“The Canfield Cowboy”

The Anderson bicentennial farm represents ownership of this 200-acre farmstead from when Abraham Kline settled here, buying this land in 1814 for his son Jonathan – to present-day owner Wayne Anderson, whom I met in the fall of 2020. His sister, Linda Keylor, contacted me, thanks to a Vindicator story about my Ohio Barn Project, and encouraged me to visit, sending many newspaper articles about her interesting family, whose roots started in Germany.

George Klein (name eventually changed to Kline), born in Germany in 1719, came to America in 1738 and settled in Hosensack, Pennsylvania. He married, had three sons, and, besides being a prominent landowner, he started a tavern, the Buckhorn Hotel. In the American Revolution, he served in the Northampton Militia.

The Ohio history traces back to patriarch Abraham Kline, born in 1769 in Schuykill County, Pennsylvania, who journeyed west, presumably, for more land and less people. He settled on a farm on the banks of the Mahoning River in 1806. His biography in *History of Trumbull and Mahoning County*, states, “He was of German descent … stern, generous, and enterprising, persevering in business, but always kind and social in his dealings. His death occurred in the year 1816 … He accumulated a large estate, having farmed extensively and dealt successfully in livestock.”

Since his death at age 46 – apparently from a stroke and unexpected – his six children (his two wives had died) were on their own. However, his estate must have been valuable since, as one of the first settlers of Youngstown, he was able to buy large tracts of land, including a block of land on present-day Federal Street. And, fortunately just two years before he died in 1816, he bought the Canfield farm for his 18-year-old son Jonathan, who was reared “by his father to understand the management of stock.” According to the *20th Century History of Youngstown*, Abraham “used to drive his stock over the mountains to eastern markets. His success as a stock-raiser was far ahead of that of his neighbors.” The Ohio Country was the Wild West in the late 1700s.

The next owner, Jonathan Kline, born in 1796 in Pennsylvania, two years after the Battle of Fallen Timbers in northwestern Ohio, inherited the farm of 1,000 acres and, having learned the trade from his father, successfully raised cattle. In his older years, he “often delighted to tell his grandson of the merry pranks played by himself and his schoolmate, the late Governor David Tod, in their boyhood.” (David Tod served as the twenty-fifth governor of Ohio – from 1862 to 1864.) When Jonathan died in 1871, he left behind his widow Elizabeth and five sons, one of whom, Peter, became the new owner of the farm.

Peter and his wife Hannah raised one son, Jonathan Allen, born in 1861, who inherited the farm on the death of his father in 1896. At this time the farm was named Grass Land Stock Farm, located on 368 acres of pastureland in Canfield, a village that took its name from his wife Maude Mabel’s great-grandfather, Judson Canfield, one of the earliest settlers.

Like his ancestors, Jonathan Allen had a cowboy streak in him, perhaps the reason for his move to Wyoming, where he and his wife Maude owned a ranch for ten years, presumably raising cattle. Upon his return to the Canfield farm, he continued to raise Hereford cattle, which he would buy and have delivered to the railroad yard in nearby Columbiana, about ten miles away. At the time, according to an essay written by Raymond Kline Anderson shortly before he died in 2013, there were no cattle trucks available for transport and so Jonathan and hired hands would ride to the yard in Columbiana and drive the herd of cattle back to the farm, which continued well into the 20th century. On one of these Ohio cattle drives, the hour was late, it grew dark, and the cattle scattered, making a round up difficult. Such was the life of a “Canfield cowboy.”

Though Jonathan Allen and wife Maude had no sons, they had two daughters – Mrs. Bliss Bayne of Wyoming (she remained in the West) and Mrs. Dorothy Anderson, whose husband Leroy and son Raymond kept the cattle business thriving. In turn, his son Wayne purchased the farm outright in 1985 from a family partnership that included his five sisters. He represents the seventh generation to farm here.

He told me that, together with his father and his grandfather, he raised over 230 head of cattle but that the stock business ended in 1996. Nowadays he has converted the pastureland to 200 acres of farm fields and rotates wheat, corn, and soybeans. Wayne, a full time farmer, continues his family agricultural tradition.

He explained that the two farmhouses, one built in 1830 and the other in 1867, predate the barn, which was built in 1907, a recycling effort – using much hand-hewn timber, some sections over forty feet long, from previous barns. In the composition, a large cement silo, built by Raymond in 1960, towers over the barn and its add-ons and a newer blue Harvestore, added in the 1990s, sits in front. To the left stands an old windmill, still functional, a remnant of the past and a reminder that farmers knew how to locate and tap into a water source. When I asked Wayne who does repairs of slate on the massive roofs, he replied, “I do.” Farmers must be jacks of all trades, as Wayne attests.

Few Ohio bicentennial farms have histories as colorful as this one and even fewer can trace their heritage to the days of the late nineteeth-century Wild West where a Kline ancestor learned the art of a cattle drive, a skill he brought with him upon his return to Ohio, earning the title of “Canfield Cowboy.” Although tempted to incorporate this western theme into the painting, instead I chose a distant view of the barn, its silos, and the windmill, their reflections shimmering in the water.