

INTERVIEW WITH DIMPLE SCOTT

Mike: Uh, Mrs. Scott would you tell me um where you were living in 1920 and how old you were and...

Dimple: In 1920, I was a eleven years old. Almost twelve and a I was living in Pike County a oh about a mile a east of McClarke, Kentucky.

Mike: Was up near the Matewan.³⁰

Dimple: Yes, a couple of miles from Matewan. Fact, I walked to school from there at the Matewan.

Mike: Um, what can you tell me about the a situation in the Matewan area at that time um...about miners being evicted from their homes? Why were they being evicted and and where were they living and a...

V:00
Dimple: Well, this would be of course, hear say for me because I was too young a but there was the a organization. The union was trying to organize and that's the first time that it happened you see, in our part of the country and a that of course, had a brought on some opposition and a as a result why a the some of the miners were evicted because I guess, I I don't know as that first hand knowledge that a a how they were if it's because they had joined the union or if they were looking for the union or just what the relationship was there I'm not acquainted with because I said I was too young to know about that but a...
V:30

Mike: But that was there was alot of tension in there at that time?

Dimple: Oh yes, much tension.

Mike: Was the Kentucky side of the river union?

Dimple: ^{2:00} Well, there were is being right on the border. It was you know. It's hard to to divide between West Virginia and Kentucky here because it's we feel we feel like it's all one area and of course now the the mine was on a...some on Kentucky side and some in some in West Virginia. Some right there at Matewan a where the...where this where we where we know it was started, now of course we had heard in other parts of West Virginia you know where it was there would be more organized and I guess and of course we were, I think we were told this that they came from the Charleston area - over in that area somewhere before they to organize the union. So that was a...

Mike: What type of business was your father in?

Dimple: My father was a general merchant..a in country store. A pretty good size store for that part of the country and a had a pretty good business there. ^{3:00}

Mike: Would you describe Matewan in 1920? How it was laid out and where the train station was and where the main street was and...

Dimple: Well, Matewan was a small town as it's still. It's not a large town yet, but a one main street and the railroad a sort of...was on one side of the town while there was some areas resident residences over across the railroad and then going up on up Mate Creek but there was only one ^{3:30}

main street that I recall at all that we even thought about other than than a now I think they do have some some other streets but...

Mike: Was the main street facing the railroad at that time?

Dimple: They were parallel. It was parallel with the railroad.

Mike: Where was the train station located?

Dimple: The the train station was over ^{4:00} away from the town. It was, I mean on the right side of the the railroad and of course then a then the railroad and then the town with the main street and the only there was two rows of of business. Main street was that that's what it was.

Mike: Pause - stop for a second. ^{4:30} Ah, tell me as best you can what you know about the the massacre that happened in Matewan in 1920. A were you actually in Matewan when the massacre occurred?

Dimple: No I wasn't. No, I was I was at my my home I said which was a mile up Blackberry Creek.

Mike: Did you hear it start?

Dimple: Oh no no, we were to far away for that in fact, we didn't know about it because a until probably an hour or so after it happened. ^{5:00}

Mike: What was the word that you all thought about what had happened?

Dimple: Well, that a I don't recall but they was a been a that there was alot of bloodshed in Matewan.

Mike: Did anyone from your family go over and and a look and see what had happened?

Dimple: I don't think so. I don't recall of any of the family going.

Mike: What kind of a facts have did you hear...

Dimple: Well, what we were told that that a the Boldenfelts detectives ^{5:30} came in on the train which, I think we called a train which ran around five o' clock in the evening-afternoon and a if the..I really don't know a the what happened except it wasn't to long it seemed after they were off the train till a till the shooting started and when it was over of course the mayor of the town was was dead a a Mayor Testaman and I really don't know how many other people were killed. I think they were some who were wounded but and I and I don't know how many of the Boldenfelts were killed either but a in fact, I don't know how many Boldenfelts men they were involved in that. I don't think there was any big number but a...it was a very traumatic thing that happened in that ^{6:00} small town and of course the whole area was stirred about this and a created alot of tension a alot of fear in the area.

Mike: What was the a police force like in the area at that time?

Dimple: I really don't know. I only know who was the chief of police. Sid Hatfield was chief of police and a I'm not sure that Mr. I don't know

whether Mr. Chambers was a policeman or not. He was involved in this. ^{7:00}

Mike: Were there any county deputy sheriffs in the area or state police?

Dimple: Ah, I don't I really don't know.

Mike: Um...describe a the a three day war and how how you got involved in it and what...

Dimple: Well, that was a personal involvement because a as I said, I was the I walked from a to school from from a which was a a from a car to Matewan to school everyday and I was a in the eight grade at this time and and in fact, we were we were taking at that time you had to have a had to take the examination before you went into high school and we were taking eight grade the examinations. They started on Thursday and a it started in must have started in the afternoon because I remember a I it was impossible for me to get home because the the shooting was going on. It wasn't a continuous shooting but it was so you know, so often till it was it was it was not safe to for anyone to be on and now of course I walked the railroad. That's the only way to get home and it was dangerous to do that so these friends of mine, a Mrs. White who I graduated with, her two two of her daughters so they and a come to their home and stay which I stayed from Thursday until a until a Sunday and a of course, we stayed pretty close during the all that time. You never knew when the shooting was going to to to start or stop and a everybody had that had a a basement certainly they used. They got alot of use during this time. So a this lasted of course, we couldn't didn't have any school after that. I don't remember what I did about I got I went onto high school. I don't

9:00

remember about the test but a I I on Sunday morning it was over and I was allowed to go home and walk walking from Matewan which was over a mile to my home at the mouth of Blackberry and I remembers particularly I had a sister who lived in Blackberry City and a I remember walking over through Blackberry City and a seeing the houses were so many houses were just whittled a I don't think anyone was killed. It was just alot of alot of destruction that way and alot of cows. I never will forget seeing those bloated bodies of those cows cause at that time there was no cattle laws and in the area you know that kept the cattle were kept up and that I remember that really impressed me a seeing seeing those cows killed and a so I went on home and but still this teaching still goes on and you know it. While it ended the three days a it didn't stop the build up of feeling or of a not not knowing what's going to happen next and of course by the time when I got to my home a where we lived we a we had a large basement under a under our house and I remember that a we put mattresses down in the basement and a we stayed at night in that basement for about six months I guess and in the meantime you see, the government sent in a first they came in the state malitia, I think it was or the and then the the a federal government troops came in and we were we were under a under sort of a of a Marshall Law you know for there for a while there. All along from days from from a from a car and I know how far beyond Matewan it went cause it cause I was we were kept in at that time.

9:30

10:00

10:30

11:00

Mike: Were the troops on the Kentucky side?

Dimple: No, they were in West Virginia. That is the state the West Virginia state malitia. Whatever they had a I don't recall any at all ever any

in Kentucky but a....

Mike: What started the war do you think?

Dimple: think it was over the a union trying to organize and a the a coal
11:30
companies were against it at least that seemed to been the opinion of
the day. That a they didn't have the right to to unionize.

Mike: What stopped the shooting?

Dimple: I really don't know except after the a when the a...federal troops came
in I don't recall after that of of of having anymore shooting battles
12:00
but a the tension went on for quite a while and of course then and a I
was told of course, I'd I'm not sure about this at Matewan. Up in the
area there going up toward Red Jacket that they had alot of a of a at
a tent village where so many of the of the miners a lived during this
time a and I I'm not sure that I remember my dad in the story. I remember
the union giving a they called it a service script by guess that they
12:30
you know to buy food and I remember my father a he had he having a store
and and a he kept quite a bit of that business from the union so...

Mike: Did you ever hear Mother Jones speak?

Dimple: Yes, I did. That was an occasion a and I don't recall just at what
time this happened whether it was before this or after but I remember
walking to Matewan. Well, all a all of the the area. It was it was
13:00
something because we'd heard of Mother Jones and I I recall standing
on the a of her coming up when the train just it just paused for a

while in Matewan and she came know to the and stood on the steps of the and spoke to the crowd...in a pretty explative language. 13:30

Mike: Could you do you remember the jest of what she had to say?

Dimple: Uh, I'd rather not say it.

Mike: Not even.

Dimple: Well, it was...her feelings you know and you could understand that when you hear when you when she told you bout what she had been through and how it how it affected her life and what she knew about this and then her a her feelings as regard to coal companies a... 14:00

Mike: Was she an immotional speaker?

Dimple: Very immotional, yes.

Mike: Do you remember how she was dressed - her size?

Dimple: I if she if I recall she was a small person. I don't recall her being a very large a...

Mike: What type of voice did she have?

Dimple: I really don't recall except I I'm sure it was we heard so I'm sure it was a pretty forceful voice.

Mike: What was her reaction of the miners in the crowd?

14:30

Dimple: Oh, it was oh they were they they appreciated it very very much. They let her know in a certain terms how how how meaningful because this time you see when you're rearranged in two parties any any a help that you can get or any build up you're looking for this. So there's quite a response to her going through Matewan.

15:00

Mike: In 1921 when the miners started their march and into the Blair Mountain and were heading to Mingo County did you all hear any rumors about...

Dimple: Oh yes, we heard many many rumors. By that time we had a we had we had gone up a we had lived a mile up Blackberry Creek and still owned you know, owned our home - owned a house up there. So we were up in that area to stay at my brother lived there at that at this time so we get out a out of the firing line. We were up there - lived up there for quite a while and I recall a families who lived still lived along McCar there. I can remember this particular family with a large a man and his wife, the large family, running all but running and they and I remember the expression was they was a blue million of them coming from Blair Creek - Blair Mountain of course we didn't see the blue million. They didn't it didn't and of course we were told later that there quite an aggregation who who got so far in Logan County and were stopped there so..

15:30

16:00

Mike: What was the attitude of the miners in Matewan about the miners march?

Dimple: You know, I I I never thought of Matewan as a as a mining as a miners town such - although we were, but a I was probably associated more with

those in in the business area in fact, a having we we lived in what was
considered a the a farm and there was really wasn't. My family was not
connected with the with mining at all except a oh I think of, I had a
brother that worked a little bit in around the mine but a because we
were ingaged in in I say in leasing a you know the area that where we
lived that that coal was. We were leased to the coal company and of
course my father being in in a general store you know had no reason
except through the association of the we had he had lots of miners who
were his customers of course, and quite for a long quite a while why
he a before the coal company before they built their store why he
handled all of the a the script you know that that was issued and of
course a that was a that was sad which we don't see this today and I
don't know whether you all know what script looks like or not. Did
you ever have you seen script? Uh, so many times and I've had I've
had a miners tell me that a they they'd have to go to the office in
fact, I've just told we were talking about this yesterday I think it
was that they would have to go and they were told how much script they
could get that day. It didn't matter what they needed you know, they
was onlt allowed so much and I do know for my in my father's store, I
can recall this this one particular miner. He used to worry me even
as a child because that time they went into the mines before daylight
and they never come out until after night and it used to worry me
because that man didn't get he didn't get to see he didn't know what
daylight hardly was. Uh, and I think that I know there's two side to
every question about in or in unions and I I know it can go to extremes
...both ways but a I think, if there there had been if there had been
more of a...well of of talking about of realizing what was involved all
of this could of been saved you know. When you communication is one of

the most important things that you have and when we lose that and I think that's what really happened and it brought about situations that just like this one. ^{19:00} So, but a...it it was a sad time and it went on for months. It was a...

Mike: What was the reaction in Matewan that you can remember when they were in the news came and Sid Hatfield had been shot in in Welch?

Dimple: Oh, that was that was a very very sad...a but the town the town was was heartbroken ^{19:30} uh because a he had been their state police and a I'm sure a he he was he was loved. I I know that he he had made a name and a then when when when the word came that that he that they had been that he and Mr. Chambers had been killed. It was a very sad time for the whole area and I guess at that from at the way I recall ^{20:00} cause I was at the funeral and I I think that was the largest funeral that I I have I had ever been a part of. It they they were buried right across from Matewan at Buskirk and I'm sure that entire mountain was all but covered with with miners for the most poart you see, cause they knew that was what and it was a very a it was it was a a funeral that was was different ^{20:30} of course because a the the lawyer, I guess the union lawyer from from Charleston who gave the eulogy and of course I still I've still just a child who been about that age but I recall him the one of the citizens always stayed with me when he and it get with raining not a down pour but a steady pattern and I cam remember him making the statement is it a wonder that ^{21:00} even the heavens weep and that was pretty dramatic statement to make at that time and very fitting for the occasion but it was a it was a very..a very sad time for the whole area.

Mike: So Sid Hatfield was a popular figure in in Matewan?

Dimple: Oh yes, a popular whenever anytime when when the public recognized a lot of things that had happened. I don't think he was popular until ^{21 30} the until the massacre. Uh, as far as I don't recall anything other than he was just one of the one of the the men. He was was liked of course but a but the the massacre really put him put him on the in the eyes of the public.

Mike: Did you know him personally?

Dimple: Oh yes, he was related to me. His mother was a a cousin about a second ^{22 00} cousin of my mother. Not on the Hatfields side but was on the on the Davis side.

Mike: How would you describe his personality?

Dimple: A good personality. Sid was a very likeable person. A neat neat a very neat dresser. He was a he was pretty popular but a...

^{22 30}
Ferraro: I would like you to go ahead and ask her about when a when you answer this question just go ahead and look at Mike, Ok?

Dimple: Ok.

Ferraro: A describe once again a what you saw when a Mother Jones came into Matewan?

Dimple: You mean the

Ferraro: Just describe what you saw and what you what you thought and your your experience your feelings.

Dimple: Well, you see now you have to think of this as a as a child cause see I wasn't more than eleven years old and you do ^{23:00} - there's a the the fever is is built up you know and I of course a I don't know why I was there except...maybe perhaps my feelings were with the with the union with the miners.

Mike: When Mother Jones came into town a...a tell me again what she looked like and and a...

Dimple: I really can't I I can't recall what she looked like cause in the first place you were excited about you know just the fact to see her was you know cause we'd heard we'd heard about Mother Jones and a... ^{23:30}

Mike: What what had you heard? What type of things - good things?

Dimple: Well, how active she well how how interested how active she was in with the with the miners. What she was doing you know to help the miners. I don't think as we as we related as union as such, I mean the terminology but the fact that a that she was so interested in ^{24:00} helping these poor miners and we'd and as I said, I we'd knew something of the miners of their life. It was a a common expression in around our area. I don't know whether you all whether you've heard this or not that a in the mines a take a and they used to use the

mules you know to to haul in the mines and it was a common expression we heard often that a a take care of the mules there they cost more you know it was that so that I don't think that I can't believe that there were there was that much division between operator and miner but I said again, when you I think when you have to realize that in the Appalachian area a which I'm definately a part of and proud of that. We do have a culture that sort of ^{85:00} makes us want to stay a part or it did I think. I think tradition you know plays a plays a large part and we sort of resent someone coming in and telling us what to do and I think there was that feeling that in that in the coal operators that were always from a big city or at least we felt like that it was so far away and then to come in and tell us what we could do what to do. There was a resentment about it and I and I guess I grew up in that ^{85:30} atmosphere and I guess that's the only reason I was there to hear Mother Jones because it a that a of this feeling.

Mike: Can you remember anything about a without going into the explaties what she had to say and like...

Dimple: I don't recall if she spoke very long because the the train just stopped just stopped for the few few minutes a and for her for her to come to ^{26:00} the I remember seeing her as she just came down on the lower step you know of the train and a the train was high enough till a the railroad till we were the all of the crowd was back you know sort of below her and I I remember just I just remember sone of the words but because as a child I wasn't to use to hear those words.

Mike: Were they pretty was it pretty strong language?

26:30
 Dimple: They a they a yeah, to me they were. I guess I'm not know how they'd be accepted today but at that time they were pretty strong that it a you remembered them but...but she a she was impressive and really made an imprint upon upon the entire group. I know this.

27:00
 Mike: Did her speech a raise the spirits of of the miners?

Dimple: Oh, I'm sure that was the purpose of it was to encourage them to to not give up...and a of course they seemed to carry on...cause not to long after this, John L. Lewis appeared on the scene so...

Mike: Uh, Ed Chambers that was a shot a with a Sid Hatfield, what type of person was he and was he well liked or...

27:30
 Dimple: Yes, the Chambers' family was well thought of you see in Matewan because a well his uncle was a president of the bank and a they were they were natives who've lived there for all these years and nice just a good family. Yeah, Ed was well thought of.

Mike: Did you know him personally?

Dimple: Yes, he was much older than me of course a like you said you know because a there oh I guess ten-fifteen years older than that than I was, I mean at that time and it was a cause they were they were married men and it just a but a they were good families.

28:00

Ferraro: One more time about a describe what you knew about Sid Hatfield.

Dimple: Beg your pardon.

Ferraro: One more time, tell us a little bit about what you knew about Sid Hatfield personally. Did did a...

Dimple: I knew well, I knew the family as I said because we were raise and they were and they were reared down Blackberry Creek ^{28 30} not there home was up to far within a couple of miles where where we lived and a I knew his I knew the brothers and and he had one sister, Alice, and a I don't recall a I don't remember what Sid did what his before he was a police-man. I don't recall now whether I know some of the brothers worked in worked in the mines a but I don't recall what Sid did at all. ^{29 00}

Mike: What about Mayor Testaman? Did you know him personally?

Dimple: Not personally. I just knew that he was a I would see him you know and and in town and school but I I didn't know him personally. Neither did I know his wife expect to I new who she was when I saw her because she was a beautiful lady - beautiful woman.

Mike: Do you remember hearing anything that would indicated the feeling of the town about his death? ^{29 30} Were were people outraged?

Dimple: A I really a...oh of course people were outraged. It the whole town was outraged over the over the you know the entire a killing that went on.

Mike: Did any of the civilians from the town were they shot or wounded or

killed? Do you remember?

Dimple: I'm I think they were but I'm not sure how many because I as I said,
 I I guess a hearing of of of the mayor a that was the only one that
 that really stuck in in my mind you know to remember him but I know
 they're some that were wounded but I I really don't recall who they
 were.

Mike: What can you remember about the feelings of the town toward the
 Boldenfelts detective agency and a did you ever see any of them?

Dimple: No, I never saw any of them but I know there was very strong feeling
 against them.

Mike: Why?

Dimple: Because of of a them coming to Matewan and getting off the train here
 to to which we were told to to a a get the put the miners out of out of
 the mones + out of their houses. Well, thats what no I don't know that
 was but that's what we what that's what the general opinion was...and a
 then there was different company organizations a a from east farther
 east of us up around Preburn who a during this well, a a following the
 three day battle when it was long we were still living in our basement
 and of course they were shooting over our house. Part of the time from
 over from from Kentucky over to Blackberry City a but a...again it was
 it was company organized against miners so it was just a generous
 situation. It was just... 31.30

Mike: Thats all the questions.

Dimple: That's it.

Mike: Can you think of anything else that I haven't asked?

Dimple: Look on your notes and see if anything.

31:43