

HISTORY OF THE BENJAMIN KEMPF HOMESTEAD AND FARM

1854 Benjamin Kempf was born in Castroville, Texas, November 8, 1854. He was the oldest of eight children of Joseph and Marie Anna Weber Kempf, immigrants to Texas from Alsace, France.

1869 Joseph Kempf bought 300 acres of land about one mile southeast Castroville, which makes up the Kempf Farm of today, being in the Kempf family now for around 164 years.

1875 Joseph gave Benjamin a couple of acres of land upon which he constructed his house.

1879 Benjamin married Mary Haby, who died on January 11, 1893. She and Benjamin had no children.

1894 Benjamin married Mary Keller, daughter of immigrants from Alsace, Andreas and Katherina Dreyer Keller. They had three children, Andrew, Martha and Ulrich.

1895 Benjamin built his homestead farm house with the help of his uncle, also named Benjamin, who was a carpenter and cabinet maker living in San Antonio and who cut the lumber for the new Kempf house and shipped it to Castroville. Nick Hutzler, a carpenter living nearby in Bader Settlement constructed the house, consisting of a kitchen, living room and porch, in the old Alsatian style.

1908 Three rooms and a porch, going halfway around the abode, were added, making the "new portion" of the home now around 110 years old. Carpenters for this project were Louis Fohn, Alois Grimsinger, John Haas and Alex Jungman.

1931 Andrew married Lucille Biediger and inherited the house after the Kempf Farm was divided between he and his brother, Ulrich. Andrew had two sons, Gerald and Mark.

1940 The Kempf home was struck by a damaging fire. The Castroville Fire Department, organized in 1939, came with their new fire truck, along with many friends and neighbors, and put out the blaze, before total destruction was done. The Kempf fire was the first fire alarm in the area answered by the