

## FEDDER CENTENNIAL FARM

The August Fedder Centennial Farm located in Collinsville Township, Section 24, of Madison County, Illinois has a very interesting history. It was originally homesteaded from the U. S. government by the Renfro family. In fact, a small cemetery lot on the farm (which has since been lost) was used as a Renfro burial plot. Mr. Albert Cordes purchased 80 acres from the Renfros and subsequently sold this 80 acres in 1859 to a young German immigrant couple, August and "Ricka" Fedder. They later added 31 acres.

August Fedder was born on August 10, 1828 in Munchehof, Germany. His parents were Ludwig Fedder and Johanne Vollbrecht, a couple who were born in the late 1700's in Badenhausen, Germany and who subsequently moved to Munchehof, Germany where they ran a bakery in the middle of town - raising a family in the attached living quarters. This area of Germany is excellent farm country situated at the western foot of the beautiful Harz Mountains. Their Illinois farm had similar farming characteristics, however the Illinois ground was more hilly with streams running through it, compared to the gentle rolling terrain in Germany.

At the age of 21, in 1849, August Fedder, who listed his occupation as a shoemaker booked passage on the immigration sailing vessel named Bark Leantine. A passenger list for this voyage shows that he and the family of Friedrich and Wilhelmine Ude (also spelled Uhde) along with their 10 children were listed as "steerage" passengers. The Bark Leantine embarked from the port of Bremen, Germany on September 12, 1849 and after sailing four months, arrived and disembarked in New Orleans, Louisiana on January 14, 1850. A record by August Ude, then 13 years old, describes waiting three weeks for winds, which eventually took them close to the equator on their voyage to New Orleans.

August Fedder had listed his intent to settle in New Orleans. However, the Ude family had listed their intent to settle in St. Louis, Missouri, and their second child, a daughter, 17 years of age named Friedricka, apparently influenced August to change his mind and go with them to St. Louis, Missouri because on January 1, 1851, August Fedder and Friedricka Ude (nicknamed Ricka) were married in the Old Trinity Lutheran Church in St. Louis, Missouri.

It was on December 5, 1859 that August and Ricka Fedder purchased the 80 acres from Albert Cordes. They cleared timber and built a log cabin which is inhabited today on the farm. They had nine children, six of whom lived to adulthood.

Records in the St. Louis Library show that during the Civil War, in 1861, August Fedder, then 33 years of age, was a sergeant in the Missouri Volunteers, First Regiment, Company I of the Union forces of United States Reserve Corps.

Later, a two story, white frame farmhouse was built by August Fedder for his growing family, and the log cabin was converted into a typical "summer kitchen" adjoining the back porch. In later years, electricity was added and clapboard siding and wood shingles were added to complete the house and cabin.

As the children of August and Ricka grew to maturity, the older boys purchased adjoining farms which have subsequently been resold to others. The original Fedder farm was eventually purchased by the fifth child, C. Herman Fedder, Sr. who with his wife, Wilhelmine Subring, had five children who were born and raised on this farm. Their children were Martin, Minnie, Emil, Herman, Jr., and Otto. In 1946, upon the death of Herman Fedder, Sr., the farm was passed down to Martin and Minnie, both unmarried, who lived with their father. They sold the farm in 1967 to Emil's son, Walter Fedder and his wife, Mary Louise Bott Fedder.

August Fedder farmed approximately 40 acres, had pastureland on approximately 20 acres for a dairy herd, pigs, and cattle. They planted a large garden, had chickens, and had a small orchard near the house. He kept a small pocket ledger dated 1875 which shows some of his purchases and sales along with a map of how he had the orchard laid out.

As this is written in 1985, the August Fedder Centennial Farm has approximately 65 acres in grain crop cultivation. A 15 acre lake was built in 1978 by damming up a spring-fed stream. The Fedders have been and continue to be a witness to the abundant goodness and grace of a loving God.

W. G. Fedder  
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