



~ HISTORY LESSON ~

# *Drumming Hoof Beats* THE STORY OF THE INDIAN RESERVATION MORGANS

By Gail Perlee

## PART TWO: THE NORTHWEST AND PACIFIC NORTHWEST

**T**his article will address the Indian horse improvement program and Morgan horse breeding programs in the Northwest and the Pacific Northwest. In some cases, it begins or continues the stories of horses that appeared in Part One, which covered the Southwest.

### MONTANA AND WYOMING

The Crow Indian reservation is located in south central Montana. It was the scene of possibly the first Morgan breeding venture begun on Indian lands. In 1937, the Crow Agency acquired eight royally bred mares that originally came from the US Range Livestock

**ABOVE:** The Ute people are the oldest residents of Colorado, inhabiting the mountains and vast areas of Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, Eastern Nevada, Northern New Mexico, and Arizona (photo © Southern Ute Archives, [www.southernute-nsn.gov/history](http://www.southernute-nsn.gov/history)).

## HISTORY LESSON *≈ Drumming Hoof Beats*

Experiment Station at Miles City, Montana. The USRLES was founded by an act of Congress in 1924 on 56,300 acres of old Fort Keogh, an early Indian fighting outpost and later a cavalry remount depot. One mission of USRLES was to develop a strain of cow horses suitable for use on Western ranches. USRLES used mostly Morgans, along with some Thoroughbreds and a few Standardbreds and draft horses as foundation stock for this program. They had been fortunate enough to purchase 20 mares from the Sellman estate dispersal, which at the time of Richard Sellman's death in 1925, had been breeding Morgan cow horses for 40 years. They then obtained the Morgan stallions Revere (Mansfield x Folly) and Monterey (Mansfield x Scotanna) from the US Government Farm in Vermont and later used Roosevelt (De Jarnette, Jr. x Alice Dean) who was owned by the US Forest Service. Between 1925 and 1935, when the USRLES cow horse breeding program was terminated, it produced 93 purebred Morgans and 78 Morgan crossbreds.

When the USRLES horses were sold, 34 Morgans went to a local horse dealer. At least eight of the mares were later purchased for the Indian horse improvement program on the Crow reservation in Montana. The oldest mare, Alaska (Alamo x Nedda K by Headlight Morgan), was foaled in 1923 on the Sellman Ranch in Texas and was among the USRLES foundation stock. Alaska was never transferred to the Crow agency, but she produced a 1937 colt, Pistol (x Monterey) that is recorded as bred by the Crow Agency but was owned and registered by a private party in Oregon. Another Miles City mare that was never transferred was the 1931 mare, Eskimo (Monterey x Alaska). We know that she went to the Crow reservation only because they are listed as the owners of record of her 1938 filly, Montana (x Roosevelt), which was later registered by the Carson Indian School in Nevada. There may well have been other untransferred mares in the Crow herd, but we only know of these two. Six of the Miles City mares and Montana were transferred to the Carson Indian School in 1940. Information on them and their produce can be found in Part One of this series, in the section on Nevada.

Although the Crow tribe never actually registered any Morgans, they had the eight mares for three years, and it is probable that they produced other purebred Morgans in 1937 and 1938 besides Pistol and Montana. Some of the other mares probably had foals at their sides and/or may have been in foal when they arrived. If so, the foals were never registered. The mares could also have had part bred foals in 1939 and 1940. It seems likely that the Morgans contributed to gene pool of the Crow horse herd in their brief time on the reservation.

Only two other Montana Indian agencies were involved in the horse improvement program. One was the Tongue River (Northern Cheyenne) Agency at Lame Deer. In 1941, they received two mares from the Chilocco Indian School in Oklahoma. The mares were Doris R M (Romanesque x Lady Spar by Sparhawk), a six-year-old and Molly R M (Romanesque x Dolly by Dude Hudson), a three-year-old. Early in 1942, an untried coming six-year-old stallion, Berry's Mountain Boy (Allenwood x Berry's Bess) was purchased from his breeders, R. L. Berry & Sons in Sheffield, Vermont, and shipped to Lame Deer. Mountain Boy was from old New England stock similar to the

Lippitts. Unfortunately, he produced no registered stock for the Northern Cheyenne, but it is likely that he produced unregistered purebreds from the two Morgan mares and many partbreds from Indian mares in the eight years before he was transferred to the Fort Belknap Consolidated Indian Agency at Harlem, Montana in 1948. No registered stock was produced there either and, although he probably continued to produce part bred stock, nothing more is known of Mountain Boy's fate.

We know that the Cheyenne kept the two Romanesque mares, because in 1950 they each produced a filly by Brunkey (Juzan x Fanita), who must have been shipped in from the Wind River Agency in Wyoming, although ownership was never officially transferred. Brunkey and the mares then slipped into obscurity as there is no further registration or transfer activity concerning them. In 1958, the Tongue River Agency sold both the 1950 fillies to Charlie Hamilton of the Triangle A Ranch in Parkman, Wyoming. Doris R M's filly, Cheyennesque, produced eleven foals between 1959 and 1971. Before she was sold to Pendleton Farms in Illinois in 1965, she produced a foal each by the working Western family studs Chinquapin (Chocolate x South Spot) and Starfield (Fleetfield x Esterzie), and four foals by the straight Government stallion, Milaca Query (Mentor x Olivia x Canfield). Most of Cheyennesque's offspring bred on, and many of her descendants carried the Blue Knoll, Suwanee, and Pendleton prefixes. Her line survives in the breed today. Molly R M's filly, Roman Calypso, was also sold to Charlie Hamilton in 1958. She was the dam of seven foals after she left the reservation. While at the Triangle A Ranch, she had foals by Chinquapin, Starfield, and Milaca Query. She was sold to the H. T. Wagner Ranch in Ashland, Montana in 1961, and her last four foals were by Beaumont Canfield (Madi Canfield x Bonny Linsley), who was also Indian bred. Only two of Roman Calypso's foals produced registered stock. Her blood comes down to us today through her daughters Roxanna Calypso (x Milaca Query), and Kimbeau Calypso (x Beaumont Canfield), both broodmares for the Wagners.

As with Berry's Mountain Boy, the two Romanesque mares, and their two daughters almost certainly continued to produce Morgan and/or part Morgan foals for the Cheyenne. The fact that two registered foals suddenly appeared in 1950 is good evidence that the breeding program continued although there were no other registrations. Even the Brunkey daughters were apparently not registered until after they left the reservation. Probably there is a rich, but unrecorded, Morgan heritage among the horses of the Northern Cheyenne in Montana.

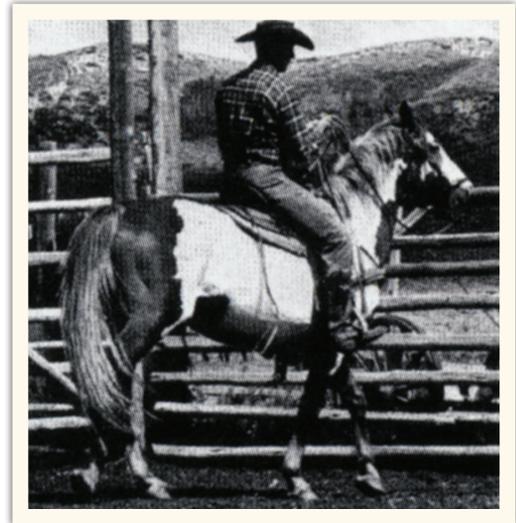
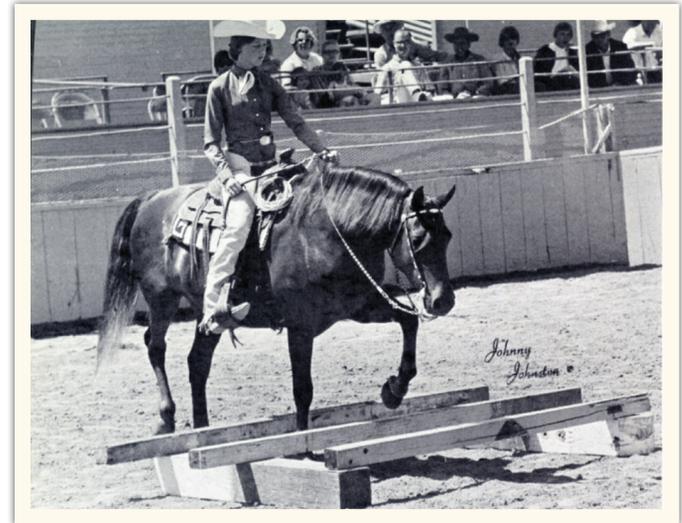
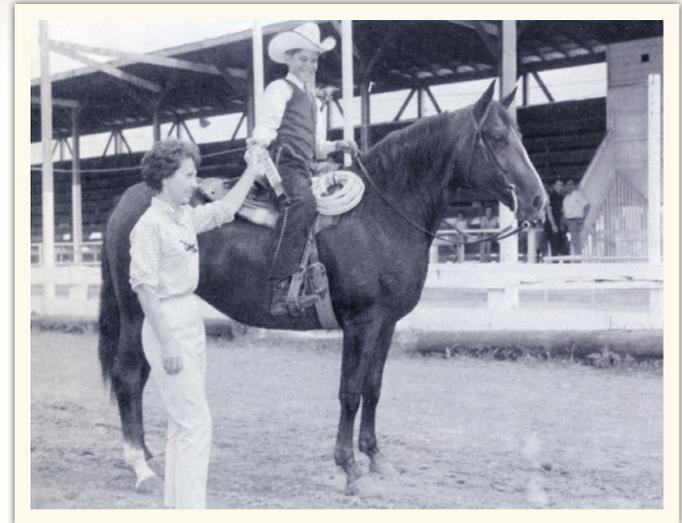
The Wind River Agency at Fort Washakie in west central Wyoming is headquarters for the Northern Arapaho and Shoshone reservation. They began a horse improvement program in 1941 when they received the three-year-old stallion, Brunkey (Juzan x Fanita x Tiffany) from Oglala Indian School at Pine Ridge, South Dakota. Brunkey was bred by Helen Brunk Greenwalt, but registered and owned by Elmer Brown in Halstead, Kansas, and sold as a yearling into the Indian breeding program. Brunkey lived up to his name. He was a pure Brunk grandson of Jubilee King on his sire's side and was out of the dam of Senator Graham. He sired 18 registered Morgans

between 1941 and 1950, all for Indian tribes.

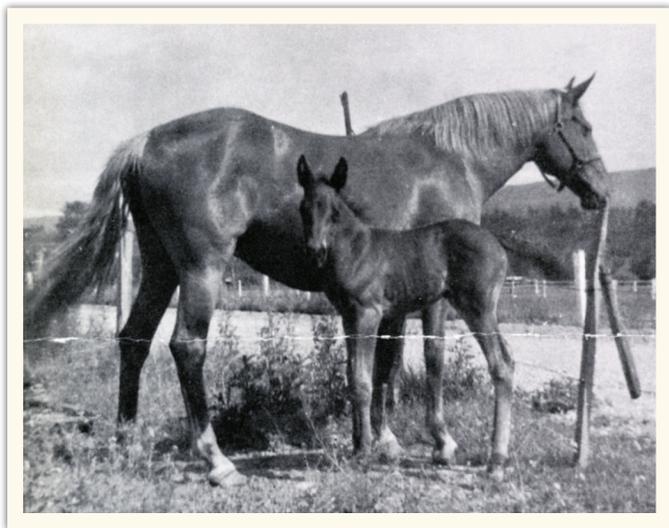
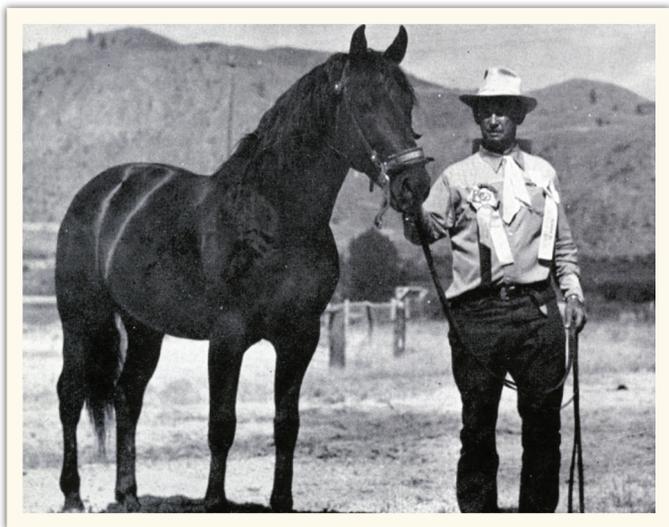
In 1942, Wind River received five two-year-old mares from Pine Ridge. Two of them, both bred by W. P. Thornhill of Miami, Texas, were closely related and had confusingly similar names. Easter Fine S (Silver Ranger x Dan's Baby x Dan) was dam of seven, including two by Chief Justin Morgan. They were Easter Mae (1955) and Lovely Easter (1960). Easter Mae was the maternal grandam of General Crook, sire of 65 Morgans, while Lovely Easter was the dam of Gladly Lee, a foundation mare for the Blankenship Ranch in Montana. Esther Fine S (Silver Ranger x Brady x Dan) was the dam of two fillies by Brunkey, neither of whom produced registered foals. Also, among the foundation stock at Wind River were Elizabeth Herod (Agazizz x Kitty Edna x Winterset), bred by Robert Tynan in Nebraska, and Julianna (Barberry x Betty Joe x Romanesque), bred by W. G. Berry of Virgil, Kansas. Both of these well-bred mares produced registered foals, but none bred on and their lines are extinct.

The last of the foundation mares was Mylynda (King De Jarnette x Glenalla x Allen King). She was another Brunk product, bred by Helen Brunk Greenwalt in Illinois. Mylynda had three foals, but only one produced registered foals. That was Chief Justin Morgan (Brunkey x Mylynda), a Wind River foal of 1945, and the sire of 53 registered Morgans between 1954 and 1967. Many of his get bred on and his name is often found in today's working Western pedigrees. One of his sons was the controversial pinto Morgan stallion, War Paint (x Painted Girl), a foal of 1959, bred by the Cross Ranch in Wyoming. He was the reason behind AMHA's "high white" rule which prohibited the registration of Morgans with "watch" eyes or white above the knees or hocks, except on the face. That rule has now been rescinded, but War Paint's papers were cancelled when it went into effect, as were the registrations of any paint offspring. Six of his non-pinto get were retained in the Register, including the four fillies, Oglala Woman, La Mancha, Miss Tigee, and H-Pally, all of whom bred on and have Morgan descendants today. War Paint went on to become an important sire for the Pinto breed. Another of Chief Justin Morgan's sons was Pride Of Shoshoni (x Shoshoni Star), sire of 68 Morgans, many for the Cross Ranch and some with the Shoshoni prefix for the Blankenships. Pride Of Shoshoni was from the last foal crop of Chief Justin Morgan and was bred by Johnnie Lee of Landers, Wyoming.

In 1945, the Wind River Agency acquired most of the Morgan herd of the Carson Indian School in Nevada. Included were the six much traveled Miles City mares, (who had started their Indian odyssey with the Crow tribe in Montana), along with the USRLES stallion Euchre (Monterey x Bronita), and at least eight of their offspring. Euchre sired Buckles (x Easter Fine S), the last of his 17 foals, at Fort Washakie. Buckles was foaled there in 1946 but was registered and owned by Robert N. Harris of Morton, Wyoming. In 1951, he was sold to Johnnie Lee of Landers, Wyoming, and then, in 1954 to the George A. Cross & Son in Dubois, Wyoming. It was while on the Cross Ranch that Buckles sired his only registered get, two colts and two fillies, all foaled in 1955 and all out of Warhawk mares. The fillies, Wanton (x Painted Girl) and Cree Woman (x Black Charmer) were both producers for the Cross Ranch, and it is only through them that Euchre's line survives today. Wanton had



**TOP TO BOTTOM:** Pendleton Liza Jane (Milaca Query x Cheyennesque x Brunkey). Her dam was bred by Tongue River Agency, Lame Deer, Montana, and sold to Charlie Hamilton, Triangle Ranch, Parkman, Wyoming; Pickagin (Chief Justin Morgan x Twin Creek Beauty). Her sire was bred by the Wind River Agency, Fort Washakie, Wyoming; War Paint (Chief Justin Morgan x Painted Girl). Pinto Morgan stallion. His sire was bred by Wind River Agency (photos from *The Morgan Horse* archives).



**TOP TO BOTTOM:** Shawalla Man (Rockfield x Wilbur Nellie). Stallion, sire of 71 Morgans. His dam Wilbur Nellie (Highland Glen x Nespelem Snippy) was 100% Colville breeding; Highland Glen (Justin's Silhouette x Sprite). Foundation sire for Colville Indian Agency, Nespelem, Washington; Nespelem Golden Flaxen (Highland Glen x Mountain Dawn). Bred by the Colville Agency (photos from *The Morgan Horse* archives).

just three foals, but her two daughters were prodigious producers, mostly for Casland Morgans in Ohio. Cree Woman, a black mare, produced 16 foals for the Cross Ranch. Fourteen of them were blacks by Chingadero, a rare perlino Morgan stallion that was erroneously registered as white. Cree Charmer, foaled in 1971, was one product of this cross. She produced ten foals for Greentree Ranch in Colorado, most by Greentree Bonnie John. The Carson herd may have been dispersed along with other Wind River Morgans in 1946, but there are no records of them after that time.

There were plans in the works to expand the Morgan breeding program at Wind River in 1945. They had acquired not only the Carson herd from Nevada, but also a group from Pine Ridge that included some yearlings and two year olds. The February 1945 issue of *The Morgan Horse* magazine reported that Wind River had 17 Morgan mares and three Morgan breeding stallions. The article goes on to say, "There is great interest in the Morgan horse in the area and an expanded program of horse improvement is being formulated." Something must have changed drastically because, in 1946, registration ceased and many of the horses were sold. In all, between 1943 and 1946, the Wind River Agency bred 14 registered Morgans. Until 1946, all the foals except one, who probably arrived in utero, were by Brunkey, and all carried the Shoshone prefix. The final 1946 foal crop of four was sired by Euchre, Copper Chief, and Swanton. All four were sold and later registered by their new owners. The fact that Wind River sold a registered Morgan mare, Dona Rockwood (Swanton x Lady Sutter), as late as 1964 suggests that they continued to own and breed Morgans, but no longer registered them. In her article, "Morgan Pages of Wyoming History," published in the May 2005 issue of *The Morgan Horse*, Merideth Sears says that Shoshone Boy (Brunkey x Mylynda), a foal of 1944 was used for breeding at Fort Washakie. He left no registered get, but he and other Morgans may have continued to enrich the blood of Shoshone/Arapaho horses for many years.

### WASHINGTON AND OREGON

Although Morgans were sent to both the Klamath Indian Agency at Klamath, Oregon, and the Yakima Indian Agency in Toppenish, Washington, there was apparently no attempt to establish a purebred breeding program on either reservation. As with the San Carlos Apache in Arizona, only colts were acquired. In December 1943, three weanling and two yearling colts from Pine Ridge arrived at Klamath. All were from the first and second Pine Ridge foal crops. The yearlings were Pine Ridge Gene (Bar-S Hudson x Jean Arthur) and Pine Ridge Smith (Chief Joseph x Kate Smith). The weanlings were Lakota Lad (Swanton x Lady Sutter), Plains Ranger (Plainsman x Twinkle L), and Swanton Two (Swanton x Mae x Chocolate). None of these colts had registered get or was ever again transferred. Some or all of them may have been kept entire and used to upgrade reservation horses, but their fate is a mystery. In 1945, the Pine Ridge Agency sent six yearling colts and a four-year-old stallion to the Yakima Agency. The four-year-old was Colonel Fox (Swanton x Mae). The yearlings were Black Rhody (Red Correll x Rhobessi), King Swanton (Swanton x Rarette), Marcus (Swanton x Illawana Daisy), Oglala Chief (Highland Glen

x Lady Lou), Rockman (Red Correll x Bar-S Delight), and Sapa Oak (Swanton x Kate Smith). All but Marcus were transferred to the Yakima in June of 1945 and transferred to private ownership only five days later. The names suggest that most, if not all, of the new owners were Native Americans. Marcus was never transferred from Yakima ownership. None of this group had later transfers or registered get, and it is not known if they were ever used at stud. Once again, a band of exceedingly well-bred Morgans had vanished into the Indian horse improvement program.

The only tribal Morgan breeding program in the Pacific Northwest was established at the Colville Indian Agency in Nespelem, Washington. The Colville Reservation, located in northeast Washington, serves a number of smaller clans known as the Confederated Tribes of Colville. In 1946, seven Morgan mares arrived at the Agency from Pine Ridge. Six of them were in foal to Highland Glen, and one mare was in foal to Burkey (Rosevelt x Queen Mae). The Colville foundation mares were Malou (Successful x Lida), a 16-year-old, Bonnie Jean (Rosin x Montana Maid), a 13-year-old, and Mountain Dawn (Rosin x Montana Sunshine), a 12-year-old. Also, two eight-year-olds, Lady Lou (Seek No Further x Malou) and Beauty Panic (Herod Panic x Midnight Beauty), and a seven-year-old, Nellie Mae Morgan (Silver Ranger x Danlyn), plus a four-year-old, Claudette (Calgary x Night Bird). All of them had been purchased for the horse improvement program in 1942 and shipped to Pine Ridge, which kept them until they went to Washington State. All but the final Colville foal was registered with the Nespelem prefix. Only one of the 1946 crop, Nespelem Snippy (Highland Glen x Lady Lou), had registered produce. She was the dam of seven foals, all born after she left the reservation, but only one of her offspring left registered offspring. Her inbred daughter Wilbur Nellie (x Highland Glen) only produced three, all for Shawalla Ranch in Walla Walla, Washington, but they were prolific producers. They were Shawalla Silver Dawn (x Silver Rockwood) dam of 11 foals, Shawalla Nellie (x Rockfield) dam of 14 foals (all with the Shawalla prefix), and Shawalla Man (x Rockfield) sire of 71 registered Morgans.

Colville's foundation stallion was Highland Glen (Justin's Silhouette x Sprite). Foaled in 1940, he was purchased for the program in 1942 from his breeder C. J. Stafford of Nye, Montana. He was shipped to Pine Ridge and transferred to the Yakima Agency in 1946 and then to Colville in 1947. He sired the entire 1947 Colville foal crop of three colts and three fillies. Three of them produced registered foals. One was Nespelem Jack (x Lady Lou), who was the sire of 12. Several of Nespelem Jack's nine fillies were later bred to Dean Montana (Fleetfield x Orange Blossom x Chocolate). One of them, Miss Pullman (x Quality Girl), appears in some Dia-H (a gaited Morgan breeder in Washington) pedigrees. Another from the 1947 crop, Nespelem Golden Flaxen (x Mountain Dawn) was the dam of eight after she left the reservation, six with the Monashee prefix. Some of them bred on. Also, in the class of 1947 was Nespelem Bess (x Nellie Mae Morgan). Although she produced only two registered foals, her inbred daughter Wilbur Silver (x Highland Glen) had 14 registered foals, including Rocky Rockwood (x Silver Rockwood). He was a foal of 1956 who sired 11, some of

whom bred on. Rocky Rockwood's full sister, Rita Rockwood, was dam of 13 including six for Canalta Morgans in Alberta, Canada. Out of Colville's 1948 crop of four, only two produced registered foals, and only one of those, Nespelem Betty (Chilocco Star x Bonny Jean), bred on. She produced nine foals, five of them for the Shawalla Ranch. Her daughter Shawalla Jean (x Silver Rockwood) was the dam of eight, seven of them with the Shawalla prefix. Nespelem Betty's name can also be found in Willow Glen, Mt View, Flick's, and Lemhi pedigrees. Her inbred sire, Chilocco Star (Silver Ranger x Racher x Silver Ranger) was bred by W. P. Thornhill of Miami, Texas, but owned and registered by the Chilocco Indian School in Oklahoma. He was foaled in 1940 and transferred to the Rosebud Indian Agency in South Dakota in 1941. There he sired four foals, including Sir Chilocco RB (x Pine Ridge Beauty) who went on to sire 14 registered foals. Chilocco Star was probably sent to Colville in 1947, but his papers were never transferred. He sired five foals with the Nespelem prefix at Colville in 1948 and 1949.

In September of 1948, Highland Glen, four of the foundation mares, and 13 of the younger Morgans were sold to various individuals. What happened to Chilocco Star and the other seven registered Morgans is not known. One more foal was registered in 1949, a gelding named Rocky Star (Chilocco Star x Nespelem Snippy). He is listed as bred by Colville, but he was owned and registered by a private party. Probably his dam was in foal when sold in the 1948 dispersal. After that, all registration and transfer activity ceased. In all, the Colville Indian Agency bred 17 registered Morgans between 1946 and 1949. As with many of the other Morgan horse improvement programs, there were probably numerous partbreds sired by the two stallions and/or produced by their offspring, both during and after the initial breeding operation. The respect of the local Indians for Morgan horses is spelled out in a letter published in the October 1969 issue of *The Morgan Horse* magazine. Mrs. John H. Thrash of Rockford, Washington, wrote, "My father who is half Colville Indian has told me that some 40 years ago when his family ranched on the reservation and ran cattle on the open (unfenced) range in probably some of the roughest country anyone might have to ride in, the only horse that could do the whole job was a Morgan. They couldn't afford three specialized horses for three different types of work. They needed a horse that could handle all of the work and they found the Morgan the best for them."

Although only the Wind River, Lame Deer, and Colville breeding programs are significant for the breed's gene pool, the many Morgan horses owned, used, and bred by the Indian tribes of the Northwest and Pacific Northwest undoubtedly influenced and improved tribal horse herds. Unfortunately, this happened at a time when the usefulness of horses, both on and off the reservations, was declining. Ultimately, most of the Indian horses ended up without a job and with a doubtful future. Some of the best Morgan blood was lost in the process. ■

---

"Drumming Hoof Beats" will be an ongoing, five-part series in *The Morgan Horse* magazine. This is part two.