after Sena (**Sena Porter Brown** 1st wife of **Fleming Low Brown** and d/o **Andrew Jackson Porter**) died. Flannery.

Letha **Molly Flannery.**

JC Yeah, **Huston Flannery**, Route one, **Salt Lick**. He's the one we talked to. He, he was about – oh, he's probably in his 40's. He had a garage there, I think. He worked on cars.

Letha (2;51) I'll tell you who you can talk to, and boy, she can tell you about the Porter alright..

Eva Who's that?

Letha **Mrs. Click.**

Eva Yeah

Letha She and I were talking on the phone the other night and she was telling me the awfulest lot of things about the Porters. She said Uncle **Jim Porter** (s/o **Andrew Jackson Porter**) had an awful good boy and he was killed. (**Ed Porter**, son of Jim, son of Andrew J. Porter)

JC Yeah

Letha One of them **Kegley's** killed him. And she said this boy, one of her husband's people shot him and cut his throat. And they told him he'd better leave that country.

Eva Who's that, a **Stegal**?

Letha No, it was a **Click**. No, what is the husband, first husband's name? Uh

JC A **Holbrooks** or a **Skeens**?

Letha **Skeens – Skeens**

Eva Uh-huh **Skeens.**

Letha And said he left & went to **Texas** and never did come back, the one who did the murder.

JC And that was some of her family that did that?

Letha Some of her family that did that. Her husband's family that did that.

Letha And she told me the awfulest lot of things. Just a talking, I can't remember things she told. She lives in **Flemingsburg**. Now she really remembers. She grew up and lived up in there among them.

JC How old is she?

Letha Oh, she's real old, as old as I am, I guess.

JC Yeah. Where about in **Flemingsburg** does she live?

Letha Well, I don't know exactly. Eva, do you know?

Eva No, I don't.

JC What's her name?

Eva **Bertellah Click**

JC What's her first name?

Eva Bertellah

JC Bertellah?

Eva Bertellah

JC Click?

Eva? **Bertellah Click**

JC Was she married?

Letha Yeah. She don't go by the Click name.

Eva Oh well, **Bertella Skeens** ----she took her ---- her first husband's name. She had remarried after Clyde died, **Clyde Skeens** died. She married a Click man but they didn't get along, so, I guess he's still living.

Letha No, I don't think so.

Eva Isn't he? I just thought—

Letha I have never heard if he is. (4:30) Now they just now settled up. She's got the last payment on her land?

JC Does she live in town, there?

Letha Yeah, she lives in town in the trailer. Do you know where that widow (of) that man killed himself up there. Do you know where she lives?

Eva **Emma Gritts?**

Letha Uh-Huh

Eva Out the other side of town as you're going towards **Maysville**, I think. But, Mother, I don't

Letha (4:50)

Eva Well, Emma may have come to town, you know, after he killed himself. She talks about Mrs. Gritts an awful lot and she says she's awful good to her.

Letha Now, she knows the Porters a lot better than I do. She told me times & things, the things that happened, you know, in the Porter family. Yeah She learned I was connected with em. And she's an awful talker. (5:18)

Eva You'd sure get a good take from her.

Letha Yes, and she's got a good memory.

Eva I tell you what, I'll bring her? If you let me know when you're coming down home, I'll see that she comes out home.

JC I might get over there and see her. I got a couple more days before I got to go back.

Letha **Miss Royse** could, might tell you where she lives. (5:38) You want to call her and see?

JC Here you want me ---you want to sit over here?

Letha No, uh-huh (5:42)

Patty Here, I'll give it to you. Ok.

Letha (5:50) it won't reach this far. Laughs

Patty Ok, set it right there.

Eva Just set it right there? Now that's funny. (Laughs) Put your knee under it or hold it or something for her. Set it right there. You'll think we're the craziest bunch you ever did see.

Letha (6:13) Oh, I'm a dialing _____, I'm sorry Phoebe. I didn't know you was on the line. (Telephone)

Eva Oh, ask her how she is.

Letha How are you? Good. Eva wanted to know.

JC (Laughs)

Letha I'm sorry, I generally always listen --Lester done me that away one night, her husband, this woman's husband, Lester (6:30)

Eva This young girl , she's a real sweet person. She's not a girl -- I mean, she's younger than I am (6:35) Her brain is dying.

JC Oh, it is?

Letha He just brought her home from the hospital today and Lester told me last night he's going after her this morning. (6:40)

Eva But it's motor side of her brain is dying , not the vital signs part, and she's dragging one leg and her arm is getting useless.

JC Huh

Letha She's so pretty.

JC How old is she?

Eva & Letha She's, early 50's. Well, I started to say early 50's, but she's only –

Letha I thought she was 56.

Eva Land, I didn't know Emma, that she was that near my age.

Eva Course Lester is 2 years younger than I am. Well, now she's in her 50's. Well, I say that's about right because Lester's 60 or 61 Lester's already -- Yeah He's 61. (7:23) He's older than Jay (**Jay Wheeler** s/o **Letha King Wheeler**) and Jay is 61? 56 I think that's about right, but don't seem that– that she's near my age.

Letha Land a mercy, she's got grown grandchildren.

Eva Almost grown anyway.

Letha They are grown. She's got two that's grown up. Sherry[s girl and (7.46)_____

JC This woman at **Flemingsburg** – how's she related to the **Skeens** that killed him? (**Ed Porter**, s/o Jim, s/o AJP)

Eva Uh, her husband was a **Skeens**.

Letha She married a **Skeens** first time, then she married that old man

Eva Click. And they didn't click. (Laughs) This old man Click.

Letha Married old man Click. Now when she divorced him she went back (&) took her first husband's name.

JC Yeah

Eva I'd say it was probably her husband's cousin that done the killing.

JC Huh

Letha Some of her husband's family. And she told _____(8:25)

Eva Well now, one of them, there was a **Stegal**, (was) mixed up in the killing.

JC **Henry Kegley** killed **Jim Porter**. They said ---

Eva Kegley? Did you ever run across a **Stegal** (8:38) _____?

JC No, I hadn't heard of that. I don't –

Letha (8:41) **Drew Evans** wife sat and told me all about that killing. She seen it.

JC She saw it?

Letha Uh-Huh. She was working in the office –

JC Oh

Letha --at the time. She was in the school board office (8:50) and she said that this (**Henry**) **Kegley** & Uncle **Jim (Porter)** was into an argument and he stabbed Uncle Jim with a knife. And she said Mr. Porter shouldn't I get the doctor and he said, "No, I'm not hurt bad." Said in about 5 minutes, I think she said, said he sat down in a chair, sitting there he said, "Maybe you better call the doctor." and she just glanced and he was gone.

JC Huh

Letha (9:20) Old man, Drew Evans, **Drew Evans** widow told me that several years ago---

JC Huh

Letha If she was living she could tell you all about the Porters, you'd want to ask, but she's gone.

Eva She was a Thompson, wasn't she?

Letha Yeah and she had such a good memory. She was a sister to Uncle **Andy Porter**. Well, a cousin to Porters.

Letha **Pearl (Thompson)**

JC Yeah, that was her sister?

Letha Uh-huh

Eva Now, I knew there was a connection with you and I told you I didn't know what the connection was. Sisters.

JC Yeah

Letha And Pearl moved to Morehead and she wanted me to meet her so bad, but I never did get to see her.

JC Huh. Jim's got a daughter living -ninety two years old.

Letha He has?

JC Yeah, **Kate (Jackson)**

Letha I'd love to see her.

JC She lives in Middletown, Ohio. Well, she was born in 1889, that'd make her 93, I guess.

Eva 83 --- 89 now I said 99. Yeah 93.

JC Yeah, 93.

Letha When did you day she was born?

JC 1889

Eva 1889 Put 10 more years on your age.

JC Yeah. She's in real good health. (She) lives there by herself. Lot of Jim's family moved up to **Middletown, Ohio** for a while. Some of them stayed up there. His wife and some of the kids. She said at one time or other all his kids lived in Middletown. Most of them moved back and some stayed up there.

Letha You know I'm a long ways from where (10:58) I was when Mother was a young girl.

JC Oh, you are?

Letha Yeah, Mother (would've been) a way over a hundred now.

Eva And Mother's 82 this December. Gee, oh.

JC (Laughs)

Letha And I'm the only one out of 9 children, living.

JC Huh. Are you one of the youngest?

Letha No, I 'm third oldest, (from the)---

JC Really?

Letha --first family. There was three of the first children and she re-married, (then) 6 more children.

JC Huh

Letha And they are all dead. And my sister & brother's (are) dead. (**James King** and **Lillie King Harris**) Eva (11:33)

JC Huh

Eva And dad (**Joseph Wheeler**) was the last one in his family.

JC Huh. I don't think I have anything written down on that family, do I?

Eva On who?

JC On your, on your mom's brothers & sisters and their kids.

Eva Uh, not much I don't guess. (Do) you want me to write it out?

JC If you ever get a chance, I'd, --

Eva I'll take my time and I'll do that.

Letha You want a cup of coffee?

JC No thanks.

Eva He doesn't like coffee.

JC (Laughs)

Eva I'd give him coffee, he wouldn't have it.

JC (Laughs)

Letha Well, I drink a lot of coffee. (Laughs)

JC Yeah if you ever get around to it, write that down for me.

Eva Well, there was Aunt **Millie's (Brown)** and Uncle **Jimmie's (King)** and --

JC And some of them.

Eva Some of them didn't have children.

JC Yeah

Eva **Virgil (Dowdy, s/o Margaret Belle Brown King Dowdy)** was and then of course **Barbara (Shepherd, d/o Ora Dowdy, d/o Margaret Dowdy)** was one of them—you've got Barbara.

JC Send me some of their addresses if you know it or where they live.

Eva OK

Letha Maybe, you might like to meet some of the Dowdy boys.

Eva Yeah.

Letha They was real nice boys, that's my half brother.

Eva That's **Virgil Dowdy's** children the oldest one of the Dowdy kids.

JC Is one of them a sheriff?

Eva No, one's a State Trooper.

JC OK. **Harlan (Porter, s/o Alexander (Porter), s/o Andrew Jackson Porter)** was telling me about that last year. He said he met a Dowdy that was a State Trooper and said that he was related, and he didn't know which, which one it was.

Eva Un-huh, **Lonnie (Dowdy, s/o Virgil Dowdy, s/o Margaret Dowdy)**, Lonnie Lonnie , (call him Buck).

JC Yeah

Letha His dad nicknamed him...

Eva When Virgil died, when Buck's, when Lonnie's daddy died, every trooper, even to the girls, the trooper, we had women troopers here at that time. Everyone of them but one, was at my Uncle's funeral. Everybody from the post (13:05)_____ was at the funeral.

JC I'll be darned.

Eva They didn't do that even for one of their own that died here.

JC Huh

Eva When the Caudill boy died, he was a State Trooper, and they didn't turn out like that to go to his funeral.

JC Huh

Letha **Lawrence, Lonnie, & Don,** and **Gene,** and **Betty** and **Johnny,** and **Johnson,** boys and **Betty's** the girl.

Eva Betty. Seemingly everybody thinks an awful lot of Buck.

Letha They do all them boys.

Eva Yeah

JC And which one was it you said had the picture with all the Porter's in it? That was a Flannery?

Eva Uh, no, Otis.

JC That was an Otis?

Eva Un-huh, **Mrs. Otis.** She was a Flannery before she married. (She) married an Otis.

JC Where'd did she live at?

Eva Down just this side, the other side down the other side of **Salt Lick,** uh, **Pea Sticks.** I think's the name of the little village. She and her husband are both dead, now.

Letha You talked to one of the sons.

JC Yeah

Letha (14:09) and he could come here and tell me who got her things.

Eva Well, now if he was a Flannery, he was, instead of an Otis, he wasn't a son, unless he was her son before she married the Otis.

Letha (14:17)

Eva No, she was a Flannery before she married, and he got **Huston Flannery** down there and if he wasn't an Otis, then he's not Mr Otis's son. I think you gave it as **Huston Flannery.**

JC Yeah, I think I did.

Eva Now she might have had a child before she married. But she was a Flannery. -----(14:39)

JC **Huston Flannery,** this woman was the Otis?

Letha But she was a Flannery & married **Bill Otis.** That's what **Virgie (Brown)** told me..

Eva Un-huh She was a Flannery before she ever married and she married Mr. Otis.

JC Wonder what the Otis' name was?

Eva Patty, do you know? Bill, **Bill Otis.**

Patty William.

Eva Bill Otis.

Eva Uh-huh. Yeah, **Bill Otis.**

JC Is **Clendarious Otis** one of the boys?

Eva I don't know.

JC Lives at **Owingsville?** Let's see, Bill Otis and ----

Eva What was her name, now? Huh. It's an odd name.

Letha If I ever heard , I don't remember.

Eva Well, huh. And I've got a Hunt. She was a **Hunt** before she married, a girl's name, that's in Indiana, some place – the name and address to write to and find about the Hunt generation, too.

JC Is she related to our Hunt's?

Eva Yeah, but I don't know how. I mean, I was just told about it and given the name. And I can't even remember her name now.

It's stuck here in my desk.

JC (15:54) If you ever find it, send that up to me. I'll write to her.

Letha Ok. We'll find (16:02)

Eva I'll just have to call her again & ask her.

Letha (16:13) Virgie give him a bawling out, I bet you. I got so tickled. _____ She was out there fixing beans and he never did call her.

Eva She found out about it, she'd rake him over the coals about right.

Letha I haven't talked to her in a long time. I didn't want to sit there very long. We just kept talking.

Eva Mother, who did this, you know? It's pretty.

Letha & Eva (16:40–17:07) (Talking about objects they are looking at)

JC I bet that guy's name is **Huston Otis** and I've got **Huston Flannery**.

Eva Well, it may be.

JC Cause Molly, **Steve Porter's** girl, married **Huston Flannery**. I've got their families written down. I'll have to check that (and figure out what's (17:23).

Eva **Huston Otis, Huston Flannery**. Having two – more than likely, you did this. Cause she was a Flannery before she married and she married (17:45) and Grandma Molly was a Flannery before she (married) a Brown (Fleming Low Brown), and she had one boy, one boy before she married him.

Letha (17:54) _____

Eva Yeah, he went by her maiden name. Yeah. Now he, I think, died up in Ohio. (18:00) And she's not been dead no real long time.

JC Yeah. Somebody told us five years for one of them, either the man or wife.

Letha **J. P.** went to him and **& Jim Ridlin**, traded places and he left _____ (18:21) Never hear from him no more. There's not a connection to the Porter Family. No, they wasn't married (18:42) been married before.

JC I might, maybe, get over to talk with that **Skeens** lady at **Flemingsburg**. (18:52)

Eva See if _____ is still on the phone. I bet she hung up. I'll have to apologize to her for that. Still on there?

Eva **Miss Royse** is real good friends with Bertellah. She'd probably give directions how to get there. Now when she lived here in Rowan County, I've been to her house, and one of her daughters lived right out by us.

Letha _____ I won't get her.

Eva Maybe she's in by now. It's getting cold. (19:27) If she wants to can tomorrow, she'll be picking this evening. She said she's going to can beans today.

Letha Come on **Miss Royse** and answer. (Trying to reach her by telephone)

Eva Let me look in the _____ And maybe I can tell by looking at it where she is.

Letha I'd call **Miss Skeens**, but she's so hard of hearing. I can't hardly make her understand who I am.

JC Yeah?

Eva So Mother just waits for her to call her.

JC (Laughs) Yeah. We're in Fleming County, now aren't we?

Eva Un-huh. Yeah Here's Bertellah. She lives on Crawford Avenue – 254 Crawford Avenue. 254 Crawford Avenue

JC She lives in a trailer? Yeah I probably can find that pretty easy.

Eva BERTELLAH (Eva Says the letters) Bertellah. Now I would've put it tilla, TILLA, see I would have I was going to spell it.

Letha Now she's sure a talker. She's hard of hearing, and the longer she talks --- I can't hardly get her to understand who I am.

JC Yeah

Letha I tried to get the number of the church (from) the woman I was talking to (and she) said I can't hear you, talk louder. Well, I was talking loud as I could. Finally I just hung up. I never did get it.

JC See to get over to that **Betty Brown's** (d/o **Virgil Dowdy**, s/o **Margaret Belle Brown Dowdy**, d/o **Sena Porter Brown**, d/o **Andrew Jackson Porter**) . Let's see, we're over here.

Eva Yeah, you go right back out 158 --

JC Go right back out (&) hit 158?

Patty Right

JC Go on up past your road and turn right on 32.

Patty Right

JC Turn left on 377

Patty Right

JC And it's there on that road.

Eva I kind of dread of them going to Betty's, you know, what kind of notion she's in.

Letha Betty's not home.

Eva Oh! Betty's not home. She's --- (21:15)

Letha Betty's in_____

Eva Betty's in Michigan

Letha Michigan or someplace.

JC Oh, she is? Yeah

Eva She's gone to her daughter's. I forgot about it. She went home with her daughter, Saturday. Yeah, I'm glad you mentioned that.

JC (Laughs)

Eva That slipped my mind completely. I knew it.

JC (Laughs)

Eva Yeah. They took the children up there and kept them a month and then when they come down Betty went home with them.

JC Well, that made that easy.

Eva Yeah.

Patty Well, now she's --

JC Laughs

Patty Saved it up

Eva Saved you that trip

Letha (21:40) She's come home, that's where she's at.

Eva No, she wouldn't be back yet. Because she went to stay a few days.

Letha (21:14) I've been homesick. I miss folks, I wished she'd come down. I wonder how that tobacco's doing. If it's doing any good at all, I'll help buy them sticks and **Tennis (Brown)**, Betty's husband has a thousand tobacco sticks coming.

JC Yeah

Letha (22:02) posts & tobacco poles.

Eva Posts – poles

Letha I've heard that time after time. Tobacco posts.

Eva He'll say fence posts & tobacco posts instead of tobacco sticks. Someplace up above, I don't know where it's coming from, it comes through. It sounds cute.

End of tape (22:25)