



~ HISTORY LESSON ~

# *The Morgans of the* **L. U. RANCH, PART I**

*When the Dickie siblings needed horses for their sprawling sheep ranch in Wyoming, a shrewd partnership developed with Helen Brunk Greenwalt.*

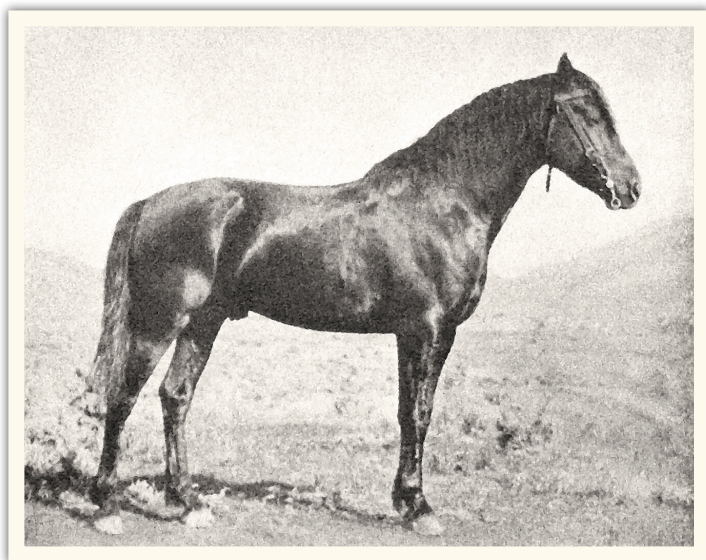
**T**he L. U. Ranch, also known as the L. U. Sheep Company, lies in the Big Horn Basin in northwestern Wyoming, near the small towns of Worland, Meeteetse, and Thermopolis. The Big Horn range is visible to the east from the ranch, while the L. U. itself extends across the basin and up into the foothills of the Rocky Mountains on the west. The range is high, dry desert at an altitude of 5,000 feet on the floor of the basin and rising to 7,000 feet in the mountains. Annual rainfall varies from about seven inches at lower elevations to 12 inches in the high country. The area is remote, the land rugged, and the climate harsh on the huge 150,000-acre ranch, which today supports a 1,500 head mother cow operation. Remarkably, the L. U. Ranch has endured for more than 120 years under the ownership and management of only two families, the Dickies and the Healys.

**By Gail Perlee**

David Dickie (1861–1935), a young Scottish sheep man, had left the family farm on the Isle of Bute to seek his fortune in Australia and New Zealand. Finding few opportunities there, he set sail for America and landed at San Francisco in 1884. He made his way to Wyoming where another Scotsman, Robert Taylor, had carved out a sheep empire near Rock Springs. Sheep ranching in Wyoming and Montana was a booming business in the 1880s. The era of the great cattle drives was over. The land was overgrazed by herds of Texas longhorns on their way to meat markets in the Midwest. Then came droughts and the terrible blizzard of 1886. By the time it was over, hundreds of thousands of cattle lay dead on the range, and the cattle barons were going bust. Scottish sheep men, whose stock thrived on the damaged range, moved in and began buying up cheap land. Robert Taylor, who had driven his

**ABOVE:** Flyhawk and Linspar sharing a corral after breeding season at the L. U. Ranch.

## HISTORY LESSON *≈ L. U. Sheep Ranch.*



**TOP ROW:** The stallion Flyhawk began the partnership between Helen Brunk Greenwalt and the Dickies of the L. U. Ranch. Photos from that time include (from left to right) both Helen Greenwalt and a young Dick Greenwalt riding the stallion at the ranch.  
**BOTTOM ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT):** Flyhawk at the ranch and his daughter Ethete (b. 1936 x Sue by Linspar) bred by the L. U.

sheep overland from California in 1880, was one of the pioneers. David probably worked for him. While in Rock Springs, David was joined by his older brother James (1857–1936), who brought along a fine Scottish collie dog. In 1890 the brothers headed north to found their own empire.

The Dickie brothers were so successful that in 1899 they shipped 50,000 lbs. of wool north to the railhead at Billings, Montana, using huge carts drawn by oxen and 14 horse hitches. That same year they incorporated the L. U. Ranch. No one knows where the name came from, but it is possible that the ranch was originally the livestock unit, or L. U. of a larger enterprise. Eventually the Dickies controlled 150,000 acres of deeded and public lands, and owned 40,000 head of sheep, a thousand head of cattle, and hundreds of horses. They were among the few ranchers who successfully ran cattle and sheep on the same range. The cattle ranged the valleys while the sheep grazed the timbered areas, hills, and mountaintops. David, who was a canny businessman, also owned a local bank. The brothers became wealthy men and, in 1917, James sold his interest in the L. U. and moved to Thermopolis, where he lived out

his life. David stayed on the ranch and over the years was joined there by other members of his large clan, including brothers Alec and Hugh, cousins Bob and Alex Stewart, and most importantly his nephew, Robert Dickie (1890–1967), who was the long-time horse foreman of the L. U.

David and Bob Dickie appreciated the value of good livestock. The L. U. raised fine Rambouillet sheep and Aberdeen Angus cattle. They needed top horses to work the sprawling ranch and they bred their own. Sometime around 1920 they acquired a Standardbred stallion, a son of legendary pacer Dan Patch, to upgrade the ranch horses. Next, they turned to Morgans. No one knows how they became interested in Morgans, but in 1928 David traveled to the Brunk farm in Illinois and personally selected Flyhawk, a coming two-year-old black colt, as a future herd sire. Then he purchased Linspar, a three-year-old stallion, from Elmer Brown in Kansas. Flyhawk was sent by rail from Illinois to Kansas where the two studs were loaded onto a boxcar and shipped to Wyoming and ponied 20 miles to the ranch headquarters. Flyhawk and Linspar laid the foundation for the L. U. Morgans, which for 60 years





**TOP ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT):** Linspar and his daughters Mallow (b. 1934 x Larkspur by Flyhawk) and Sox (b. 1934 x Nancy by Flyhawk).  
**BOTTOM ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT):** Night Tide and his daughter Luellen (b. 1939 x Ethete by Flyhawk).

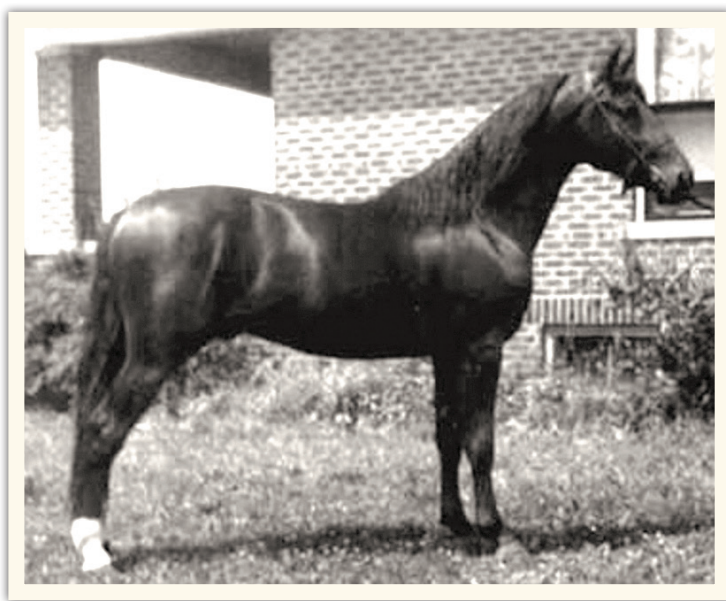
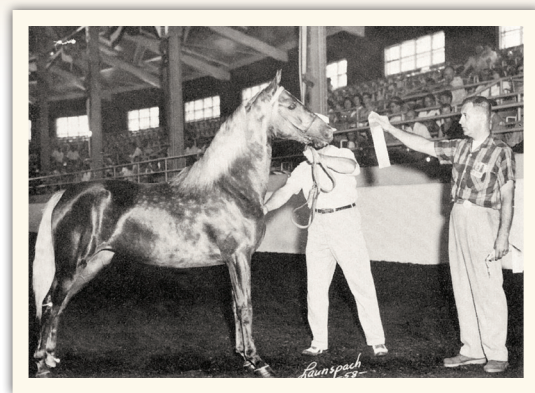
provided horsepower for the ranch and supplied quality Morgans to farms and breeders across the country. The two young stallions were first crossed with grade Standardbred mares, and then the daughters of Linspar were bred to Flyhawk and vice versa. These second-generation foals were eligible for registration as Morgans under Rule II that until 1948 permitted the registration of a few horses of predominantly, but not pure, Morgan blood. Such horses had an X preceding their registration numbers.

The L. U. had three divisions, the cattle, sheep, and horse units, each with its own foreman and crew. Every cowboy and shepherd was assigned two geldings, all of which were bred, raised, and trained on the ranch. The ranch maintained a herd of 20 to 30 broodmares and a covey of about 70 ranch geldings. The mares were never trained. They foaled outside and ran on the range year-round. This was a tough but healthy lifestyle that resulted in long-lived, productive mares and strong, hardy foals. The stallions were kept up in corrals at ranch headquarters, and the mares were driven into adjoining pastures for teasing and breeding. The stallions were trained but not pampered and had to be sensible and

good tempered for both ranch work and stud duties. Proof of this is an old photo of Linspar and Flyhawk sharing a pole corral after breeding season was over. Horses that were to remain on the ranch were branded on the left hip with the L. U.'s horseshoe bar, and on left cheek with the last digit of their birth year. Normally only fillies selected for the broodmare band were registered, but over the years many others were sold and registered by their new owners.

Linspar (Linsley x Sparbelle x Sparhawk) was a chestnut with a strip and white left hind ankle. He was bred by Elmer Brown and foaled in Halstead, Kansas, in 1925. His sire was a US Remount stallion bred by the Government Farm in Vermont, who was sired by General Gates and out of Sunflower Maid, a Western working mare. Linspar's dam was a Western working mare whose family traced back to old New England and Midwest lines. Linspar sired only 23 registered foals, all for the L. U., between 1934 and 1938. Then he was sold, but never transferred, to someone near Casper, Wyoming, and dropped out of sight. Probably he lived out his life as a cow horse sire for other ranches. With so few get, it is amazing how often Linspar shows up in Morgan pedigrees today. Some of





**TOP ROW:** Night Tide is considered the common factor in pedigrees of many colorful Morgans, including the lines from (left to right) Dawnglo (Night Tide x Ishawooa by Linspar), her son Midnite Sun (by Sun Down Morgan) and the mare Cotton Candy whose dam Arvada is out of Luxury by Night Tide (photo © Launspach). **BOTTOM ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT):** Plains King and his daughter Lady Helen (b. 1943 x Grovont by Linspar x Monty by Flyhawk). Lady Helen was dam of ten foals by Lippitt Moro Ash.

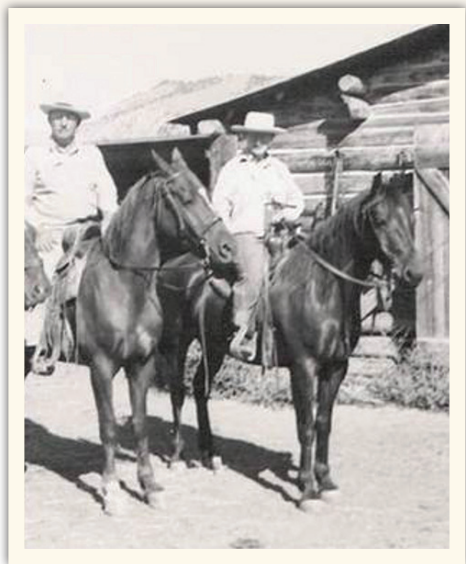
his most productive daughters, all out of Flyhawk mares, were Shasta, Sox, Mallow, Ishawooa, and Grovont.

Flyhawk (Go Hawk x Florette x Allen King) was a black foal of 1926 bred by Joseph C. Brunk in Illinois. His dam was a Brunk mare, but his sire was from a different old midwestern line. Although he fathered 97 foals during his long life, Flyhawk sired only ten registered Morgans while at the L. U. All were out of Linspar mares, and all of them bred on. They were Kaycee, Monty, Black Dinah, Grace, Ethete, Lynna, Shoshoni, Spruce, Birdseye, and Teepee. Horse foreman Bob Dickie took a shine to Flyhawk and often used him to bring in the geldings and for other ranch work. By the time he was ten, Flyhawk had so many daughters, most of them unregistered, in the broodmare band that he was no longer useful on the L. U. In 1936 he was sold to the nearby Padlock Ranch. They used Morgan stallions to improve their ranch horses, but never registered anything.

In 1939 something happened that would change the Morgan breed forever. Helen Brunk Greenwalt, a daughter of Joseph C.

Brunk, came to Wyoming to bring Flyhawk home to Illinois. Although her brothers and sister were all involved with the horse business, it was Helen who inherited their father's passion and genius for breeding Morgan horses. One of the things she sometimes did to maintain and refresh Brunk bloodlines was to buy back some of the best horses bred by her father. In 1939, she retrieved a nine-year-old stallion, King De Jarnette (Jubilee King x Deura by Senator Knox) from Iowa and traded him to the Padlock Ranch for Flyhawk. After using him for a couple of years, the Padlock Ranch sold King De Jarnette to the Ernest Mays family, owners of the Antlers Ranch (also known as the T. A.) near Meeteetse. He was herd sire there until 1946, when he was struck by lightning and killed. The Mays had been using L. U. Morgan stallions to upgrade their ranch horses since 1932. They followed the same formula of breeding grade ranch mares to Flyhawk and Linspar and crossing the daughters of one on the other.

After leaving the Padlock Ranch with Flyhawk, the Greenwalts stopped in at the L. U. so Bob Dickie could say goodbye. With tears



LEFT TO RIGHT: Loy and Helen Greenwalt riding at the ranch; a corral with mares and foals.

in his eyes Bob said, “Don’t you ever put a collar on my horse.” He must have thought of driving horses as draft animals and couldn’t abide the idea of Flyhawk pulling a plow. Back in Illinois, Flyhawk became a champion show horse and went on to sire 87 more foals, many of whom passed their excellent genes on to the next generation. He was never broke to drive. Flyhawk, along with Jubilee King and Senator Graham, is regarded as one of the three major Brunk sires of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

At some point, Helen did a deal with the Dickies. She would supply Morgan stallions to the L. U. in return for a percentage of each foal crop. This arrangement went on for more than 20 years. The L. U. got eight top stallions, Helen Greenwalt got a steady supply of outstanding youngsters and the breed got an infusion of well-bred, ranch raised Western working Morgans. The first stallion to go to the L. U. under this plan was Night Tide, a black foal of 1934 bred by J. C. Brunk. Although his dam, Glenalla, was Brunk bred, his sire Tiffany (Mansfield x Klyona) was bred by the Government Farm in Vermont and acquired in a trade with them. Night Tide sired five foals in Illinois before going to the L. U. in the winter of 1937, including Barberry, herd sire for the Chilocco Indian School in Oklahoma. Night Tide sired just one foal crop for the L. U. of which only ten fillies out of Linspar/ Flyhawk mares were registered. His 1939 foal crop included several influential brood mares. There were four blacks, one dun, one bay dun (probably both buckskins), and two palominos. None of their dams were colorful or produced other colorful foals. If the color came from Night Tide, as seems to be the case, he must have been a smoky black, which conceals the dilute gene. Most of Night Tide’s L. U. daughters bred on, including Dream Star (x Pahaska by Flyhawk) a black who produced ten non-colorful foals, mostly for Towne-Ayer in Vermont.

Four Night Tide daughters, Luellen, Luxury, Carmel Snow, and Dawnglo, would be crucial to the future of colorful Morgans. Luellen (x Ethete by Flyhawk), another smoky black, was the dam of 13, many by Red Correll. She had five palomino foals including

Betty Gold, dam of prolific Walker broodmare Golden Peggy, Miss Luellen, dam of palomino sire Rusty Walker, and Morgan Gold, palomino sire for the Oglala Souix. Another Luellen foal, Black Luellen, was the mother of palomino Nugget Ann, dam of palomino sire Speedramp Walker. Luxury (x Mallow by Linspar), was a dun who produced 11 foals including three palominos and four duns. One of them was Quita (x Highview King), the prolific dun mother of 13. Although registered as duns, these Night Tide horses were actually buckskins. In those days, the terms buckskin and dun were often used to describe the same color. Today we have a better understanding of the genetics of color and DNA tests to verify it. Quita was the dam of palomino sires Yellow Bird and Dickie’s King. Her daughter was Vicky V, registered as a chestnut, but actually a palomino. Vicky V is the dam of 15 foals, some of whom were also palomino, though registered at the time as chestnut. She is in the pedigrees of horses with the Chasley and Serenity prefixes and is the maternal granddam of the influential sire Serenity Masterpiece. Another Luxury daughter was the palomino matron Arvada, dam of Cotton Candy. Night Tide’s two palomino daughters were Carmel Snow (x Kaycee by Flyhawk) and Dawnglo (x Ishawooa by Linspar). Carmel Snow was the foundation mare for Joe Young’s Pineland Morgans in Georgia, where she had 11 foals including five palominos. Dawnglo went to California where she was the dam of nine, mostly by Red Vermont, including Keystone broodmare Georgette Vermont and Beckridge foundation mare Ginger Vermont. She also had four palominos including the sire Midnite Sun (x Sundown Morgan). In October of 1938, less than a year after he arrived at the L. U. ranch, Night Tide was transferred back to Mrs. Greenwalt. That same month he was sold to a man in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, along with three young black, X-registered L. U. mares. It is unknown why Night Tide left the ranch so soon, but it seems likely that someone with money to spend was starting a black Morgan breeding program. Night Tide sired six more Morgans, all out of the L. U. mares and





Morgan geldings at the ranch.

all but one of them black, between 1942 and 1944. Some of them produced registered Morgans, but nothing bred on to the present day. Then Night Tide dropped out of sight. He was only nine when he sired his last foal. Perhaps he died or the endeavor was a casualty of World War II. In any case, for a stallion who only sired 21 get, Night Tide left a bright legacy to the breed and especially to breeders of colorful Morgans.

While Night Tide was still in Wyoming, Mrs. Greenwalt decided on the next stallion to go to the L. U. In February 1938 she purchased a two-year-old stallion from Kansas. Plains King was a chestnut Western Working colt with two hind socks. He was bred by Hiebert Brothers in Hillsboro, Kansas, and sold to Elmer Brown as a yearling. His sire, Romanesque, was bred by the Sellman Ranch in Texas and was by the government horse, Red Oak. Elmer Brown bred Plains King's dam, Ella Linsley. She was by the stallion Linsley and out of a Sparhawk daughter, making her a three-quarter sister to Linspar. Plains King sired 48 registered foals for the L. U. between 1940 and 1943, many of whom appear in today's pedigrees. As in the previous generations, only the fillies were registered, although some of the colts were sold and registered later. Plains King's most productive daughters out of Linspar mares were Lupine, Lucienne, Lucky, Targhee, Falcon, Flavia, Teewinot, Moonflower, Lady Helen, Moccasin, and Moraine. Lupine (x Mallow) was the grandam of both Domino Joe, herd sire for the Neeley's Teton Ranch in Idaho and Senatefield, a major sire for the Jackson Ranch in Montana. Lucky (x Ishawooa) was the dam of 11 for the L. U. including the Waseeka foundation mare, Varga Girl. Targhee (x Sox) was the grandam of sire Rocky Bon. Lady Helen (x Grovont) had 19 foals

mostly for Alexander Ruthven in Michigan. Moccasin (x Auburn) produced for Mary Woolverton's Victory Farm in Colorado. Plains King's primary daughters out of Flyhawk mares were Luray, Luscious, Lustre, Golden Princess, Fantan, Cheetah, Mountain Queen, and Moonbeam. Among them, Luray (x Monty), Luscious (x Black Dinah), Lustre (x Shoshoni), and Cheetah (x Teepee) produced 29 registered foals for the L. U., many of whom bred on. Golden Princess (x Grace), Fantan (x Monty), Flavia (x Ishawooa), Moonbeam (x Ethete), and Mountain Queen (x Spruce), dam of sire Westcrest Silver, contributed greatly to other breeding programs. Plains King was also the sire of Utah quarter mile racing champion and sire, Escalante (x Monty), whose line unfortunately is extinct today. By 1944 Plains King had many daughters in the broodmare band, and he had outlived his usefulness to the L. U. He was sold to Milo Measel in Michigan, where he went on to sire another 58 Morgans. Plains King was a credit to his family and the breed long before Western Working Morgans were recognized within the breed as a separate bloodline. He sired a total of 106 foals and contributed much to both his own and other Morgan families.

A pattern of intense line breeding, based on the Brunk, Government, and Western Working families, was starting to emerge in Helen Brunk Greenwalt's plan for the L. U. herd. She may have used Western Working blood to ensure hardiness and cow sense, government breeding to gain size and scope, and Brunk lines to bring in more quality and breed type. Her judgement was soon proved to be sound and, in the long run, her work with the L. U. program would earn her the reputation of a master breeder of Morgan horses. ■