



≈ HISTORY LESSON ≈

MICHIGAN'S DR. ALEXANDER RUTHVEN AND THE INFLUENCE OF *Lippitt Moro Ash*

By Brenda L. Tippin

Dr. Ruthven was credited as the first to bring Morgan horses from Vermont to Michigan, indulging in a love for the Morgan breed he had steadfastly carried since his boyhood. The herd's influence was immediate in his own time and extends beyond through the likes of the Trija-prefixed horses, Tedwin Topic, and significant offspring of Trophy.

DR. ALEXANDER RUTHVEN, EARLY FAMILY HISTORY

Dr. Ruthven was born in Palo Alto County, Iowa, April 1, 1882, to John and Kathryn "Kate" Rombough Ruthven. Kate was from nearby Hull, Iowa, the daughter of a pioneer family who had moved there from Rome, New York, in 1870. John and Kate were married in 1878, when she was 17 and he was 33. She went home to be with

her parents in Hull after Alexander, their first child, was born.

Dr. Ruthven was named after his grandfather, Alexander Ruthven, who married Margaret Geddes in 1842. They raised eight children in Stanerigg House in Scotland, then came to America in 1868 and were among the earliest pioneers in northern Iowa. Alexander and his sons, Alexander Jr. and Robert, were the first to come, followed the next year by John, Dr. Ruthven's father. They

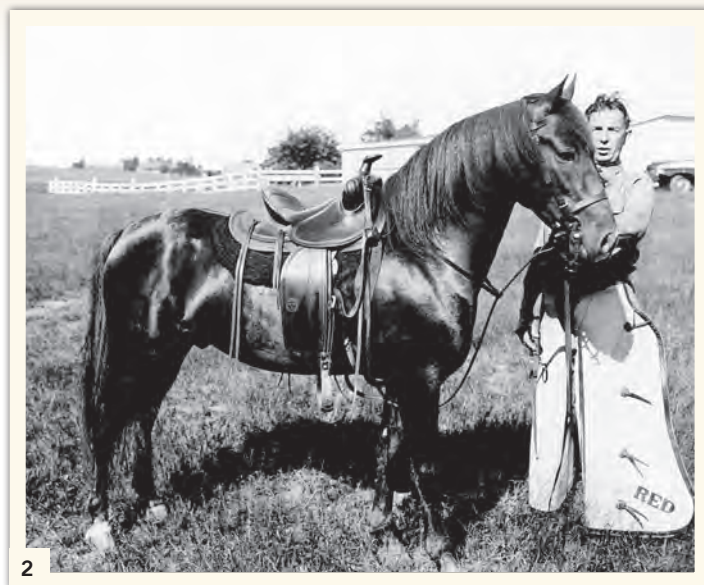
ABOVE: Ruthven's foundation stock, Ruthven's Polly Ann, Ruthven's Sally Ann, and Lippitt Moro Ash with trainer Jimmy Dolan and Dr. Alexander Ruthven, 1939 (photo © 1939 MLive Media Group/The Ann Arbor News. All rights reserved. Used with permission.). **RIGHT PAGE:** Dr. Ruthven and Lippitt Moro Ash on the cover of *The Morgan Horse*, February 1988. The issue was dedicated to the influence of both man and horse.

THE MORGAN HORSE

February 1988, \$4.00

PRIDE AND PRODUCT OF AMERICA





LEFT TO RIGHT: Lippitt Moro Ash (Moro x Lippitt Sally Ash) standing (1), and in tack pictured with Ruthven farm manager Nelson “Red” Wilson (2).

joined other pioneers who sought to take advantage of the Homestead Act of 1862, and made their way to Iowa in covered wagons, settling near several shallow lakes. The Homestead Act initially provided title to 160 acres of land to any adult citizen or immigrant who intended to become a citizen provided they lived on the land and improved it for five years. After they had improved their original sod shanties and built more substantial cabins, Alexander’s wife, Margaret, and two daughters joined them.

The town of Ruthven was established when the railroad came in 1878, and Dr. Ruthven’s two uncles, Robert and Alexander Jr., donated the 30 acres of land, or about half of what was needed for a depot. The town was platted around the land donated by the brothers and called Ruthven in honor of Alexander Sr. Thirteen lakes lay within 20 miles of the little community, and five were within ten miles. The town reached a population of 787 by 1900 and has maintained an average population between 700 and 800 to this day. The town earned the nickname “Hub of the Wetlands,” due to its proximity to so many lakes.

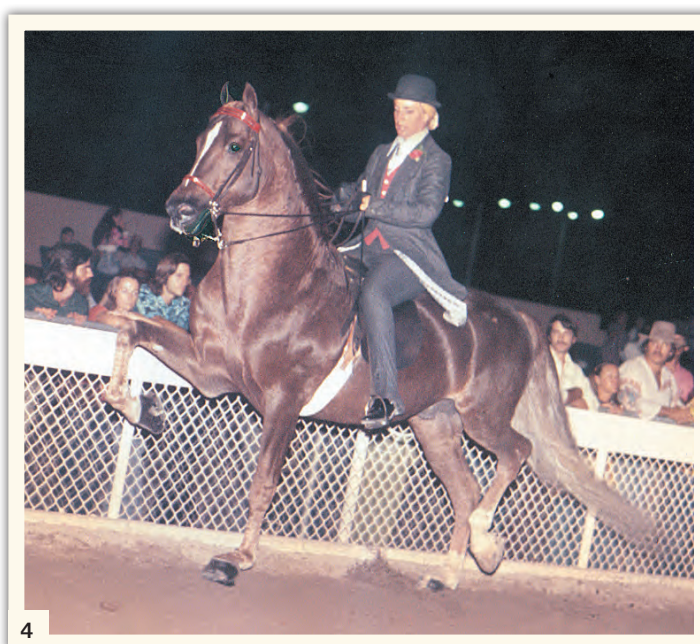
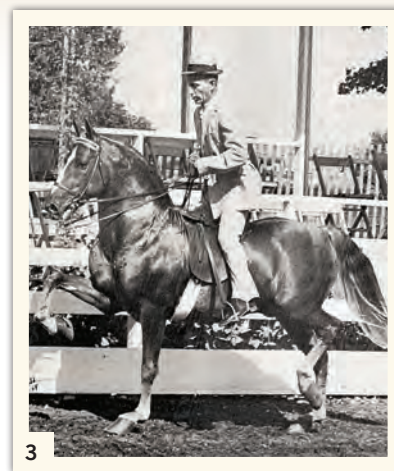
THE MORGAN CONNECTION

In Volume I of the *Morgan Horse Register*, Joseph Battell refers to the Iowa Agricultural Report of 1866. A committee of three was appointed by the State Agricultural Society, who sent circulars into nearly every county to acquire information on horses. Of 13 responses received, each written and signed by a different person, eleven made mention of Morgans as follows:

1. Jackson County—“Blackbird, Morgan, and French stock most needed.”
2. Harrison County—“The Morgan and Black Hawk stock are the choice of farmers.”
3. Cedar County—“Bashaw Jr is owned here. For farming, draft, and general purposes the Morgan or Norman French is preferred.” (Note: the dam of Bashaw Jr was Fanny Foss, inbred to Hale’s Green Mountain, Sherman, and Bulrush).

4. Jasper County—““Thos Arthur has a Morgan stallion as thoroughbred as any of that strain; A. K. Emerson has a high-grade Morgan stallion. Stock in highest estimation for all purposes is the Morgan.”
5. “Marion County—“With many farmers the Morgan and Hiattoga blood for stallions are preferred.”
6. Polk County—“Black Prince (Morgan) raised in Vermont and bought and brought to this county by George Crawford, is a jet black, weighing 1,200, a sure foal-getter and the best stallion for all purposes we have. Panic sired by Ethan Allen and raised by C. W. Ensign and owned by Dr T. K. Brooks, is a perfect beauty, coal black, two white feet, weight 900.”
7. Adams County—“The Morgan stock is in the highest estimation.”
8. Fremont county—“There are two blooded stallions in this county, one a Sherman Morgan owned by Daniel Pickens of Sidney, and one an English hunter from imported stock. Farmers prefer Morgan stock to any now here.”
9. Pocahontas County—“The Morgan blood is the choice of the farmers.”
10. Hamilton County—“The Morgan blood of horses is held in highest estimation.”
11. Jefferson County—“Farmers regard the Morgan as the best stock of horses, the most profitable to raise and to work...We may state that the Morgan is the best stock for all work, most durable and the best travelers, as they do their work with more care and on less food than any other kind.”

This report was made 77 years after the birth of old Justin, and nearly 30 years before the first volume of the *Morgan Horse Register* was published in 1894, which marked the first official effort to preserve the Morgan breed. Battell was deeply impressed by the high regard for Morgan horses held by Iowa farmers at this time, at a location more than 1,300 miles from Randolph, Vermont, where



ABOVE: Rosilee (Jubilee King x Allana) (1) was one of Ruthven's foundation mares; Her son, Patrick Geddes, (by Lippitt Moro Ash) (2) begat one of the most productive lines from the Ruthven breeding program through his two important granddaughters, Little Miss Pepper and Donna Mae Pepper; Rosilee's daughter Ruthven's Betty Ann (by Lippitt Moro Ash) was the dam of Trophy's Award (by Trophy) (3), sire of Quakers Acre Treble (4), maternal grandsire of Gulfwind DawnCommand, BHOF (5) (#2 photo © All Breed Pedigree).

Justin Morgan (the man) first introduced the remarkable colt who bore his master's name and went on to found a breed. Pocahontas County, listed in this report, is immediately adjacent to Palo Alto County where the Ruthvens settled near the small town of Ruthven, only about 30 miles from the county line.

It is also worth noting that while railroads first began to appear in Iowa during the late 1840s, it was not until 1867, a year after this report, that the first main line railroad to cross the state all the way to the Missouri River was laid by the Iowa Division of the Chicago and North Western Railway and began to link with smaller towns. Telephones did not reach Iowa till 1876. News of horse breeds depended upon agricultural journals, the postal service, and word of mouth. By the time Battell established the *Morgan Horse Register*, he found a great number of Morgans had gone to Iowa, many

of which are registered in Volume I and Volume II. In an interview with Silas Hale in 1888, Hale told Battell he had taken 12 to 15 sons of Hale's Green Mountain Morgan west, and sold the majority of them in Iowa. At least two dozen Morgans in Volume I of the *Morgan Horse Register* alone are listed as having been brought to Iowa, or bred there, and nearly as many recorded as having won premiums at the Iowa State Fair.

Dr. Ruthven loved horses from his earliest childhood, riding and helping with farm chores and herding cattle by the time he was eight years old. He also fell in love with Morgan horses as a boy, and recalled watching them draw covered wagons across his native Iowa, a practice which continued well into the 1890s. Iowa was important as one of the "jumping off" points for the Oregon Trail as many settlers came through the state and started in Council Bluffs,



ABOVE: Sweet Pepper (1); her daughter Trija Vigilpepper (by Orcland Vigildon) (2), 1974 World Champion Mare; and her son Waseeka Peter Piper (by Waseeka Tiz Here) (3) (photos © Linda Quillen Wollaber, Foucher).

Iowa. Dr. Ruthven remembered many Morgan teams pulling the covered wagons still making the journey during his boyhood. The Ruthvens were prominent farmers and also raised registered cattle. In those days, local, county, and state fairs were major events for farmers to exhibit and become acquainted with different breeds of livestock, and Morgan horses frequently won the top premiums at the Iowa fairs.

While there is no record of the early Ruthvens owning registered Morgans when Dr. Ruthven was growing up, given that horses were a necessary part of farm work at the time, and were the most popular choice of farmers in the state of Iowa, it seems likely they did have Morgans or at least part Morgans at some point, for the breed left a lasting impression upon Dr. Ruthven which he never forgot. In the biography of Dr. Ruthven, written by Peter E. Van de Water, which included interviews before his death, Dr. Ruthven recalled, "Riding a cowpony over the sunlit, wind-swept prairie, trampling over the black loam of plowed fields under dull autumn skies, listening to the calls of the wild fowl as they dropped into sloughs swollen with floods from melting snows... a small boy dreamed of knowing wild animals, studying their habits, and being associated with them in a museum or zoological garden." All of this instilled in him a deep desire to learn more and study their habits, and by the age of 12 he had determined to become a biologist of some kind.

EDUCATION

Alexander attended school in Ruthven, and, following high school, became the first of his family ever to attend college. Because the Ruthvens were devout Methodists, Alexander chose Morningside University, near Sioux City, Iowa, which was established by the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1894, just five years earlier. One of his greatest mentors at Morningside was R. B. Wylie, professor of botany, who also was a fellow at the University of Chicago. After Alexander's third year, Professor Wylie wanted him to attend summer classes with him at the University of Chicago. The courses at the University of Chicago resulted in contacts with many distinguished scientists and promise of a scholarship if he would come there for his graduate work. His family was appalled, as he was

expected to remain in Ruthven and work in the bank where his father had an interest and served on the bank board. Alexander was determined to pursue his interests in science, however, and, following his graduation from Morningside, enrolled for graduate studies at the University of Chicago.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

In the summer of 1903, Dr. Ruthven received a telegram from Charles Adams, who had been one of his favorite professors during the summer courses at the University of Chicago. Adams had begun a new position at the University of Michigan as curator of the Museum of Natural History, and wondered if Alexander would be willing to accept a graduate assistantship to continue his studies there. Although the stipend was only \$150 per year (compared to the \$200 yearly he would have received at University of Chicago), Alexander enthusiastically accepted due to his great respect and admiration for Adams and his work, enrolling for graduate work at the University of Michigan instead of going to Chicago. Adams mentored him zealously for the next few years as he led expeditions, contributing numerous specimens to the museum and completing his doctorate. When Adams left in 1906, Dr. Ruthven took over his assignments as zoology professor and curator of the museum. He married Florence Hagle in 1907, and they went on to have three children.

By 1912, Dr. Ruthven persuaded the regents to allow him to reorganize the museum as the Museum of Zoology and be named its director. He was a prolific writer, publishing his work in numerous scientific journals, and was regarded as one of the most knowledgeable herpetologists in the country, leading numerous expeditions and describing and naming 16 new species of reptiles. His legacy is recognized in the scientific names of seven reptiles who were named after him. Dr. Ruthven also continued to advance his career and was named president of the university in 1929. The presidential years were difficult, as he was obliged to give up his field work which he very much enjoyed, and then had to face the monumental task of guiding a university through the Great Depression, followed by World War II, but he rose to the challenge, and continued as a strong leader until his retirement in 1951.

A RETURN TO MORGAN HORSES

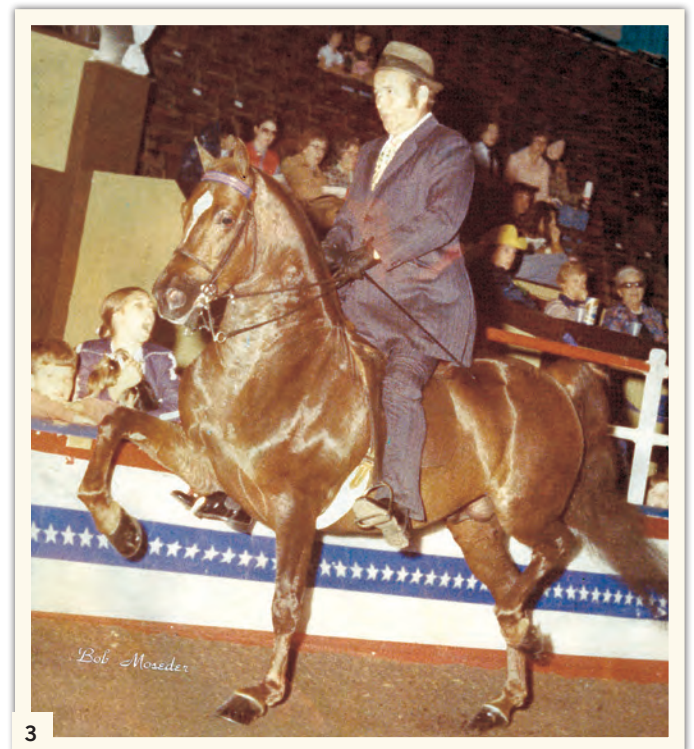
In his book *Naturalist in Two Worlds*, Dr. Ruthven told the following story about an occasion when the poet Robert Frost was visiting and expected to read some of his poems. "An old friend, a distinguished poet and a lovable man, discovered after dinner and just before his public reading that he had forgotten copies of the poems he proposed to recite. Did I have a copy of his collected works? I did. 'To repay you for the use of this book I will read first the poem of your selection.' Naturally, I chose 'The Morgan Colt.' In announcing the poem he remarked to the audience that it was a favorite of mine, and he was reading from the Morgan Horse Edition of his poems. As the audience was leaving the hall after the talk, I was stopped by two instructors in English. They told me they thought they knew all of the editions of Frost's poems but had never heard of the Morgan Horse Edition. I could only tell them that I was not surprised for only one copy had ever been printed and I had it. I have often wondered for many years if this bit of misinformation was passed along to students."

Of note, the poem referred to was, of course, "The Runaway." On borrowing the book from Dr. Ruthven, Frost wrote on the fly-leaf, "The Morgan Horse Edition of my poems, Robert Frost." So there really was no "Morgan Horse Edition," it was just a bit of Frost's humor since he knew of Dr. Ruthven's admiration for the Morgan horse, and characteristic of Dr. Ruthven's humor in passing the joke along. Frost was often a guest in the Ruthven home.

Dr. Ruthven further explains in this book, "I had from boyhood an interest in horses. One of my grandfathers raised harness horses, my father raised Shires, and ever since I had my first horse, at eight years of age, I enjoyed handling them.... I first became acquainted with the Morgan horse when, as a boy, I saw these beautiful animals on some of the covered wagons going West with easterners who were helping to open certain Indian reservations. I decided to begin studies of this breed, acquired two registered mares and a stallion from Vermont, and began experimental breeding. This has been an absorbing business which has now brought into complete cycle one of my longtime interests."

Dr. Ruthven and his family were living in Ann Arbor in 1929, the year he became president of the University of Michigan. They were invited to Frankfort, Michigan, as guests of the dean of the dental school, who owned a cottage on the shores of Crystal Lake. It was such a beautiful spot, reminding him of the lakes where he grew up around the little town of Ruthven, Iowa, that he bought a 24-acre parcel from the railroad. However, Dr. Ruthven's goal was to breed Morgan horses, and he wanted more pasture land. He then bought property to the north of George Street, extending from M-22 to Lake Michigan, and constructed a small barn on the corner of George Street and Michigan Avenue, which still stands today, for his Morgan stallion. The Crystal Lake property became his summer house. Built of wood and cinder block in a long, low ranch-style, open fields surrounded either side of the lane leading up to the cottage on the bluff overlooking the lake. In these fields, Dr. Ruthven built stables, a riding ring, and jumps for his prized Morgans.

The return of the Ruthven Morgans to the Rolling R Ranch at Crystal Lake was a great event for young and old alike, as the Ruthvens would stage an annual rodeo each summer with a grand



ABOVE: Little Miss Pepper (1); and her sons, Trijas Mr Peppertime (by Serenity March Time) (2) and Trijas Mr Pepperlect (by Applevale Donalect) (3) (photos © Jane Lynick, Bob Moseder).



ABOVE: Donna Mae Pepper's son Fiddler's Contender (by Red Pepper) (1) produced only two foals. One of them was the prolific sire Tedwin Topic (2)
(photos © J. Livingston, Hal Hoover).

parade featuring the Morgans. Professional bucking stock were often brought in. The stable managers, Jimmy Dolan and his wife Catherine, were skilled trick riders. Dr. Ruthven's youngest son, Bryant, eagerly learned many of these tricks and liked to show off his roping skills. During the 1930s, Dr. Ruthven regularly invited all the University of Michigan regents to attend these festivities, which they watched with amazement. The Ruthvens also regularly enjoyed riding as a family. Mrs. Ruthven, though past 50 when she learned to ride, loved to go along.

Dr. Ruthven is credited with bringing the first Morgans from Vermont to Michigan in 1938. The first registered Morgans he purchased were Lippitt Moro Ash (Lippitt Moro x Lippitt Sally Ash), bred by Robert Lippitt Knight and foaled in 1937, along with two mares bred by Herbert H. Robbins of Middlebury, Vermont. These were the full sisters Ruthven's Polly Ann, foaled in 1929, and Ruthven's Sally Ann, foaled in 1931, both by Rajah (Mansfield x Viola) and out of Albena (Allen H x Bell Fellows). He named the two mares, establishing his practice of naming his mares with the prefix "Ruthven's," while colts would be named with the suffix "Geddes" in honor of his grandmother's maiden name.

"In February 1948, Dr. Ruthven published an article in *The Morgan Horse* titled "Horses are my Hobby." While he says much the same thing in an article for the *Michigan Alumnus Quarterly Review*, Volume 59, published in 1952, his views on the matter had already begun to shift slightly and he now considered his Morgan horse breeding an avocation rather than a hobby. In the 1952 article he wrote, "I do not consider the terms hobby and avocation synonymous. The former is pursued chiefly for the entertainment of the owner. The latter is calculated both to give pleasure to the individual and to add to the sum total of human knowledge, and possibly in other ways to benefit society."

Developing his thoughts on the matter further in this article, Dr. Ruthven added, "When people ask me why I raise Morgan

horses as an avocation, my honest reply is that I am just doing what comes naturally. I am next to the last, so far of a family line of horse-lovers. As a youth, from the time I was eight years old, I was privileged to go out on the range and select the colt of my choice to own and to train. Night after night I listened to my mother, father, and grandfather discuss the bloodlines of their horses and the contribution of Morgan blood to the light breeds developing in America. Often, as Indian reservations were opened to settlers, I watched the covered wagons of the New Englanders moving westward drawn by beautiful teams of Morgans and part Morgans—horses which could not be purchased en route, except occasionally by the wealthy timber bandits of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, or by the gamblers, the saloon keepers, and similar gentry with more money than morals. To own one of these animals became a dream—a dream that was not to become a reality until after I had finished college, had become a teacher, biologist, and conservationist, and had finally fallen heir to an administrative position which would permit me no longer to conduct scientific expeditions. I discovered then that my vocations had only intensified my interest in the breed and I began to assemble a Morgan stud. This activity I have pursued for something like twenty years as a labor of love and a source of pleasure."

After relaying some early history and achievements of the Justin Morgan horse, Dr. Ruthven concludes his thoughts in this article by saying, "I have found the raising of these beautiful, intelligent, and affectionate creatures a satisfying avocation for a horse-lover, schoolteacher, biologist, and conservationist. When life's problems have become too trying, when there have seemed to be not enough hours in the day for the work to be done, when people to be dealt with have appeared to be unusually unthinking or non-cooperative, it has profited me to heed the admonition given me by an old horseman: 'Doc, you are running under wraps. Spend more time with your horses. They won't give you any guff.'"



ABOVE: Ruthven's Nancy Ann (Lippitt Moro Ash x Ruthven's Beatrice Ann) (1) became a famous nick with Trophy, producing, among others, the show horse and sire Trophy's Jade (2) and the mare Trophy's Emerald (3), dam of Saddleback Supreme (by Mad River Sailor) (4) (photos © Hal Hoover, Bob Moseder).

Dr. Ruthven also adds the following scenario from his book:
Visitor: "I understand Dr. Ruthven has retired. I would like to see him. Where is he?"

Tex (manager of Stanerigg for almost twenty-five years):
"I have him back where he started. He is working in the stable." (NOTE: Stanerigg was the name of Dr. Ruthven's stable at his home in Ann Arbor, Michigan, named after the family home in Scotland, where his grandparents raised their eight children.)

Beatrice Nesbitt Ruthven, wife of Dr. Ruthven's youngest son Bryant, who shared his passion for horses, did an interview for the *Betsie Current Newspaper* in 2016, and passed away two weeks later, just before her 99th birthday. She provided further interesting details about the Crystal Lake property. "The Ruthvens and other

Ann Arbor friends were equestrians and brought their horses up from Ann Arbor via train—or actually rode them the entire 250 or so miles—every summer. The property was vacant and proved to be an excellent place to build stables, a bunkhouse, and adequate riding facilities with pastureland." She goes on to explain the property was called the Rolling R Ranch, with the main house being completed in 1932. She married Bryant in 1940, and they spent their honeymoon there. After Dr. Ruthven and his wife passed away, the property passed to Bryant and Beatrice, and they lived there between 1972 and 1989. They sold the property to a church group who planned to build a not-for-profit co-op for retired seniors, which was called Michigan Shores and opened for residents in 1991. Beatrice and Bryant moved into Michigan Shores in 2000, enjoying many more years of retirement on the property once owned by the family.

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ABOVE: Ruthven's Kathryn Ann (Lippitt Moro Ash x Ruthven's Polly Ann) (1) was a prolific producer for Frank and Frieda Waer; Fox Brush Custom Design GCH (2), who famously represented Morgan versatility in Australia, is a descendant of the Moro Ash grandson Hy-Crest's Tommy; the Moro Ash sons Bruce Geddes (out of Ruthven's Lady Helen) (3), born 1951, and John Geddes (out of Ruthven's Beatrice Ann) (4), born 1945 (top left photo © Potts).

RUTHVEN'S FOUNDATION STOCK LIPPITT MORO ASH (Lippitt Moro x Lippitt Sally Ash)

Lippitt Moro Ash was a chestnut marked with a small star, snip, and right hind coronet. He was bred by Robert Lippitt Knight and foaled in 1937. He was purchased by Dr. Ruthven as a yearling in June of 1938 to be his foundation stallion, and went on to sire 59 registered offspring. The sire of Lippitt Moro Ash was Lippitt Moro, sired by Moro (Welcome x Polly Rogers). Moro was bred by Henry Steele Wardner, the first president of the Morgan Horse

Club. Wardner owned the well-bred Morgan mare Polly Rogers, who was a daughter of the highly regarded Peters' Ethan Allen 2d #406 (Peters' Morgan #405 x mare by Ethan Allen 50), who had three crosses to old Justin Morgan in five generations and eight more in six generations, as well as two crosses to the often-overlooked Tom Morgan, one in four generations and one in five. Tom Morgan was a son of True Briton, the sire of Justin Morgan, and out of a daughter of Justin Morgan, meaning he shared 75 percent of Justin Morgan's blood though he was not registered. Annie Florette (Peters' Morgan x Nancy [by G.W.K. Carleton Horse]), the dam of

Polly Rogers, was also intensely bred, having three crosses to Justin Morgan in five generations, and five more in six generations, with her tail female line tracing to a daughter of Woodbury Morgan.

RUTHVEN'S POLLY ANN and RUTHVEN'S SALLY ANN
(Rajah x Albena)

Also in 1938, Dr. Ruthven purchased two mares, full sisters, from Herbert H. Robbins of Middlebury, Vermont, and named them using his own prefix. These were Ruthven's Polly Ann, foaled in 1929, and Ruthven's Sally Ann, foaled in 1931. Both were sired by Rajah (Mansfield x Viola) and out of Albena (Allen H x Bell Fellows). Mansfield, of course, brought in the golden cross of Bennington x Artemesia. Viola was a daughter of the Government foundation stallion General Gates (also the sire of Bennington). Her dam was Marguerite, a daughter of White River Morgan #482 and out of a daughter of Crocker Horse #1377. This cross went back to Hale's Green Mountain Morgan #42 on the sire line, and also added three close crosses to Black Hawk #20. Polly Ann produced a total of six registered foals, three of which were by Lippitt Moro Ash and one by his son Patrick Geddes. Sally Ann produced eight registered foals, including seven by Lippitt Moro Ash and one by his son Patrick Geddes.

ROSILEE
(Jubilee King x Allana)

The next year, Dr. Ruthven added the Brunk-bred mare Rosilee (Jubilee King x Allana). Allana was by Allen King (#7090) who was also the sire of Flyhawk's dam, Florette. Her dam was Ruby Reade, sired by the great Morgan show horse and trotter Charles Reade #3593 and out of Ruby by Jubilee De Jarnette. The cross was a golden one, and Patrick Geddes was the first of eight foals Rosilee produced, all by Lippitt Moro Ash.

RUTHVEN'S BEATRICE ANN
(Cornwallis x Gill)

Beatrice Ann was another Dr. Ruthven named with his own prefix. She was foaled in 1939, and Dr. Ruthven purchased her from C. E. Allen in 1941. Beatrice Ann also had a rich pedigree. Her sire, Cornwallis, was the most influential son of Sealect (Sir Ethan Allen x Bell Marea), who was one of eight Lippitt Foundation Sires. Gill (Mansfield x Sentinel Lass) added more Government foundation blood along with a line to old Knox Morgan #4677 (Mountaineer Morgan x mare [by Sagad hoc]). Beatrice Ann was particularly influential, producing 17 foals, of which 12 were by Lippitt Moro Ash, including the "blue hen" mare Ruthven's Nancy Ann, described below.

LADY HELEN
(Plains King x Grovont)

Bred by the L. U. Sheep Ranch, Lady Helen was foaled in 1943, sold to Dr. Ruthven in 1947. She was the dam of 19 foals, and of these, 13 were produced for Dr. Ruthven, ten of them sired by Lippitt Moro Ash.

These horses provided the backbone of the Ruthven foundation

stock. Altogether, Dr. Ruthven bred more than 70 Morgans bearing either the Ruthven prefix or Geddes suffix, as well as a few others not identified by a prefix or suffix. In addition, a couple of later horses descended from the original stock were bred by Bryant Ruthven and his wife Beatrice after Dr. Ruthven's death in 1971. Lippitt Moro Ash sired 59 of these horses, his last foal being born in 1960. The rest were descendants of Lippitt Moro Ash and/or the original mares.

INFLUENCE OF LIPPITT MORO ASH

It would be impossible to detail the contributions of all Lippitt Moro Ash's offspring, but we will mention just a few notable examples.

PATRICK GEDDES
(out of Rosilee)

Patrick Geddes was the first colt bred by Dr. Ruthven, foaled in 1940, and was a beautiful flaxen chestnut stallion. He was sold in 1943 to Lewis Darragh Crusoe as a foundation stallion for his Golden River Ranch. He had bought a farm in Aloha Township, Cheboygan County, Michigan, and built a cabin, eventually expanding the property to 3,200 acres and developing the largest ranch breeding registered Hereford cattle east of the Mississippi River. Crusoe retired from General Motors in 1945, moving to the farm with his wife, and choosing the name Golden River Ranch after the book *King of the Golden River* by John Ruskin. He also operated the Golden River Dairy with his son, being the first dairy in the area to homogenize milk. His retirement was cut short when he was asked to help the Ford Motor Company with post war reconstruction, and he turned over active management of the farm to his son. A few Morgans were bred, but unfortunately the focus moved away from horse breeding, and Patrick was gelded in 1948 after siring just six foals. Two of his offspring were particularly influential, Golden River Dona and Hy-Crest's Tommy.

Golden River Dona
(out of Lippitt Polly Moro)

Foaled in 1947, she was the dam of five foals including the full sisters Little Miss Pepper and Donna Mae Pepper, both sired by Brown Pepper (Upwey Ben Don x Lady Seneca Esther).

LITTLE MISS PEPPER

The dam of 17 foals, her first born when she was just three years old in 1957, and the 17th in 1980 when she was 27. This was before embryo transfer was available, or even semen transport. Her offspring included Sweet Pepper (by Pecos), dam of both the 1974 World Champion Mare Trijas Vigilpepper, and Waseeka Peter Piper (by Waseeka's Here Tiz), who sired many champions for Mantic Morgans; the great producing mares Dainty Dot (by Townshend John) and Equinox Polly Pepper (by Bald Mt Ebony Knight); Trijas Mr. Pepperlect (by Applevale Donalect); and

HISTORY LESSON *≈ Dr. Alexander Ruthven and Lippitt Moro Ash*

Trijas Mr Peppertime (by Serenity March Time), to mention just a few.

DONNA MAE PEPPER

The dam of eight foals including Fiddler's Contender (by Red Pepper), who sired only two offspring before being gelded, one of them being the highly-regarded Tedwin Topic (x Waseeka Cajun Queen).

Hy-Crest's Tommy (out of Lippitt Polly Moro)

A full brother of Golden River Dona foaled in 1949, sired 28 offspring, including West Lane Dawn (out of Springbrook Surprise), who was the second dam of Mary Ann Schafer's Bowood Elusiv Dream GCH, who received the Morgan Sport Horse Award in 1995, one of only nine horses to achieve this title. Bred to Funquest Erick (Funquest Monarch x Funquest Estrella), Dream produced Fox Brush Custom Design GCH, who was leased to Wirraway Sport Morgans in Australia and, after producing three outstanding foals, compiled a formidable record competing in open competition shows including Western working, ranch, versatility, dressage, endurance and more every year between 2013 and 2022. She was also the first registered Morgan ever to complete the Tom Quilty Cup, Australia's premier endurance ridge which covers 100 miles of rugged terrain, placing 19th in a field of 111 starters, more than half of which were unable to complete the race.

According to Renee Page in her article "The Daughters of Trophy," *The Morgan Horse*, February 2012, D. F. Switzler was very much influenced by Dr. Ruthven's breeding program, and when he began to research mare lines he purchased two daughters of Lippitt Moro Ash, Ruthven's Nancy Ann and Ruthven's Betty Ann, the latter a full sister of Patrick Geddes.

RUTHVEN'S NANCY ANN (out of Ruthven's Beatrice Ann)

She produced 13 offspring including eight foals by Trophy, which Renee believed qualified her as a "blue hen" mare. Among her offspring by Trophy were Trophy's Emerald, dam of Saddleback Supreme (by Mad River Sailor), 1979 Park Harness World Champion, who sired Philharmonic who, in turn, sired Charles-town Super Sonic, who was exported to Great Britain; and the

spectacular park champion Trophy's Jade, who sired reserve world champion Cedar Creek Scalawag and Elegant Heir, the dam of the breeding stallion The Couturier (by Mizrahi).

RUTHVEN'S BETTY ANN

(out of Rosilee)

She produced three foals by Trophy, including Trophy's Award, sire of 36 including Quakers Acre Treble (out of Baroosa), who, in turn, sired the mare Dawnhill Jubilation (x Stillwater Jubilee), dam of Gulfwind DawnCommand, BHOF (by Tug Hill Commando).

RUTHVEN'S KATHRYN ANN

(out of Ruthven's Polly Ann)

Purchased by Frank and Frieda Waer's Rex Ranch, she was Champion Mare of the Los Angeles County Spring Fair, 1948, also first prize Aged Mare and Champion Mare at Bellflower Show the same year. She also won first place in the lightweight division of the fourth annual Redlands Trail Ride. She produced at total of 13 foals, 12 of which were bred by the Waers, and contributed prolific daughters to their breeding program.

A dedicated scientist, Dr. Ruthven brought the same thoroughness and scientific approach to breeding Morgan horses. He continued to breed a few horses each year until his death in 1971, just two and a half months shy of his 89th birthday. The Ruthven Morgans were beautiful, well-bred, and excelled in all disciplines, providing a lasting influence on many breeding programs across the country which will continue for many more generations. ■

RESOURCES

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