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PORT'S ROCK OF GIBRALTER

—By Doris Walker Casey

(a tribute in memory of Superintendent Jesse M. Welch of the Port Consolidated School District No. 5)

In thoughts and memories of many students and faculty members having attended and taught in the Port School during the tenure of one Mr. Jesse M. Welch, his name and the name of Port School seem somewhat synonymous.

Who was

This personage of renown in the hearts and memories of the Port School Alumni?

This "Rock of Gibraltar" standing firmly against all obstacles that would have caused the weak to falter?

This "Standard of Principles," holding to firmness, integrity and fairness, fighting for the best in these he led and guided?

This Leader, loving his school, his students, his teachers, and his community—backing their endeavors in work, in play, or in other performances?

This Perfectionist, believing every student should strive for the best within himself, to be the best of whatever he was to be?

This Educator, holding no interest in making a name for himself with new theories of education to be tested, but desiring to teach each student the fundamentals of book learning?

The Superintendent, after 4:00 p.m., picking bushels of black-eyed peas, free for the picking, to help eliminate the financial crunch of the School Lunch Program?

This Father Figure, knowing each child should have a hot lunch even though he could not pay the three cents a day, and feeding him anyway?

This Algebra and Geometry teacher, teaching with authority that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points and that the longest way around is the sweetest way home . . . and eliminating gum-chewing in class by threatening to tell his "Cud-Chewing Cow" story?

This leader in Team work, whether it be leading classes to cotton patches to aid the farmer in gathering his cotton crop, cheering on a basketball team, giving full support to a dramatic production, or coordinating details for a wonderful Senior Trip to Washington, D. C.?

This man, finding no task too small or too degrading if it helped his fellowman, especially those students in his school?

A Man of Stature, living these Christian virtues of hope, faith, trust, love, and honesty looking for the same in others?

This man was Jesse M. Welch, Superintendent of Port School. He was mighty enough to demand respect without effort, yet humble enough to see the needs of those around him and give his service to benefit the cause.

Now Mr. Welch has gone to a better land. Can't you see him with Saint Peter within the Pearly Gates standing by that golden vat of heavenly ambrosia—ladle in hand—shouting "Come and get it, or I'll throw it out!"? *

(DORIS WALKER CASEY, member of the Port High School Class of 1940, is a retired high-school English teacher and librarian in Waco, TX. She and her husband now live in Troy, TX where she does free-lance writing and serves as an active member of her church.)