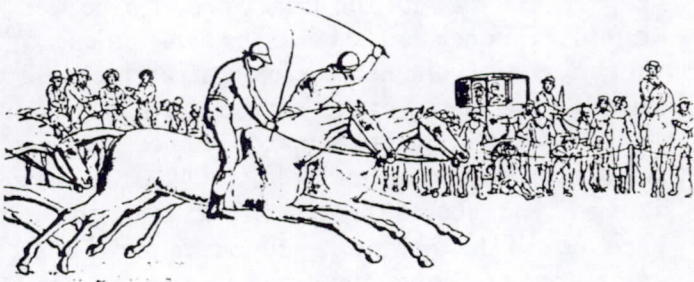


The Colonial Williamsburg

Animal News

JUNE/JULY 1989

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HEADS UP FOR FALL RACING

by Madge Hall

Hell-o race fans! This is a notice to inform all of our loyal followers of a horsey event you will not want to miss.

On September 3rd, as the grand finale to Public Times, there will be horse races held (no, not on the Palace Green, we heard that chuckle) but at York Street pasture, across from the Patrick Henry Inn.

The races will be run by three re-enactors from Ohio and their horses. Ken Hall and friends will arrive on Friday and participate in the weekend's festivities by riding through town, exhibiting their encampment, as well as riding in the races.

Please greet these gentlemen from the frontier of the Colony of Virginia when you see them at Public Times. Then come out to cheer them on and make a wager or two.

HELLO ALBERT AND GLEN

by Richard Linger

We welcome our two newest additions to Coach and Livestock. Glen and Albert are the new Durham oxen we now have. They came from Connecticut on May 1, and are already making appearances in the village. Although trained to commands, being just 3-years old it will require some maturing on their part both physically and emotionally. They now weigh around 1600 pounds a piece, but after about three more years they should each weigh 2300 to 2400 pounds.

Naturally, they are a little apprehensive and nervous due to their age and the strangeness of this new environment. But, time and exposure will overcome this. When encountering them in the village I ask that you respect the period of adjustment they are going through, and allow them a smooth and easy transition.

As for Top and Willie, they have not retired. They're still very much a part of our program and will be sharing duties with Glen and Albert.

NEW ARRIVAL

Under the careful eye of our Security Department, Jane foaled Aaron in-between time shifts. On April 13, at 6:30 P.M., all was quiet with no signs of the new arrival. But, by 8:30 P.M. Aaron was on the straw with mom beside him. We hope in 3 to 4 years he will be pulling a carriage with his full brother, Moses.

It is confirmed that Russ Dow, our agent, has selected 7 ewes and 1 ram. They should be arriving at Colonial Williamsburg sometime in August or September. The ewes were bred and will lamb this fall.

Bubba, a 10 year old Suffolk Punch draft horse, was donated to Colonial Williamsburg by Mr. Kevin Lacks of Cullen, Virginia. Bubba will be paired with Rod to pull a carriage under the training of Joe Jones.

Colonial Williamsburg just purchased a new team of Suffolk Punch horses locally from Bruce Hall of Norge. Their names are Star (age 14) and Tony (age 12). Both will start training soon.

COWS & BIRDS & BEES

by Elaine Shirley

Anyone who works or lives within earshot of Alice the cow doesn't need to be told that we recently weaned Henry, the calf! We did a little re-shuffling of cattle, putting Nora and Alice near the Wythe House for our milking program. Alice complained about the separation for a week or so, but now she is resigned to being a milk-cow. Karen Ingram, Elaine Shirley, and Allison Harcourt will be milking Alice for the public twice daily through the summer. Alice will provide the 18th-century kitchens with milk and cream to make butter, soft cheese, sauces, syllabubs, and ice cream.

And how is Henry taking this change of lifestyle? He seemed to take it all in stride, a few cries for Alice, and then he took comfort in his alfalfa. Hannah, on the other hand, was not happy to have to babysit Henry and has made *her* protests loud and clear.

Henry's next lifestyle change will be to move to a small farm near the Jamestown ferry where he will be (after a few years of growing) the herd bull. If all goes well and Henry keeps his good disposition, he should live to a ripe old age as a bull.

Nora and Hannah will spend June and part of July at the National Colonial Farm in Accokeek, Maryland. There is a very handsome Devon bull residing there and we hope to have two pregnant cows by the end of the summer.

WHAT IS A SUFFOLK PUNCH HORSE?

The Suffolk Punch is the only draft horse breed developed exclusively for farm work. Originating in the counties of Suffolk and Norwich, it has remained relatively unchanged for over 200 years. Horses of Suffolk type are even older, being described as early as the 15th century.

Suffolks are easy to recognize because of their uniform color, one of seven shades of chestnut between lemon and liver, and lack of white markings. At 15.2–17 hands high and 1600–1800 pounds they are the smallest of the draft horses. Built for power more than style, their rounded appearance gave them the nickname “punch”. Suffolks are characterized by their friendly, willing dispositions, endurance, and “heart”. They are quick workers and relatively cheap to keep because of an excellent food conversion ratio. Suffolks also do well in hot climates and have especially good feet which do not always require shoes.

As with the other draft horses, the number of Suffolks dropped drastically after World War II and the breed was barely kept alive by a small group of breeders. Since the 1970's there has been a resurgence in the use of farm horses and the Suffolk is now becoming more popular on small farms for logging, plowing, cultivating, and other tasks.

Status: RARE. The Suffolk Punch is the most endangered of the heavy horse breeds in Britain with fewer than 150 animals left. There are approximately 400 Suffolks in North America, with 30 registrations in the U. S. in 1985.

(Information supplied by The American Minor Breeds Conservancy – Breeds Notebook)



DOCILITY AND SAGACITY IN MULES

To the Editors of the Sporting Magazine
Gentlemen,

Perhaps you may think the following extract from Townshend's Journey through Spain, not entirely unworthy of a place in your excellent Miscellany.

Anon.

“In this little journey, I was exceedingly diverted and surprised with the docility of the miles, and the agility of their drivers. I had travelled all the way from Barcelona to Madrid in a *Coche de Colleras*, with seven mules; and both at that time, and on subsequent occasions, had been struck with the quickness of understanding in the mule, and of motion in the driver; but till this expedition I had no idea to what extent it might be carried.

“The two coachmen sit upon the box; and of the six mules, none but the two nearest have reins to guide them; the four leaders being perfectly at liberty, and governed only by the voice.—Thus harnessed, they go upon the gallop the whole way; and when they come to any short turning, whether to the right or to the left, they instantly obey the word, and move altogether; bending to it like a spring. As all must undergo tuition, and require frequently some correction, should any one refuse the collar, or not keep up exactly with the rest, whether it be (for example) Coronela or Capitana; the name pronounced with a degree of vehemence, rapidly in the three first syllables, and slowly in the last, being sufficient to awaken attention, and to secure obedience, the ears are raised, and the mule instantly exerts her strength. But, should there be any failure in obedience, one of the men springs furious from the box, quickly overtakes the offending mule, and thrashes her without mercy; then, in the twinkling of an eye, leaps upon the box again, and calmly finishes the tale he had been telling his companion.

“In this journey I thought I had learnt the names of all the mules; yet one, which frequently occurred, created some confusion, because I could not find to which individual it belonged; nor could I distinctly make out the name itself. It sounded like *Cagliastra*; and led me to imagine that the animal was so named after the famous imposter Cagliastro, only suiting the termination to the sex, because the mules in harness are usually females.

“In a subsequent journey the whole difficulty vanished, and my high estimation of the mule, in point of sagacity, was confirmed. The word in question, when distinctly spoken, was *awuella otra*; that is, *you other also*; and then supposing Coronella and Capitana to be pairs, if the coachman had been calling to the former by name, *aquella otra* became applicable to the latter, and was equally efficacious as the smartest stroke of a long whip; but if he had been chiding Capitana, in that case *aquella otra* acted as a stimulus to Coronela, and produced in her the most prompt obedience.”

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I send this hoping you will insert it, as the mule appears to me to have more sagacity than the horse.

(contributed by Richard Powell)

Please help us during this busy season in reminding guests not to feed our animals. This is for their own safety, as well as for the health and safety of the animals.

QUESTIONS? COMMENTS? Please write to:
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