

# Destined

*Doug Gallier's Hereford connection goes back centuries.*

by Sara Gugelmeyer



Doug Gallier is not unlike many men his age. He retired from a long, successful career and returned to a more rewarding rural lifestyle on a small farm with a few Hereford cows. But there is one thing that sets Doug apart; he is the great-great-great-great-great-grandson of one of the first-ever Hereford breeders. He is the direct descendant of William Galliers (note the “s”—more on that later), who was breeding Hereford cattle in England in the mid-1700s.

### Way back when

According to early Hereford history, Richard Tompkins was one of the original breeders of Herefords, selecting for traits that would change

the oxen-type cattle to a form of the beef cattle we know today. It is noted that Benjamin Tompkins, Richard’s son, was a close friend of and often traded and cross-bred his cattle with William Galliers, who had developed more of a mottle-face version of red cattle at the time.

William Galliers’ herd was located at Wigmore, England, and from 1745 until about 1820, the family’s herd was well known for its quality and consistency, even winning awards at agricultural expositions. In 1795 John Galliers, one of William’s sons, hosted a sale of his cattle, at which buyer’s names and prices were recorded as the first-ever sale of the Hereford breed.



William Galliers

At the end of the 19th century, Doug’s great-great-grandfather,

Alfred, immigrated from Herefordshire, England, to Ohio. He had 10 children and a feud among the children led Doug’s great-grandfather to drop the “s” from the end of the surname, thus the name Doug bears today — “Gallier.”

### Modern history

Doug’s parents were not farmers, but his maternal grandfather had what Doug calls a typical farm of the 1940s and 50s with a few sheep, a few chickens and a few pigs. He also fed out a few cattle. Doug was raised in Ohio next door to his grandparents’ farm, where he reluctantly worked after school and during the summers of his youth. He showed pigs and Hereford cattle in 4-H but knew nothing of his rich Hereford heritage. Doug went to college and began a successful career with Dow Chemical.

At Dow, Doug worked his way up to global manager for marine and terminal operations, which required a lot of traveling. He and his wife, Nancy, and two sons also relocated often because of Doug’s job, so when he neared retirement, they were ready to settle down somewhere. “I was thinking back and even though I didn’t like being forced to work on my grandpa’s farm when I was younger, I realized that the farm life is rewarding from a personal standpoint,” Doug says.

So in 2004 Doug retired, and he and Nancy bought 40 acres in north-central Michigan. Coincidentally, about this time, Doug’s father, Marvin, was researching the Gallier’s family history. “He spent a great deal of

time tracking down our genealogy. He contacted and received information from distant uncles, and he passed that information on to me and my three sisters. I saw that there was a direct linkage back to William Galliers in Herefordshire, England, who was one of the original breeders of Hereford cattle. I thought I might be predestined to raise Herefords then."

#### **His Hereford niche**

After Doug and Nancy built a home and did some other improvements to their land, they entered into the Hereford business. "I bought three heifer calves from a seedstock breeder in Michigan, and that's how I started out," Doug says.

Doug's Hereford herd may be small, about eight cows, but quality is his goal. Local breeders, the Simpkins family of Sugar Sweet Ranch, helped Doug learn about modern cattle management practices and guided him in getting started. "Each year I cull out one or two cows and buy replacement cows to improve my genetics," he says.

He buys sons of proven popular bulls like BR Moler ET, CS Boomer

29F and STAR TRF Battle Chief 356P. "I am constantly working to improve my genetics."

He sells his calves primarily to other seedstock producers and occasionally one of his calves will become a 4-H steer.

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Doug says his Hereford herd has proved as rewarding as he hoped. Nancy, too, enjoys the cows, and she and Doug carefully plan traveling to visit their grandchildren around calving season. Doug says he believes his cow herd would make his great-great-great-great-great-grandfather William Galliers proud. **HW**



Doug says he is constantly improving his genetics with rigorous culling and buying top replacements.



Gallier Ranch in north-central Michigan is home to Doug's small herd of top-quality Herefords.