



Matt and Chris Jacobs were just discovering the pockets in their new bib overalls when their mother, Diane, snapped this classic photo.

**MORE THAN 237,000 COPIES SOLD**

## Twin Boys' Poster Is Popular Item

By Kelly J. Boldan

"Have you been farming long?"

That's the caption, and the picture of two small blond boys says the rest. As a poster, this winning combination now has sold more than 237,000 copies and is selling more each week.

It all started with a mother's love for her firstborn — identical twins. Like every parent, Diane Jacobs wanted to capture the first steps of her boys — Chris and Matt — in photographs for the family album.

Now, one of those pictures of these twins — then 1½ years old, with their hands stuffed in their new bib overalls — is found on the walls of farm households, bedrooms, office walls and barns throughout the Midwest and the rest of the United States and Canada.

"The boys had just gotten a new pair of bib overalls," Jacobs noted in a telephone interview from her Hanford, Calif. home 25 miles south of Fresno. "The boys had just found the pockets and were not paying much attention to me when I snapped that shot."

"We really liked the picture and showed it to our family and friends. Everybody seemed to like it and wanted a copy," she said. The picture was on its way.

Later Jacobs would enter the picture in the San Luis Obispo County Fair, but the judges didn't like it. As in life, the picture suffered a setback. It later would suffer another setback.

"It didn't win but it sure drew a crowd," Jacobs said. "After the fair, people began contacting us wanting to buy copies of the picture."

Later, a friend submitted the photo

to the *Guernsey Breeder's Journal*, Columbus, Ohio, and the Jacobs twins graced the cover of the national journal in November 1980. The picture was on its way.

In 1981, Babson Bros. Co. of Oak Brook, Ill., purchased a copy of the photo for the company calendar for its Surge dairy product line. And in 1982, the photo marked the year for recipients of calendars from Surge. Recognition of the picture was growing.

Meanwhile, Jacobs decided to approach the company which manufactured the Osh Kosh bib overalls. The company declined the chance to use the Jacobs twins' picture to advertise its clothing products, according to Jacobs. The photo had suffered its second setback but not for long. Later, the company asked permission to use the picture, she said.

In the fall of 1982, fate took one of its unique turns. Roy Reiman was visiting daughter Julie at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. The daughter asked her father to look at a photo on the ISU agronomy department's bulletin board.

And there it was — a little four-inch print of the two small blond boys in bib overalls. Reiman liked the picture instantly.

He felt the photo would have some appeal to farm families. He recognized this appeal quickly since he is on constant watch for new material for his company's (Reiman Publications, Inc. of Greendale, Wis.) varied publications which include *Farm and Ranch Living*, *Farm Wife News* and *Country Kids*.

**WEIGHED 4,720 LBS.**

## "Big Ben" Steers Visitors to Indiana

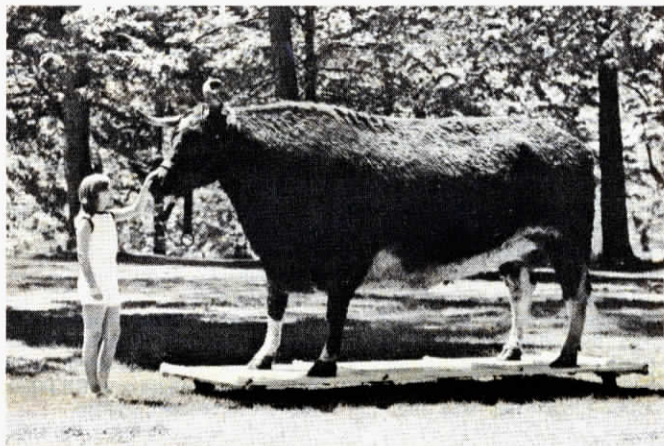
As big as old Ben was, you'd think he was related to Paul Bunyan's ox, Babe, or at least be from Texas. But this Hereford-cross steer, of conventional heritage, was born and raised near Kokomo, Ind.

Born in 1902, Old Ben weighed 4,720 lbs. and was still gaining when, in 1911, he slipped in the ice, broke a leg, and had to be destroyed. When full grown he stood 6 ft. 4 in. tall, was 16 ft. 2 in. long, and 13 ft. 6 in. around at the girth. He weighed 1,800 lbs.

when he was 18 months old, and 4,000 lbs. at 4 years of age.

After Old Ben died, he was stuffed and is now in display in a Kokomo park, where he continues to attract visitors, just as he did while alive.

As large as Old Ben was, the Guinness Book of World Records lists Mount Katahdin, a Holstein-Durham cross, as the world's heaviest steer. This animal, exhibited in Maine in the early 1900's, weighed in at a whopping 5,000 lbs.



Big Ben weighed 1,800 lbs. at 18 months, 4,000 lbs. at 4 years, and 4,720 lbs. when he died at 9 years of age.

Reiman originally intended to use the picture for the cover of his *Country Kids* magazine, but the photo didn't fit the format. So the photo was run inside the magazine. Then the telephone calls began and the letters started coming — all requesting a copy of the picture. Now the picture was becoming famous.

The requests mounted and soon Reiman's company had the photo made in a 14-x18-inch color poster. To add a little humor, Reiman added the slogan — "You been farming long?" The poster has sold more than 237,000 copies, according to Reiman.

Neither the Jacobs nor Reiman thought the picture would be such a hit.

"I knew it (the picture) was special the minute I saw it, but I am still surprised," Reiman said. "We are thrilled with the success of the poster," Jacobs said. "We had no idea it would sell this much."

How do the twins — Chris and Matt — feel about their increasing popularity. Right now the 6½-year-old boys are "still kind of indifferent toward it," Jacobs commented. "They ask what's the big deal. For a long time, they could not even tell who was who on the poster."

The boys do enjoy the attention they receive from time to time though, their mother said. Recently, a couple from Manitoba, Canada, took

the time to look the twins up in California, Jacobs related. "They just want to look us up because they think so much of the picture," she said.

"Several weeks ago, a couple from Wells, Minn., called all the Jacobs listed in the phone book to locate us," she said. "The twins ended up autographing a poster for the couple."

"It has been very enjoyable to receive letters and calls from all over the country," she said. "Even though we've made money from it, it's a thrill for us as a family to know that we are brightening other people's day each time they look at the poster."

Reiman agrees with Jacobs on the issue of bringing joy to farmers.

"The poster reminds people of the time when farming was good and easy," he said. "It peps people up. And farmers need that more in a down year than a good one."

The poster has sparked other responses.

Two farmers in Minnesota struck up the same pose in a photograph and sent it in (to Reiman Publications) with the caption "I've been farming for 50 years."

The 14 by 18 in. full color poster is available at \$3 each (including postage) from: Country Kids, Suite 1247, P.O. Box 572, Milwaukee, Wis. 53201.

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