



~ HISTORY LESSON ~

THE ORCUTT FAMILY MORGAN LEGACY

Part 4: Orcland Farms and Ulendon's Early Legacy

By Brenda L. Tippin

Under the leadership of Lyman Orcutt, and his wife, Ruth Whitney Dickson Orcutt, Orcland Farms united two of the oldest families in the Morgan breed and achieved new heights that would continue to influence the Morgan breed for generations. The program was threatened by a

tragic fire in 1958 which very nearly destroyed it.

ORCLAND FARMS, THE EARLY YEARS

When Dr. Wallace Lyman Orcutt married Ora Elizabeth Drake in 1921, two children were born to them, Wallace Lyman Orcutt Jr.,

MAIN PHOTO: Chip and Louise Orcutt on Ulendon with their parents, Ruth and Lyman (photo © B. Stone); **INSETS:** Ruth & Lyman Orcutt were inducted into the AMHA Breeders Hall of Fame in 1992 (photo © Suzy Lucine); (left to right) Lyman, Ruth, and Louise Orcutt, Ruth Dickson, Roger, Anna, and Nancy Ela in the Family Class at the 1951 National Morgan Horse Show (photo © Ira Haas).



ORCUTT FAMILY

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Dr. Wallace Lyman Orcutt with Vigil Dawn; Dr. Orcutt's son, W. Lyman Orcutt Junior, at the Northampton retirement of Ulendon, and (pictured below) judging; Dr. Orcutt's daughter, Joyce Orcutt, on Ulendon (photos *The Morgan Horse*, Freudy, Faucher).

known as Lyman, and Joyce Orcutt. Both Lyman and Joyce were immersed in Morgans from their earliest childhood. The grand stallion Ulysses #7565 (Bennington #5693 x Artemisia #02731) was a wonderful influence. Every Orcutt horse had a job, a tradition that continued throughout the history of Orcland Farms.

Although Ulysses was already mentioned in a previous chapter, he played a significant role in Lyman's life. Foaled in 1927 when Lyman was just four years old, they literally grew up together, and Lyman had a special bond with the stallion. Ulysses had a great deal to do with not only the founding bloodline of the Orcland program, but with shaping Lyman's views of the Morgan breed, and the direction he would follow in developing his breeding goals for the rest of his life.

Ulysses died in January of 1950 at the age of 23. He was the sire

of 25 registered offspring, as well as seven Remount foals. Among these, he is best known as the sire of Ulendon #7831; Melysses, top stallion at University of New Hampshire; and Quiz Kid, Junior Champion Stallion at the 1948 National.

Dr. Wallace died in 1950, not long after Ulysses, and Lyman and Ruth continued to build on the Orcland program he had established. The 1950s were years of success and prosperity for Orcland Farms, given the early success of Ulendon as a sire of both Morgan breeding stock and show horses, plus the family's involvement in both endurance riding and the show ring.

LYMAN

Wallace Lyman Orcutt Jr. was born July 21, 1923. Among Lyman's early chores was the task of driving Ulysses to deliver milk from

the herd of dairy cows when he was about 12 years old. Ulysses also often pulled the doctor buggy for his father, Dr. Wallace. When Lyman was 16, he showed Ulysses to the title of Grand Champion Stallion at the very first Morgan National in 1939.

Since Lyman had such a special bond with Ulysses, it was perhaps not surprising he would also form a strong bond with Ulendon, who was to become the greatest son of Ulysses. Bred by Dr. Wallace Orcutt, Ulendon was foaled when Lyman was just 10 years old, and they literally grew up together.

Although he loved the Morgans, Lyman's great passion and interest was in breeding and raising dairy cattle. Accordingly, he enrolled in the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts in 1940 at the age of 18. At the time, World War II was well underway, and the United States entered the fray with the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Lyman then enlisted to serve in World War II, initially as a private with the 1st Cavalry Division. By the end of his second year in the military, he had joined a Quartermaster Pack Troop, still a part of the 1st Cavalry Division. In a letter from the Philippines, he wrote to *The Morgan Horse* magazine how anxious he was to get back to the National Morgan Show. He served much of his time during World War II in the Pacific Theater, as well as the Philippines, which had been attacked by the Japanese nine hours after the attack on Pearl Harbor and had a number of important U. S. military bases. He earned many medals, and loved to tell stories of his time in Australia, which also provided important bases for the United States following the Pearl Harbor bombing. Lyman maintained his interest in dairy cattle and when he returned from the war his father had a herd of fine registered Guernsey cattle waiting to help him get off to a good start adjusting back to civilian life.

Lyman later transitioned his herd from Guernseys to Holstein-Friesians. He was very proud of their bloodlines. The Orland dairy herd was world famous, and before the fire of 1958, was often known for some of the top milk-producing cows in the country.

The Orcutts also grew their own hay. Some fields would be reseeded while others were turned over, and they maintained the soil with fertilizer and lime. The horses were regularly used for farm chores. Ulendon was used to rake hay, as well as many other chores, and was easily able to do anything asked of him.

Lyman also became very involved in judging horse shows, not just Morgans and not just in the United States. He judged many breeds around the world and both he and his wife, Ruth, attended training for judging different breeds in Europe. Daughter Louise recalled, "Judging horse shows was a big deal for Dad, he loved judging! He loved to get out there and talk bloodlines with people and discuss which crosses worked the best. He also helped Wayne Newton with his Arabians."

JOYCE

Meanwhile, in 1941, Dr. Wallace bought Mrs. Huntington Smith's prized gray show mare Upwey Jubilee Kay #05097 (Jubilee King #7570 x Melody Queen, [Saddlebred]), bred by J. C. Brunk, and presented her to his daughter, Joyce, then 15. At that time, Jubilee Kay had more than 46 blue ribbons to her credit, mostly at open shows throughout New England. She had also won at Madison

Square Garden and had even managed to defeat Dr. Wallace's top champion at the time, Wonderman #7671 (Bennington #5693 x Juno #03284) a few times, which few horses had managed to do.

Joyce continued to show the mare with great success, and bred her to Ulendon #7831, producing another lovely gray show mare, Jubilee Queen #06428. Jubilee Kay was among the original horses inducted into the AMHA Show Horse Hall of Fame. Joyce went on to marry A. Neil Gadd, and they purchased her father's house in town. Several children were born to them. Joyce sold Jubilee Kay and Jubilee Queen in 1949, and they did not continue to be involved with Morgans. Joyce was a lifelong resident of West Newbury and passed away in 2006 at the age of 79.

RUTH WHITNEY DICKSON ORCUTT

In 1946, Lyman married Ruth Whitney Dickson, uniting two of the oldest families in the Morgan breed. Three children were born to Lyman and Ruth. Wallace Lyman III, or "Chip," in 1947, Louise in 1949, and the youngest, Elizabeth (known as "Liz"), some years later in 1958. Ruth put a great deal of effort into helping the children and young people with lessons and riding camps, and after marrying Lyman she was often fondly known as "Mrs. O."

Ruth remarked at one time, "We Dicksons went out thinking we had to beat the Orcutts because they always won...and so I joined them." Ruth was the daughter of Brenton Halliburton Dickson Jr. and Ruth Bennett Dickson, and was born December 27, 1919, at their farm in Weston, Massachusetts, known as the Ivey Abbey. She was the youngest of seven children, and among her siblings was the well-known Anna Ela, founder of Townshend Morgans, who lived to be nearly 101.

The Dicksons first came to this country from Scotland in the late 1600s, settling in Connecticut, and then lived in Nova Scotia for several generations before Brenton's father came to Massachusetts in the mid-1800s. The Bennett family were descendants of Henry Bennett, one of the original settlers of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in the early 1600s and had remained in the area for generations. Ruth's mother, Ruth Bennett Dickson, born in 1878, had a lifelong history of involvement with Morgans and was remembered especially for her work with children and providing them opportunities to learn about Morgans, work which her daughter, Ruth, carried on. Ruth was a Concord Academy graduate and went on to obtain her degree in Physical Therapy from the University of New Hampshire, and later interned at Boston Children's Hospital.

Fiercely competitive, Ruth was not only a skilled horsewoman, but excelled at both skiing and sailing as well. During Ruth's time at the University of New Hampshire she won the very first intercollegiate sailing race in which women were allowed to participate, on the Charles River in Boston. An accomplished sailor, she won numerous sailing races throughout her life, and sailed her last race at the Chatham Yacht Club in the late 1990s. Ruth was also one of the first skiers to compete at Mt. Tom in Woodstock, Vermont, and use the Rope Tow; she went on to qualify for the 1948 U. S. Winter Olympics Team. She was on the ski team for the University of New Hampshire and skied all over the world.

Ruth's involvement with Morgans was no less intense. In the Woodstock area, she was amongst the original members of the



DICKSON FAMILY

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: The daughters of Ruth Dickson were forces behind both the Orcland and Townshend prefixes. (Left to right) Ruth Dickson, her daughter Ruth Dickson Orcutt, Ruth's granddaughter Louise Dickson Hardie, and Mary Dickson Cressy at the Windsor Fair (photo © Ira Haas); Ruth Orcutt with her mother's mare Ping Pong; Ruth showing Ulysses; Ruth on her 15th and final GMHA 100-mile ride with Orcland Highness (photo © Ira Haas).

Green Mountain Horse Association and was a lifetime supporter, riding numerous times in the Vermont 100-mile Ride. It was Ruth who guided the famous mare Sadwin, owned by her sister Ana Ela, on many of her endurance rides, including both of her wins in the 100-mile ride in 1941 and 1945, as well as her 1941 win in the 80-mile Maine Trail ride. Sadwin had also won the Maine Trail ride in 1939 and 1940 and was named "Morgan Horse of the Year" in 1941, and "Mare of the Year" in 1945.

Well-known equestrian Denny Emerson recalled often seeing Ruth at the 100-mile rides when he was a teenager and remembered her competitive spirit. The Orcutts, and Ruth especially at that time (being the main rider), were well-known for versatility. The same horses that would win in trail or pleasure classes could turn around and be just as successful in a park class. The famous poet Robert

Frost was a great friend of Ruth's, and one year was looking for her at the National Show in Woodstock when he popped his head into Denny's stall, much to Denny's surprise.

In an article written for *The Morgan Horse*, April 1950, on Trail Ride Conditioning, Anna Ela had this to say about her "baby" sister, 10 years younger: "I will start with my sister, Ruth Dickson Orcutt, who won two Vermont trail rides and one Maine ride. She also placed second, third, fifth, and tenth on the Vermont rides. She never worried about anything; therefore, her horses never did. She was always out for a good time...I don't think she ever quit. If you had a mount you could trust, which she always had, her thoughts were, 'What a wonderful day!'"

Ruth not only competed in the very first Vermont 100-mile ride in 1936 when she was just 17, she continued riding in every annual

ride for more than 15 years. At the age of 67, she also competed in the 1986 50th Anniversary 100-mile ride on Orland Highness #027172 (UVM Highlight #12984 x Symphonie #07545) placing sixth, as well as competing in the ride for many of the years in between.

CHIP ORCUTT

Chip Orcutt, the oldest of Lyman and Ruth's three children, was born in 1947 and remembers growing up with Morgans and working on the farm. He recalled, "My dad would tell stories about Ulysses and him delivering milk, pulling horse-drawn hay equipment, or pulling the Dr. Buggy. Ulysses is known as one of our foundation Morgan sires and a show horse, but that wasn't his day job. It was the same thing at Orland Farms; each horse was used and had a job. Each horse was versatile and could do it all. Dad was the biggest promoter of the Morgan horse, and our horses were a good example of the can-do picture.

"Mom would tell me one thing at one end of the ring, and dad would change that and tell me something else at the other end of the ring," Chip said. "That was more when I was in the saddle, but same thing when I was driving in the harness classes. Russ Smith, looking down from the announcer booth at the National, could see the whole thing, what was going on." Russ Smith was a long-time friend of Lyman's from Haverhill, Massachusetts, and would hang out at Dr. W. Lyman Orcutt's barn in West Newbury when he was growing up. Chip says, "He saw the whole picture."

Chip's earliest memory of the farrier trade was when he was seven or eight years old, and Squire Warner, a farrier from Marblehead, was doing some work at the farm. He used to make shoes for Ruth's show horses. "He said, 'Look, I'm not a blacksmith, I'm a farrier.' And that kind of stuck with me over the years," Chip recalled. Not surprisingly, Chip became a farrier.

LOUISE ORCUTT

Louise, born two years after Chip in 1949, remembers when she was very small, about three, how her dad would put her up on Ulendon's back, bareback, and lead her around. She remembers being impressed with how big Ulendon seemed, yet so gentle and kind. She learned early to appreciate the qualities of the Morgan breed. "I guess we took it for granted, but they are so smart, even today they will try to test you, push your buttons, not in a mean way, but in a good way. They will teach an individual how to ride. What was so unique about them was their durability and their stamina, they can handle a lot. Their whole attitude made it fun, the whole discipline, the ride, the drive. During winter we would hitch them with toboggans or flying saucers to take the kids out for something different... From early on, Mom started a practice of breeding foals in partnership with each of her three kids, so at any point there would be at least one horse registered in each of our names. This was to try to help make sure we stayed involved with Morgans, stayed in it."

LIZ ORCUTT

Liz was born several years later, in the fall of 1958, during the difficult season of trying to rebuild following the terrible fire which had occurred earlier that year. Although she was very small and



ORCUTT CHILDREN

TOP TO BOTTOM: Chip riding Orland Donanna; Louise on Johnny Appleseed; Liz up on Orland Ann Darling (photo © A. C. Drowne).

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Ulendon was very old by that time, she also remembered him. “When I was very young, I got into the pasture with Ulendon and he lifted me up, I’ll never forget that! But they grabbed me right away, and he didn’t do any harm, he was very gentle, just wonderful. I knew all of his get.”

ULENDON’S FIRST LEGACY

Ulendon #7831 was bred by Dr. Wallace Orcutt, but his remarkable story continues and is very much intertwined with the chapter of Lyman and Ruth. Foaled in 1933, when Lyman was 10 years old, he proved to be the most influential son of Ulysses. He was Grand Champion Stallion of the National Morgan Horse Show in 1940 and 1941, and many times Grand Champion Stallion at the New England Morgan Show, as well as numerous wins both under saddle and in harness. In addition, his early foal crops had already produced such outstanding show horses as Jubilee Queen #06428, Orcland Leader #9038, Orcland Vigildon #10095, and Havolyn Dancer #10182. While the Orcutts subsequently had many great stallions through the years, there was none that approached Ulendon for quality and enduring influence on the breed.

Despite being a stallion, Ulendon was wonderfully gentle and reliable around children, and was one of the first teachers for Chip and Louise when they were small. Lyman and Ruth had Chip and Louise ride Ulendon double for a Christmas card one year, and this photo then appeared in the January 1952 issue of *The Morgan Horse*. Ulendon was retired at the National Show the next year, in 1953, when he was 20 years old, and he was so well known and admired by many that his retirement photo was chosen for the cover of the National Show issue of *The Morgan Horse* in September of that year. Ruth put him in cross-ties and he stood quietly and patiently for a very long time while tiny four-year-old Louise did her best to groom him.

Ulendon was a legendary sire, even if one did not count his numerous get and grandget inducted into the AMHA Show Horse Hall of Fame. Following the death of Dr. Wallace in 1950, Ulendon continued as the primary sire for Lyman and Ruth, building his stellar reputation as a sire. Several of his offspring made up the backbone of the Orcutt’s show string.

In a 2020 article in *The Morgan Horse*, Vermont horsewoman Bonnie Sogoloff remarked, “Ulendon is synonymous with Lyman Orcutt. Lyman couldn’t say two words without one of them being ‘Ulendon.’”

JUBILEE QUEEN #06428

(Ulendon #7831 x Jubilee Kay #05097)

A gray mare bred by Joyce Orcutt out of the elegant Brunk-bred gray mare Jubilee Kay and foaled in 1944. Jubilee Kay was also among the original horses inducted into the AMHA Show Horse Hall of Fame. Jubilee Queen proved a wonderful show mare, and Joyce sold her in 1945 as a five-year-old to Carol Ramsey who continued to compete with her successfully. She produced two foals, Julenden #11014, a chestnut gelding by Ulendon foaled in 1953, and later a mare, Julee Darling #012041, by Ulendon’s son, Orcland Dondarling #12261.

ORCLAND LEADER #9038

(Ulendon #7831 x Vigilda Burkland #06040)

A chestnut stallion marked with connected star, strip, snip, and four white fetlocks, bred by Dr. Wallace Orcutt and foaled in 1944 and sold to Steve Tompkins as foundation stallion for Bar-T Farms. He has been mentioned before but it is important to look at him again in the context of Ulendon’s record as a sire, particularly during the early years after Lyman and Ruth were married and began taking over the management of Orcland Farms. Orcland Leader won countless championships and was constantly featured in the pages of *The Morgan Horse* magazine during this time. He also was among the original horses inducted into the AMHA Show Horse Hall of Fame. He went on to sire 139 registered offspring, and this line was prolific in producing some of the most outstanding show horses in the breed. Gladgay’s Pride #11594 (x Gladly #05020), bred and owned by Mark Hanna, and Chasley Superman #12194 (x Rena #07229) were both superb show horses in their own right and were two of five Ulendon grandget among original inductees into the AMHA Show Horse Hall of Fame.

As an example of the profound influence of this line, Chasley Superman was among the coveted class of stallions able to sire both sons and daughters of truly legendary quality, just as his grandsire Ulendon did. Chasley Superman was the sire of the most prolific stallion in recent Morgan history, Courage Of Equinox #23622 (x Katy Bennfield #013735), sire of 380 registered offspring. Chasley Superman was also an exceptional sire of daughters. He sired Hanover Super Lady #016464 (x Lippitt Ethan Georgia #010643), who was crowned World Champion Mare at the first Morgan Grand National held in Oklahoma City in 1973, and thus the first mare to earn that title. She in turn produced six foals, including Rapidan Georgian #67358 (x Black River Pegasus #19158) who won the World Champion Amateur Park Saddle stake in 1990, among other World and National titles. Chasley Superman also sired Special Kay #024704, who was a full sister to Courage Of Equinox, and who was World Champion Mare in both 1979 and 1981, as well as 1983 World Champion Mare Suzy’s Suzette #074255 (x Pinehaven Suzy-Que #015009). Rapidan Apollo #23748, a full brother of Hanover Super Lady, was World Champion Stallion in 1975. Bar-T Regina #010882 (x Krinisor #07417), a daughter of Orcland Leader, was dam of Apollo’s Reflection #28893 (x Emyrean Apollo #21565), who was World Champion Stallion in 1981.

Gladgay’s Pride was also 1965 Eastern National Champion, while yet another son of Orcland Leader was Bar-T Invader #14434 (x Corene #07477), who was 1969 Western National Grand Champion Stallion.

ORCLAND VIGILDON #10095

(Ulendon #7831 x Vigilda Burkland #06040)

A dark chestnut stallion marked with star, strip, both front pasterns, and both hind ankles white, bred by Dr. Wallace Orcutt and foaled in 1947. He was a full brother of Orcland Leader and prominent sire for Townshend Farms. Among his 106 registered offspring, Townshend Debadonna #012609 (x Windcrest’s Debutante #07622), a 1962 dark chestnut mare bred by Nancy Caisse, was 1967 Eastern National Grand Champion Mare, 1968

ULENDON & FAMILY



Three photos of Ulendon's sire, Ullysses (from the great cross of Bennington and Artemisia). Chip Orcutt makes the point that at Orcland Farms, Morgans were working horses as well as breeding and show horses. Both Ullysses and Ulendon pulled the wagon delivering milk from the Orcland dairy (photos Ira Haas, *The Morgan Horse*).



Ulendon (Ullysses x Allenda), foundation of the Orcland dynasty, was show horse and sire. The get and sire win is from *The Morgan Horse's* coverage of the 1952 "National."



Orcland Vigildon, important early son of Ulendon, (x Vigilda Burkland); and his get Vigilmarch (x Mayphil); Bro-Rock Vigilmoud (x Mayquinn); and Townshend Debadonna (x Townshend Debutante) (photos *The Morgan Horse*).

Jubilee National Grand Champion Mare, one of the original horses inducted into the AMHA Show Horse Hall of Fame and was also a Ulendon granddaughter. Orcland Vigildon was also sire of Bro-Rock Vigilmoud #013284 (x Mayquinn #010909), who was 1968 Gold Cup National Grand Champion mare, and Trijas Vigilpepper #020341 (x Sweet Pepper #010836), 1974 World Champion Mare. Additionally, the great sire Vigilmarch #12044 (x Mayphil #07192) was also a son of Orcland Vigildon, and in turn sired HVK Viceroy

#26033 (x U C Lovely Vision #010448), who was World Champion Stallion in 1977 and 1982. Another grandson of Orcland Vigildon was the well-known UVM Promise #16916 (UVM Highlight #12984 x UVM Empress #09957), who was World Champion Stallion in 1978, as well as World Champion Park Saddle in 1978, 1979, and 1980, among other World and National titles. He, in turn, sired 1988 World Champion Mare Festival Pride N Joy #096194 (x Sunnyvale Joy #027550).

ULENDON & FAMILY, CONTINUED



Orcland Leader, important early son of Ulendon (x Vigilda Burkland), with his get Gladgay's Pride (x Deerfield Leading Lady), Bar-T Invader (x Coreen), and Chasley Superman (x Rena) (photos *The Morgan Horse*, B. Stone, Fallaw, AMHA Archives).



Havolyn Dancer, important early son of Ulendon (x Gayselba) with Dr. Bob Orcutt up, his daughter Mary Orcutt [Wahl] is on Orcland Gaydeen (Ulendon x Gayselba); Havolyn Dancer's son, Gay Dancer (photos Family of Dr. Robert Orcutt, Warren Patriquin).



Orcland Youlenda (x Paleface) carried and passed on the unique silver dapple gene; and Jubilee Queen (x Upwey Jubilee Kay), who was gray like her dam, but did not have produce. They are pictured with Claire Murphy and Carol Ramsey, respectively (photos *The Morgan Horse*).

ORCLAND GAY-LASS #07628 (Ulendon #7831 x Gayselba #05514)

She was a black mare bred by Dr. Wallace Orcutt and foaled in 1947. She was one of only three horses to survive the terrible fire that ravaged Orcland Farms in 1958, because she happened to be in the cow barn when the fire occurred. Gay-Lass was also heavily in foal at the time, having been bred back to her sire. Just one month later, she delivered the black filly Orcland Gaystar #010300, later owned by Louise. Gay-Lass went on to produce a total of ten foals, six of

which were by her sire, Ulendon, three by Orcland Dondarling.

HAVOLYN DANCER #10182 (Ulendon #7831 x Gayselba #05514)

A bay stallion marked with a small star, bred by Dr. Wallace Orcutt, and foaled in 1948. He produced only two registered offspring before he was gelded as a three-year-old, but one of these was the talented colt Gay Dancer #11012 (x Deerfield Leading Lady #07965), who was among the original horses inducted into



LOST IN THE FIRE

Among the 17 horses who perished in the 1958 barn fire were (clockwise from top left) Orcland Gayman, Orcland Gleam, Orcland Walinda, Soneldon, and Supersam. The latter, a son of Lippitt Sam out of the Jubilee King daughter Paragraph, was a hopeful for Orcland as both a show horse and sire. He died with only six offspring (photos Freudy, B. Stone, Ira Haas, *The Morgan Horse*).

the AMHA Show Horse Hall of Fame. Havolyn Dancer himself became a top show horse.

ORCLAND "IKE" #1118

(Ulendon #7831 x Townshend Sealselia #05448)

Orcland Ike was a bay gelding, bred by Orcland Farms and foaled in 1953. He was sold as a weanling to June Brockett of Bro-Rock Morgans, who is well-known as the breeder of Vigilmarch #12044 (Orcland Vigildon #10095 x Mayphil #07192). Ike was a challenge to train but went on to win many ribbons and championships for her, including the first and second legs of the Amateur Morgan Stake Trophy at the Eastern States Exposition.

ORCLAND YOULENDA #09297

(Ulendon #7831 x Paleface #06366)

Registered as a dark chestnut mare marked with a stripe, Orcland Youlenda was bred by Ruth, foaled in 1955, and was later recognized to be, in fact, a rare silver dapple in color. She was sold as a weanling to Ralph Lasbury Jr. of East Windsor Hill, Connecticut, and later to Claire Murphy. She eventually produced seven foals for Fiddlers Green and became an important mare for the Silver Dapple Morgans Project. Her fascinating story is told by Laura Hornick Behning in the article *Orcland Youlenda and*

the Silver Dapples of Fiddlers Green, with additional information and photos on the website www.silverdappleorgansproject.com. Youlenda was, in fact, one of three silver dapple foals by Ulendon, all out of the mare Paleface, who was also silver dapple.

ORCLAND FIRE

As Lyman and Ruth began to take over the management of Orcland Farms, they developed a very successful show string. Lyman and Ruth traveled to New Orleans that fateful weekend in January to attend the annual AHSA banquet and accept the AHSA High Point Award and trophy earned by their versatile Junior stallion Supersam #10426. The trouble actually began on Saturday, January 18th, although no one was aware of it at the time. As was customary, a square silo inside the horse barn was filled with fresh shavings that day by the traditional practice of blowing them into the space until it was full and packed tight. This had been done more times than anyone could count without incident, both at Orcutt Farm and numerous others. The exact cause was impossible to tell. Perhaps a stray spark from a cigarette got into the shavings and silently smoldered for hours. Or spontaneous combustion may have occurred from the dust or even dampness as the silo was locked up tight.

Sunday morning, the 19th of January, dawned crisp and cold.



Sisters Anna and Ruth in their final appearance in the ring in Northampton for an impromptu family class. Left to right are Mark Caisse, Anna Ela's grandson, riding Al-Bar's Attention; Anna's daughter, Nancy, riding Townshend Sweet Remark; the sisters are in the pleasure cart behind UC Cover Girl; and Ruth's granddaughter, Chris Orcutt Henderson, is riding Orcland Bold Silk. All horses trace back to the Orcland and Townshend prefixes in their pedigrees (photo Bob Moseder).

Jim Anderson had promised young Chip and Louise a sleigh ride as reward for their efforts as they were all working hard, cleaning all the stalls and tack, and covering the tack with new plastic dust covers to have everything in shining order for their parents' return to celebrate the beautiful trophy Supersam had won. As they filled all the stalls with the fresh, sweet smelling new shavings (and were still unaware of the tiny spark steadily building within the silo), just enough oxygen was let into the silo to circulate the air and fan the flames. They had gone back to the house to eat a quick lunch and get ready for the greatly anticipated sleigh ride, having no idea of the deadly spark within the silo that was quickly springing to life. They had been gone from the barn only twenty minutes. Jim was just putting on his overshoes for the sleigh ride when a milk man driving past alerted them of smoke pouring from the barn. Before Jim could even reach the barn, the silo inside exploded with such force it blew the big barn door off its track. Ulendon and the mare Anna Darling #08413 were in stalls which opened outdoors, and though the risk was tremendous, Jim was able to go in and

save those two horses. Louise, trying to follow his example and save her beloved Orcland Walinda #0891, whom she had received for Christmas just the month before, had to be rescued twice to keep her from going into the deadly flames. The task was futile. The thick smoke, acting as an anesthetic, felled the horses inside the barn within minutes and Jim tried several times to enter the barn only to be driven back by the roaring heat of the deadly flames. The entire barn was completely consumed within 45 minutes.

At that time, Freddie Johnston and his brother, Paul, were working down in the cow barn. They managed to get the herd of 40 Holstein-Friesen cows out of the barn, along with the mare Orcland Gay-Lass, who had been staying in the cow barn, as well as the children's pony. In all, three horses (Ulendon and two mares both in foal to him) were saved, as were the pony and 40 cows. The cow barn had some damage but was not destroyed. Lyman felt the loss of the horses especially keenly for Ruth's sake and wanted to shift his focus to helping her get back the tremendous show string they had lost, though at the time neither of them could imagine how that was

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going to be remotely possible. The cow herd was sold to Maine.

The following were among the horses lost in the fire:

SUPERSAM #10426

(Lippitt Sam #7857 x Paragraph #04027)

Supersam was a handsome and typey dark chestnut stallion marked with a small star, bred by Frances Bryant, and foaled in 1950. He was among the early outside horses Lyman and Ruth brought in after the death of Dr. Wallace, and they were very proud of him and had high hopes for his addition to their breeding program. Supersam stood 15¼ hands tall and was very well balanced with natural action. He was successfully shown in park classes with a pleasure shoe and showed great promise, both as a show horse and sire. This promising young stallion had just six registered offspring at the time of his death but does have a number of surviving descendants today.

ORCLAND GAYMAN #11218

(Ulendon #7831 x Orcland Gay-Lass #07628)

The result of Ulendon being bred to his daughter, Orcland Gay-Lass #07628 (x Gayselba #05514), was Junior Champion Stallion at the 1957 National Morgan Show, and Grand Champion Stallion of the 1957 New York State Fair.

ORCLAND GLEAM #06393

(Ulendon #7831 x Vigella #06039)

A brown mare bred by Dr. Wallace Orcutt and foaled in 1944, Orcland Gleam became one of the major show horses from Lyman and Ruth. She was New England Champion Pleasure Horse in 1953 and 1954 and won countless ribbons in numerous shows. She had no opportunity to produce any offspring before her untimely death.

ORCLAND VIGILEEN #07627

(Ulendon #7831 x Vigilda Burkland #06040)

Brown mare, nine years, 15¼ hands, was among the horses lost in the Orcland fire in 1958, and the New England Reserve Champion title was listed with her credits in the March 1958 *TMH* coverage of this tragedy. She was Reserve Champion Morgan (to the great Orcland Leader) at the 1951 Manchester, New Hampshire Horse Show and Reserve Champion Saddle winner (again to Orcland Leader) at the 1952 National Show with Ruth riding.

SONELDON #8737

(Ulendon #7831 x Ethanelda #04967)

A chestnut stallion marked with a connected star, strip, and snip,

right hind pastern, and inside and front of left hind pastern, bred by Frank Orcutt out of his prized mare Ethanelda. He was transferred to Dr. Wallace Orcutt as a yearling and later sold as a three-year-old to Jane Clark, though he continued to be boarded at Orcland Farms. Soneldon was Ulendon's first colt and won the Lightweight Division of the 100-Mile Ride in 1953 and 1954 and won the Justin Morgan Performance Class at the National in 1955.

ORCLAND WALINDA #0891

(Ulendon #7831 x Lippitt Wally Moro #05182)

Won Champion Three-Year-Old Mare at the 1957 National Show and was a Christmas gift to Louise.

ORCLAND SENSATION #11709

(Ulendon #7831 x Townshend Lady Sensation #06937)

The first mare to ever win a Justin Morgan Performance Class, in 1953, she showed tremendous promise and was believed to be the most outstanding natural mover ever raised by the Orcutts.

Sixteen Morgans and one Arabian (13 Morgans owned by Lyman and Ruth, the other four owned by boarders), were tragically lost in the Orcland Fire of January 1958.

AFTER THE FIRE

News of the tragic fire spread quickly in the Morgan community. It was widely known that Lyman and Ruth had gone to accept AHSA awards that weekend on behalf of their talented young stallion Supersam, who was among the horses lost. Even as Lyman and Ruth heard the awful news and could not begin to imagine how they could continue their program, the Morgan community was rallying. The Ela family left their duties at Townshend Farm immediately to come and ensure the worst of the heart-breaking devastation was cleaned up before Lyman and Ruth returned.

Shocked and heartbroken, Lyman and Ruth's excitement at returning home with the prized awards from their successful show season felt hollow and empty, and they could not begin to imagine how they could possibly pick up the pieces and move forward. They were thankful that the children and Jim Anderson, as well as others working at the farm or who had stopped to help, had not been hurt; thankful for Ulendon and the two mares who had been saved; but the future looked incredibly dark. ■

Part V of the "Orcland Legacy" will chronicle Orcland Farms' significant contributions to the Morgan breed after the fire.

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