



The Colonial Williamsburg Animal News

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SEX SCANDAL IN LIVESTOCK PROGRAM

An embarrassing sex scandal has surfaced in our flock of geese. Some of the ones we thought were female are male and some of the ones we thought were male are female. This is embarrassing but understandable. It is difficult to determine the sex of young birds. We'll give you more information on *Goosegate* as the imposters are exposed.

DIVING MULES AN EDITORIAL

Did you see the diving mules at the state fair? Quite a few people, some connected with anti-cruelty organizations, feel these animals are forced to take the "Nestea plunge" by unkind methods. Now if you've been reading your *Animal News* you're very sophisticated about mules and have already laughed off these claims of mere mortals forcing mules to do ANYTHING. If you saw the mules dive at the fair you know those who have complained about the act are not only ignorant of mules, but did not even see the act. In case you missed it we'll give you a report.

The four legged diving team consisted of one Shetland Pony, a black dog, and two pony-size mules (remember our discussion of breeding mules for size). A long ramp secured by several cables led up to the padded diving platform which was equipped with a stationary kickboard. The kickboard is positioned under the platform, at a little more than a right angle, pointing down to the water tank below. Four-legged divers, their trainer reported, need a kickboard in order to control their plunge.

One at a time each animal was directed to the ramp and released. Each animal climbed the ramp by itself, unaided. At the top each one looked around, carefully lowered itself on it's front end with hooves

(or paws) pointed forward, pushed off slowly, and kicked off gently from the kickboard as it dropped into the water with a big splash. None of this was a threat to Mr. Louganis of course.

The diving mules were trained to dive and did so with no gimmicks to force them to perform. How do we know? Because we are knowledgeable about hoofed animals.

We know the animals were not forced up the ramp by their handlers. The handlers were no where near them during the climb or dive. We know no remote control electronic shock devices or other stimulus were applied to the animals as they went up the ramp because the animals' ears and facial expressions would have indicated such. If the mules or pony had been in anyway prodded from behind they would have pinned their ears back focusing their attention on what was going on at their rear ends. Sure, deadening injections and other methods of blocking the ear nerves can be used to prevent an animal from pinning its ears back (certain breeds of show horses sometime suffer this), but those procedures stop all ear movement. We observed the little divers and they used their ears normally. On the platform, as they got ready to shove off, all ears were pricked forward, attention focused ahead.

The diving mules and thier co-stars looked healthy. We say "looked" because we did not give them a hands-on inspection, which we feel is only necessary if we are interested in purchasing the animal being scrutinized. The two little mules are too small to pull the stage wagon anyway. All the animals were well cared for.

To wrap up the whole matter the animals were not forced, they were trained. They were not chained together in any way, as one member of an anti-cruelty organization reported, but performed singly and with no sign of any "aids". We enjoyed the act.

One coachman suggested that Jake (our lazy mule) dive off the Palace into a sandbox. That sounds like a one show act to us.



A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CARRIAGE WHIP

by Richard Nicoll

Since man first domesticated animals and used them to help with his daily work, some form of "carrot and stick" have been used. So often more stick than carrot.

The use of the horse has always been associated with some form of goad or whip used with it. The whip being used to punish or signal by touch or sound.

When man first started driving the horse to a wheeled vehicle a whip was employed, consisting of a wooden handle and leather thong, long enough to be able to reach any of the horses being driven. No matter how the vehicle was driven, whether from the vehicle, sitting on one of the horses, or walking beside the horses and vehicle, a whip of some kind was used.

Up until the seventeenth century, most driving was done from the ground and was of carts or wagons. Through the seventeenth century, carriage driving in Europe began to become more common, particularly with the Royalty and wealthier classes. Through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the carriage whip used was a stick with a leather thong, better known as a drop thong whip. This whip has a small loop at the top from which the thong is attached.

As the nineteenth century began, the carriage whip developed from this stick to a one-piece whip with a quilled top—the junction between the stick and thong being strengthened with goose quills and the first part of the thong having an inner core of whalebone, giving it its characteristic bow top. As the numbers of carriages being driven increased so did the availability and elaborateness of the whips.

The most popular type of wood used for these bow top whips was Holly, though other woods used were Yew, Blackthorne, Cane and Malacca, and Hickory in the United States.

Prices varied on the quality and detailing. The mounts (butts and ferrules) also determined the price, materials used being gold, silver, brass, nickel, and ivory.

Most bow top whips used in England and America were made in England, though at the end of the nineteenth century the American whip industry was selling the cheaper variety of bow tops and putting together whips of better quality from sticks imported from England.

In America during the colonial period whips were still being imported from England. However during the nineteenth century the American whip industry developed rapidly, so much so that by the twentieth century the American whip industry reputedly produced 90% of the world's horsewhips (200 varieties) and most of the industry was focused around the town of Westfield, Massachusetts. They were producing 20 million whips a year, with the prices ranging from 25 cents to \$25.00. However, by 1937 only one factory was left with a minor production.

The use of the whip whilst driving a carriage is an art. A good whip must be springy but not too soft, and must be in proportion to the weight of the thong.

The length of a stick for four horses should be 5' 1½", and the thong length 12' 6" from the base of the quills to the point, pairs and singles for both horses and ponies all having shorter thongs and with ponies, shorter sticks.

The slight irony of the horse whip was that the most popular leather to use for the thongs was horse hide.

As A. Maudslay in "Highways and Horses" says, "It seems a strange thing when we consider it, that we should take the hides of dead horses—the hides upon which the lash may so often have descended—to make more lashes to beat more horses."

WHY A WHIP?

"Why do you carry those whips?" a visitor will ask a carriage driver. Those who ask this question nearly always have a look of pure horror on their faces and a vision of poor Black Beauty being whipped by a heartless coachman in their minds. Carriage drivers carry "those whips" for communication and safety.

You must communicate with your animals. A rider communicates with his mount by means of bridle, legs, voice, and by shifting his weight in the saddle. A driver has only the bridle and voice. The whip, therefore, becomes the only means by which a driver can touch his animals.

A whip is used for forward motion. When the command "walk on" is given, if the horses ignore it, what can the driver do? Yelling the command is improper, slapping the horses' backs with the reins like they do on "Bonanza" is downright uncouth, so you must make an appropriate application of the whip. An appropriate application may be anything from a light touch to a brisk smack.

A whip is used to correct one member of a pair without disturbing the other. For instance, if one animal is laying back and not pulling, the whip is applied appropriately to the lazy beast and the horse who is working well is not involved. If you spoke to the lazy horse, the energetic one would hear too.

A whip is used to command attention. If horses are distracted by their surroundings the whip can be appropriately applied to draw one or both horses' attention back to the coachman. In case of an object or activity horses might consider frightening, commanding their attention could distract them from shying. This is an important use of the whip for C. W. coachmen.

The whip is also useful to C. W. drivers as a turn signal. When approaching an intersection, especially on crowded days and when tour groups are nearby, usually the driver will point the whip out to the side indicating the direction he or she will turn.

Whips are an indispensable part of driving equipment and are used in more ways than covered here. They are required by all carriage drivers who wish to practice good, safe horsemanship. We carry those whips because we must.

QUESTIONS? COMMENTS? Please write to: **Animal Editor, MHW. Colonial Williamsburg Animal News** is published by Coach and Livestock Operation, Historic Trades Department. Kay Williams, *Editor*; Richard Nicoll, *Manager*.