

## 13 October 1936

Oliver Keith Manuel was born as the second son of Wesley Franklin Manuel and Fay Irene Graham Manuel on Tuesday, 13 October in Wichita, Kansas, when Fay was 24 years old and Wesley would soon be 30 years old. Their other son, Leo, was then 3 years and 8 months old.

On 13 October 1936, Franklin Delano Roosevelt visited Wichita to campaign for a second presidential term against Kansas' favorite son, Alf Landon, and to push for his progressive "New Deal" economic policy to correct some of the social ills of the Great Depression. Within a month Roosevelt won a landslide victory, carrying every state except Vermont and Maine, including Landon's home state of Kansas.

Fay and Wesley had survived the Great Depression well. In 1934 they managed to buy a new Chevrolet and drive it to Arkansas to visit his parents and siblings. In a seemingly unrelated event, a meteorite impregnated with elements from the Sun fell near Fayetteville, Arkansas on 26 December 1934.

On the other side of the globe, a famous scientist visited Japan in 1936 to watch a solar eclipse - Nobel Laureate Francis William Aston. Aston developed the mass spectrograph and used it to measure the nuclear packing fraction (nuclear potential energy) of most isotopes known to that time. The lecture that he presented at the Imperial University of Tokyo on Saturday, 13 June 1936, inspired an unusually talented student, Kazuo Kuroda, to study nuclear energy and the nuclear reactions that generated the elements that comprise the solar system. [See pages 5-8 of Kuroda's autobiography, ["My Early Days at the Imperial University of Tokyo"](#)].

Twenty-four years later Professor Paul Kauzo Kuroda would become Oliver's research advisor at the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville, send him to Berkeley to learn the latest improvements in Aston's mass spectrometer, and advise him to use that instrument to analyze the meteorite that fell on Fayetteville in late 1934.

Soon after giving birth on 13 October 1936, Fay was found to be suffering from tuberculosis (TB). She was moved to a sanitarium by the time Oliver was 4 months old. Fay Manuel died on 1 September 1940, shortly before her 28<sup>th</sup> birthday and her youngest son's 4<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Relevant pictures are not available from 13 October 1936.

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