

Little Clair Klinger

One of the clues that we had to our ancestral past was the large group photograph of the Kessler clan standing on a porch. Prior to our adventure, I was able to identify Elias, Emma, and maybe Charles Kessler. When I was leaving Atlanta to meet Mary and Lynn, I told Gloria that I'd be happy just to identify 2 or 3 more people in the photograph.

Aunt Mill was able to provide the first bit of information on the photograph. After identifying "Flatch", or our grandpa Elias, in the photo, she also tentatively identified Doxie Klinger. Doxie, or Clarence Klinger, is the man with eyeglasses toward the far right of the large group photograph. Mill also believed that Doxie owned, or once owned, the auto repair shop next to the Salem cemetery. So later that day, we went to the garage and inquired inside. The person in the garage knew our family, but the Klingers had long since sold the garage. He did, however, point out the Klinger residence, a farm house immediately across the road from the garage.

An elderly man named Clair Klinger answered the door of the farm house, and asked us in when he found out we were Eli's kin. After sharing some of our efforts, we asked if he would be willing to look at a picture we had to identify some of our relatives. We showed him the picture of Mr. Klinger, and asked if that might be him. A big smile crossed his face. He said, "No, I'm not him. That's my dad. I'm him", and he pointed to the little boy standing between grandpa's knee.

He then proceeded to get a folder from his bureau, and showed us a copy of the same photograph identifying nearly all the people in the photo! Apparently, one of the Klingers had done this as part of a Klinger genealogical project. They had also completed a genealogical chart on the Klingers, showing the Kesslers three generations prior to Grandpa Elias.



The Kessler family in front of the big house. This photo is discussed at length in chapter 3.



Clair Klinger between his Grandpa's knee.