

AMERICAN CREAM NEWS

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WINTER, 1991

High Ho Silver and Away!

Looking over the history of the American Cream Draft Horse, one can not overlook one of the first and most noted stallions—Silver Lace No. 9. Many of our creams today can be traced back to this stallion, which has had the greatest influence on the breed of any other stallion thus far.

G.A. Lenning of Melbourne, Iowa, owned, raised, and bred the stallion. Silver Lace No. 9 was foaled on August 20, 1931. The sire was Knox 1st (an American Cream) and the mare a light sorrel Belgian. Galord Lenning the youngest son of Mr. Lenning recalls how his father described the stallion: "He was a big horse about 16 hands, he had yellow-colored coat, with pink skin, hazel eyes, white mane and tail, and a narrow blaze running down his face. He weighed 2,230 pounds."

Before the depression Mr. Lenning was a farmer. He had many horses, 75 Jersey cattle and 1 bull. But like so many, when the depression hit he lost quite a bit. He was left with 4 horses and 12 milk cows. He hid 2 cream colts that he had raised on a nearby farm, one being Silver Lace.

Silver's first name was to be King, but Galord, like most boys his age and time, had a hero. The Lone Ranger, and we all know Silver was his famous mount. Galord pleaded with his father to name the colt Silver. Lace came from the farm. It was like a trademark.

The Stallion was trained to jump into the back of a pick-up truck and was hauled to one mare every day. Violet Lenning Brown (wife of the oldest son, Amus) said, "The stud fee was \$15.00, but you did not pay until the foal was standing and had nursed for the first time." The stallion was bred from early spring until late November or December. The money earned from the stud fees helped the Lenning family through the depression.

At one point Mr. Lenning was arrested for standing the stallion for stud. In 1935, the Iowa State law required all stallions standing for stud for public service to have a certificate of soundness and a permit issued by the State Department of Agriculture. This permit could not be issued to other than a registered stallion of a recognized breed. At this time American Creams were not recognized, not until 1950.

The local banker, Charles Long, with whom Mr. Lenning did business, had a son, Zip Long, who was a lawyer. Zip Long helped Mr. Lenning start the Silver Lace Horse Company, which had stockholders. In order to breed to Silver Lace one had to be a shareholder and buy into the company. This is the main reason for the organization of the Silver Lace Horse Company, for it was the only way to legally stand the stallion for public service. Because the stallion was jointly owned the stallion was not required to have a permit.

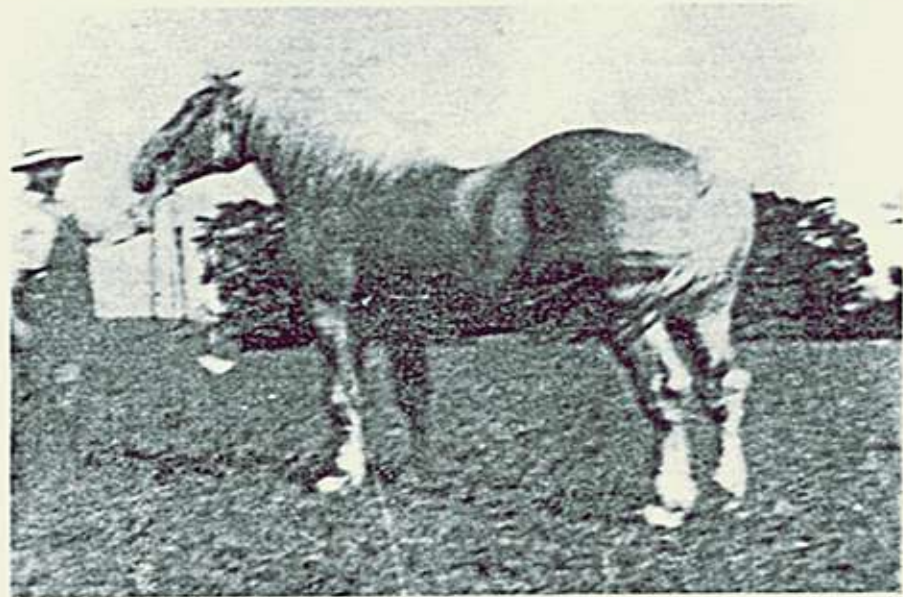
The American Creams were becoming popular among locals and neighboring counties. Mr. Lenning was located in Union, a



Silver Lace in his stall with Adeline Lenning, daughter of Mr. Lenning.

part of southeastern Hardin County at this time. The Silver Lace Horse Company had stockholders in other parts of Hardin, Grundy, Marshall and Story counties as well. Unlike today, the stallion went to the mare, so Silver did quite a bit of traveling.

Silver Lace only stood at stud for eight years, when suddenly and mysteriously he died in 1939. There are some speculations as to what led to the stallion's death. Other drafters were jealous of Mr. Lenning's stallion. One person offered \$1,000.00 for Silver Lace just six months before his death. A needle was found in the stall where the stallion had died. Some boards on a nearby fence were broken, showing signs that someone or something was there. Unfortunately, we will never know what ended this stallion's career, but Silver Lace No. 9 will always be remembered for his influence on the American Cream Draft Horse.



Mr. Lenning's oldest son, Amus is holding the stallion known as Silver Lace, which shows much of his Belgian mother's characteristics.



Mr. Gerhard A. Lenning owned, raised, and bred the stallion, Silver Lace No. 9. He is pictured here with his wife, Gurtie.

Odds & Ends

Betsy Ziebell secretary/treasurer reports that we have 32 living members in the association and that 64 animals have been registered since 1979. Only two breeders have turned in their Stallion Reports. Please send them to Betsy. This is the only way she can make a census.

Carol Semrad from Oregon wrote and said her Stallion Captain's Barnabus Gold won his class at the Oregon State Fair and took reserve champion overall. A wagon train from Independence, Missouri, retracing the Oregon Trail allowed Carol to join them with her wagon. Barney not only pulled, but was ridden during their time with the wagon train.

Marylou Gorman from Sonoma, California, wrote and said she is enjoying her 30-month-old gelding. Marylou suggested that some of you may be interested in reading *Equine Genetics and Selection Procedures* by Don M. Wagoner c 1978. The address is Equine Research Inc., P.O. Box 9001, Tyler, Texas, 75711.

Colonial Williamsburg and Mike and Karen Smith of Virginia, took their creams to the State Fair. Colonial Williamsburg took 4th in Virginian Showmanship and 1st in a costume class depicting some form of travel. Mike and Karen's mare took second place in the open grade mares class.

Christine Prescott-Allen from British Columbia, Canada, went to see and photograph Carol Semrad's stallion and Colonial Williamsburg's rare breeds. Mrs. Prescott-Allen is working on a book about rare breeds in North America. She is seeking funding through the American Minor Breeds Conservancy. Anyone who knows of a foundation or individual who may be interested in this project, please write to the AMBC, P.O. Box 477, Pittsboro, North Carolina, 27312, or call 919-542-5704.

Breyer, a plastic horse model company, is a division of Reeves International Incorporated, which is planning to do an American Cream model. Steven Ryan, Marketing Manager, says that "We are still a number of years away from production of this item." For those who would like to write in support, here is the address (this would be a great project to do with children!):

Reeves International, Inc.
c/o Steven Ryan, Marketing Manager
34 Owens Drive
Wayne, New Jersey 07470



Afoal of Nickel Lane, No. 9, Galord Lenning, youngest son, is believed to be the person holding the mare.

Letters:

Roseville, Ill.

February 6, 1991

Dear Horse Friends,

I was very surprised to see your article on the American Cream horses. I first got literature on them in 1944. In '45 my wife and I went to C.T. Rierison to see his horse, and at that time I owned six palomino draft horses. He was here twice to look at my horses and I was out there two times. My palominos didn't have the amber eyes and pink skin. I had two that were much larger than his Creams, they were 1/2 Suffolk.

I took membership in 1948 and was the 32nd member. In September, 1951, I took my truck and a friend to Elora, Iowa, where I helped Rierison show his horses in halter classes. They also had six and four horse hitched showing, and at that Fair, Dick Sparrow and his dad were showing Belgians. Dick was just newly wed and his wife was helping braid the horses.

I think there were three or four exhibits of Creams. The man I took there went to buy a pair of Cream mares. He dealt for a nice pair at the fair but the man's wife wouldn't let him sell them, so we heard of a pair at Rock Falls. We went up there and he bought a nice well-matched pair and I also bought a mare that matched a palomino draft mare. All were bred. My mare foaled, and the colt died of navel infection, and one of his mares did likewise. I always thought that the sire passed that navel disease to the foals.

I have a sale bill of November 16, 1957, of Rierison's estate. One five-year-old stallion, seven mares, and eight geldings, and 20 head of Albino Angus cattle. I heard that the following spring a pair from that sale topped the horse sale in Indiana. He had nice horses, but it was at the worst time of all for the draft horse. I hung on and farmed with horses.

I guess in '51 we were the second to bring Creams this side of the Mississippi River. A nice big pair of mares were first at Marango, Illinois, a Mr. Challenger, I think.

I wrote to one of Rierison's sons to find out if any Creams were in their part of Iowa. That was five or six years ago. They answered and said all that remained were an aged pair of mares at Jewel, Iowa.

The man that got the mares in Rock Falls just had them a year and they sold and went to southern Illinois. I lost track of them. Had my A.C. in several parades, once back in Iowa at Ft. Madison. 4 yr old when I got her and kept her till 20.

I had advertised in *Prairie Farmer* and heard from a man from Gleason, Wisconsin. He had a stallion and three yr old mare. I have a picture of the stallion, sure looks like yours. Went to Gleason in 1976 and found out they moved to Indiana.

Do you have the six page History and Development of the A.C.? I do and also have some good photos of A.C. Just a month or two ago I saw a list of horses and the A.C. were said to be extinct. I couldn't hardly believe it. So I was very pleased to see your write-up on them. I still think they have a good future. Rierison had one son that farmed, but was interested in the stock. I'm 80 years old and have two sons that aren't interested in horses.

Well, best of luck with American Creams.

J.P. Kramer

(Submitted by Frank and Penny Sperlak)

Letters continued

November 1, 1991

Frank and I wanted to share our first "show" experience with all of you. This summer we took Frosty, the stud colt we purchased from Clarence and Betsy Ziebell, to our County Fair.

As you all well know, not many people are aware of the American Creams, so we thought this would be a great way to expose the breed a little more in our area. Unfortunately, most people assumed that Frosty was a funny-colored Belgian-including the judge!

The class had six draft foals entered, four Belgians, a Percheron, and Frosty. He stood perfectly still, like a good work horse is supposed to. He took the whole thing in stride without so much as a whinny.

We waited anxiously for the results, and wouldn't you know it, Frosty didn't even place. The judge said he wasn't FLASHY enough! We were still very proud of the way he behaved. Thank you, Clarence and Betsy!

Penny Sperlak

Ellsworth, Wisconsin

(Note: It takes a lot of courage to walk into a show with something different. Good job, Penny. You broke the ice!)

Creams in the News

Recent articles have appeared in some publications about American Creams. There are still some back issues available for those wishing to purchase copies.

Rural Heritage - Autumn 1991
P.O. Box 516
Albia Iowa 52531
\$4.00 plus \$1.25 for shipping

Farm Chronicle - September 23, 1991
P.O. Box 460
Culpepper, Virginia 22701

Western Horseman - October 1991
385 North Nevada Avenue
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80933
1-800-545-9364
\$5.00 per copy

Freepress Journal - Standard -
October 5-6, 1991
Weekender (a feature supplement)
Freeport, Illinois

Horseman's Corral
P.O. Box 110
211 West Main Street
New London, Ohio 44851
November issue/\$2.00 per copy

American Cream Newsletter
P. O. Box 474
Lanexa, VA 23089

The American Cream Newsletter is a benefit of membership in the American Cream Draft Horse Association. Published bi-annually from the Coach and Livestock Operation at Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. The American Cream Newsletter welcomes articles, pictures, letters, and classified ads for publication that deals with American Cream Draft horses.

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