

NEWMAN, AUTHOR H.

INTERVIEW

#9069

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BIOGRAPHY FORM  
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION  
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

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NEWMAN, AUTHUR H.

INTERVIEW.

9069.

Field Worker's name Anna R. Barry.

This report made on (date) October 25, 1937. 1937

1. Name Authur H. Newman.

2. Post Office Address El Reno, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) 146 North Shepherd Street.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month April Day 17 Year 1867.

5. Place of birth Marion County, Iowa.

6. Name of Father Lawrence Newman. Place of birth Indiana.

Other information about father \_\_\_\_\_

7. Name of Mother Rebecca Godfrey Newman. Place of birth West Virginia.

Other information about mother \_\_\_\_\_

Notes or complete narrative by the field worker dealing with the life and story of the person interviewed. Refer to Manual for suggested subjects and questions. Continue on blank sheets if necessary and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached 5.

Anna R. Barry,  
Journalist..  
October 25, 1937.

An Interview With Authur H. Newman,  
146 North Shepherd Street, El Reno.

Authur H. Newman was born in Marion County, Iowa, April 17, 1867; the eldest son of Lawrence Newman and Rebecca Godfrey Newman.

When Arthur was eleven years old the Newman family moved to Pottawatomie County, Iowa.

In the Newman family were three boys and one girl.

In 1888 that Authur Newman married Cornelia Mauk.

After the Opening of Oklahoma in 1889, the Newman family received several letters from their uncle, Payton Smith, telling them of Oklahoma and that they could buy land very cheap in Canadian County.

Mr. Newman's father owned several farms, eighteen miles east of Council Bluff, Iowa.

Late one evening while cutting posts in the timber Mr. Newman's father asked the boys if they would like to sell their farms in Iowa and move to Oklahoma..

That night he went home, made a sign saying "For Sale" and placed it on a post in front of their home. The next day a man came to his home inquiring about the place, and was told to go and see Mr. Newman. When told what Mr.

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Newman wanted for his place the man said, "Get in the buggy and we will go to town and fix up the papers".

Mr. Newman sold his place and was ready to move to Oklahoma.

The Newman family, with their three wagons packed with bedding, farm implements, a few pieces of household goods and clothing started on the long and slow trip to Oklahoma. It was a very tiresome and hard journey.

Upon their arrival in the Territory, in May, 1890, a year and a month after it had been opened to settlement, they found prosperous little cities and towns and almost every quarter section of land opened to settlement was occupied. In many instances there were two settlers claiming the same quarter and in a few cases as many as five were living on a quarter, all claiming the land. This usually happened where land was valuable or near the cities or towns.

After arriving in Canadian County, Mr. Newman purchased two relinquished claims, northeast of El Reno, not far from where the little town of Richland is now located. On one of these claims was a little two room house. It was on this claim that they made their home.

In the autumn of 1890, the settlers who had arrived the year before were anxious to plant the small patches

where the sod had been broken. In many cases seed wheat was lacking. The Rock Island Railroad Company agreed to furnish seed wheat to the farmers and permit them to return this wheat the next year after harvest without charging interest on the investment.

There were times when transportation companies, banks and other business interests manifested a similar spirit of co-operation with the homesteaders.

Mr. Newman said they attended church service at the Richland Church, services held about twice a month.

Most of the homesteaders prospered, while some grew dissatisfied, sold out and left.

The chief crops when Mr. Newman first came to Canadian County were corn, kaffir corn, pumpkins, turnips, sweet potatoes and a few patches of wheat.

In the early days people left home and never thought of locking a door. If a family was away from home and a neighbor came to borrow a farm tool or food they helped themselves just as if the family was at home.

One time Mr. Newman and his family had gone to town on Saturday. His wife had left a tub of peaches sitting on the kitchen floor intending to can them. When she returned that late in the evening they found the peaches

all beautifully canned in jars sitting on the table and no one in sight. Later, they learned that a neighbor lady had come to their home soon after they had gone. She noticed these peaches and set to work canning them. That evening she had left before they returned home.

Another time the Newman family left home to spend the week-end. When they returned they could readily see some one had stayed at their house over the week-end. Next morning as Mrs. Newman started to prepare breakfast she found a note stuffed in the spout of the coffee pot telling them that a number of their relatives had come to spend the week-end at their home. The note said the men had spent a great deal of their time fishing, while the women had fried chickens, baked cakes and pies and all had had a good time.

On several occasions when Mr. Newman or other members of his family were sick, neighbors would come for miles to help plow his crop or if it was in the fall of the year they would gather his corn and kaffir corn. The women in the neighborhood would come and bring baskets of cooked food for the dinner.

The arrival of the railroad in El Reno was celebrated all over the country. People came for miles around to see

the first train come to El Reno. This was in June, 1890.

Fort Reno at this time was a highly important post with the Fifth Cavalry and their band in full control.

In 1890 Mr. Newman helped to build barns and officers quarters at the fort, receiving one dollar and fifty cents per day for carpenter work. He boarded with his uncle, Payton Smith, paying three dollars per week for board and room.

~~Section lines had not been established when the Newman family first came to Canadian County.~~

Bridges across the North Canadian Rivers were almost unknown. One bridge across this river was located on the river between El Reno and Reno City; another small bridge was located by Yukon, but if the river happened to be up it was impossible to cross here. The lack of bridges made it very inconvenient for the homesteaders. Often people had to travel as far as twenty miles out of their way if the river happened to be up and they were unable to ford it.

Mr. and Mrs. Newman reared their family of five girls and one boy, on this homestead in Candian County.

In later years Mr. Newman sold his farm and purchased a farm near the South Canadian River, south of El Reno. In 1930, they sold their farm and bought a nice home in El Reno.