

# Site of First Cabin in Count

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A little over 160 years ago, Jacob Newman built the first cabin in this territory, as his new home. This took considerable courage, since he was the earliest permanent settler in Richland County.

The question now is just where in the 900 square miles of the county, did Jacob build his nine by 12-foot house?

Early this century, A. J. Baughman wrote these words: "The following year (1807), the Newman settlement was made and the first cabin was erected on Section 36 (Madison Township), about 60 rods from the grist-mill, later known in history as Beam's Mills."

We are most grateful to Mr. Baughman, who with this sentence reduced our area of search to one square mile, into Section 36 of Madison Township. He also wrote that there is "a spring of water at the base of a knoll, a few rods west of where the cabin was erected."

Now the first landmark to seek is the grist-mill. We were overwhelmed to learn that "the total number of waterwheels supplying power for pioneer industries in this one county amounted to 190 mills in 1840." Fortunately only a couple of these mills were in Section 36.

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Thanks to Mr. Graham's writing we did learn that "Michael Beam purchased the Newman place on the Rocky Fork, finished the grist-mill, which became celebrated and widely known as Beam's Mill. Later Silas Rummell bought this mill on the Rocky Fork, and subsequently the owners have been Goudy, Amsbaugh and Campbell."

This list of owners helped us track down the exact location of the grist-mill landmark. Careful study of Rerick Brothers Atlas (1896) of this county, shows that in the northeast quarter of Section 36 in Madison Township, there was a grist-mill on 20 acres of land owned by H. Amsbaugh.

Having located the grist-mill landmark, we are now just "60 rods" from the exact location of the first cabin.

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Graham penned another clue. "The location of this first cabin was upon the right bank of the creek, back several hundred yards from it, near the present dwelling of H. L. Goudy, a few feet west of his barn. The spring is a short distance west of the site of the cabin."

Great! Now the last landmark to locate is the "dwelling of H. L. Goudy." However, since Graham penned his clue nearly a century ago, a few things have changed. The Goudy house and barn no longer exist. They are gone but their foundations remain.

On the afternoon of Feb. 3, 1971, Jesse Beer of Hickory Lane was visited. Beer is a knowledgeable, alert and aged gentleman. During a most pleasant discussion, it was learned that Beer had known Mr. Amsbaugh, the one-time owner of the grist-mill.

Indeed, Beer had attended school with the Amsbaugh children. Furthermore, Beer recalled knowing of miller



Henry Newman, son of Jacob Newman, lived as a boy in Richland County's first log cabin near the present Richland Hospital. The Newman son later moved to Bryan, in northwestern Ohio. He provided a wealth of information to historians about the settlement of Mansfield. (Photo by courtesy of Richland County Genealogical Society.)

Henry Goudy and most certainly knew of his "dwelling". The miller's little house, he said, once stood at the west corner of Lucas and Sites Rds. and just farther west stood the barn.

Having located the "dwelling of H. L. Goudy" and barn landmark, we have located the exact location of the first cabin.

A "spring of water" still flows from the base of the knoll on which the cabin stood and this location is just "60 rods" across the Rocky Fork from where Beam's grist-mill once stood, in Section 36. This site is therefore the exact location of Jacob Newman's earliest home, the first cabin in our territory.

This corner of the county is the cradle of our civilization in this territory. It is an historic site, and should be preserved.

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Henry Newman, who lived in Bryan, O., in the 1830s, was a son of Jacob Newman. Henry lived to see our county peopled by thousands, its well-cultivated farms take the place of dense forests; its thousands of cattle and other domestic animals, in place of wolves and bears; its beautiful towns and farmhouses in place of the wigwam of the savage.

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Henry Newman was a boy of nine or 10 when his father's cabin was erected, but remembered it well, and said it was a little log pen, with a roof over it; a wide fireplace occupying nearly all of one end with a stick and mud chimney running up on the outside, no floor but mother earth; windows made of a 12 - by - 12 piece of oiled paper.

The early cabin contained but a single room with a loft overhead; was made of rough, round beech logs with the bark on; clinked and daubed with sticks and mud to keep out the wintry blasts. The door was so low that a man of ordinary height had to stoop to enter.

The Newmans lived in this little hut about two years, when, by hard work, having finished a saw - mill, they erected a new cabin.

The new cabin was of hewed logs, built about eight or 10 feet from the early one, and a covered breeze - way extended over this space. Having the mill, they were able to put in a board floor. Since this cabin was a half - story higher than the early one, a board loft was put in, which was reached by a ladder and used as a sleeping room.

The doors and window frames were made of sawed lumber. The logs were nicely hewed and fitted and there was glass for windows. The usual great cheerful fireplace occupied the end, and the never - to - be forgotten iron crane was suspended therein, with its numerous hooks on which to hang the iron cooking kettles.

It was not often that an early settler or Richland County was found who could afford to have a cabin like this hewed - log one of the Newmans. The earliest settlers often lived for weeks and months, with their families, in what was called a "pole cabin" that is, a small cabin made of poles and sticks, and covered with brush and bark.

In the spring of 1808, Michael Newman came to the settlement. He was a brother of Jacob's and brought along his wife from Canton. They moved into that early cabin of one room.

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The new cabins were usually 14 by 16 feet. The windows were square or long holes, made by sawing through one or two of the logs, with staves nailed across. Bedsteads were improvised of rough dogwood poles made fast to the wall. A substitute for chairs, were roughly - hewn benches.

The chamber, or "loft" was reached by a ladder, sometimes from the outside. If room was lacking within the cabin, a row of stout pegs in the wall, could be climbed.

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The fireplace occupied the greater part of one end of the cabin. The trammel and hooks were prize possessions. Earlier a lug - pole across the inside of the chimney, about even with the loft floor, served as a trammel. A chain was suspended from it, hooks attached, and from this hung the mush - pot or tea kettle. Iron ware was very scarce.

Jacob Newman and his family lived in this cabin until 1811, when he sold out his possessions to Michael Beam, and moved "uptown" into the new village of Mansfield.