

Tensas Parish History  
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Extracted from the Tensas Gazette of July 10, 1936

#### A BIT OF EARLY HISTORY OF NEWELLTON

We are indebted to Mr. Robert Y. Newell for the following bit of early history of Newellton.

The town of Newellton was founded about the year 1876, by Edward D. Newell, one of the pioneers of Tensas parish, and his eldest son, Capt. John David Stokes Newell. Edward D Newell and his brother, Dr. Thomas M. Newell, came to Tensas parish about 1834, and entered about 30,000 acres of land on what is now known as Newell's Ridge. This land extended from the Gorton property line, on the south, to Tensas River, on the North. The brothers bought slaves and cleared many acres of this land and were successful planters up to the beginning of the Civil War. They sold several large tracts of the original purchase but retained two large plantations each living and operating them separately, in the early sixties. Dr. Thomas M. Newell lived on Shackelford plantation, where he died, together with most of his family, during the epidemic of cholera in 1868. Edward D. Newell lived on Cypress plantation, where he reared a large family of children by his first wife.

Among whom were the following, all now dead: Capt. J.D.S. Newell, Confederate Army; Mrs. Anette Newell Wolfe, Edward Henry Newell, Elizabeth Newell, Tensora Newell. His second marriage was to Mrs. Moody of Port Gibson, Miss., but there were no children from this union. During the last year of the Civil War Edward D. Newell married Miss Jennie Yates of Schnectady, N.Y., who bore him four children, viz: Mrs. Josie N. Fultz, Robert Y. Newell, Edgar Farrar Newell, and Jennie Yates Newell, the latter having died in childhood. In 1874, Edward D. Newell and J.D.S. Newell purchased from David S. Newell (brother of E.D. Newell) lot No. 5 of the Verona plantation, said lot having been purchased by D.S. Newell and his son E.T. Newell, from J.T. Gorton. Sometime between the date of purchase and 1876, the first store building in what was to become the Village of Newellton was built by Edward D. and J.D. Newell and rented to a man named Joe Coleman, who was the first merchant of this now prosperous and progressive town. Several more stores were soon built by them, and later a post office was established, Julius Morris being the first postmaster of Newellton. The mail was carried from Hard Times, traveling by horse and buggy, three times per week, for many years. Hard Times being the steamboat landing nearest Newellton, where all freight was received and all

cotton shipped. Some years later Capt. Newell built a residence on a five acre lot adjoining the town property, which he had also purchased individually, and lived there until he moved to St. Joseph, where he resided until his death in 1899. Edward D. Newell retained five acres of land for himself, which is not the property of Mrs. Josie Newell Fultz.

Edward H. Newell also owned a five acre lot adjoining that of his father, E.D. Newell, and he also built a residence, about 1885, and lived there during the remainder of his life, having reared his family in Newellton.

E.D. Newell and J.D.S. Newell dissolved partnership in 1885 and divided the town property which they owned jointly. In June 1888, Edward D. Newell died, his wife having preceded him by about six years. Sometime about 1880, Mr. A. Cohn, who then was the owner of Routhwood Plantation, sold some town lots just south of Gorton Lane, fronting on Lake St. Joseph, and more store buildings were built, which increased the size of Newellton, which town has been and is yet growing and spreading in three directions, until the limits extend about three-quarters of a mile, and north and south a full half mile.

Mr. Cohn was a very progressive man and good citizen and he helped very much in the extension of the town of Newellton.

Today we of Newellton know that we have a good town, second to none anywhere near its size, in the state. We have progressive business men and live, up to date merchants, and feel that things are on a solid foundation. We have a good paved north and south highway, No 65, which extends from the Gulf of Mexico to the Canadian line, giving a direct route from all to use this route. We have an east and west gravel road from Monroe to Newellton by way of Winnsboro and other towns west of us. Highway 80, magnificent pavement, passes through Tallulah, twenty-eight miles from Newellton, crossing the United States east and west. We have the Missouri Pacific R.R., our old stand-by, and daily bus lines, so the town of Newellton is well located.

The living members of the once large Newell family are not many. Those of the older ones now living are: Mrs. Josie Newell Fultz, Robert Y. Newell, Newellton; Edgar Farrar Newell, St. Joseph; R. Wade Newell and Benj.Y Newell of Newellton; Dr. Edward Dunbar Newell, Chattanooga, Tenn., and Dr. Edward Thomas Newell, also of Chattanooga, as well as Capt. Carroll H. Newell, U.S. Army; Garland and Udolpho Wolfe, sons of Mrs. Anette Newell Wolfe, reside in New Orleans. There are many grand and great-grandchildren of Edward D. Newell and J.D.S. Newell now living in Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Iowa and Washington, D.C., who will some day be told that their forefathers founded Newellton, and it is hoped that they will feel proud of the little city bearing their family name.