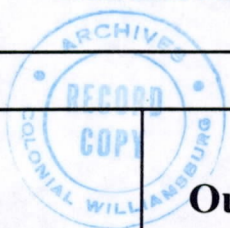


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Winter Days and Wooly Horses

So far this winter the conversations have ranged from "Gee, it's pretty warm for December; to "Well, I guess we're getting a taste of winter." But, no snow or ice to really stir things up, and make everyone long for a cup of something hot and more socks. Those days are a coming, and you may wonder "What about the animals...do they get an extra pair of socks?" Not to worry, we've got a plan.

All that extra hair the horses grow over the winter is not just to collect mud and make the coachmen miserable; the horses have grown their winter woolies. For the most part, our winters are mild enough that the majority of horses with a good winter coat can do quite well even on days with low temperatures. Some horses are happy whatever the temperature, and some are thin skinned and need some extra help. Hairless human creatures that we are, we think because *we* need to wear a winter coat (most likely made out of some unnatural man-made fiber) then our animals need a coat as well. Pet store owners make all sorts of extra cash on designer coats for Fifi and Fido. Even horse owners are not immune. The sheet and blanket section in horse catalogs is large enough to make even a Barbie doll blush. Do they really need those designer blankets to keep warm? Sometimes. Mostly though, the blankets are for the owners convenience. For example, our coachmen put a blanket or sheet on the big grey polish horses at night so that in the morning most of the green and brown manure stains are on the blanket rather than the grey horse. Although the laundry may disagree, it's much easier to launder a blanket occasionally, than scrub a large grey horse daily. Using the blanket trims some of the surface area to clean. Humans also enjoy dressing up their animals because it makes us feel good. Did the horse really request that hot pink and lime green trim blanket with the matching hood? I hope not.

Back to our plan. During the winter, the staff is careful to make sure that the livestock has a good supply of clean, ice free water. Many of our pastures now have automatic waterers with heating elements to prevent frozen water. This is important, as frozen or ice filled water can lead to dehydration; a serious problem whatever the season. Keep your pets' outside water bowl free of ice. Twice a day the water is checked and ice broken and removed. The staff also makes sure that the animals caloric intake is enough to help them keep warm. Too thin is also too cold. We also carefully check on the horses to make sure they aren't uncomfortable. Sometimes by afternoon, one may be standing at the gate cold, although in the morning he may have been just fine. The staff knows who are the "freezers", who may need careful checking. On those rainy days we check to make sure that the undercoat of the horse is still dry even though the top is wet. If they're wet all the way through, they horse may need to come in. We check on the temperature and keep a close eye on the forecast. We also know which pastures have good natural windbreaks to give shelter, and which are cold and breezy.

OK, so you're not worried about the cold days; but when do the horses come in? They are brought in when there is freezing rain; rain, wind and low temperatures; or snow. We have a battle plan for those days and every horse has an assigned stall. Don't worry about the sheep—those long wools are wearing several sweaters by now. Remember that wool is still warm when wet. The cows will be hiding in the woods.

So on those cold snowy days the snowplow will be shoveling the streets, our hero's in landscape will be clearing the walks at Colonial Williamsburg, and we'll be in the barns shoveling...well, you know!

Our Amazing American Creams

In October Jane, Benjamin, and Moses took a trip to the Virginia State Fair for Draft Horse Day. The trip gives us a chance to introduce people to American Creams, and introduce young Benjamin to the "outside" world.

Jane (CW Sour Cream) took second place in the grade mare class. Benjamin (CW Cream de la Creme) took fourth place in the Virginia Bred Fitting and Showmanship. While his young and tender age hampered him (he was a little upset without his mom), he performed willingly and by the afternoon he was an old hand at the whole thing.

Moses went as an eighteenth-century pack horse in a costume class. This year the state fair held a class for costumes representing the use of the horse (or mule) through history. Moses carried large gunny sacks, lashed to his pack, saddle baskets filled with fruits and vegetables; leather; a fleece, and as the crowning glory, Lightning the game cock in a chicken basket lashed to the top of everything. With his pack bell ringing and the rooster crowing, Moses was hard to miss. The judges peeked in all the baskets and bundles and even though there was some tough competition, awarded Moses the blue ribbon. Karen Smith did a super job of "leaping into the breech" and showing Moses to his win.

This year the state fair encouraged patriotic theme stall decoration so we joined in the spirit. After all, the American Cream is the only American draft horse. Our theme was "Made in America" as a backdrop to display our educational posters about the American Cream. We used red and blue bunting left over from the floats in the 1987 Constitutional Parade in Philadelphia. Nothing is ever thrown away around here. The laundry provided us with old sheets, Karen Smith made the signs and posters, Karen's mom lent us giant tubs of mums, and my mom provided artistic help making a folk art Uncle Sam. Kids...they grow up, get married and hold jobs, but they still want help with their art projects! We didn't win but we were proud of our colorful, attractive and informative display.

After the fair, Mary and Jane went to Carter's Grove, and Easter and Ben stayed at our modern stable. Weaning time. After one noisy day the youngsters settled down and resumed their early training. This winter they will learn to stand quietly while being groomed, calmly pick up their feet to be trimmed or cleaned, lead and tie. They are working on their horse pre-school lessons. Ben has also started work on the lunge line and is doing very well.

This winter marks a change in our American Cream Family. Jane will be going to live with Karen Smith. Karen did much of the work in bringing the Creams to CWF, is a director on the board of the American Cream Draft Horse Association, and edits The American Cream Newsletter. Jane has come a long way from the frightened mare who stepped off that long trailer ride in 1989. Much of that progress is due to Karen, the one Jane really trusts. So Mama, as we call her, will continue being a mama for Karen. We know she will be in good hands.

Remember Aaron, Janes' second colt? He was sold to our farrier Stan Rudacil. Stan reports that Aaron is doing well. He is starting his training for driving and has made a few trips down the lane with the cart. American Cream Aaron gave pony rides for Stan's son Stone's birthday party. Two-legged Stone and four-legged Aaron are both the same age—three years old and Stone loves to ride Aaron with his father's careful supervision. A good illustration of the Cream's willing and quiet temperament.

Older Cream brother Moses turns four and continues to do well with his cart work. This winter he will assist the oxen in clearing brush by the jail, hauling away all the pulled up brush. Learning patience is still Moses' biggest challenge. He also shows a strong streak of curiosity with just a little bit of mischief. He spend a day observing and harassing a C&P repairman who had the misfortune to have to work too close to Moses' pasture fence. Our maintenance department has informed Moses that if he is going to pick up rakes and shovels while the guys are using them and carry them away, Moses will have to start learning to use them properly and help out with the job.

Mary (CW Rich and Creamy) will again make the trip to Western Virginia to be bred to the stallion Silver (CW Cream of the Crop). We hope for a 1993 Foal.

National Inquirer Reports Elvis Returning to CWF in the Landau

Yes of course, it's a gag headline. Elvis is not coming to CWF. However, there is a strong possibility that the Landau will finally be finished and back in use in the Historic Area this year. The Landau was sent to Mr. John Zimmerman's carriage shop for restoration. Mr. Zimmerman has been working a steady, but extremely slow pace for lo these many years.

For those of you who can't remember just what a Landau is, or why you should be excited...here's a refresher course.

A Landau is a type of carriage named for the town in Germany where it was first built. This type of carriage was in use in England before the middle of the eighteenth century. William Felton in his 18th-century book *Treatise on Carriages*, defines a Landau as a "carriage built in the manner of a coach, but, with the upper part of the body to open at pleasure." There must have been small demand for Landau's in colonial Virginia, as Williamsburg coach-makers eventually dropped the carriage from the list of vehicles they could make or repair. There is only one reference to a Landau in Virginia. Phillip Ludwell Lee of Stratford in Westmoreland County, lists a Landau in his inventory of 1775-76.

Our Landau was designed here at Colonial Williamsburg in consultation with Paul Downing. Built in 1960, it carries the arms of Phillip Ludwell Lee painted on its' doors with twentieth century bullet proof panels. That special modification gives a clue to the Landaus use as the carriage providing rides for visiting heads of state. The Landau was very familiar to the secret service during the 1983 Economic Summit Conference, when all the heads of state rode in the carriage. After twenty-six years in the spotlight the Landau was beginning to become a mite tattered, so it made the journey to Lancaster, Pennsylvania to Zimmerman's carriage shop.

One of the reasons for its long delay was the difficulty in finding a source for the right coach lace. Germany proved to be the final source for the broad lace woven on one of the few remaining jacquard looms. The carriage was completely stripped, new upholstery and of course new paint. Not just any old paint job, but the kind of deep glow that comes from layers of paint lovingly applied, sanded off and then painted again. The type of paint that almost grows from the wood rather than placed on top. You can't hurry this type of job and you certainly can't hurry the Amish. Especially when some 5000 tacks will be required for the upholstery and hood. The last touches will be done here where our CWF craftsmen will gild and paint the coat of arms.

The astrological signs all say this is the year of the Landau's return. Keep an eye out for a mustard colored carriage with green interior, and the squirrels and acorns of the Lee family arms. Oh...and keep your grubby fingers off the paint job! Gosh, seeing the Landau and Elvis all in one year—what a year it could be!

A Word from the TOPsy

As Told to Lee Peters

Greetings from Colonial Williamsburg's number one celebrity horse, Topsy. For those of you who may be alarmed because I've been absent from the streets of Colonial Williamsburg, have no fear, I'm on vacation at Carter's Grove. Joining me

for this holiday are my Percheron "brothers" Prince, Bill, and Bruce.

I've informed Mr. Nicoll that I will be available in the spring---and *not before!* Of course, Prince, Bill and Bruce *follow my lead* and do as I say!

By the way, I'm enjoying my new pasture at Carter's Grove, that was especially built for me.

Comings and Goings

Belgian mare Dolly, and Jake and Jock the mules, were traded for Pat and Nell from Saluda. The departure of Jake and Jock leaves the Historic Area currently "muleless". Though we hope to acquire a pair in the future. Pat and Nell are two grade mares of unknown ancestry, short and stocky with black manes and tails and brown bodies.

Pat and Nell will be working first with the skeleton break. This is a training vehicle with a high seat for the driver, a brake system (something our colonial carriages do not have), front wheel that can turn easily, and a platform for a helper to stand. The "skeleton" part of the name refers to the lack of body to carry passengers. All new horses work first with Joe Jones pulling the skeleton break before they move to one of our colonial carriages. Under Joe's able guidance they acquire any new lessons if needed, stop old bad habits and are introduced to the Historic Area. Only when Joe gives the OK, can they finish horse P.I.E. and begin giving rides for visitors in the Historic Area.

Belgian horse Dick (Dolly's partner) was sold to a local resident as a riding horse.

Kurtos, a grey Lippizan gelding has joined the stable as Karen Smith's side saddle mount. A little too large to be totally accurate, he is most importantly safe and steady under saddle.

The Devon cows Nora and Hannah are doing their best "blimp with horns" imitations waiting for the birth of their calves in February or early March. This year we would be very happy to see two bull calves to keep for a new pair of oxen.

There is a new sheep face in our pastures. He is a large handsome English Leicester ram from the Beechwood flock in New Zealand. "Woodie" as we have nicknamed him, is on loan for breeding to help us widen the gene pool of our flock. He was imported from New Zealand about the same time as our own frock from Tasmania. The farm owner whose business is to provide quality fleeces to handspinners, selected Woodie from hundreds of rams viewed. Woodie is among the top percentage of New Zealand English Leicesters. We are very pleased with this generous loan. By using Woodie we are able to combine the best of Australian breeding with the best of New Zealand breeding. Some of Woodies finer qualities are superior fleece, and good hindquarters.

In spite of Woodie's good looks, he's not a "stuck-up" kind of guy. He has a super temperment, very important in a ram. Wellington has been known to butt. It's no fun to be knocked flat on your face in the mud and sheep poop by several hundred pounds of ram hitting you at full speed. Even worse is "Ram-lash," when you stay on your feet, but your neck and back are sore for weeks. During breeding season when the ram's hormones are raging, we do funny sidesteps and always keep one eye out for the ram. Woodie's calm and friendly temperment is most appreciated. He seems very interested in his new location, spending time gazing our through the pasture fence watching the world. Most of the other sheep seem only interested in food.

The rams have done their ramly thing. (In Scotland you would call them Tups). We expect lots of spring English Leicester lambs to look cute and be lots of work.

Things will be bursting in the spring!

QUESTIONS? COMMENTS? Please write to: Animal Editor, MHW. Colonial Williamsburg *Animal News* is published by Coach and Livestock Operation, Historic Area Programs and Tours
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