

DR. BEN NEWLAND

The state of Indiana has reason to take pride in the personnel of her corps of medical men from the early days in the history of this common-wealth to the present time, and on the roll of honored names that indicates the services of distinguished citizens in this field of endeavor there is reason in reverting with gratification to that of Dr. Ben Newland, who has long since ended his earthly services and "joined the innumerable caravan that moves to the mysterious realm," but whose record will long remain as an incentive to the youth who contemplates a career in this great branch of science. He was a member of a prominent Virginia family, one that has been influential in public and civic life wherever they have dispersed.

Ben Newland, who during his active life was one of the most prominent and popular and successful physicians who ever lived in Lawrence county, was born on July 19, 1821, in Jackson county, Indiana, near the town of Velonia. He was a son of William and Susan Chester (Harrold) Newland, the father a native of Virginia and the mother of Kentucky. They came to Indiana in 1816, settling on the White river near Tunnelton, in Lawrence county, where the father followed farming pursuits, and later located east of Bedford, where his death occurred, the mother subsequently dying in Illinois. They were the parents of the following children: Elizabeth, the wife of Greenbury Owen; Mary, the wife of J. Hostettler, of Illinois; Kate, who became the wife of Michael Malott, of Sullivan, Indiana; Sarah, the wife of Henry Malott; Robert, who married Nancy Holland and went to Texas, where he died, having served as a colonel in the Confederate army in the Civil war; Laura, twin to Robert, became the wife of James W. Palmer, of Bedford; Benjamin, who was the third child in order of birth, is the subject of this sketch; Emily became the wife of Eli Knapp and died at Decatur, Illinois; Caroline, widow of John Hostettler, is living at Decatur, Illinois. William Newland took a contract to carry the United States mail and in the fulfillment of this contract his son, the subject of this sketch, at the age of twelve years, started to carry the mail by horseback between Orleans and Indianapolis, and Bedford and Versailles, following this employment for three years. This was a tiresome and oftentimes dangerous trip for anyone, much less a boy of his tender years, but he faithfully performed his part, of the work for his father. He was an industrious lad and after ceasing his duties as a mail carrier he engaged in cutting rails, cutting ten thousand of them during 1840 and 1841. He also engaged in teaching school and then, having an ambition to take up the medical profession, he entered the office of Dr. Elijah Newland, with whom he remained for two years. He afterward attended medical lectures at Louisville, Kentucky, and in April, 1845, opened an office at Bedford, on the northeast corner of the public square. He continued his studies at the Louisville Medical College during 1845-46-47 until he was graduated and then, returning to Bedford, confined himself closely to his profession up to the time of his death, which occurred on April, 1889. During this long period probably no other physician in this section of the country enjoyed to a greater extent the absolute confidence and regard of the people to whom he ministered and with whom he mingled, for he was not only a successful practitioner, but possessed a kindness of heart and a broad-minded sympathy for suffering humanity which endeared him to the affections of all who knew him. Though a busy man, Doctor Newland took an interested part in many phases of public life and especially in military matters was he prominent. In 1849 he was made captain

of, the state militia, and in 1852 was made a brigadier-general of the militia. On the outbreak of the Civil war he tendered his services to the government and was commissioned surgeon of the Twenty-second Regiment Indiana Volunteer Infantry, which he accompanied to the front. The command was first sent to Missouri, where, on September 6, 1861, Doctor Newland was appointed medical director of the central district of Missouri, headquarters at Jeffersonville. There he equipped a hospital with four thousand beds and also a pest house, but was soon afterward assigned to another army corps and just prior to the battle of Pea Ridge he was made medical director of his division, having charge during the battle of Pea Ridge, when he established a hospital of five thousand beds for the accommodation of the sick and wounded soldiers. When the division was ordered to Kentucky, Doctor Newland asked to be retired and returned to Louisville. However, he took part in the battle of Perrysville and was on the field a week after the battle directing the care of the wounded. On November 4, 1862 he resigned his commission and returned to Bedford on account of his wife's ill health.

Politically, Doctor Newland was a lifelong Democrat and was for many years an active participant in the political affairs of the state, especially concerning his immediate locality. He was state senator from Lawrence county in 1852 and in 1876 he was a delegate to the Democratic national convention at St. Louis, which nominated Samuel J. Tilden for the Presidency. He was also chairman of the county central committee of his party and was a delegate to many state and county conventions. In 1854 and 1855 Doctor Newland was president of the Bedford Branch of the State Bank, and in 1856 was a delegate to the national convention of bankers at Cincinnati, Ohio. He was made a member of the Free and Accepted Masons in 1849 and all his life took a deep and appreciative interest in the workings of that time honored order.

Professionally, for twenty years Doctor Newland was a member of the American Medical Association and for twenty-seven years a member of the State Medical Society, as well as the Lawrence County Medical Society and the Mitchell District Medical Society. In 1879 he was president of the State Medical Society, and at the close of the session he made an address for which he was highly complimented by the president of the society. He made a deep and exhaustive of tuberculosis, in the treatment of which he was successful and for many years he was counted the leading physician and surgeon of Lawrence county and vicinity. In 1850 he and Joseph Hostettler owned a drug store on the east side of the public square in Bedford, but the Doctor later retired from that business. Religiously, he was first a member of the Christian church, but subsequently transferred his membership to the Episcopal church, of which he was thereafter a faithful and earnest member. Personally, Doctor Newland was a man of magnificent physique, standing over six feet tall and weighing two hundred and fifty pounds. He was a man who would attract attention in any assemblage and he enjoyed a large acquaintance and a marked popularity wherever he was known. What he did for his fellow men and the community in general may in a manner be told in words, but in its far-reaching influences cannot be measured. He was in close touch with the people and from a sincere and deep-felt interest in their welfare he labored for all that would prove of public benefit until his busy and useful life was ended. His death occurred on April 5, 1889, and his wife died on January 15th of the same year.

On December 28, 1847, Doctor Newland was married to Louisa A. Curry, who was born at Salem, Indiana in September 1819, the daughter of John and Deborah

(Newland) Curry. Her parents were of good old Quaker stock and the father, who was a farmer, was numbered among the early settlers of Salem, Indiana, where his death occurred, his wife dying in 1873. He was a hatter by trade and was a man of fine personal qualities. His wife, who had received a splendid education, taught school from 1835 to 1846. To Doctor Newland and wife were born four children, namely; Helen, born July 12, 1848, became the wife of William Lewis, of near Mitchell, where her death occurred in August, 1907; Mary, born October 31, 1849, and who died on February 7, 1895, was the wife of Albert C. Andrews, of Madison, Indiana; Laura B., born October 11, 1851 is the wife of James M. Caress, who is referred to elsewhere in this work; Kate B., born March 25, 1854, and who died on December 5, 1898, was the wife of James H. Willard, of Bedford, Indiana.

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