

The composite photo of the Kleinhenz Stockyards is on page 2 of this document.

Hi Julie and Ben,

Here is a little history of this picture. A large copy of this picture was displayed in the "lobby" of each of the pictured locations. Each location consisted of mostly livestock pens. Each stockyard also had a heated indoor area that included a small office and a scale house. The actual weighing platform of the scale was among the livestock pens. But the read-out of the scale was in a scale house that formed a lobby type room. This room usually had a large leather couch, several library type chairs, and a rocking chair or two where farmers would gather and drink coffee. The scale house also had a large blackboard showing current livestock market prices. You can see one or more chutes at each stockyard. A chute is a fenced-in ramp used for unloading livestock from farm vehicles and loading livestock onto trucks.

I had the impression there were 20 or more Kleinhenz Stock Yards in the late 1930's or early 1940's. The twelve locations shown on this picture probably existed in the late 1940's or early 1950's. By the time I was old enough to understand things, about ~1955, there were nine locations. Apparently after the pictures were distributed, the locations in Burkettsville, OH, Bluffton, IN and Russia, OH were closed. (Incidentally, the Prussian descendants living in Shelby County pronounce Russia "roo'-shee".) St Marys was like the central location. The other locations were like satellites. The marketing advantage for our ancestors was these satellite locations. Farmers with small vehicles could sell their livestock a few miles from their farm. That was a big deal before modern roads and transportation. At the end of every business day, Kleinhenz used a fleet of large trucks to collect all the livestock from the satellite locations and bring it to St Marys. St Marys had rail service for transporting the livestock to slaughterhouses in big cities like New York and St Louis. Kleinhenz stockyards never dealt in cattle. They specialized in shorter animals like hogs, sheep and veal calves. As the structure of the livestock market changed, the business model of the Kleinhenz Stock Yards became obsolete and consequently ceased to exist by the mid 1970's.

Dad (Bob) said that Hoge Lumber Company of New Knoxville, OH built many of the pictured stockyards. A business relationship, and probably a personal friendship between Hoge's and Kleinhenz' seemed to go way back. When I was on a business trip, in approximately 1980, the man seated next to me on an airline flight introduced himself as John Hoge of Hoge Lumber. As we talked, he explained he was a good friend with my uncle Ray. John Hoge and Ray Kleinhenz Jr lived two generations after the people that built the stockyards.

The original picture was about 30" wide X 21" high. Ned's wife Jan had Dodd Camera scan the 30" X 21" picture to make the digital copy in JPG format. I remember the original was placed directly in a black frame, without a mat, making an assembly of approximately 34" X 25". In recent years, we found the picture among Bob's possessions, and it no longer had a frame. In 2015, Jan had the original matted and framed to make a final assembly 40" wide X 31" high. It is currently displayed in the home of Tom (and soon to be his bride Lindsay) Kleinhenz in Kettering, OH.

We made a few prints from the digital image in a more manageable size of 24" X 16". We also had the color balance of printed images shifted to gray tones instead of the sepia tone of the digital image. These prints have a pleasing color, good resolution and a size that does not occupy an entire wall. Jan also discovered that having large prints made from this digital image is relatively inexpensive. But matting and framing the prints can be quite expensive.

I wish you good luck in working with this image, and hope your family enjoys these pictures as much as we do. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Ned Kleinhenz; April 2, 2017.



KLEINHENZ STOCK YARDS



Ansonia, Ohio



Willshire, Ohio



Chattanooga, Ohio



Burkettsville, Ohio



Celina, Ohio



St. Marys, Ohio



St. Henry, Ohio



Ft. Recovery, Ohio



Bryant, Indiana



Russia, Ohio



St. Patrick, Ohio



Bluffton, Indiana