

## Shelby County Centennial Farm, 1975

March 19, 1975 edition



The Owen (Doc) Kinchelow centennial farm is a 40-acre tract in Tiger Fork Township south of the old Burksville store, on a big hill known in the neighborhood as Josh's Hill.

Fenton Kinchelow, Don's grandfather, acquired the land January 23, 1869, from the Rev. Henry Louthan, with whom he and his wife Jane came as slaves from Virginia. Rev. Louthan, who was born in Frederick County, Virginia, in 1808, was known as a kind and compassionate master and helped Fenton buy the land after the slaves were freed.

On this spread Fenton built a log house, which is still standing (1975,) although now covered with weather boarding. The sturdy logs were as long as the house, which is a double-room, two-story building. Probably a neighborhood log raising placed those heavy timbers in place to form the home, which sheltered the family for many years.

A pine tree, which had its origin in their native Virginia either as a seedling or a cone, still stands in the year. Mrs. Gerald Bonnel speaks of the "million dollar view" from this yard overlooking the North River Valley to the north.

Rev. Louthan built the first Old Brick Church and had special pews built so his slaves could attend church. Doubtless Fenton and Jane were among the worshipers and they are buried in the cemetery there, (later known as Looney Creek.) Jane died February 12, 1881 at the age of 72, while Fenton died March 19, 1884 at the age of 63.

Their son, Joshua, inherited the farm from Fenton and Jane. He and his wife, Kizzie Thomas, lived there many years. The first Negro school in Tiger Fork stood on the southwest corner of this 40 acres, a drafty log building with oiled paper instead of glass for windows. Their son, Doc, went to

school there until the old Pansy School became the Negro school in the area.

Josh and Kizzie got their groceries from a small store not far away, which might have been Solomon Miller's Mill and Store. Later, the store at Burksville supplied their needs.

After the death of Joshua and Kizzie, their son Doc became the owner of the farm, where he lived alone. He was a familiar figure in the neighborhood, helping the farmers in the vicinity chopping wood for the winter's fuel, besides farming his own ground. He was well liked by his neighbors and was known to exercise his voting privilege, always coming to Burksville on election days to vote.

A good many slaves settled in this area of Shelby County after they were freed, and Doc remembers many families who were neighbors of his folks. They were much a part of the early history of our county, which the Historical Society is endeavoring to preserve. Too much already has slipped away.

Doc is a cousin of Fenton and Ann Kinchelow, who lived in Shelbina for many years when Fenton worked at the Shelbina Mill. Doc left the farm in October 1974 and bought a house in Shelbina from George Walker, where he now lives. The log house in Tiger Fork stands on the hilltop, a sturdy reminder of the past generations who were the pioneer farmers of Shelby County.