



Proud to Raise Angus

Rollie Hendrix French Lick, Ind.

Rollie Hendrix of French Lick, Ind., has been breeding Angus cattle for 67 years. At 86 years of age, the Angus are still a major part of life.

Rollie Hendrix, now 86 years of age, began raising cattle with his father John T. Hendrix, in the hills of Martin County, Ind. In 1916, a purebred Angus herd was started with the purchase of a cow and heifer calf. The calf was Treesies Beauty, later to be one of the most productive cows in the herd. During these first years with purebreds, numbers were gradually increased through purchase of outside stock and by keeping the heifer calves.

Record Performing Bull

The importance of performance was recognized in Indiana in the 1920s and was encouraged through "The Hoosier Thousand Pound Calf Club." This was a state-wide project sponsored cooperatively by the Purdue University Department of Agricultural Extension and the Indiana Livestock Breeders Assn. It was through this project that one, if not the greatest highlight, of the Hendrix herd's career was achieved. In March 1931, a bull calf produced by Rollie

set a world record for "weight for age" by tipping the scales at 1,249 lb. the day he was 12 months old. Even today, some 52 years later, most Angus breeders would be elated with this 365-day weight.

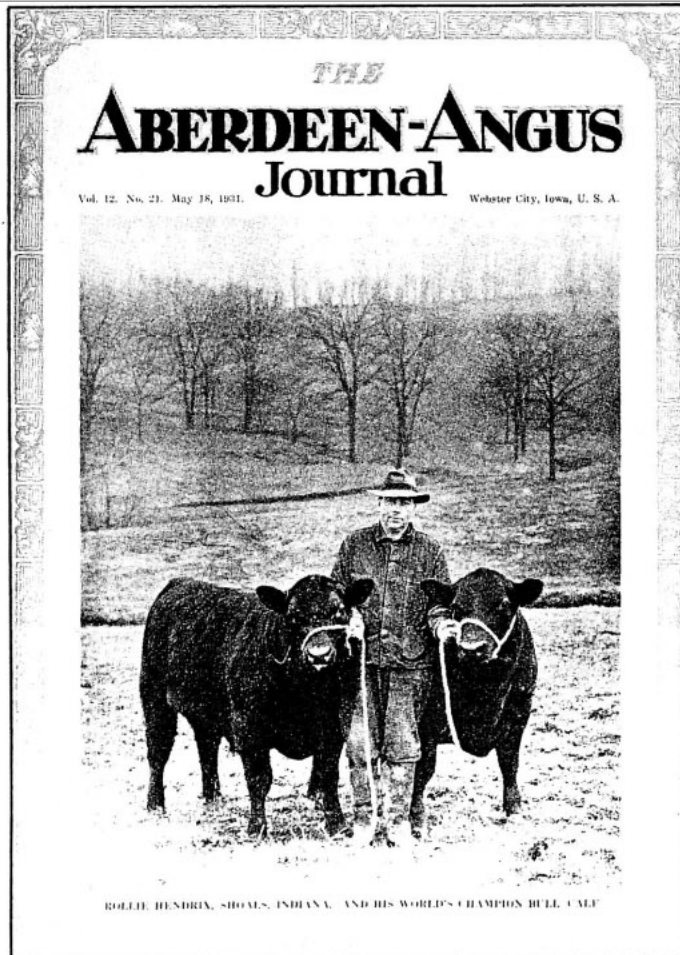
The calf Equity Idolmere, was sired by the Hendrix herd bull, Eb Idolmere, bred by J.F. and J.C. Larkin of Loogootee, Ind. This bull was by Eb Eliglow and out of Broodus Evisa, a daughter of the 1919 International champion, Idolmere. Dam of the weight champion calf was Treesies Beauty, who was 14 years old and this was her twelfth calf. She was by Equity Boy, the sire of Hillsdale Pride that was grand champion female at the 1916 and 1917 International.

A second calf and herd mate, Glencraig Idolmere, out of the same bull weighed 1,107 at 365 days of age.

Rollie had entered these two bulls at birth in the project and they were fed together. The calves were fed cracked corn, ground oats, linseed oilmeal, cottonseed meal and alfalfa hay as creep feed. At weaning, four lb. of ground barley and three lb. of ground wheat were substituted for a portion of the corn and blackstrap molasses was added to sweeten the mixture. During the last three months of the year's feeding period, the calves each were consuming about 20 lb. of grain. Grass hay and a handful of corn silage was also being fed.

Numerous livestock publications published the event including The Aberdeen-Angus Journal in its March 23, 1931, issue. In a later issue of the Journal (May 18, 1931), Rollie and his two calves were featured on the cover. An excerpt from an article in that issue apparently relates to some of the views about Angus cattle at that time: "Those who spend so much time telling folks about the 'Little Black Cattle' will no doubt enjoy carefully scrutinizing today's cover page—not so little as some folks would have us think." The calves were described as being smooth and typey, combining scale, quality and good breeding to a remarkable degree. The weight champion calf was later sold at 18 months of age, weighing 1,600 lbs.

Rollie Hendrix and two of his high-gaining bull calves were featured on a 1931 Aberdeen-Angus Journal cover. One of the bulls set a world record by tipping the scales at 1,249 lb. at 12 months of age.



Rollie Bred Them Big

There was controversy among breeds and breeders as to the ideal cattle type. Rollie, however, avoided the small type cattle. He gives great credit to those who provided advice and assistance throughout the years. Heavy use was made of the cooperative extension service. Individuals such as Jesse A. Wood, county agent, and P.T. Brown and Henry Mayo of the Purdue University agricultural extension department were the source of much help. W.H. Tomhave and Frank Richards with American Angus Assn. were also helpful, says Rollie.

In 1931, Rollie's herd consisted of 21 cows, and he farmed the homestead of 405 acres (100 tillable). Fortunately, during the depression years of the '30s, demand for Rollie's cattle remained good. Cattle were shown regularly, with the sale of several club calves during the '30s and '40s. The herd was expanded primarily from within but supplemented with some purchase of outside females. Heavy emphasis was put upon the selection of good herd sire replacements. Most herd sires used through the years were sons of or closely related to the outstanding bulls of the breed, such as: Blackcap Banner, General 4th of Lonjac, Eileenmere 85th, Eileenmere 500th, Homeplace Eileenmere 264, Mr. Eileenmere, O. Bardoliermere 2nd, Ankonian TN Emulous 6, Biffles Emulous 992, Great Northern and Canadian Colossal. Present herd sires are sons of Sir Big William 2021, Byergos Black Revolution 36 and Schearbrook Shoshone. A son of Pine Drive Big Sky was recently acquired for a future herd sire prospect.

In 1943, Rollie's son, Kenneth, acquired additional land for farming and herd expansion. Together, they have maintained the operation.

Purdue Research Involvement

Although, as indicated earlier, heavy use was made of the extension service for advice, research data and information on pasture and forage improvement for many of the sandstone based, fragipan soils in southern Indiana was limited. As a result, in 1948, Purdue University department of agronomy began using part of the Hendrix farm for forage plot research. At one time more than 300 forage and fertilizer research plots were located on the farm. Some of the Angus herd was also used as research animals. In 1950 and 1951, the first and possibly only, Indiana pasture irrigation research was conducted at the Hendrix farm. The research activities were discontinued in the early '50s when Purdue University acquired the Southern Indiana Forage Farm, now known as the Southern Indiana Purdue Agricultural Center (SIPAC) in Dubois County, located about 10 miles from the Hendrix farm.

Angus Are Major Family Enterprise

The herd had expanded to 125 cows by the 1950s. Because of the time and labor involved, showing of the cattle ceased with the exception of 4-H involvement with Kenneth's son, Kern. Rollie and Kenneth have

maintained the herd at about 100 to 110 brood cows for the past 20 to 25 years. With minor exception, replacement females come from within the herd. Because of labor, natural service is used for the entire herd. Herd sires are obtained from production or performance-tested sales.

Breeding cattle are merchandised entirely by private treaty. During the early years cattle from the herd were sold throughout the United States, at times in truckload lots. A number of currently existing herds in Indiana obtained their start with Hendrix cattle.

During recent years, sales of breeding and finished cattle are more at the local level. The Hendrix's are thankful for their many repeat customers, a necessity for the pure-

bred breeder. They have attempted to provide quality breeding stock at a price affordable to the local cattle producer. Because of the terrain, the farm is not suitable for heavy row cropping. Thus, most of the land is devoted for forage production and Angus cattle. The Hendrix's are proud of the fact that for the past 67 years, Angus cattle has been the major family enterprise. The farm recently received one of the Centennial Angus Herd Awards, presented at the American Angus Assn. Centennial Celebration in St. Joseph.

Kern, an animal scientist at Purdue University, hopes to continue the operation his grandfather and father have established.

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