



≈ MORGAN AMERICANA: CAMBRIDGE MORGAN FARM ≈

## *Born of the* **MOUNTAINS OUT WEST**

By Carol Nelson

Cambridge started out as a dairy farm when Ed Young's grandfather moved the family from England to Denver, Colorado. His grandfather, and then father, dedicated their lives to the milk business. With their passing, Ed, who was in the music business, became an entrepreneur, building several businesses on the dairy farm land. Since he still loved the land, he moved to Castle Rock, Colorado and bought a run down ranch, where he started raising registered Polled Herefords. As a boy, Ed had some Morgan riding horses, so it was only natural that he bought Morgans to ride on his 1700-acre ranch. He did want to retain the Cambridge prefix for his horse ranch.

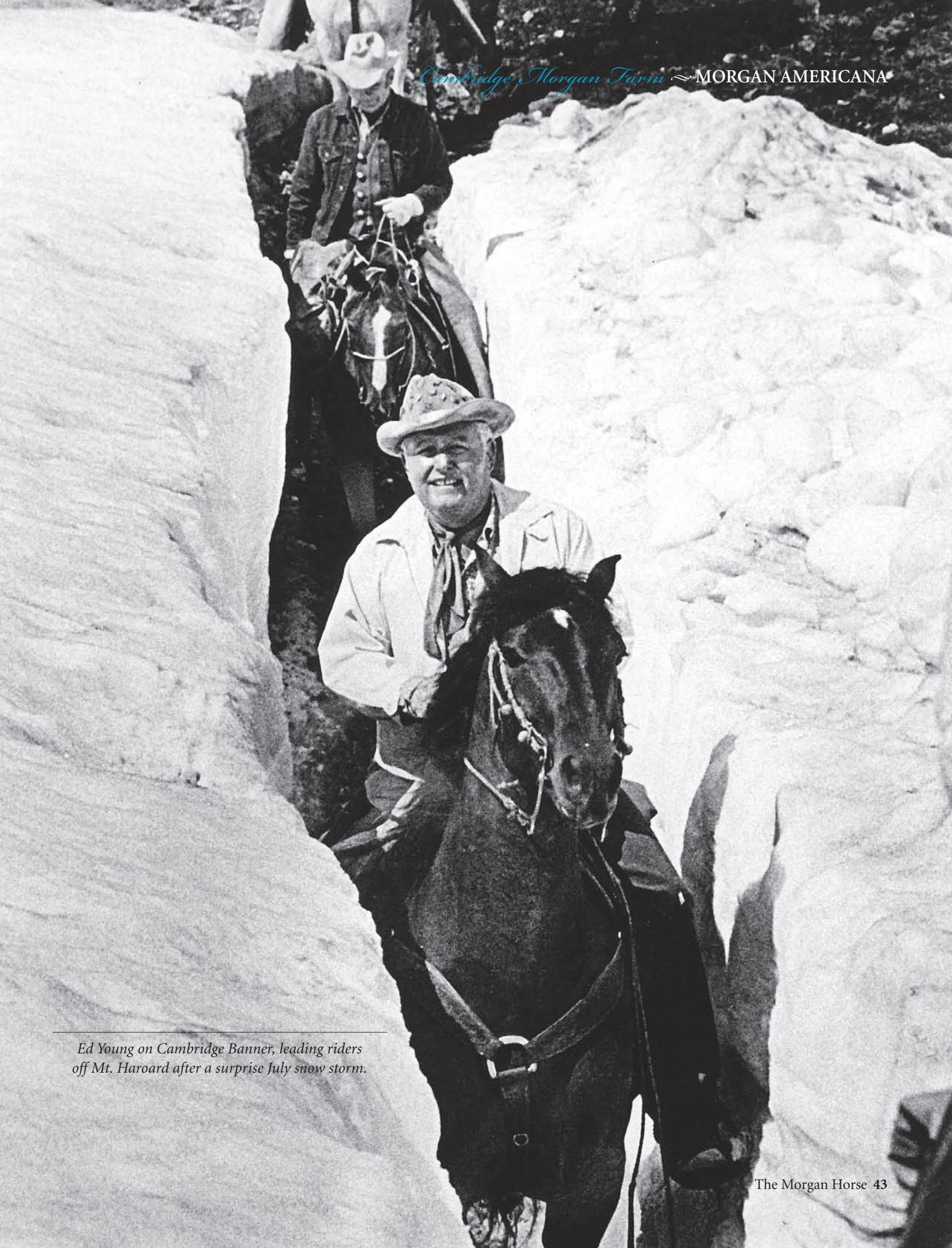
I first met Ed in 1968. I had a nice Morgan filly I had purchased

from Everett Reed. She was sired by Everett's champion roadster stallion, Reed's Gallant King, so I was interested in seeing Ed's horses. One thing led to another, and I ended up becoming the manager/trainer of Cambridge, where I remained for the next 35 years. I realized after pulling my first calf in a snowstorm that the cows had to be replaced by horses. We wanted to raise good using horses, by maintaining the wonderful traits that made the Morgans famous as a good, versatile family horse.

We needed some good stallions for this purpose. At that time, Topside Morgan Farm, owned by Peggy Nichoalds, was contemplating selling out. She had two well-bred horses that I wanted for our foundation stallions. Kings-Haven Senator was

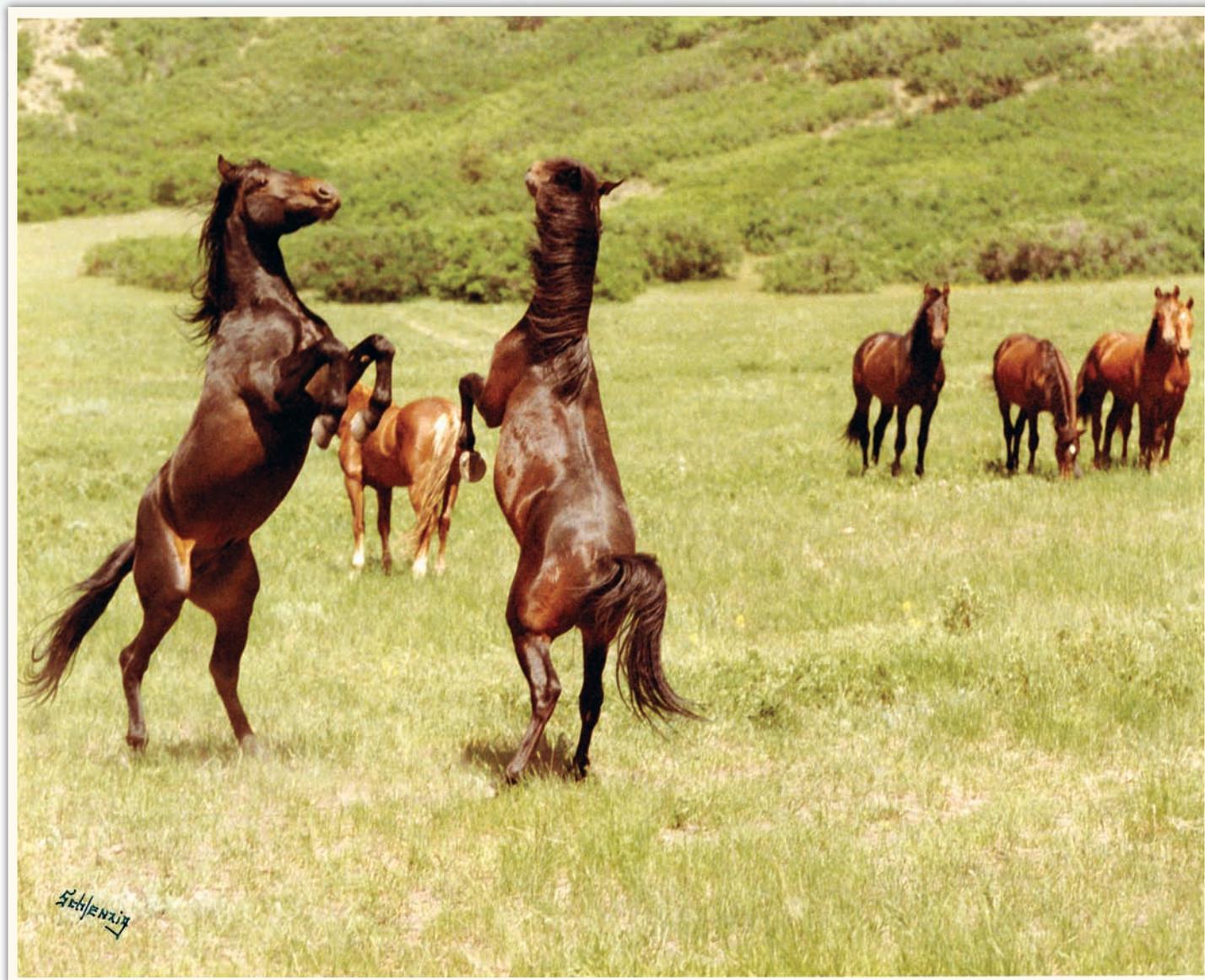
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*Reed's Gallant Joy (Gallant King x Reed's Clarabo) with Carol Nelson and Ed Young at Bell Mountain Ranch, home to the Cambridge Morgans (photo © Schlenzig).*



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*Ed Young on Cambridge Banner, leading riders off Mt. Haroard after a surprise July snow storm.*



Brunk bred, heavy with Flyhawk bloodlines, and Mickey Finn (King Mick x Jubilee Joy) brought more Flyhawk on the dam's side. Both the stallions had a lot of age on them, but there were 23 horses in the Topside herd. There were several good Mickey Finn daughters, which I treasured until the day they died. These mares bred to Kings-Haven Senator, were our magic cross. Fate dealt us a lucky hand the day we acquired those horses.

The intense Flyhawk breeding produced headstrong horses, but once trained they made exceptionally tough, intelligent mounts. They did their jobs, and tolerated no nonsense, which most people couldn't understand. You never fought with these horses, they had to be sweet talked. This particular cross was always my preference for my personal saddle horse. You couldn't ride them down and they never quit on you. Our market was for good mountain and ranch horses that liked their jobs. Looking back on history, you can

understand why the army chose Morgan stallions with the Flyhawk bloodlines to be brought West to sire their cavalry mounts.

Ed's joy in life was to ride with his saddle buddies, called the Round-Up Riders of the Rockies. Every year this group rode the Continental Divide for a week. Each year they picked up the trail where they left off the year before, until they traversed from Wyoming to New Mexico, on the top of the Continental Divide. Ed was always mounted on an outstanding Morgan. A lot of horses couldn't finish this ride, and we sold several horses to these riders when they saw how tough and sure-footed these Morgans were. On one ride, they rode down the Grand Canyon. At the bottom is a suspension bridge across the roaring Colorado River. None of the horses wanted to put their feet on this swaying bridge, until Ed's horse got to the front of the line and crossed without hesitation. Then the rest of the horses followed him. On another ride, they got

*Young stallions, growing up in a herd, at play* (photo © Schlenzig).



### FOUNDATION SIRES

(clockwise from top left): *Mickey Finn* (*King Mick* x *Jubilee Joy*) (photo © Schlenzig); *Waseeka's Vanguard* (*Windcrest Musicman* x *Windcrest Twinklebar*); *Kings-Haven Senator* (*Senator Graham* x *Choquita*) (photo © Schlenzig); *Senator Stennis* (*Broadwall Brigadier* x *Cambridge Coco*).



stranded by a blizzard on top of Mt. Harvard (in July). Incredibly, the snow was over a man's head on a tall horse. The forest service shoveled a trench by hand, to open a tunnel for the riders to get off the mountain, led of course by Ed on his Morgan.

Breeding horses has always intrigued me. A lot of it is just plain luck, but you always want to breed good to good, and hope for better. This is not always the case. There have been a lot of champion show horses that cannot even replicate themselves. It takes at least five years to prove your cross worked and then unless you did the same cross every year, for better or worse, it is a waiting game. If you did get a good cross, perhaps circumstances would prevent you from doing it again. Ed always criticized me for being too quick with the knife, but a stallion is a breeding animal, and a gelding is an excellent using horse.

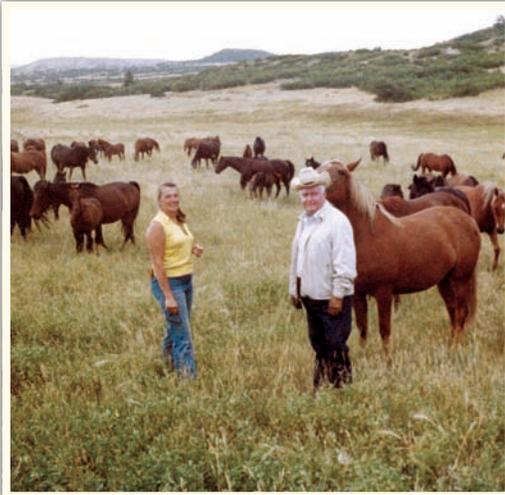
It has been my contention that the broodmare is 80 percent

of a good breeding program. There are lots of good stallions out there, but a mare who will produce well, year after year for you, is the life blood of your program. Our broodmare herd was a select group that had to be proven. One such mare was Cambridge Dusty Rose (Mickey Finn x Topside Tangerine). She lost an eye at an early age, so was never trained, and was just put into the broodmare herd because of her bloodlines. She produced 18 foals for us, and we had a waiting list for her next foal. Our bloodlines produced 14 world champions for Cambridge. Another beautiful mare was Topside Firefly, who after being shown just a few times was sold back East, and garnered the World Champion Mare title. She lost her mother at birth and was raised on the bottle.

We made a reputation for matching a horse to the rider. Once a Morgan went to a good family home, usually they stayed there until the day they died. On a few occasions I wouldn't sell

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*Cambridge Windchant (Waseeka's Vanguard x Topside Tiffanty) was shipped to Venezuela as a breeding stud on a large range to improve size and disposition. (photo © Schlenzig).*



### MORGANS IN THE MOUNTAINS

(clockwise from top left): A mare and foal at Bell Mt. Ranch; Youngsters, running free and growing up on the good mountain grasses at Bell Mtn. for the first three years of their lives (photo © Schlenzig); Cambridge Timberline; Cambridge Dusty Rose leads a group of mares; broodmares in winter; and in summer; Carol Nelson and Ed Young checking on their herd.



a horse to people I didn't feel were right, and sometimes if things didn't work out, I bought them back. But as time went on, I even sold horses sight unseen, and never had one of these horses returned. I sold an outstandingly beautiful young stallion, named Cambridge Windchant, to a huge ranch in Venezuela, South America. The owner wanted to cross him on his mare to get more size and disposition.

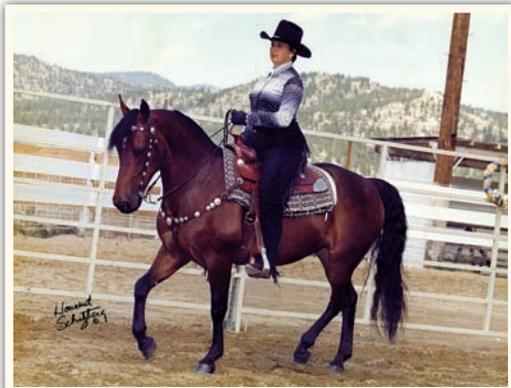
Genes are the elements of a cell which are transmitted from parents to offspring, and genes are carriers of hereditary traits. Thus, homozygous genes are alike, while heterozygous genes are unlike. When we had a good individual that was not strong in a certain trait, I tried to find an out cross that could consistently produce that trait, and incorporated it into our breeding program. For example, I wanted more refined, prettier heads. The Waseeka genes carried this trait. I went back East and purchased one of their last yearling stallions, Waseeka Vanguard, by Windcrest Music Man. He was a small, refined animal with a very pretty head. He only grew to be 14.1 hands, but when crossed with my big, strong boned horses, I achieved my purpose. Likewise, when I wanted a little more front action for my show horses, I sought out Breezington by Mr Breezy Cobra, to accomplish that purpose. Doris Ryan was instrumental in helping me find this colt. Here again he was a small horse, but crossed well on my larger mares.

I have always been against inbreeding, but even with line breeding, it is a very touchy situation. When people have a horse with a good trait, they tend to overlook something that is weaker in their particular bloodline. When breeding two individual animals like this, it is frequently the weaker, unwanted trait that will come through. Then if you continue to breed those horses, this trait will propagate in future generations. You have heard the phrase "Blood will tell"; it is true.

We did a lot of showing, as it was something that came with the territory as a showcase for the versatility of our horses. I preferred to sell the horses and let someone else show them. Cambridge Blackstone (Mickey Finn x Lakehurst Sweet Sue) was a good example of this. His owner, Hilary Nelson, showed him to three world championships, and had a room full of trophies. I really preferred to

### REED'S GALLANT JOY

*In the top photo the mare is aged into her twenties and has adopted a foal, producing milk to feed it despite being retired for years (bottom photo © Schlenzig).*



### CAMBRIDGE MORGANS PERFORMING

(clockwise from top left): Carol Nelson on Cambridge Eddy Black (photo © Jack Schatzberg); Cambridge Hot-N-Tot (photo © Pam Olsen); Cambridge Blackstone, winner of three world championships (photo © Jack Schatzberg); Mile-Hi Bold Sun, Mike Craig, rider, Grand National Champion Stock Horse 1988 (photo © Howard Schatzberg); Cambridge Noble Air was donated to Denver Police Department. Morgan breeders of Colorado each donated a horse to start the mounted patrol in Denver, still active today; Carol on Cambridge Bellflower from the golden cross of Kings-Haven Senator on a Mickey Finn daughter. (photo © Howard Schatzberg).



*An idyllic scene of mares and foals  
at Cambridge Morgans.*

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stay home and raise babies, and do the training.

I was very fortunate to have Bell Mtn. Ranch for this purpose. Our foals were born at the ranch, then they and their dams went up to the high pastures for the summer. In the fall, just before snowfall, they were brought down, weaned and halter trained, and handled a little. Then in the following spring, they were again sent up into the high pastures, to grow strong on our mountain grasses. With the exception of showing in a few futurity classes, I didn't believe in doing any of the training of the youngsters

until they were three and their knees were closed up. If the leg twisted before the knee closed, you had a crooked, and thus a weak leg. No leg—no horse. I also never castrated until they were long yearlings.

When training started, the ranch was an excellent training ground. Railroad tracks ran across the ranch, and the colts became accustomed to the train, and after that, not much scared them through their life. If a colt was full of vinegar, and wanted to either buck or run away, we had a dry sandy creek bed for this purpose,



and the sand sure slowed them down in a hurry, and gave them a new mindset. We had mountains to go up and down, creeks to cross, and brush to ride through. We also had a prairie full of Yucca plants that taught the colts, if they didn't move off your legs when asked, they got stuck by these plants. We had a five-mile dirt road around the ranch, which was wonderful for training harness horses on. Even our show horses at the end of the season had their shoes pulled, and were used for trail riding. This gave them a chance to let down and enjoy life.

When Ed Young passed away in December of 1997, and the ranch was sold for development, I took all the old horses that weren't sold, bought a small ranch and let them live out the rest of their lives in peaceful pastures. There were not very many men who would have given me a free rein to raise such wonderful horses, in such a perfect setting. How fortunate I have been, to live my dream. I still retain a lot of the friendships I made with people to whom I have sold horses over the years, and have such good memories, now that I am retired. ■