

SHEEP ARE ON THEIR WAY

Our new English Leicester sheep have arrived in Edmonton, Alberta. They will be in quarantine for 30 days after which they will be moved on to Bowmanville, Ontario for an additional 30 days, then last stop C. W. Russ Dow, our agent, told us that the 7 ewes, 1 ram and, at present, 6 lambs are all doing well. We expect them to arrive sometime in November.



LIVESTOCK UPDATE

Nora and Hannah have arrived home from their stay at National Colonial Farm, MD., where they had the company of a handsome bull. Both are due to calf next summer. Alice is dried up (no milk) and is also expecting a calf next summer too! All three are located at Patrick Henry pasture.

Ruby and Diamond have been on T.L.O. at Carter's Grove for about two months and will return in November. They are having a well-deserved rest and a chance for their hoofs to grow out.

We are looking for a good home for Friday. He is a flea-bitten gray, 13 years, 16 hands. If you are interested or know of anyone, please contact Richard Nicoll at ext. 2491.

The Dean Forge interpretive program has been discontinued until next spring. Everyone is busy working on a shop interpretive manual.

Jane has been separated from Aaron, our new American Cream Draft foal born this past summer. Aaron and his full brother Moses are having a good time out at Carter's Grove with the visitors.

Mary and Jane have both started basic training to see if they have what it takes to be a C. W. carriage horse. So far, they are coming along nicely.

Tony and Star are out working on the street pulling the yellow training Vehicle. It won't be long before they will be pulling the carriage.



DID YOU REALIZE?

POSTING

Historically, posting was developed by the "post boys" or "postillions" who rode the near side horses of the four-horse hitches used for carriages years ago.

—C. L.

COCK HORSES WERE REAL

The nursery rhyme about "riding a cock-horse to Banbury Cross" was based on real life. A cock-horse was a spare horse or pair, attached in front of the leaders on a coach to help pull through rough spots. They were generally ridden postillion-style if in a pair. The rhyme refers to a steep hill outside of Banbury in Oxfordshire, England.

—P. I.

PONY POWER

Don't feel those little ponies are persecuted when they tow a 250-pound man in a tiny cart. A Shetland pony weighing between 400 to 500 pounds can pull from one to one and one-half times its own weight.

—C. L.

BIRTH OF THE CLODHOPPER

The term clodhopper, usually applied to a dull, unintelligent person goes back to early England when horses pulled heavy plows through the fields. The wealthy landowner rode his horse over the plowed land, while the peasant had to leap or hop over the clods of dirt turned up by the plows. The peasants were clodhopping. Thus, the clodhopper.



LITTLE GIRLS AND HORSES

by Allison Harcourt

Little Girls and horses; that glassy-eyed stare, total focus on the horse, deaf to any of mother's calls. Fire and flood will not stop that child from coming close and maybe even touching her hearts delight. It seems like every day I encounter a little girl with a full-blown case of horse-itis. This benign addiction occupies the hearts and time of a surprising number of Americans. The horse industry generates billions of dollars each year through a large variety of professionals, services, and products. Why do these people spend so much time, energy, money, and effort on horses?

Ask any horseperson why they became interested in horses and you will find their replies fall under some general categories. Some people develop a case of hero worship from a living role model, the horse down the street. Books, movies, and television lure others to horses. They imagine themselves as cowboys, *Black Beauty* and *National Velvet*. I guess I fall under the category of destiny. That's a very grand word for as far back as I can remember I wanted a horse. From the moment I could string two words together I began to nag, wheedle, coax, and whine to my long suffering parents for a horse. Eventually the squeaky wheel finally got a horse. Some horse people fall into horses through friends or family, and discover they really enjoy these large beasts. My brother rode horses simply not to be left out, and wisely saw a chance to lord over his little sister. He now has two horses and has managed to absorb most of my horse related equipment, while I am currently horseless. Whatever the initial beginning, horse addiction is usually pleasantly lifelong.

The little girl is back, she's following the horses, not caring if she walks through the entire fire and drum corps is she can just touch or be near that horse. Occasionally I have the chance to talk to her parents, who will mention in a resigned way that she 'really loves horses'. I try to tell them that horses teach some very valuable lessons of self-confidence, discipline, organization, and preparation. Horses also keep you humble. They seem to know when you are feeling just a bit too self-important, and are all too ready to let you know just where you really fit in the overall scheme of things. Frequently this place is far below that of equines.

In order to successfully ride or work with horses there must be a partnership between the horse and rider. This partnership, like any good partnership, works from a basis of respect. But, unlike people,

the horse and rider can't vocalize their problems. The rider must be alert to non-verbal cues. This knack for watching and understanding the whole individual comes in handy in all walks of life.

Horses will also give you a dose of frustration and fear. My mother can attest to the fear part, as I have taken a few of my more spectacular falls in front of her. Fear is not something most parents will want for their children, but learning to conquer that fear of failing, of appearing stupid, and once in a while fear of the horse, can be constructive. There will be days in your riding and training when things seem to go backwards instead of forwards, but learning to work through the block makes the step forward all the more wonderful.

Horses teach patience. A lucky few of us are truly gifted and things fall into place quickly and easily, but most of us savor the hard won victories. I tell the parents if their son or daughter really wants that horse they will work for the privilege. One way to ride and learn is through a working student arrangement. In exchange for riding time, more time is spent doing barn chores for a boarding stable or a private owner. Working time is not standing around brushing horses or feeding carrots; it's the down and dirty of mucking out, repacking the clay in the stalls, or unloading several tons of hay. This type of work soon separates those with a casual interest in horse from those with a true passion. Money spent on riding lessons is usually well spent, sort of like drivers-ed for horses. When parents finally give in to the pleas for a horse, it's best to take along someone who knows about horses on the horse buying trip. It is OK to get a second opinion. Make sure the horse is safe and the child can ride the horse, and ask a veterinarian to check the health of the horse with a pre-purchase exam. In most cases the combination of an inexperienced child, and an untrained horse is not a wise one. The well trained older, not so flashy model is better than the pretty two-year-old that looks just like *Black Beauty*, but has never been ridden.

After twenty years of hanging around horses, I have lost some of the dewy-eyed innocence of that little girl. I have yet to encounter the horse that would save me from falling over a cliff, or rear up and smash the rattlesnake in the best *Black Stallion* imitation. Some of my horses have been honest and giving, and some entirely deceitful, but loveable. I try not to give horses human motivation and reasoning. I have gained a fascination for the equine mind—what makes horses tick. For those truly addicted to horses, whether we are male or female, we all carry some of that little girl's total passion and fascination for horses. Occasionally, when I am with a horse in C.W., and I see a little girl or boy with all the symptoms, I'll think "oh no, not another one." In the end though, I'll always have to stop or talk because, I can see a bit of myself in their faces.

QUESTIONS? COMMENTS? Please write to:
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