

91 year old Kate Porter Jackson 12-18-1979 (daughter of Jim Porter, son of Andrew J. Porter) Track 2

JC: They called you the best looking girl in the country when you were young?

Kate: That's what they told me.

JC: Who told you that?

Kate: Neighbors around.

JC: Neighbor boys?

Kate: No, it wasn't no boys.

Kate: I never had a lot of boyfriends.

JC: You didn't.

Kate: No. My husband's been dead for 20 years, and I never thought of another man. I had a chance to marry. I could have married a man with money. I don't believe in marrying unless it is love. You shouldn't marry somebody if you don't love em. That's just the way I feel about marriage.

JC: Did your family go to church a lot when you were young?

Kate: We had to go all the time. We never was allowed to miss.

JC: Your mom and dad made you go?

Kate: We had to go. They made us go. (1:10) (Neighbor lady comes in.)

JC: (2:00) You say your dad (Jim Porter) made you go to church every Sunday?

Kate: Yes sir.

JC: Where did you go to church at?

Kate: Stark, KY. We lived about 2 miles. We was just allowed a pair of shoes every so often. We had to take care of them. We would go barefooted until we would get to the top of the hill, then we would sit down and put our shoes on.

JC: So what church did you go to?

Kate: Methodist.

JC: Old Fairview?

Kate: No, Fairview was on quite a ways. Fairview was where Uncle Steve lived. (Steve Porter, s/o Andrew J. Porter) This was Stark, KY.

JC: You went to the Stark Methodist Church?

Kate: Stark Methodist Church.

JC: Was your dad a good Christian man?

Kate: Yes, and my mother was too? (2:40)

Dale: Is that Aunt Bess? (looking at a picture)

Kate: Yes, where did you find that? (2:50)

Kate: (8:00) She looked old when she was young, because she had to work so hard. She raised us children. My mother worked in the store, and she had 10 children. When her children were born, she'd just turn em over to my sister, and my sister would raise them. She was a mother to all of us.

JC: Your mom looks awful old in this picture. (1904 Jim Porter family group picture)

Kate: When that was taken, I guess she had ear syphilis? (8;30), and she come pretty near a dying.

JC: She did? She had syphilis?

Kate: Ear syphilis(?) I don't know what it is, but she liked to have died. They had to cut her hair off. No, she never had no syphilis. (laughing) My mother was as fine a woman as (8:54) ever walked on two legs, if I do say, she was my mother.

She said I'd be alright if I didn't have such a temper, and she didn't have too much of a temper? (9:13) Ain't no body goin to do something to rub it in on me. I'd hold my own, with any of them? I don't believe in letting people run over you. I believe in holding your own.

JC: Do you remember when your brother (Ed Porter) was killed?

Kate: No, I sure don't.

JC: I mean do you remember how it happened, and all that?

Kate: Well, I remember how it happened, and I hate to tell you. Andy was a goin with a married woman.

JC: He was?

Kate: Yes. He went with her, and they wouldn't get married, and she turned in and married someone else, thought she'd spite my brother. Well my brother didn't want her. (9:54)

JC: You mean she wasn't married at the time, she was engaged, going to be married?

Kate: Yes, but she went with him after she was married.

JC: Oh.

Kate: She was going with him, and kept a writing to my brother, Andy. That was the cause of my brother's (Ed) death. She wrote and told Andy to meet her at a certain place, this married woman did. My brother Ed told his friend about it, and then he told some of her people. They killed him over that. My brother was just as innocent as you are of goin with some married woman right now. He never would have thought, he didn't believe in that. But my oldest (brother), Andy, he done wrong. He knew she was married.

JC: How did they happen to meet up with him (Ed)?

Kate: Well my brother Ed had a mill where you grind corn meal. He had that mill and he had worked all day that day. He had a girlfriend. He was going to go see her that night at Sandy Hook. He was going to go see her, and he a bought her, that was when they used those feather fans, he had bought her a fan, to take to her. He stopped in the store. He told somebody in there about my brother getting word from this married woman (11:15) and they went right and told her people, and her husband and her brother killed my brother (Ed).

JC: They did?

Kate: They put out a \$5000 reward for them, but they skipped out during the night and they never seen or heard tell of.

JC: Those two men?

Kate: Ya, the one's that killed my brother. One of them wrote back to some of their people and said, "Ed Porter walks with me of the day and sleeps with me every night." His conscience. They got away, and they never did get em, and they never did come back to that country.

JC: Who were the two men?

Kate: Well one of them was a Skeens. ____ (12:00) and her father was a minister. This girl that my brother (Andy) was going with, her father was a minister, and a Sunday School teacher.

When they shot him, seemed like he just couldn't get saved, and they sent for this girl's father to come and pray for him. He come to pray for him and he said, "Ed, what is the trouble?" He (Ed) said, "Well Mr. Skeens, it is hard to say." Now I was right there and heard this. "It is hard to say that you love the man that takes your life." He said, "Well you have to say it." And he looked up and said, "Lord, I love everybody." And he was saved right then. ____ (12:45) I do remember that part of it. I held his hand till the last breath left in him. I was holding his hand on one side of the bed, and your dad was on the other side. (Kate speaking to Dale Porter, son of Bill Porter) We both held his hand till he died.

JC: You say they shot him.

Kate: Ya, they shot him. They shot him, then one of them tried to cut his throat with a knife.

JC: He lived after that then?

Kate: Oh yes, he lived. Like I said, he had to get saved, so he lived till he got saved. That would be hard to say you loved the man that took your life. That would be hard to say. He told this girl's father that, he said, "Ed, you have to say it." Ed looked up and prayed, "Lord, I love everybody." He didn't any more than get the word out of his mouth, and he was saved. He meant it! He did. He had to. In order to get right with the Lord. But he died happy.

JC: He was just about 20 when he died?

Kate: I really don't know his age. He was more than 20. He had taught two schools. I imagine he was teaching school when _____ (14:15)

JC: Do you remember the story of the night your dad got killed?

Kate: Well, I'll have to think a little. He was killed in Sandy Hook, KY, I know that. My brother Andy was applying for a first class certificate for a school teacher. He had taught school, and another party was applying for that first class certificate. Let's see, how was that? My brother and my father had went to Sandy Hook that day, and he told somebody up there, that this fellow said that he would kill every Porter of the name, before he would let them teach that school.

JC: Who said that?

Kate: The man that killed my father.

JC: Was his name Kegley?

Kate: I don't know who it was. I don't remember. But anyway, they said up at Sandy Hook, somebody told him that he'd kill every Porter of the name before he would let them teach the school. And they killed him. Then and right there. Killed him right there. He never lived to say nothing. They said when he fell, he said, "Lord have mercy on my wife and children." As ____ (16:52) would say, "I remember that." (crying)

JC: Didn't it happen in the Sheriff's office?

Kate: It happened at Sandy Hook, but I don't know if it was in the office or not. I imagine it was. I don't know.

JC: How did everyone in your family take it?

Kate: I loved my father better than I loved my own self. I loved my father better than I did my mother. I was always out on the farm with him. I didn't like house work. I just wanted to work on the farm. I told me father, you can make me go to school, but you can't make me learn. You might as well take me out in the stalk field and I'll cut stalks? I could do any thing on a farm that a man could do. I've done everything on a farm a man could do. I've plowed, turned ground, built fence, I've cut corn, and I've shucked corn. I'd swing that old plow around there, and done everything on a farm a man can do. He said, "Well if that's the way you feel." I said, "That is the way I feel, I want to work on the farm, I don't want to go to school." I didn't have an education. I never did regret it.

JC: How far did you go in school?

Kate: About the 4th or 5th grade I guess. (laughing) I sat behind my sister and some of them and copied off of them. I just didn't like school, and I didn't intend to go. If they'd have whipped me everyday, I still wouldn't have went to school. I'd have went, but I wouldn't have learned.

So my dad said, "If that is the way you feel, we will just take you out and put you in the stalk field." I said, "Suits me." I started working the field when I was 8 years old, tending the farm. And that was pretty young. I worked until I got married and had kids.

JC: Your dad raised a lot of corn did he?

Kate: Not a whole lot of corn. Just enough to feed his stock. He bought a lot of stock. He would buy it to sell, and drive it to market. He made a good living that way. We never wanted for anything. We never had a whole lot. We always had plenty to eat and a bed to sleep on that was sufficient.

JC: Did he hire a lot of people around there to work for him?

Kate: He had, of course my brothers both taught school. He had two men, and sometimes one. And he would tell them if he could keep up with me, he would pay them extra. But neither one of them could keep up with me. I was a worker when I was young, I will say that. And I've worked ever since.

Dale: You sure have.

Kate: I sure have. I had a big house over there with six rooms upstairs _____ (20:12) and I never went on no charity, I never asked for help. I've made my livin all those years and never asked for anything. The church over there come over and wanted to know if I wanted to sign up, and get some stuff. I said, "I'm not on welfare." They said, "Well you are on a low income." I made it. I made it all these years, and I still make it till I die.

JC: (21:05) Have you ever heard them say anything about your grandpa Porter?
(Andrew J. Porter)

Kate: I've never heard them talk about him.

JC: You've been to the Fairview Church haven't you?

Kate: Ya.

JC: Did you know he is buried up there?

Kate: Who is? _____ (21:08)

JC: Your grandpa Porter.

Kate: No, I didn't know that. I know when my mother died, she talked about going back to KY to be buried, but then she changed her mind. She was buried here. And when my sister was here from Montana, was that about 3 years ago?

Dale: Ya. Before you moved down, when you still lived over there.

Kate: About three years ago, I think it was, she was here. We went back to KY. We went to the old cemetery, and we never could find where our father was buried. Never could find him.

JC: You couldn't? He is buried at Old Fairview too.

Kate: I know it, but we couldn't find his grave. We found the church and all like that, but we never did find our father's grave. The church sat up on, was you ever there?

JC: Ya, I was there last night.

Kate: Was you? The church sat up on the bank, and people seemed to think they had high waters, and it had washed that monument away.

JC: Your dad's (Jim Porter) tombstone is still there, and so is your brother's (Ed Porter).

Kate: It is?

JC: They are right there in the back of the cemetery.

Kate: Well we couldn't find it.

JC: You came up the hill, and the church...

Kate: Ya.

JC: The church sets facing this way.

Kate: Ya.

JC: There are some tombstones over here, and he is back here in the back, in that back corner.

Kate: We went all around there, and couldn't find it.

JC: I think he's got a sort of a tall monument, with a point on top. (23:00)

Kate: We never could find it. My sister Sarah wanted to find it so bad. Well I did too, but we never did find it. Some of them said maybe the water got high and washed them away.

JC: Do you know any of the Porters who live down there now?

Kate: No.

Dale: Where are all of Andy's kids? Did they all move away?

Kate: I don't know where they are at Dale. Some of them moved to Dayton, and I don't know what become of them. Some of them come to see me once after they, see Andy's boy used to room with me. I think for nearly nothing. And when he left, I was so good to him. He owed a lot of telephone bills (23:50) His wife seemed to think the world of me, and they come to see me one time, and I wasn't home, and they never did come back (24:01). So I don't know where they are at. They are in Dayton I guess. But they didn't think much of me to be that close and not come and hunt me up. I've been here so many years that I am well known here. Ought to be, I lived in that big red brick over there for about 3 years.

Kate: I think it was about 20 years, wasn't it? I lived there when your twins was little. Then when I moved from there, I moved up over the funeral home and I lived there 17 years.

Dale: You lived in that big house across the street too. You lived across the street in the big house in the 40's. (24:48)

Kate: You mean there where _____ (24;55) Well I never lived across the street from that.

Dale: Yes you did too. (thru 25:20) (more discussion about where Kate lived)

JC: What's the name of the cemetery where your mom is buried?

Dale: Woodside.

JC: That's in Middletown?

Dale: Yes (25:30)

JC: When were you married? Were you married in Carter County?

Kate: No. West Virginia.

Dale: West Virginia?

JC: What were you doing over there?

Kate: I was staying in Ashland, Ky there doing housework. (26:07 Kate talks about meeting her husband)

JC: So you just went across the border to get married. What year was that?

Kate: Well, my girl's got the record. What records we have, she's got em up there. I just can't tell you right off.

JC: He was Jack Jackson?

Kate: Well his name wasn't Jack. That was a nickname.

Dale: George.

Kate: George Walter. (26:47) Jack was a nickname they gave him.

JC: Your oldest sister Lucy moved to Idaho. Whereabouts in Idaho?

Kate: Well I can't think right now. You ought to know, (talking to Dale) you've been there haven't you?

Dale: Ya, I was there, but I can't remember. Was it Boise, Idaho?

Kate: I don't know. It wasn't too far from Salt Lake City.

Dale: It was too many years ago.

JC: She was living when you were there?

Dale: Oh ya.

JC: How long has she been dead?

Dale: How long has Lucy been dead?

Kate: Lord, I don't know.

JC: Does she have a lot of kids out there now?

Dale: Some of them live in California don't they?

Kate: I just had a letter from the one girl today, and she's in Oregon.

JC: You've got her address then? Do you have that letter handy?

Dale: Where's it at, I'll get it Aunt Kate. Right here?

Kate: I threw the envelope away. (Kate shuffling through the trash can)

Dale: _____ (29:16) JC & Dale looking at JC's chart.

Kate: Here it is Dale. Lena Baker.

JC: Lena Baker is her name? This is Lucy's daughter? (29:47)

Kate: Ya.

JC: You say you also have Sarah's address?

Kate: Ya. I'm going to give you this Dale. I know you'll want it.

Dale: Oh ya, Mom & Dad. (30:39)