

Ancient Type For To-day

By Bruce Orser

Curator of Ancient Morgan Word and Image

This is a letter written to the editor of the "Cultivator"
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Luther Tucker, Esq.—In my letter, published in your January number, I stated that there are but four of the old Justin Morgan horse's colts which were kept as stallions. All of these I have often seen, and I now propose to give you my views of the principal points of difference between them, and of their relative qualities and merits as stock horses.

The Morgan Revenge was foaled in Claremont, NH. His dam, then owned by one of the Goss family, was a middle sized white mare of no particular blood. His color was dark bay and his general form was similar to the others. He had less action than the Woodbury or Sherman, more nearly resembling in the respect the Bulrush, from whom he differed, however, in having a shorter gait. He was about 14-1/2 hands high, and weighed about 1000. He stood nearly all his life in NH. His colts were generally dark bay or chestnut, and were less celebrated than those of either of the other horses.

The Sherman Morgan was raised by James Sherman, of Lyndon, VT. His dam was a chestnut colored mare, of rather light bone, said to be of English blood, and long owned by Nicholas Brown, of Providence, RI. His color was a bright chestnut, with a very hollow back, heavier chested than the Revenge, with a straight lean head, and rather small eye, hairy legs, with good bone and muscle, and great courage and action. He was about 13-1/2 hands high, and weighed about 950 to 975 pounds. In his young days he was kept in the vicinity of Lyndon and Dansville, VT. After he was bought by Mr. Bellows of Lancaster, NH, he stood one season, 1831, at Col. Jaques' Ten Hills

Farm, and for the residue of his life was principally kept at Durham, Dover, and other places in the eastern part of NH. His stock was generally excellent, and their color was most usually bay, chestnut, or sorrel. I believe there are now but three stallions in Vermont sired by him.

The Morgan Bulrush was raised by Mr. Gifford, of Tunbridge, VT., from a thick heavy dark bay and rather lazy mare, and was foaled in 1816. His general appearance, shape, and form, correspond with those of the Revenge, but with a heavier chest, longer gait, and more hollow back; in this last respect, more nearly resembling the Sherman Horse. His legs quite hairy, height about 14 hands, and weight about 1000. His style of motion not so good as either of the others, but none of them excelled him in endurance. His colts have been almost invariably dark bays, and have generally inherited his peculiar qualities. Many of them have proved very fast, and they have usually made very valuable road horses, though on the average smaller than the stock of either of the others. There are at this time more stallions of his stock than of all the others put together.

The Woodbury or Barbank Morgan was foaled in Tunbridge, VT, also in 1816, from a bay mare said to weigh about 1000 pounds, a smart good driver, and then owned by Mr. White. He was of a bright chestnut color, about 14-1/2 hands high, weighed from 1000 to 1025, with a heavy and finely curled mane and tail, hairy legs, a large prominent eye, and very

broad between the eyes; heavier quartered, and deeper flanked, with less of the sway back than either of the others. In other particulars very similar to them. He was full of nerve and action, and fine courage, was a favorite parade horse and constantly seen in the muster field, and his gait in harness was not surpassed by either of the others. The color of his stock was most usually bay and chestnut. With the exception of one season in NH, and one or two of the last years of his life in Keesville, AL, where he died, he was kept nearly all the rest of his life in Vermont, and I am of the opinion that it is his branch of the Morgan stock which has mainly contributed to establish the very extensive reputation and celebrity which the Vermont Morgan horses have so justly obtained.

It is a remarkable circumstance that notwithstanding the great diversity of mares through which they have been propagated, the Justin Morgan horse has been able so clearly to impress upon his descendants to the fourth and fifth generation, his own peculiar and valuable characteristics, and it can hardly fail to carry to the minds of those familiar with such subjects the strongest conviction of his thorough bred origin.

It can scarcely be necessary to add that many animals are offered for sale and palmed off upon the unsuspecting as Morgan horses, which have not a particle of genuine Morgan blood flowing in their veins.

Frederick A. Wier
