

County's Jewish heritage traced to Jacob Newberger

Grant County's Jewish community has played a significant role in the development of social, economic and political institutions of this area.

Jewish settlement within the city can be traced to the Civil War period. However the area's first known Jewish resident, Jacob Newberger, came as a pioneer to Grant County's southeast corner some 20 years earlier.

The life story of Jacob Newberger was told in an 1883 obit-

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uary in the *Marion Chronicle*.

Newberger, born in Germany in 1809, migrated to the United States in 1830.

In 1840, he found his way, when forests scarcely blazed a trail, to New Cumberland, Ind., which later became the town of Matthews.

Newberger was described as born in the religion of Abraham. His primary concern, the writer continued, was for the proper religious training of his children, that they be useful and honorable.

Newberger was characterized as a devout man who



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prayed twice daily, in supplication and thanks to the Supreme Ruler of the universe.

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The article recounted that Newberger voted for every Republican from the inception of the party. His strong Republicanism led him to be an outspoken opponent of slavery.

An incident during the Civil War is reported in which southern sympathizers in this area threatened secession and recruiting officers were shot.

Newberger, in defiance of these acts, nailed an American flag to his roof, where it remained until the town's last Union soldiers returned from the war.

His wife of 40 years, his children, and grandchildren survived him.

Newberger was praised as having died as he had lived, in full consciousness of a well-spent life, of a useful and honorable career.

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