

## [Nellie Henley Barnum]

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1684 words. PIONEER STORY Nellie Barnum

I was born on a farm in Delta County, Texas, in 1877 and I have lived in Lincoln County, New Mexico for fifty eight years. I was four years old when my father, tho'mas W. Henley, my mother, one half sister, two brothers and myself left Delta County, Texas in October, 1880 for Roswell, New Mexico. We traveled in a covered wagon with a chuck box in the back, a cow hide stretched under the wagon for our cooking utensils and two kegs tied on the sides of the wagon for our water. We carried all of our provisions and bedding and the six of us all rode in the one wagon which was drawn by two small mules. We slept on the ground at night and mother did all the cooking over a camp fire. She made sour dough bread and baked it in a dutch oven. We children gathered buffalo and cow chips for our fuel. When we made camp at night we kids would get our two sacks and start to gather up the chips. We had a tin can with a spout on it. Mother put an old rag in the can and pulled part of it thro'ugh the spout and poured grease in the can and that gave us our light.

We were always on the look out for Indians but we didn't see any until we reached Lincoln County, New Mexico. We brought all of our own smoked meat with us. We saw Buffalo and Antelope but they were too far away for father to kill one. The plains were awfully dry and hot when we crossed them. But we had no trouble in finding watering places. We crossed the Trinity River on a ferry boat driving the wagon on the boat we were drawn across by hand 2 with a large rope. As we came to the small streams we camped on them for the night and washed what clothes we had dirty and would be on our way as father was in very poor health and wanted to get to his father's home in Roswell, New

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Mexico as quickly as possible. Father's ill health was the cause of our leaving Texas and moving to New Mexico. My grandfather and grandmother moved to New Mexico in 1879 for grandfather's health. They owned a farm where the town of Boswell now stands. Their houses on the farm were called "Chosas" (which means dug-outs) in tho'se days. They dug down in the ground about three feet and built it up with posts to about four feet above the ground and filled in between the posts with mud. They had dirt floors and dirt roofs. We arrived at my grandfather's late in November, 1880, and lived in their home that winter. In the spring of 1881 mother and father left us children with our grandparents [?] and they came on up to Fort Stanton, New Mexico, which was a military post in tho'se days, father took up a homestead five miles west of Fort Stanton on the Rio Bonito. Father was a school teacher and practiced medicine in Texas. He was not a licensed doctor but he had gone to a medical school in St. Louis, Missouri, but on account of finances he had to quit before he graduated. He practiced with an older doctor while in Texas and he always did all that he could for the sick is long as he lived. In tho'se days there were very few doctors and most of the farmers that lived around close to us always sent for father. They paid him whatever they felt like giving him as he never set a price. [????]

There was a lot of stealing and killings going on in Lincoln 3 County at that time. Billy the Kid had been captured and was on trial in Las Cruces for the killing of Sheriff Brady. He was convicted and brought back to Lincoln, New Mexico in April where he killed his two guards and escaped, to be killed by Pat Garrett in July 1881.

Father and mother came back to my grandfather's and loaded up their few belongings and us four children and started for their homestead in Lincoln County. Father, mother and the two older children built a one room log cabin, with a fire place for heating and cooking, for us to live in. I was too small to help with the building of the cabin but I had to look after the baby while mother helped. We had plenty of nice wood as father was clearing his land and cut down lots of nice big pine trees. In the spring of 1882 we planted a crop and raised lots of nice vegetables and feed for our stock. The second year we were on the farm, father got a job at Fort Stanton as blacksmith, shoeing the horses and mules. Mother would take

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him down to work on Monday morning and bring the wagon and team back as she had to have them during the week to work the crops. Father had a yoke of oxen and my mother and sister used them to do the plowing in the crops. That spring father started a four room adobe house. Mother and my oldest sister would make the adobes during the week and let them dry and when father came home to spend Sunday he would lay the adobes in the wall and the next week they would do the same thing until we had the walls up. We had to haul our lumber from the Dowlin Mill which was located on the Ruidoso. We had to go to Alto and then down Gavalan Canyon to 4 the Ruidoso river and then about three miles up the river to the saw mill. It was a good two days trip. Father used the wagon and team of mules to haul the lumber. We had a fire place in the front room and one in the kitchen for cooking. We had dirt floors and dirt roof. Father cut small logs and laid them very close together and put dirt on them for a roof. Father picked up a second hand stove at Fort Stanton and it was the first cook stove that I ever saw. Mother and Sister built a rock fence around our place. They went up on the hill side and threw the rocks down so they could carry them and put them in the fence. Mother and Sister did a lot of hard work to have a place to live in and in time we had a very nice farm and house. We raised all of our own hogs and father bought a few head of cattle as he was able. We raised our own wheat and took it to Dowlin's Mill and had it ground into flour and had our corn ground into corn meal. We bought our coffee in the green bean and roasted it and ground it in an old fashioned coffee mill. The first winter that we lived in the log cabin we had our grease pot and the fire place for lights.

We got our mail at Fort Stanton. Father taught us reading, writing and arithmetic the first two years that we lived on the Bonito and when we got enough neighbors they got up a three month subscription school. It was in a one room log cabin and about a mile from our house. We three older children walked to school. Later on the community got together and built a nice one room school house at Angus, New Mexico. The men put up the building and the women folks would go along each day and cook dinner for the men folks.

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After father left Fort Stanton he got a job at the "V" Ranche as blacksmith for the Crees. Mr. and Mrs. Pat Garrett lived on a ranche adjoining the "V" Ranche and Mrs. Garrett gave birth to a baby girl and my father attended her at this birth. This baby girl is the same Elizabeth Garrett who wrote our state song, "O Fair New Mexico." While we lived on the Bonito father would make a trip every fall to Las Vegas, New Mexico and buy the calico for our dresses, shoes stockings coffee, sugar and salt as that is all we had to buy. We raised every thing else that we ate. We lived here eleven years. Father sold this place to George Barrett and we moved to Nogal, New Mexico where we had better school advantages. Father hauled freight from Socorro and Las Vagas, New Mexico with mule teams. Mother died in 1915 and Father died in 1921 in Nogal, New Mexico. My father was born on a farm near Jefferson City, Missouri in 1840 and was a confederate soldier during the Civil War. He fought in the battle of Bunker Hill. My mother's maiden name was Nancy Williams and she was born in Arkansas in 1855.

While we were living at Nogal, New Mexico I met Linza Branum and we were married June 6th, 1894. There were six children born to us, three girls and three boys. Mr. Branum came to New Mexico from Putman, Texas and located at Three Rivers, New Mexico. He had forty one head of cattle and the first year he was here he branded two calves, the cattle rustlers got the rest. After we were married we lived at Three Rivers for three years. Then we bought a ranche in Coyote Canyon, about five miles northwest of White Oaks, New Mexico, from J.P.C. Langston who was deputy sheriff of Lincoln 6 County at that time. We moved all of our cattle from Three Rivers to this ranche and lived there twenty nine years. In 1916 we sold this ranche and cattle to the Warden Brothers and bought the I-X Ranche, near Oscuro, New Mexico and lived there one year. We sold the I-X Ranche to E.O. Finley in 1917. We moved to Carrizozo and built us a large modern home. Five of my children graduated from the Carrizozo, High School. Mr. Branum died May 3, 1925, at Carrizozo, New Mexico.

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NARRATOR: Nellie Henley Branum, Aged 61 years, Carrizozo, N. Mex.