

Nona Dwelly Track 1 - July 11, 1981 (wife of Jess Dwelly, s/o Mary Dwelly, d/o Andrew J. Porter)
Mt. Olivet, KY

JC: I was having a little trouble this morning with it, (tape recorder) when I was talking with Kate (Porter Jackson, d/o Jim, s/o AJP) Well what do you want to tell me about them? (laughing)

Nona: I don't know, I think I've told about all that I knew about them.

JC: Well let's see, the two girls were the oldest in your husband's family, right?

Nona: Uh huh. Lucy was the oldest. Then Lula.

JC: What's her life story? Lucy?

Nona: A life of hard work.

JC: Hard work?

Nona: Hard work, yes sir. She worked hard all of her life. They were fairly well off when she passed away, but she sure worked hard. Lula, she didn't marry until she was 46.

JC: She didn't? She didn't have any kids either did she?

Nona: No.

JC: Why?

Nona: I don't know why she never did marry. She thought she had to stay at home and rule the roost.

JC: Did she live with her dad all that time?

Nona: Uh huh. Her mother and dad, and when her mother died, she lived on with her dad. Then she married a man whose wife hadn't been dead but about 7 months when him and her married.

JC: Did I tell you that we went down and talked to that Eva Owens. I think I told you about her.

Nona: Yes.

JC: She sent us on a wild goose chase, looking up people that were dead. She would say go to their house. One guy had been dead for 5 years. She told us, some of the stuff, it had to be right, but some of the other stuff, I don't know.

Nona: You wrote and told me some of the things she was telling you. I guess she was way off there on some things.

JC: She said her grandma's mom was Sena (Porter) Brown (d/o AJP), that was Mary Dwelly's sister. Have you ever heard of her?

Nona: Ya, I've heard Mrs. Dwelly speak of her.

JC: Oh you have, what did she say about her?

Nona: Well she just mentioned her name, that was one of her sisters. That is practically all I ever heard her say about her. She never talked about her people much.

JC: She didn't?

Nona: No, I don't know why.

JC: Did she say she had died?

Nona: I don't remember. Seems that she did. There was one of her sisters that was dead. But there was one that, what was her name? I know what she looked like, her picture. I never saw any of her people, only the boys, the men. I seen all of them, but the one that got killed, Jim.

JC: You saw one of her sister's pictures?

Nona: Uh huh. It's in that family group.

JC: Oh, Martha.

Nona: Martha, that is the one, I couldn't think of. She married a Day.

JC: She told you about her?

Nona: Ya. She talked like she had a pretty rough life with him. She said he was a drunk.

JC: He was?

Nona: That's what Mrs. Dwelly said, he was just a drunk. That's about as much as I ever heard her say about any of her sisters.

JC: I wonder what happened to her husband, that Daniel Day?

Nona: I don't know. He was dead at the time she was talking about him. She said he was just a...and it seemed to me like it was one of her sisters. Seems like it was her that was in the Masonic Home. It was one of her sisters. I don't think she had but two or three sisters. She had three sisters I think. Sena, Martha, and seems like there was another one.

JC: She told you about another one?

Nona: Seems like there was another one named, but I can't place her. I don't know.

JC: Emma, May Jane (Should have said Nancy Jane), Elizabeth Hunt?

Nona: Hunt, that's it.

JC: That's the one. She talked about her some?

Nona: I heard her mention her name. That was all I knew. We would just talk about how many there was of the children you know, girls. As for knowing anything about her or ever hearing anything about her.

JC: She never said anything about Mary Jane (should have said Nancy Jane) or Emma?

Nona: No.

JC: Cause she had 5 sisters.

Nona: She did?

JC: Ya, but those two never married. See, I've heard of the ones you heard of. No one has ever said anything about these other two, but they are in the records. When they take the census, there is the whole family, and them two are in it. Levi was the oldest son, and Mary Jane (should have said Nancy Jane) was the oldest daughter.

Nona: Yes, I knew that. (That Levi was the oldest son?)

JC: Nancy Jane was her name, not Mary Jane. Nancy Jane was the one that never married. I am getting mixed up now. She was right after Levi, and she never married.

Nona: I never did hear her mention her.

JC: That is the one this Eva Owens told me about. Said her grandma, Sena Brown's daughter. Sena died, and she went to live with her grandpa (Andrew Porter). This lady's grandma (Belle) did. Her grandpa was Andrew Porter. And living with Andrew Porter at the time was his daughter Nancy Jane.

Nona: Oh.

JC: She still lived at home, because she wasn't married.

Nona: I didn't know that.

JC: I didn't know anything about her. I knew she was living in 1880. She was listed in the census. Her grandma (Belle) asked this Nancy Jane. Said they were washing long dresses, if she would have to wear those big dresses some day. She told he yes, I guess. That is all she knew about her.

Nona: Well I had never heard of those two.

JC: She (Eva Owens) said she thought that she (Nancy Jane) died about the same time that Andrew Porter died. This Sena Brown (d/o AJP) died in 1885, then Andrew (Porter) died in 1888.

Nona: That was before I knew any of them.

JC: Also living with them in 1880, John (Porter), the one that you knew, he was still living at home. He wasn't married yet. There was Emma, the youngest sister. She was the youngest of all of them. I don't know what happened to her.

Nona: I never even had heard of them. I don't believe Jess ever knew anything about them, that's my husband. He didn't seem to know, you see, he was so far away from them. There was some of them, the boys would come and visit down there, once in a while at Mr. Dwellys.

JC: The boys?

Nona: That is Mrs. Dwelly's brothers. Levi, he was there, and Alick and John. That was the only three I ever remember being there. Uncle Steve, he was there when they held that revival too. He was in Wisconsin then. They come back here, and was here for about a couple weeks. Him and Uncle John together held this revival over there.

JC: Out at George Dwelly's house?

Nona: Uh huh. And I was over there at that. That was before I was married.

JC: Did you live close to them out there, and that was how you met your husband?

Nona: Uh huh. Within sight, across the creek, Johnson. He lived over on one hill, and I lived over on the other one. People didn't get very far from home in those days.

JC: About everybody married their neighbors back then.

Nona: That's right.

JC: (9:33) I want to make sure that is recording OK. First time I heard myself, I didn't think it was me. Sounds different.

Nona: Ya, it does.

JC: This time that Alick and John & Levi came, there wasn't a revival then? They were just coming to visit?

Nona: No, there wasn't any revival. They just came down. The three brothers just came down and just spent two or three days.

JC: Did Alick ever bring his first wife back, you know he married her here? That would be my great-grand grandma Laura Fulton.

Nona: I don't know. Now I guess he must have. They didn't have any of their family with them, those three brothers.

JC: They just came by their selves.

Nona: They came by themselves. Now his (Alick Porter) first wife was Kate Coffee wasn't she?

JC: That was his 3rd wife.

Nona: 3rd one?

JC: Ya.

Nona: Oh.

JC: You remember her?

Nona: Uh huh.

JC: His first one, he married her here. She was from here.

Nona: Yes, I remember. Gertrude Linville (Laura Fulton's first cousin)...

JC: How is she doing?

Nona: She is bad off, she is bed fast.

JC: Oh she is?

Nona: She is at her nephew's. And she has been for some time, bedfast. Can't get out at all. When you was here the first time, she was over here.

JC: Ya, I was told about her, I went and visited her. I didn't even know that you lived here. She told me that you lived up here. I didn't realize that. I came here the year before that and I went down here and talked to this Reed, or whoever her relative is, her niece or somebody, Mrs. Reed.

Nona: Ya, I don't know which one, is she kin to Gertrude?

JC: Ya, somehow. I stopped there and she wouldn't talk to me. She wouldn't come out of the house. I went to the neighbors and they called over and she said she wasn't seeing anybody that day. (laughing) She just wouldn't come and talk to me. That winter, my grandpa's sister ran into a woman, she works at a grocery store. They got to talking and she said she was related to the Fultons from Robertson County and she (Geneva Erwin, d/o Jasper Porter, s/o Alex, s/o AJP) told her, "My grandma was a Fulton from Robertson County." They got to talking, and it was the same family, and she told me about this lady again. I forgot, and when I came back the next year, it was the same lady, when I pulled in and saw the address, I realized, and I tried again and she wouldn't talk. I think the neighbors, or maybe she told me through the window to come down here, so I did, and this was the right one.

Nona: I was trying to think who it was that wouldn't talk to you.

JC: They live in a red brick house down there coming into Mt. Olivet. It is on the right. I thought her name was Reed, but I don't know. I think her maiden name was Fulton.

Nona: Her name would have been Linville.

JC: Did you know any of the Fultons?

Nona: Uh huh.

JC: You did?

Nona: Quite a few of them.

JC: Did they live over close to the Dwellys?

Nona: Gertrude's family, see her mother was a Fulton.

JC: Ya.

Nona: They lived over there on Johnson, close to where I was raised. We all grew up, Gertrude was older than I. She would be, her birthday was in May.

JC: She must be about 90 isn't she.

Nona: Yes. She must have been 90 this last May. She was 6 years older than me. Yes, she was 90 this last May.

JC: Did George Dwelly's people, when he was a boy, live over there when they moved here, in that area?

Nona: I guess, cause I didn't live in that section then. I knew his mother. She lived with her daughter. The Chandlers. Charlie Chandler married one of Mr. Dwelly's sisters. And she lived with them, or they lived with her, or something. They all lived together. I believe the place belonged to her. It seemed like it did. I'm not sure.

JC: Did Mary Dwelly ever say that her dad lived over there?

Nona: Never did say a word about it.

JC: Never told you?

Nona: No. If I'd have known all this company, I would have found out a lot of things. I would have asked a lot of questions. You know, they didn't talk about it. I just never thought anything about it. She told me about in the Civil War. That was before they moved to Kentucky. They came from Virginia, , originally. She told about the soldiers coming by and her mother giving them apples and things, that they had buried.

JC: Were they buried just to store them for the winter?

Nona: Uh huh. They would dig pits and put, some put one thing and some put another, oh like fence rails across so that it would hold them up and the water wouldn't stand. They would bury apples, potatoes, cabbage, turnips, corn, all that kind of stuff. There wasn't any way of keeping things in those days.

JC: And they gave em to the soldiers?

Nona: The soldiers came by and she said there was a man in command, I don't know what he was, an officer.

JC: Enemy soldiers or the ones that were on their side?

Nona: She just said, lots of soldiers. I don't know which it was. She said they wanted to ask for something to eat. They asked her if she had any apples, or anything like that.

JC: Who did they ask, Mary?

Nona: No, her mother (Lucy Cornett Porter). She (Mary) was a little girl. It was her mother. She said she showed them which mound out there in the garden, they had buried them in the garden. Showed them which one was the apples, and they went out and dug out some. They brought them, and she poured water over them and washed the mud off of them, cause they had kind of got muddy. (16:59) She said one of the soldiers started to go into the house, and the officer yanked him out right straight, told him, "Come out of there." He was going to pilfer you know.

JC: I bet it was the enemy soldiers then, don't you?

Nona: It might have been. There was some on both sides that would do most anything I guess. My grandfather on my dad's side, he was in the Civil War at the time Uncle Levi (Porter) was and they were both in prison. They didn't know each other.

JC: How did you know Levi was in prison?

Nona: She (Mary Dwelly, d/o AJP) said that when he came back, he was all starved, and she said that her mother was afraid to feed him all he wanted at a time. She just gave him a little bit at a time until she got him so that he could eat. I think he was in the same prison, and I know my granddad was in Rock Island ? (18:10) prison.

JC: That's where Levi was at. (?)

Nona: That's what I thought.

JC: I've got his military record. It shows he was captured at the Battle of Winchester, VA in 1864.

Nona: I've got something I'll show you that was my granddad's. I don't reckon I showed it to you before when you were here? I think I know where it is. (18:35)

JC: So you heard that Levi was captured and in the same prison?

Nona: Uh huh. Uncle Levi, he wasn't but about 16 years old when he went. He went in his father's place. You know they could take their places in the Civil War.

JC: Do you mean they were going to make his dad go (Andrew J. Porter)? Did his dad not have a choice?

Nona: I don't know? I don't know if he was going to be forced to go, or if he felt duty bound to go. Anyhow, Uncle Levi went in his place because his father had family (19:37) you see, and he was only 16 I think.

JC: She told you 16?

Nona: Uh huh. He (Levi) went in and his father bought him a horse, and of course horses weren't high then. They didn't think nothing about it, that wouldn't be no big price now. He (Andrew Porter) gave \$200 for a horse. They said it was such a pretty thing. They thought it would be something fine, but it wasn't no account at all, and they had to get rid of it, and get another one. It had been raised as a pet and it couldn't stand anything. It couldn't run.

JC: I'll be darn.

Nona: (laughing) I'd heard em tell about that.

JC: Is it possible Levi joined on his own first, and then took his dad's place when he reenlisted?

Nona: No, he took his dad's place. When he first went, that was the only time, he just went you know, was captured and imprisoned. Then he got out of prison, and he wasn't in service no more. He went to keep his dad from going.

JC: The reason I wondered, I sent for his record, and his dad's record. His dad, he joined in 1863, then he was AWOL, you know absent without leave. He wasn't in too many months. I know Levi was in four years, because he said he was. There is a special census of Civil War veterans, and he told them that he served four years. He had to be 16 when he went in, because the war was over when he was 20. That would have been 1861 when he went in, but the record I have of him shows him going in in 1863 after his dad went AWOL. They served for three year periods, so it looked to me like he joined on his own the first time for three years, and then his dad went in and got out, and they probably came back for him, and he enlisted in his dad's place.

Nona: He could have done that.

JC: It's what it looks like by the records, but I'm not sure.

Nona: I don't know, I never did hear anything. After you got all of this information was the first that I'd ever heard that his dad (Andrew J. Porter) went AWOL.

JC: Well I think that was him. There was three Andrew J. Porter's that I found. This one was in the same regiment (as Levi) so I'm pretty sure it is the same one. I was told he took his dad's place so I figured they would have been in the same regiment. The Confederates, they don't have a lot of information on their records. So you can't be sure.

One of the relatives was telling me that either Levi or Andrew was coming home from the war, and the commanding officer caught him, and he says, "Where's your pass?" He pulled out his gun and said, "Here is my pass. I'm going home." (laughing)

Nona: That sounds about like some of them.

JC: But he wasn't sure if that was Levi or Andrew that did that. Have you ever heard that story?

Nona: Not until you told me. Now that was about as much as I've ever heard about any of them going into service. What they told about Uncle Levi taking his dad's place and about the horse. That's just about all I ever heard about it. (23:27)

JC: Somebody else told me that when he came home, he shot all of his dad's pigs. (Nona laughing) He thought they were his neighbor's pigs, so he just started shooting them. His dad didn't get mad at him because he had been gone in the war.

Nona: Gene laughed, he said, "I don't know if I want to dig up too much about the Porters or not after some of the things I've heard. It is his, see they were not blood relatives to me. He was laughing about that and about Uncle John and Will going to New Mexico or somewhere. You know they went on a hunt of that feller who killed one of those Porter boys. (24:22) He said, "I'll tell you right now, they would go after them wouldn't they?" He just laughed. He said, "I don't know if I want to dig up too much about them or not."

JC: Ya, they were a pretty rough group.

Nona: There is one thing about it, they didn't let people push them around.

JC: No, it doesn't sound like it.

Nona: He knew one of his dad's cousins. He used to live around Millersburg. I think. I think that is where Gene told me. He lived not too far, I think Millersburg. Will Porter. I don't know which one. There was more than one Will Porter. I don't know which one it was, it was one of his dad's cousins. Cause he had met him and talked to him you know. That's been I don't know how long ago. It's been 10 or 15 years ago.

JC: What's Millersburg close to?

Nona: It's between here and Paris, KY. This side of Paris. On 68.

JC: And he was a first cousin to your husband?

Nona: I don't know. Gene thought he was, but I can't think he was, because he wasn't old enough I didn't think, but Gene said he thought he was. He thought he was an _____ cousin,(26:23) but I don't know about it. Will Porter was his name, and he was from that same Porter family you know. (26:32) Anyway, he thought he said he was his own cousin. (26:35)

JC: There was Bill Porter in Middletown, Ohio. He was just born in 1900. He is dead now, but I don't know if he ever lived in Kentucky.

Nona: This one, it has been in the last 20, 25 years anyway, that he talked to him. Because when he worked for Tomkins Auto Parts, he traveled for different garages you know, and sold parts. Automobile parts and took orders for them. I'm sure he said it was Millersburg where he met up with him and talked with him.

JC: How old of a guys was he?

Nona: Well I asked him, and he said he was up around 60 then, or maybe older.

JC: Did the guy live in Millersburg?

Nona: Uh huh.

JC: He lived there?

Nona: Uh huh.

JC: I don't know. I've never heard of any of them.

Nona: I don't know, but he was some of them, because he was telling about different ones of them. He was part of the same Porter family.

JC: Well when he comes in, why don't you ask him about him. I'll have to check into that.

Nona: I'll ask him about it when he comes in tonight.

JC: You were telling me about that barn revival. You went to it?

Nona: Uh huh.

JC: What was it like?

Nona: I don't know. You've been to Methodist revivals haven't you?

JC: I don't know, I reckon.

Nona: That was what it was. Just an old fashioned Methodist revival.

JC: How long did it last? Just one night?

Nona: Oh no. I think they were there about a week or 10 days or something like that.

JC: Who did the preaching?

Nona: Both. Sometimes Uncle John would preach, and sometimes Uncle Steve would preach.

JC: So you have heard both of them preach then?

Nona: Uh huh.

JC: Who was the best?

Nona: I don't know, I was just about 14 or 15 years old then. (laughing) I wouldn't know which one was best.

JC: Did a lot of people go to it?

Nona: Oh ya, big crowds went.

JC: Like 50 or 100 people?

Nona: No. A big crowd then would have been 100 or 150 people.

JC: 150 people?

Nona: That would have been an awful big crowd. I don't think there was that many when I was there. I wasn't there too many times. I was there a few times.

JC: Maybe 40 or 50 people, or something like that?

Nona: Uh huh. They put in new straw. They had remodeled and worked the barn over. They put straw and had plank benches.

JC: They did?

Nona: Uh huh. That was old timey.

JC: And they just had one barn revival that you remember?

Nona: There at Mr. Dwelly's, that's all I remember. (end track 1)