

The Colonial Williamsburg

PAMPHLET FILE

Animal News

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NEW ARRIVALS AND SAD FAREWELLS

Even though it was still officially winter, spring seemed closer than ever with the arrival of a fine bull calf from our Milking Red Devon cow, Alice. From the very start this little boy was up and investigating everything so it was not long before he was called Curious George. With two more Devon ladies to calve, there was some discussion as to which one would calve next. On March 20, Nora heralded the start of spring in her own way with the appearance of a lovely heifer calf born just after the Vernal Equinox. With a birthday like that it's natural she will be registered as C. W. Spring.

Hannah was the last of our ladies to calve. Like all babies, calves come into the world on their own timetable. No new calf for Open House even though Hannah looked ready any second to provide added excitement for the weekend. Of course, just after we had relaxed and given up peering at her, Hannah calmly delivered a strong bull calf. He will be registered as C. W. Randolph.

Along with the arrival of new calves there were still routine chores like vaccinations for all our animals every spring. April 4, our veterinarian came to check and vaccinate the cattle. As Alice was led to the stocks for her turn, Dr. Doxtater noticed she seemed a little upset and suggested he give Alice her injections in the stall with her calf. Just after she reached the stall Alice began having convulsions and in spite of aggressive and extensive treatment by Dr. Doxtater, Alice died an hour later.

This was a great shock as well as a great mystery. What caused her death? The initial post mortem simply showed a basically healthy cow. Tissue samples were sent off to the state lab. The results told us that Alice did not have any disease nor was her death due to any management problems. The pathology report from the veterinarians at the state lab could not give a probable cause of death. Our vet's speculation is that of a possible aneurysm, but we will never know for sure. One small relief was that Alice's calf was already eating hay and grain and simply went to his new owner just a little earlier than planned. Renate Daigenault tells us that George is a healthy growing bull calf who loves to be groomed and scratched. We are delighted that George is in such capable hands and look forward to following his progress.

Working with animals shows the cycle of loss and renewal. Two days later our Dorset/Wiltshire cross Penny presented us with twin ram lambs.

"The life of all animals, then, may be divided into two acts, procreation and feeding; for on these two acts all their interests and life concentrate."

Aristotle

CREAMS ON THE GO!

Early Friday morning, April 20, the truck and large horse trailer loaded with three American Creams, Karen Smith, Allison Harcourt, and what seemed like a ton of equipment, left C. W. bound for the Virginia Horse Center in Lexington, Virginia. We were to take part in the Virginia Horse Festival which showcases the many breeds and uses of horses in Virginia. Breed displays, demonstrations of different types of riding, and educational presentations by organizations such as 4-H make the weekend lively and informative.

We were excited about the opportunity to participate in the Festival as an opportunity to educate the public about the American Cream Draft horse, Colonial Williamsburg's rare breed program and, of course, Colonial Williamsburg itself. Karen Smith, Stable Manager, had worked for months in advance setting up the trip, preparing information and posters for the breed display stall, and a host of other small but vitally important details. We were also eager to show off the progress the Creams had made with their training program.

Saturday morning the public found the Creams with their stalls sporting smart looking name plates made by Colonial Williamsburg's paint shop, an interesting and attractive breed display, and us scurrying to get ready for the Cream's breed presentation. This was the chance for Mary Margaret (C. W. Rich and Creamy) and Moses (C. W. Cream de Mint) to strut their stuff in the main arena. Karen's narration gave the history of the American Cream Draft horse, noted the breed's usefulness and versatility, and gave a little personal history of the two horses being exhibited in the ring.

The only real pre-performance jitters came from the humans, not the equines. All three horses were very interested, yet calm and well-behaved in spite of the strange sights and hustle and bustle of the weekend. Three-year-old Mary was ridden at a walk, trot, and canter, while two-year-old Moses was worked with long lines at a walk and trot to demonstrate his obedience and flexibility. The audience was impressed with the horses' young age and the fact that they had been in serious training for only a little over three months. Needless to say, we were very proud of their wonderful behavior. This appearance is only one step in their training, but it certainly has proven the Cream's ability to have long and useful careers in the Historic Area in the future. For C. W. Sour Cream (better known as Jane), the highlight of the weekend seemed to be flirting with an impressive Percheron stallion and a handsome Andalusian stallion. Being a mare of taste, not just any male will do, and Jane took a real dislike to the miniature stallion stabled next to her.

In spite of the occasionally rainy skies, the Virginia Horse Festival attracted more than 12,000 people to view the 75 vendors and 28 breed demonstrations. Many of the visitors were very curious and impressed with the American Cream Draft Horse and interested in Colonial Williamsburg's rare breed program. We feel the Creams were excellent goodwill ambassadors.

Monday morning found us headed to Duffield, Virginia to the home of Donald Clark. Mr. Clark has agreed to stand the Cream stallion Silver. We were very pleased with

Silver's condition. He is fit, healthy, and happy. His change of location to the mountain air really seems to agree with him. The mares, Mary and Jane were left in Donald Clark's capable hands to be bred by Silver, and when checked in foal by the vet will return to Williamsburg. We hope our future holds two more American Creams foals.



ENGLISH LEICESTERS TO THE MARYLAND SHEEP AND WOOL FESTIVAL

Three English Leicesters from Colonial Williamsburg caused quite a stir at the Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival. The Sheep and Wool Festival features educational displays, vendors of equipment and crafts, as well as competition for wool breeds of sheep. It is a respected show drawing competitors from up and down the East Coast, and even attracting a few from the West Coast. The festival is extremely well attended by the public, drawing a huge crowd.

Our English Leicesters did not compete, but participated in the breed display. Like the Virginia Horse Festival, our mission was to educate the public about the English Leicester. Karin Ingram and Allison Harcourt prepared breed display posters explaining the history and characteristics of the English Leicester, as well as escorting the sheep to the festival. A poster was also prepared highlighting the usefulness of the Leicester for crossbreeding. It is important to show the English Leicester not only as an interesting rare breed of sheep, but one that is useful and economically viable as well. Once again the paint shop made outstanding signs to identify our sheep. More help came in the form of a very skilled and patient Colonial Williamsburg photographer whose excellent photos provided just the right shots to liven up our posters. Wool, finished goods from Textiles, and fleeces to touch gave our display much to see and learn from. Of course, the stars were Wellington, the ram, and the two ewes, Bridgett and Sheila. Each day Sheila went to the American Minor Breeds booth to do her part in promoting rare breeds. Sheila was the biggest hit of all, always stepping up to the front to be scratched around the ears. The next door neighbors made fast friends with Sheila and were extremely sorry to see her leave.

Throughout the weekend we heard, "Oh, these are Colonial Williamsburg's sheep from Australia." Many people had heard about Colonial Williamsburg's efforts to import these sheep and about their arrival and were very interested to see them. Interest was also expressed in purchasing wool or breeding animals at a later date. One highlight was the approval by a former breeder of English Leicesters in England. Praise is always nice, especially from the experts. Even nicer was to meet people we talked to at the Festival who came to Williamsburg to see the rest of the flock.

At the close of the weekend we were showing off not only the Leicesters, but also the first prize for the Best Breed display. The award was a nice surprise as we really had not been aware of any competition. Much of the credit goes to Karin and Tom Ingram (who took the time from studying for his bar exam) for their late nights at home with their computer arranging and printing the materials for the posters in such an attractive fashion.

The appearance of the English Leicesters at the Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival was a rousing success. We talked to lots of people and, as always, the animals made the best impression of all.

NEW HORSES IN TOWN

Say hello to our new horses on the street. Six new horses have arrived to make up three teams of carriage horses.

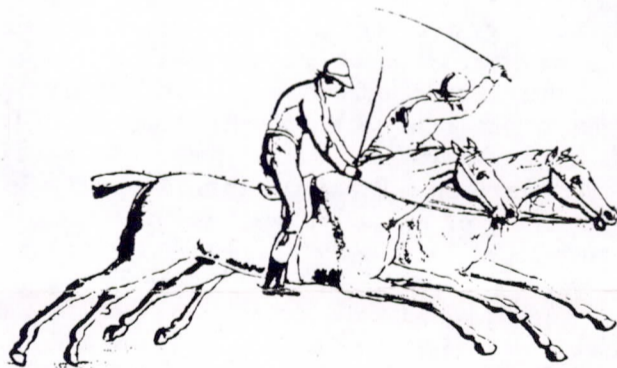
You may have already noticed a flashy team of Tennessee Walking Horses. These tall chestnut horses with their erect head carriage make quite an impression. Their registered names are "Moon's Challenger," better known as Junior. His partner is "Star's Easter Delight," A.K.A. Sunny. Joe Jones is pleased with their progress and reports they are working well.

Our most recent arrivals come from Salem, New Jersey, donated by John M. Seabrook. He purchased the four greys from Poland at the age of five and brought them to the United States in 1985. The Polish name for their breed is Wielkopolska, but you can also call them Polish Warmbloods. Mr. Seabrook used them for pleasure driving and competition. Devit and Pomort are already working on the street, with Kaskader and Brytanik soon to join them. The coachmen report they are wonderful to drive.

AUCTION AND HORSE RACES HELD DURING PUBLIC TIMES

If you missed last year's exciting match races, then be sure and attend the races on Sunday, September 2 at 4:30 p.m. York Street Pasture near Bassett Hall will once more be the location for these thrilling races with plenty of 18th-century wagering. Honor and glory will be due the owner of the victorious horse, and perhaps even a fat purse. Will someone be foolish enough to wager the plantation? Come and see.

Perhaps you are in the mood to "purchase" a fine horse. An auction will be held in the pasture behind Mr. Prentis's store. Consignments include a fine chair horse, and a handsome pair of matched grey coach horses just to name a few. The bidding promises to be lively and the merits of these horses hotly debated. This auction will take place Saturday at 4:00 p.m. September 1. Only bills of exchange will be accepted. The auction on Saturday and the races on Sunday will be the talk of the taverns for weeks. Don't miss these exciting events.



QUESTIONS? COMMENTS? Please write to:
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