



≈ HISTORY LESSON ≈

THE ORCUTT FAMILY MORGAN LEGACY

Part 6: Dr. Bob Orcutt, Burkland Beginnings

By Brenda L. Tippin

The remarkable Orcutt legacy continued with Dr. Bob Orcutt. He and his family carried forward both the influence of his father, Frank Orcutt, as well as his uncle, Dr. Wallace Orcutt, to establish their own brand of Orcutt tradition with the creation of Burkland Farm in Rowley, Massachusetts. This article covers Burkland's formative years up to the early 1960s. The rest of the story will appear subsequently as Part 7.

ABOVE: The legendary Vigilda Burkland (Vigilant x Lucinne), namesake of Burkland Farm, with her breeder, Frank Orcutt, and his son, Dr. S. Robert Orcutt, at the mare's retirement at the National Morgan Horse Show. Photo from the cover of the September 1956 issue of *The Morgan Horse*; **INSETS:** Dr. Bob Orcutt, in high school, in his military uniform, and with the signature stallion Gay Dancer (Havolyn Dancer x Deerfield Leading Lady) (photos © Freudy, J. Livingston, Family of Dr. Robert Orcutt).



The Orcutt Family: Ellery, Dr. Bob, Murray, Phyllis (Bob's wife), Lyman, Frank, unknown woman, Irvin, Elsie (Phillips, Dr. Bob's sister).

EARLY LIFE IN VERMONT

Samuel Robert Orcutt was the youngest of five children born to Franklin Harrison Orcutt and Myrtie Laura [Coe] Orcutt in 1912, and the only one to carry on his father's lifelong passion for breeding Morgan horses. He was born and raised on his father's farm at the base of Burke Mountain in East Burke, Vermont, which in turn was not far from his grandfather Harrison's farm, purchased originally by his great-grandfather, Samuel Orcutt. Since both his grandfather and great-grandfather were well-known and respected breeders of Morgans, and evidence was strong that his great-great grandfather Ephraim bred and used Morgans as well, young Bob Orcutt was already (at least) the fourth generation, even likely the fifth generation, of Morgan horse breeders in the Orcutt family.

This tradition traced back more than a hundred years before Bob was born, to the very origins of the Morgan breed. Notably, it is still going strong today with more than 200 years of Morgan horse breeding in the direct Orcutt family line. Orcutt-bred Morgans first appearing in the Registry were foaled as early as the late 1870s, with named Morgans that can be traced in pedigrees foaled at least as early as 1860, thus making the Orcutt family one of the very longest, if not *the* longest, documented Morgan breeders that can be traced back to the same family, with early horses they bred still important in pedigrees today.

When Bob was small, he had opportunity to get acquainted with his grandparents, Harrison Orcutt and Paolina Kenerson Orcutt, who lived at the old family farm in Sutton, on the border of the village of West Burke, which had been in the Orcutt family more than 100 years, and where many of the original Orcutt Morgans, still found in pedigrees today, had been bred. Harrison died when Bob was 11 years old, and Paolina's health began to fail not long after this. Frank and Myrtie brought her to their farm to care for her in 1925, and she passed away in November of that year, when Bob was 13. The funeral was held in their home.

Frank Orcutt was not eager to embrace modern technology, as he found the Morgans more than adequate for any task he needed, and this ideology was deeply impressed upon young Bob Orcutt from his earliest memories. Among the Morgans he was raised with was the grand mare Lady Laura #03341 (Bob Morgan #4549 x Laura by Mor-

gan Tiger #816), dam of three registered foals. A pretty, dark chestnut mare standing 14½ hands tall and weighing about 900 pounds, Lady Laura went on to have a profound impact on the breed. Her offspring included the legendary mare Artemisia, who became the cornerstone of the U. S. Government Morgan breeding program, as well as the exceptional mare Lucinne, foaled when Bob was six years old and kept by Frank all her life, so Bob grew up with this mare as well. Lady Laura and Lucinne also did their share of the farm work, helped with family transportation, and were shown by Frank at the county fairs, thus instilling in his son the idea early on that Morgans really could do it all. Bob's early years were filled with the daily life of dairy farming, logging to clear the land, working the fields to grow and harvest the yearly crops, and producing maple sugar. All of this was done with Morgan horses. The family did not even buy a car until Bob left for college.

LEARNING FROM UNCLE WALLACE AT ORCLAND FARM

Bob started college, but in 1931, at the age of 19, he left college and went to work for his uncle, Dr. Wallace Orcutt, to help train and handle the growing show string he was building at Orcland Farm in West Newbury, Massachusetts. His young cousin, Lyman, was just eight years old at the time and Joyce only five, so Dr. Wallace was sorely in need of more help. Bob found he missed being around the Morgans as well. Like his father, Frank, Bob had a natural talent for handling horses as well as for breeding Morgans, and he was well-equipped with the skills of horse training learned from his family. Working for Uncle Wallace opened a new door for him to show Morgans more frequently, as well as compete at larger shows. Training and showing Morgans truly became his passion. Among the early horses he worked with was the great stallion Ulendon, foaled in 1933. Although Ulendon was very much associated with Lyman, it was in fact Bob who gave the stallion his early training and showed him to so many of his early victories, contributing to the legend Ulendon would become.

Dr. Wallace was elected President of The Morgan Horse Club in 1931, the same year he hired Bob to come and help, and he continued to hold that position until 1947. Thus, Bob was truly at the heart and center of the Morgan world.



FAMILY PHOTOS

FIRST ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: Mary Jane Orcutt on two-year-old Vigilda Jane; Vigilda Jane with Mary Jane (driving) and Helen Orcutt; Dr. Bob and Phyllis with children Helen, Mary Jane, and Robert on Havolyn Dancer, sire of Gay Dance (photos courtesy of the Orcutt Family Collection and the family of Dr. Robert Orcutt). **SECOND ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT:** Daughter Mary Orcutt [Wahl] on Orcland Gaydeen and Dr. Bob on Havolyn Dancer; The Orcutt kids with Vigilda Burkland's kids: Robert on Vigilendon, Mary Jane on Vigilda Jane, and Helen on Betty Burkland (photo © B. Stone, photos courtesy of the Orcutt Family Collection and the family of Dr. Robert Orcutt).

WONDERMAN #7671 (Bennington x Juno)

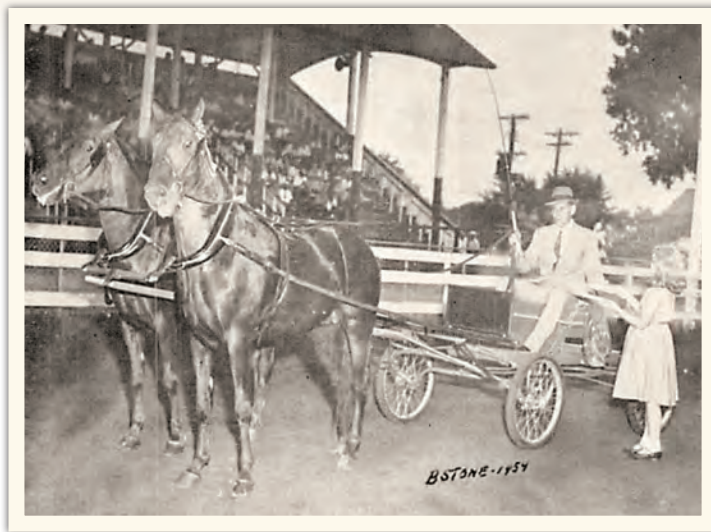
One of the most notable show horses Bob helped to train was Wonderman #7671 (Bennington x Juno), bred by the U. S. Government Morgan Horse Farm and purchased by Wallace in 1934. A flashy chestnut marked with a star, strip, snip, and a few white hairs in his right hind coronet, and foaled in 1929, Wonderman was a three-quarter brother to top Government sire Goldfield (Mansfield by Bennington x Juno). Wonderman was gelded and left no offspring, but he was considered one of the truly great Morgan show horses of his day. Wonderman was practically unbeatable for years, competing not only at Morgan shows but in open competition as well. With Bob handling most of his training and showing, he won countless championships and blue ribbons all over the East Coast against the most formidable competition.

Wonderman was shown victoriously all the way from Harrison, Maine, to the elite Madison Square Garden. Madison Square Garden was the original home of the National Horse Show, established in 1883 by a group of influential horsemen. Long considered the most prestigious equestrian show in the United States, it became

an international event in 1909 and was held in New York for more than 100 years, taking place at four different Madison Square Garden locations. Bob and Wonderman competed at the third Madison Square Garden location, which was located on 8th Avenue between 49th and 50th Streets and held there from 1925 to 1968.

In Hartland, Vermont, Wonderman retired the original Challenge Cup Trophy in 1937. This prestigious award was given to the horse winning the highest number of points for three years in succession, and he won it in 1935, 1936, and 1937. He also won the second Challenge Cup Trophy in Windsor, Vermont, in 1938, which had similar requirements. During the 1938 season, as just one year's example, Wonderman was shown in 13 shows from New York to Maine, as well as in Massachusetts, Vermont, and New Hampshire. He won 29 firsts, 16 seconds, nine thirds, five championships, two reserve championships, as well as placing third in both the New York Championship Stake and Windsor Sweepstakes, and first at the Eastern States Exposition held in Springfield, Massachusetts. He was shown at all the largest shows against the very stiffest of competition.

Throughout his remarkable career, Bob was the one who showed him and provided most of his training, with some help



DR. BOB'S EARLY SHOW HORSES

LEFT TO RIGHT: Dr. Bob Orcutt with Wonderman, one of the first horses he trained; Orcutt's Allen Day & Orcutt's Fannie Allen, 1954 (photo © B. Stone).

from his uncle. In 1939, Wonderman and Bob won both the Roadster Championship and the Saddle Championship at the first annual National Morgan Show. One of Wonderman's 1939 wins with Bob was at Madison Square Garden in a huge open competition "uncut tail" class sponsored by the Humane Society. At the time, Humane Societies were generating a lot of publicity against cut and set tails, and as they were sponsoring the event, it attracted a huge field. Wonderman and Bob won the class handily. Wonderman also had two years' credit on his way to winning the third Challenge Cup Trophy when Dr. Wallace sold him to Mrs. Richard Stiles of Oxford, Maine, who retired him from the show ring. Bob left horse training in 1940 to attend veterinary school at the University of Pennsylvania. In 1949, the Wonderman Trophy was established in honor of the horse's 20th birthday. This trophy was awarded only to purebred Morgans having no outcrosses granted under Rule II. Wonderman died a few years later at the age of 24.

DR. BOB AT FRAMINGHAM

As much as Bob loved training horses, he also had a natural love for animals, both large and small, and treating their injuries. He wanted very much to pursue a career in veterinary medicine, and diligently studied at the University of Pennsylvania, graduating in 1945, after which he was affectionately known in the Morgan community as "Dr. Bob." During this same time frame, as World War II was going on, he served in the U. S. Army Reserve. He met and married his wife, Phyllis Marshall, and they went on to have three children, a son whom they named Robert ("Bobby") and two daughters, Mary Jane and Helen. They settled in Framingham, Massachusetts.

In 1947, Dr. Bob became one of the founding members who established the New England Morgan Horse Club and was named to the Executive Committee. At the National Morgan Show that year he showed his uncle's stallion Meade #8628 (Goldfield x Glady) to Champion Stallion Under Saddle and Reserve Champion Model Stallion. He then served two years on the show committee for the

National Morgan Show, and a committee to review the judging rules for the New England Morgan Horse Club. He also was one of the founding members of the Morgan Judging Standards Committee that produced the current Morgan Horse Judging Standards. Additionally, he served as one of the directors of The Morgan Horse Club. Dr. Bob then served as a Captain in the U. S. Veterinary Corp during the Korean War. Dr. Wallace died in 1950, which was a sad time for Dr. Bob, as he had been very close to his uncle.

In April 1951, Dr. Bob wrote an article for *The Morgan Horse*, titled "But is He a Morgan?" In this, he separated the longstanding argument on Morgan type into three basic categories:

First: A Morgan is a horse with the highest possible percentage of original Justin Morgan blood.

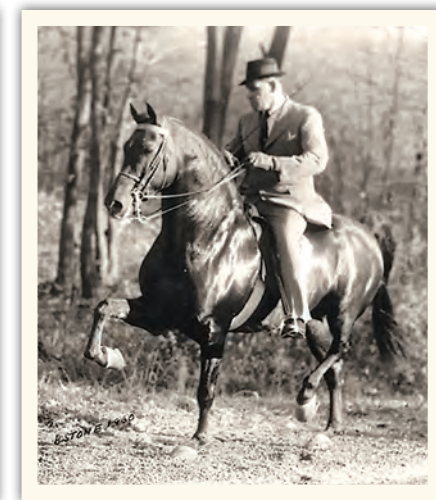
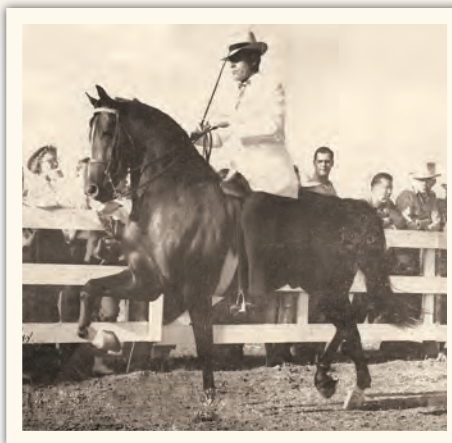
Second: A Morgan is a horse from whose breeding all blood of recognizable breeds has been excluded in recent generations.

Third: A Morgan is a horse whose type has been improved for saddle purposes by the infusion of a controlled quantity of outside blood, but in which Morgan characteristics have been retained."

Dr. Bob then provided illustrations comparing three generations of four different lines, one of Lippitt breeding, one of Western, one of U. S. Government breeding, and one of show lines tracing to the Saddlebred Upwey King Peavine, which Owen Moon had registered as a Morgan under Rule II. He pointed out lines where outcrosses had been made and consistently bred back to Morgan blood, the Morgan type returned. Dr. Bob went on to suggest that perhaps the proponents of the different type theories really have the same breeding goals but are achieving them by different routes.

PHYLLIS

Phyllis Miriam Marshall was born in 1918 to Leslie Edward Marshall and Helen Marion Neily, in Haverhill, Massachusetts. Most of the Marshall and Neily ancestors traced to original settlers of



DR. BOB'S EARLY SHOW HORSES, CONTINUED

FIRST ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: Orcland Vigildon, pictured twice; Orcland Gaydeen ridden by a young Mark Hanna with Havolyn Dancer ridden by Dr. Bob, 1951; **SECOND ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT:** Three-year-old Gladgay's Pride in 1959; Gay Cavalier as a three-year-old; Gay Dancer in 1960. AMHA Professional Hall of Fame inductee Bonnie Sogoloff had this to say in an August 2020 article recalling memories from New England Morgan: "... the most defining moment for me, and perhaps the one that shaped me most as a horseman, was when I saw Dr. Bob Orcutt ride Gay Dancer into the ring. They were breathtaking. I remember it as if it were yesterday. I tried to fashion Gay Dancer's grandson, Longview Sundance, in that image I've always kept in my mind. One doesn't see perfection often, but I did that day, 60 years ago." (photos © Freudy, Ira Haas, B. Stone, Torrance, from *The Morgan Horse* and the National Museum of the Morgan Horse).

the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The family moved to Newburypport, Massachusetts, when Phyllis was two, and a brother was born. They continued to live there for several years then moved to Dauphin, Pennsylvania, when she was a teenager. Phyllis later met Dr. Bob when he came to Pennsylvania, and they were married.

Helen, the youngest daughter of Dr. Bob and Phyllis, remembers, "My mother, Phyllis, was always behind all of us kids showing. She was always behind the scenes; she was our biggest cheerleader."

Phyllis was very much behind the scenes the rest of the time as well, and her unwavering support enabled Dr. Bob to keep up with a schedule that otherwise would have been nearly impossible, allowing him to manage a very busy veterinary practice and still find time to train and handle the Morgans he loved, compete regularly at shows, serve on various committees, and have time for his family.

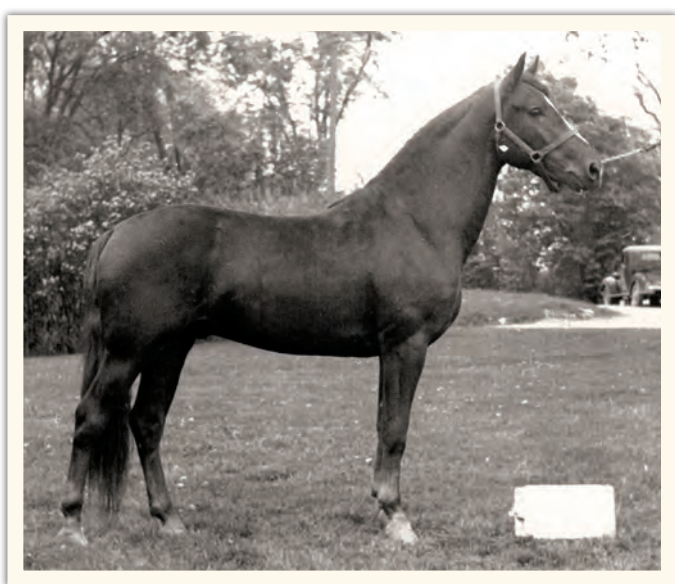
At the 1956 National Morgan Show, Phyllis won the Seamstress Award. She sewed vests and serapes for Bobby and Mary Jane to wear in the parade class, and Bobby won the class on Havolyn Dancer.

BURKLAND FARM

In 1951, Dr. Bob purchased eight acres of farmland in the small historic town of Rowley, Massachusetts, north of Boston, and about an hour's drive northeast of their home in Framingham. There he set up his veterinary practice, intending to work out of his home and train and raise Morgan horses in his spare time. He named it Burkland Farm, in honor of his roots in Vermont, and in particular, the great show and foundation mare, Vigilda Burkland, bred by his father.

Dr. Bob's grandson, Josh Noble, recalls how his grandfather started Burkland Farm, "Steve Tompkins owned Bar-T Farm on the other side of Rowley, and he was a customer of my grandfather's. Steve bought Orcland Leader from Gramp, and that connection led to my grandfather buying Burkland Farm. He bought it in November of 1951, and he said he would never have bought it if he had seen it in the summer, because of the vicious greenheads that come out during the month of July."

"Greenheads," technically known as *Tabanus nigrovittatus*, are the horse flies, named for their brilliant green eyes, which plague



EARLY DAY STOCK AT BURKLAND

TOP TO BOTTOM: Deerfield Leading Lady; Gay Dancer (photo © Warren Patriquin); Meade.

northeastern Massachusetts during the month of July through mid-August. The female lays her first eggs within a few days of mating, but to lay additional egg masses, she must have a blood meal. They occur in great numbers and are able to fly for miles. The females bite during daylight and persistently attack both people and animals.

Bob Orcutt, Dr. Bob's son, remembered early life at Burkland Farm and some of the horses that would later make history, "One other memory that came to me was from the 1953 New England show season when I was eight years old, Mary was five, and Helen was just born. Every weekend the whole summer the Morgan Park Saddle Championship came down to a competition between my father riding Orcland Vigildon, Steve Tompkins riding Orcland Leader, and Ruth Orcutt riding Orcland Vigileen. All three horses were offspring of Ulendon bred to Vigilda Burkland. These three people and horses were remarkably instrumental in the advent of Morgan shows in the 1940s and 1950s. I realize how historic that year was now, but I thought it was pretty routine as a kid when I was being dragged around to horse shows every weekend when I probably would rather have been watching Ted Williams play baseball!

"As I was growing up, I occasionally went on calls with my father, but I was probably much more involved helping out with the horses on the farm that he had in training. His lifestyle was such that, when I was in high school and college, he sometimes had 25 horses in training, spread out over two or three barns.

The main barn was there at Burkland Farm, all three were in the area. He never went on his vet calls until early afternoon. He and Pat [Tataronis] were out on the road."

Dr. Bob's daughter, Mary Jane Wahl, noted, "I can recall, because I was small, I would always get put on horses that were just starting to learn to be ridden. It was always interesting, how many times around we would go. It was in a round pen they had on the property. The fence was five feet high, just high enough that it kept the horses encircled. Dad would be in the middle, and the horse would be on a lunge line first, until he felt the horse was going to be okay. Then he would unsnap it, and we would go around (we would just start out at trot, go round and round, stop and reverse, and go the other way.) That was a fun memory. It's repetition the horses learn by. Dad always enjoyed the Sundays when clients would come to the barn to see the horses go, and they'd stay and tell stories. The people who knew my dad, they would tell stories about when he was young on the farm. Sleigh riding was always great in the winter, driving on the backroad in Rowley, if the snow was right."

Helen Noble, Dr. Bob's youngest daughter, remembered, "My dad's first love was definitely training horses over veterinary medicine, but the practice of veterinary medicine enabled him to keep the horses. My dad would get up at 5:30 a.m. and have the horses all worked by 11 a.m. Then he would have lunch and go out on the road. There are lessons from the farm that the kids can take with them into any career. One thing you can instill in your kids is a work ethic, whatever they end up doing. It's also having a responsibility to someone outside yourself."

In spite of his incredibly busy schedule, Dr. Bob served in the army during those early years, and still found time to train horses for many other Morgan owners, including Otho Eusey's Varga Girl; Nelson White's champions Edward Ash and Riviera; and



PAT TATARONIS & VIGILENDON

The pair were practically unbeatable. Photos are from their remarkable years in 1959 and 1960.

many more. He won the Pair Driving Class at the 1954 National with Orcutt's Allen Day, owned by Ellsworth Reed, and Orcutt's Fannie Allen, owned by his father, who bred and trained both of them. Dr. Bob also trained horses for other well-known breeders, including Mabel Owen, Rum Brook Farm, Green Meads Farm, and many more. Dr. Bob also trained Mark Hanna's Gladgay's Pride, another grandson of Vigilda Burkland who was among the original horses named to the AMHA Show Horse Hall of Fame. He was frequently asked to serve on committees or give training presentations. Dr. Bob's reputation as an outstanding veterinarian was equally legendary.

PAT TATARONIS

By the mid-1950s, Dr. Bob's unique talent for bringing out the true potential of each and every horse he handled was becoming legendary, and his training skills were in high demand. His barn was always full of top horses to be trained for other Morgan owners, as well as his own. In addition, he was trying to juggle this with the needs of his wife and three young children, which came foremost, and a thriving full-time veterinary practice. He badly needed help and felt it was time to hire an assistant. Patricia Tataronis was born in Salem, Massachusetts, on August 8, 1938, to Waclaw Tataronis and Mary Powsar Tataronis. Her father was born in Poland in 1892. Pat was just 18 years old when she came to work for Dr. Bob at Burkland Farm, both as a veterinary assistant and assistant trainer, in 1956. Dr. Bob was quick to recognize her talent and natural ability, and put it to good use.

Dr. Bob's grandson, Caleb Noble, recalls, "Pat was a pioneer for women in the industry of training horses. She started working for my grandfather when she was 18 years old and would drive to the calls while my grandfather would nap. Pat always had a smile and positive attitude. She loved breeding horses and showing the babies and had an uncanny ability to get along with any horse. Also, she was able to get horses into and around the ring all while making it look easy—a feat for sure. She is the major reason we are still involved with horses today."

ETHANELDA

(Sir Ethan Allen x Lucinne)

By late 1952, Frank Orcutt had sent his most prized mare of all time, Ethanelda, to stay at Burkland Farm so his grandchildren would have a trustworthy horse on which they could learn to ride. She was around 22 years old at the time.

MEADE #8628

(Goldfield x Gladly)

A chestnut stallion marked with a star, strip, small snip, and the inside of the right hind coronet, and standing just under 15 hands, with beautiful conformation and natural action. Meade was bred by the U. S. Government Morgan Horse Farm, and foaled in 1942. Dr. Wallace acquired him and used him for a few breedings, and he was sold to Dr. Bob, who planned to train and show Meade for a while, and then sell him at a profit, a practice he repeated with many horses. With Dr. Bob's training, Meade won Reserve Grand Champion Model Stallion and Champion Stallion Under Saddle at the 1947 National Morgan Show. He went on to sire 30 offspring.

HAVOLYN DANCER #I0182

(Ulendon x Gayselba)

Bred by Dr. Wallace and foaled in 1948, Havolyn Dancer was a handsome stallion marked with a small star. He was a beautifully proportioned horse with an exceptionally short back and an exquisitely beautiful head. Dr. Bob acquired him as a young horse and initially was very excited about him as a prospective stallion to start his breeding program and use him for showing. He believed Havolyn Dancer strongly resembled his sire, Ulendon. His dam, Gayselba, a daughter of Gay Mac (Mansfield x Dewdrop), and his second dam, Ulyselba (Ulysses x Melba) were both bred by Dr. Wallace, and Gay Mac also had three crosses to the legendary broodmare Artemisia, bred by Dr. Bob's father, Frank, thus making him especially rich in Orcutt family breeding. At the same time, Dr. Bob was also training Orcland Gaydeen, a full sister of Havolyn Dancer owned by Mark Hanna, often shown with Havolyn Dancer in harness pairs.

Late in 1953, following the show season, Dr. Bob sold Havolyn Dancer, then five years old, to Mrs. Antoinette S. Kelley of Chester, Vermont, who put him in training with Ed Williams. He continued to show through the 1954 season with many wins in stallion classes, pairs, saddle, and others. At some point following this, he was gelded, having only sired two foals, Stormy Dancer in 1952, and Gay Dancer in 1953. In 1955, Havolyn Dancer was purchased by Dr. Wilson Haubrich of Claremont, New Hampshire, who won the Senior Horsemanship Trophy for Men riding Havolyn Dancer in the Vermont 100-Mile Ride. They were featured on the cover of *The Morgan Horse* for October 1955, receiving the trophy from Miss USA Carlene Johnson. Of 57 horses who started in the ride that year, Havolyn Dancer placed ninth in the Heavyweight Division. The next winter, he returned to Dr. Bob and Pete Nelson, with whom Burkland owned horses in partnership from time to time. Dr. Bob used him for sleighing all winter, often teamed with his son, Gay Dancer, both side by side and in tandem. Havolyn Dancer was also ridden and shown by all of Dr. Bob's children and played an important role in their learning to show. He won the North Shore Horseman's Association Annual Championship Award for Western Parade in 1956, and Helen won the Leadline Reserve Championship riding Havolyn Dancer the same year.

DEERFIELD LEADING LADY #07965

(Orcland Leader x Lady Field)

A lovely chestnut mare marked with a star, strip, snip, and four white feet, Deerfield Leading Lady was a daughter of Orcland Leader and out of Lady Field (Mansfield x Little Troub), foaled in 1948. Lady Field had won Grand Champion Model Mare, Mares with Two of Produce, First Prize Mare with Foal, and Senior Champion Model Mare at the 1948 National Morgan Show. Deerfield Leading Lady was bred by Steve Tompkins, who had purchased her sire, Orcland Leader, from Dr. Bob as a five-year-old, shortly after his prized Lady Field produced the exceptional filly, and won Mares with Two of Produce for the second straight year at the 1949 National, competing in a class of 13 mares with 26 of their produce. Orcland Leader went on to win Grand Champion Stallion at the 1949 National. Leader also won the Stock Horse, Parade, Fine Harness, and Combination Classes at the National that year. Dr. Bob,

in turn, purchased Deerfield Leading Lady as a weanling that same year. Dr. Bob bred her to Havolyn Dancer, and she went on to become the dam of Gay Dancer. Dr. Bob then sold her to Waseeka Farms, and she produced eight more foals for them.

GAY DANCER #I1012

(Havolyn Dancer x Deerfield Leading Lady)

Foaled in February 1953, he was a dark chestnut stallion marked with a small star and snip standing 14¾ hands tall and weighing 1,000 pounds. Gay Dancer was bred by Dr. Bob, and was later owned by Peter Nelson of Boxford, Massachusetts, but Dr. Bob retained an interest in him and was always listed as an alternate contact on the ads for stud service. Gay Dancer was trained and shown by both Pete and Dr. Bob, and spent time at both their farms, and is one of the horses Dr. Bob is best remembered for. Rich in Orcutt breeding, Gay Dancer was a great-grandson of Vigilda Burkland, a grandson and great-grandson of Ulendon, and had five lines to Artemisia in four to five generations. A grand show horse, he was among the original inductees into the AMHA Show Horse Hall of Fame. Gay Dancer went on to sire 62 offspring, including several also important to the Burkland story.

TO BE CONTINUED

Dr. Bob's own life story, spent entirely with Morgans, covers 93 years. In addition, the Burkland legacy he left with his family is still going strong, so there will be much more to tell in the next and final Orcutt chapter. ■

RESOURCES

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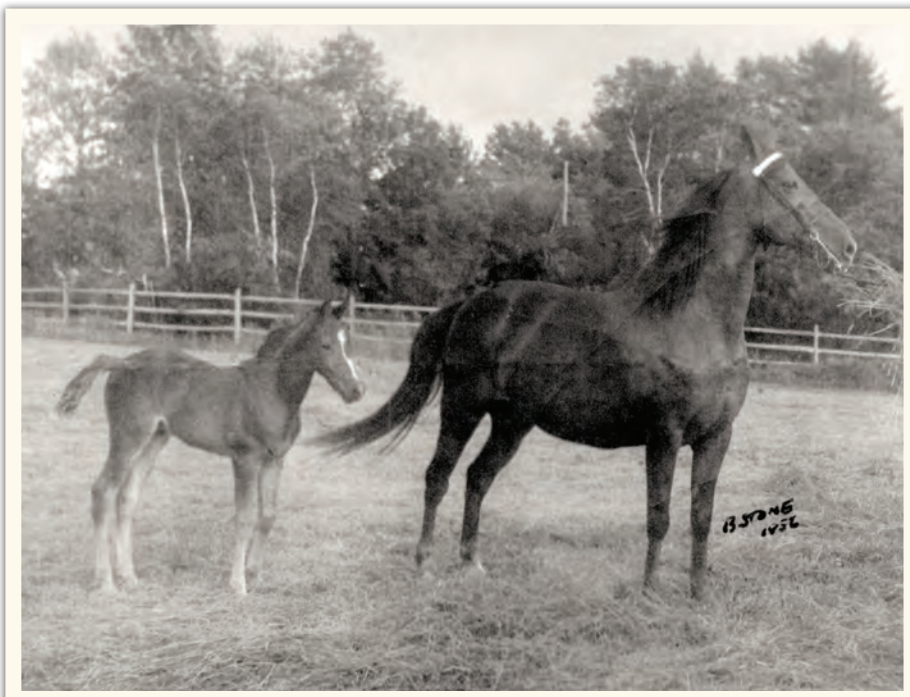
THE LEGEND AND LEGACY OF VIGILDA BURKLAND

Dr. Bob Orcutt's father, Frank Orcutt, holds the distinction of having bred two of the most influential mares in the history of Morgan horse breeding. In Part 2 of the Orcutt family series (*The Morgan Horse*, September 2022) author Brenda Tippin chronicled the legacy of the first of these iconic broodmares, Artemisia. Here, in Part 6, she offers a similar account of the second.

VIGILDA BURKLAND #06040 (Vigilant x Lucinne)

Bred by Dr. Bob's father, Frank Orcutt, and foaled in 1935, Vigilda Burkland was to become a key to the foundation of Burkland Farm. A truly elegant chestnut mare marked with a narrow connecting strip, snip, and left hind ankle, she was an outstanding show mare who would be competitive even today, and arguably, one of the most influential broodmares in the history of the breed. Of the 22 original inductees into the AMHA Show Horse Hall of Fame, Vigilda Burkland was responsible for no less than five. She was the dam of Orcland Leader; the granddam of Chasley Superman (Orcland Leader x Rena), Townshend Debadonna, and Gladgay's Pride (Orcland Leader x Gladys); and the great-granddam of Gay Dancer (Havolyn Dancer x Deerfield Leading Lady), in addition to being one of the most elegant show mares of her day.

Vigilda Burkland was bred similarly to the famous Government foundation mare Artemisia, also bred by Frank Orcutt, both sharing the same tail female line, tracing back to Lady Laura #03341, a daughter of the original Laura by Morgan Tiger, owned by Frank and his father before him. This line traced back to a daughter of Billy Root, who was a double grandson of Justin Morgan, by Sherman Morgan and out of one of Justin Morgan's daughters. The large heart gene came down through this line and passed to sons and daughters of Vigilda Burkland, just as Artemisia passed it to her offspring. This factor was a key to the remarkable influence of these mares.



Two lesser-known photos of Vigilda Burkland as a broodmare. **TOP:** At Burkland Farm with her 1956 colt Billy Burkland; **BOTTOM:** At the farm of Dr. Bob's frequent horse breeding partner, Pete Nelson, with Vigilda Joy, in 1958. While the mare stayed in the ownership of the larger Orcutt family throughout her life, she produced foals with the Orcland prefix, the Burkland suffix, and three with her own name distinguishing them (photo © B. Stone, Warren Patriquin).



TOP TO BOTTOM: Orcland Leader; Orcland Vigildon winning Get of Sire at The National in 1961; Vigilda Jane and her 1960 filly Fashion Plate (by Gay Dancer).

Frank had broken Vigilda to harness with her three-quarter sister Vigella, and sent the pair to his brother, Dr. Wallace, in 1943. Dr. Bob was attending veterinary school at the time. Vigilda Burkland produced four foals for Dr. Wallace, including the famous AMHA Hall of Fame Orcland Leader, foundation stallion for Steve Tompkins' Bar-T Farms in Rowley, Massachusetts, and Orcland Leader's full brother Orcland Vigildon, a foundation stallion for Townshend Farm in Bolton, Massachusetts. Dr. Bob was very much involved in the training of both these horses.

Even though Burkland has since brought in many horses with other bloodlines besides the original Orcutt strains, nearly all Burkland Morgans today still carry one or more crosses to Vigilda Burkland. And her influence on the breed spread far beyond Burkland Morgans.

Dr. Bob's grandson, Josh Noble, says, "She was the foundation of both Orcland and Burkland Farms. She was bred to Ulendon, my grandfather's cousin, Lyman Orcutt's, horse, and my great grandfather, Frank Orcutt, had the mares. As far as influencing the breed, she had a major impact."

At her retirement ceremony held at the National Morgan Show in 1956 when she was 21, she was shown by Frank Orcutt and had most of her offspring lined up behind her, making an impressive appearance. Those offspring included Orcland Leader, Orcland Vigildon, Orcland Vigileen, Vigilda Jane, Vigilendon, Betty Burkland, and Billy Burkland.

ORCLAND LEADER #9038
(Ulendon x Vigilda Burkland)

A striking chestnut marked with star, strip, snip, and four white fetlocks, Orcland Leader was bred by Dr. Wallace and foaled in 1944. Although Orcland Leader has already been mentioned as a part of the Orcland breeding program, his story and continued influence bore unique ties to Dr. Bob. It was Dr. Bob who gave Orcland Leader his early training, and who sold him to Steve Tompkins as a three-year-old in 1947. Dr. Bob also provided Steve with early lessons in biting and training, and he was an excellent pupil. For the next several years, Orcland Leader and Steve Tompkins ranked among the stiffest competition Dr. Bob had to face with other horses he trained and showed. By 1953, Orcland Leader had won 15 of 16 championships he had entered, and more than 100 ribbons in the previous two years alone, shown without heavy shoes or boots. These included Grand Champion Saddle Horse at the 1949 National Morgan Show, as well as numerous championships and ribbons in parade, combination, and fine harness. Orcland Leader was among the original horses named to the AMHA Show Horse Hall of Fame and he continued to play an important role in the early breeding program Dr. Bob established for his Burkland Farm. Orcland Leader was the sire of 139 offspring, including Chasley's Superman (x Rena) and Gladgay's Pride (x Glady), also both among the original horses inducted into the AMHA Show Horse Hall of Fame.

ORCLAND VIGILDON #10095
(Ulendon x Vigilda Burkland)

A full brother of Orcland Leader, Orcland Vigildon was nearly as



LEFT TO RIGHT: Vigilendon and Pat Tataronis in 1959; Betty Burkland; Billy Burkland (photos © B. Stone, A. C. Drowne, Launspach, Orcutt Family Collection).

famous and formidable in the show ring. A dark chestnut stallion marked with a star and strip, both front pasterns and both hind ankles, he was bred by Dr. Wallace Orcutt and foaled in 1947. Ana Ela purchased him as a young horse for a foundation stallion for Townshend Farm, and Dr. Bob handled his training and was usually the one showing him. For the 1953 season, as just one example, Orcland Vigildon was named Champion Morgan and Champion Western Parade Horse for the New England Horseman's Council Annual Awards after being ridden and handled by Dr. Bob throughout the season. He went on to sire 106 offspring, including Townshend Debadonna (x Windcrest's Debutante), another of the original horses inducted into the AMHA Show Horse Hall of Fame. He was also the sire of Herbert V. Kohler Jr.'s prized foundation stallion, Vigilmarch (x Mayphil).

VIGILDA JANE #08403
(Ulendon x Vigilda Burkland)

After the death of Dr. Wallace in 1950, Vigilda Burkland passed back to the ownership of Frank and Dr. Bob. She remained at Dr. Bob's farm the rest of her life, and he bred six more foals from her. The first of these was Vigilda Jane, a full sister of Orcland Leader and Orcland Vigildon, foaled in 1951. Vigilda Jane was a very typy and pretty dark brown mare, marked with a small star, snip, and right front coronet.

Dr. Bob's daughter, Mary Jane Wahl, remembers, "My mare, Vigilda Jane, was mine. I got her when she was around two-and-a-half years old, and I have her picture. She was my favorite; I learned to ride on her, and she had a bunch of foals—we showed mare and foal classes with her. ...She was fun to ride, she did it all.

"Back when I was little...I rode Vigilda Jane at the North Shore Circuit in Massachusetts, in Lynnfield, and then in Hidden Valley. I rode her at the National when I was 10. At that time, they didn't have junior exhibitor classes. I rode leadline, then one year in walk-trot, when I won the championship for the North Shore Cir-

cuit in 1957, and the next year I was riding in the open classes. A lot of them were just open Morgan classes. Dad said, 'Okay, you're set to go in the open classes,' and so I did." Mary Jane also won the North Shore Horseman's Association Children's Walk-Trot Equitation Championship for 1954 with Vigilda Jane.

Vigilda Jane was an important part of the Burkland breeding program and became the dam of 11 foals. We will hear more about Vigilda Jane and her offspring in the next, and final, Orcutt chapter.

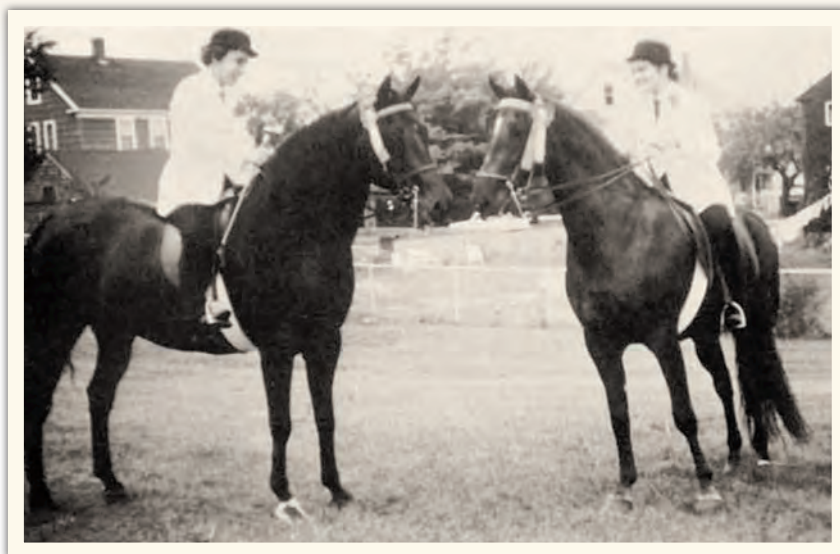
VIGILENDON #10911
(Ulendon x Vigilda Burkland)

Vigilendon was a handsome dark chestnut marked with a star, wide snip, and right forefoot, bred by Dr. Bob, and foaled in 1952. He sired ten offspring before being gelded at the age of eight.

When Pat Tataronis came to work for Dr. Bob in 1956, at the age of 18, Vigilendon was a four-year-old. With Pat training and showing, they won regularly in model and pleasure classes at countless shows. These included the Pennsylvania National, The Great Barrington Horse Show, The Eastern States Horse Show, the New England Morgan Horse Show, the Syracuse All Morgan Show, the Green Mountain All Morgan Show, and, of course, the National Morgan Horse Show. Pat and Vigilendon competed and placed high in numerous local trail rides as well as the Vermont 100-Mile Ride. Additionally, for several years, Vigilendon won the New England Horseman's Council High Score Awards for Trail Horse, Road Hack, Morgan Pleasure, and the New England Horseman's Council Open Pleasure Class. Whatever Pat asked Vigilendon to do, he did and did well. In 1961, Dr. Bob sold Vigilendon to Mr. and Mrs. Darwin Morse of Green Meads Farm in Richmond, Massachusetts.

BETTY BURKLAND #08905
(Vigil Day x Vigilda Burkland)

Betty Burkland was a chestnut mare, bred by Dr. Bob, and foaled in 1953. She was the only one of Vigilda Burkland's foals sired by



LEFT TO RIGHT: Vigilda Joy and Patsy Freund with Vigilda Jane and Mary Jane Orcutt; Gay Cavalier and Dr. Bob Orcutt (photo © Freudy).

Vigil Day, who was bred by Dr. Bob's father, Frank, and by the same sire, Vigilant (Welcome x Lucille). Also, Vigil Day was out of Sirenelle, a daughter of Sir Ethan Allen (Ethan Allen 3d x mare by Corbett), out of Lucinne, the dam of Vigilda Burkland. Moreover, Vigilant was a grandson of Morgan Dan (Ethan Allen 3d x Laura), bred by Dr. Bob's grandfather, Harrison Orcutt. Betty Burkland was, therefore, especially rich in old Orcutt family breeding, with four crosses back to the original foundation mare, Laura by Morgan Tiger, used both by Frank and his father, Harrison. Betty Burkland was kept as a prized broodmare and was the dam of ten Burkland foals.

BILLY BURKLAND #11632
(Gay Dancer x Vigilda Burkland)

A handsome chocolate chestnut stallion marked with a large, connected star, strip, and snip, Billy stood 14¾ hands tall and weighed 1,000 pounds. Bred by Dr. Bob, he was foaled in 1956, and was the first of Vigilda Burkland's last three foals, all by Gay Dancer. Billy was sold to the Behlings of HyLee Farms as a junior stallion prospect. He sired three offspring and was later gelded.

VIGILDA JOY #09759

(Gay Dancer x Vigilda Burkland)

A pretty chestnut mare bred by Dr. Bob and foaled in 1957, Vigilda Joy was a full sister of Betty Burkland. Initially, she was Helen's mare. Helen sold her as a yearling to a young lady, Patricia Freund, who had lost her horse in the tragic Orcutt fire. Vigilda Joy's new owner continued to train her with Dr. Bob. She became the dam of two foals.

GAY CAVALIER #12369

(Gay Dancer x Vigilda Burkland)

The last foal of Vigilda Burkland, Gay Cavalier, was bred by Dr. Bob and foaled in 1959, when Vigilda Burkland was 24. He was a chestnut marked with a star, strip, and snip, left front coronet, and left hind sock. He was sold to Darwin Morse for the good price of \$2,100 at the Green Meads weanling sale and sired 13 colts and 11 fillies before he was gelded.

Vigilda Burkland raised her last colt, but died later that fall after he was weaned. She left a remarkable legacy, and her influence on the breed is still strongly felt today. ■

