

## Johan Christian Augustus Friedrich

August Friedrich (Frederick) was born in 1832 in Switzerland and was brought to Ohio in 1836 by his family. They settled in Winesburg in 1838. August was the fifth of five children. Times were different back then. August's older sister, Friderika, was the first of the five and married in 1840 in Winseburg. She had a total of nine children, and of the first five, four "died young".

Much of the information for August now comes from the Supplement to the "Authentic History of Winesburg" by Rev. Arthur Smith. This document describes August's education as "rather limited" but credits him with careful reading and self-education.

When August was 19, he traveled to Chillicothe, Ohio, as an employee of Thomas Woodrow who operated a mercantile establishment. Thomas Woodrow was the uncle of Woodrow Wilson.

*Comment and speculation: How does an Ohio farm boy with a "rather limited" education gain such an opportunity? He needed a mentor and it must have been his future father-in-law, Col. Nicholas F. Joss. Nicholas Joss was a store owner and notary and although not a lawyer, he was constantly sought after for legal advice. Nicholas Joss was referred to as "The King of Winesburg."*

*Apparently Nichols Joss liked what he saw in Augustus, and set him up with Thomas Woodrow.*

In 1864 Nicholas married Emilie Joss, daughter of Col. Nicholas Joss and Louisa Cranz. They lived in Chillicothe until 1872 when he returned with his family. At that time the children were Emma and Charles, with Will about to be born (or a newborn).

Augustus, with his brother-in-law Charles Joss, took over the "thriving mercantile business" of Nicholas Joss. In 1885 Charles Joss withdrew and Nicholas continued the business with assistance from his son Charles Frederick.

*Comment and speculation: In today's world, a young man, on his own in a distant city, would probably stay there or move elsewhere as circumstances dictated. Instead, August returned to Winesburg to marry the daughter of his mentor and returned again to take over the business of that same sponsor. I am strongly suspicious that Nicholas Joss was concerned about the future of his family in that his son Charles may not have been his pick to take over the business. Plus, he would also need a worthwhile husband for his daughter Emilie who was ten years younger than Augustus. Liking what he saw in Augustus, he probably presented Augustus with the Chillicothe opportunity along with a thick layer of obligation not to forget his roots in Winesburg.*

During the Civil War, August was an officer in the “home guards”. His father-in-law, Nicholas Joss, has the title of Colonel although there is little information available concerning military service. Augustus had a physical disability that prevented him from taking a more active part in the war.

*Comment and speculation: I doubt that Swiss-German immigrants of the 1830-40s were very emotionally involved with the issues of the Civil War. Apparently Nicholas Joss was well connected and while it may be unfair and is pure speculation, I believe that the family participation in the Civil War was much like the participation of Bill Clinton and George Bush (the younger) in the Vietnam War.*

August retired in 1901 to Canton, Ohio. He and Emilie celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on March 22, 1914. This was just 10 days prior to Emilie’s death on April 1.

August died in 1919 and is buried in Canton, Ohio.