

Black Hawk's Unfavorable Influence on the Lippitt Morgan

Several people, in print, described Black Hawk as 'the most beautiful horse in America'.

He was probably faster than most in-bred Morgans.

His speed was in most instances the reason he was given that patronage.

The faster of the early Morgans and later in Black Hawks time, were not so far behind him

In speed – about 10 to 30 seconds per mile.

Sherman's get were all in this same group for speed. Woodbury's stock perhaps more so, none of them, however, equaling that of BH.

I believe this infers that Black Hawk's (unique for a Morgan horse' speed) came from elsewhere.

The black color of the horse is very uncommon among the early Morgans horses, though Sherman is known to have sired others. It may have come from the dam; if so BH could also have gotten his extra dose of speed from her or perhaps the combination of sire and dam producing the greater quantity. The speed of Black Hawk was not the speed of 13h 3" Sherman.

Black Hawk possessed something of the Morgan type. He was 15 hands, the upper most height where most horses of Morgan blood began to lose the strongest of Morgan characteristics. He had longer legs than was found on Justin Morgan; his forearms not so well muscled and less of the full neck. His head was doubtless more like his dams as was so much else of his form. All cuts of him show a good head but fine and shallower through the jowl than what was typically Morgan.

A writer of New England horses in the Annual Report of the Commissioner of Patents for 1862 described the Black Hawks this way saying: "**Another Class** of horses which has become very popular in New England as light, stylish roadsters, is that known as the Black Hawk". This one sentence pronounces much truth.

Again re: the sire of Black Hawk, G. B. or (George Barnard) writes to the Nov. 16th 1854 issue of the CULTIVATOR, that he, hearing of Black Hawk made inquiries of the horse. It was reported to him that he was a son of Sherman. Barnard's inquirer had a doubt for him, his "agent" stating he also interviewed the man who held the mare while she was being served by PADDY!

This then would substantiate the story about "the boys" who after Sherman failed to serve the mare earlier in the day put her to Paddy later in the evening.

<http://books.google.com/books?id=8lICAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA342&dq=the+Black+Hawks+were+of+another+character+and+color&hl=en&sa=X&ei=Vk7DULPOFMLTiwKozoHoBA&ved=0CDgQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=the%20Black%20Hawks%20were%20of%20another%20character%20and%20color&f=false>

Much has been said about the possibility of Paddy being the sire of Black Hawk. Fred Wier said that the year before John Bellows died, Bellows told Wier that those who thought Paddy was the sire of Black Hawk "were in the right of it".

The most damning of Black Hawk's influence was none other than Ethan Allen 50 who, in any one of the cuts or photos, aside from his excellent bone, bears no resemblance to real Morgan type as personified by Justin Morgan.

Mr. George B. Loring writing to Joseph Battell in 1889 says this about Black Hawk: He resembled, moreover, many of those powerful little horses for which Vermont is distinguished, **modified somewhat**, perhaps by his dam, which was said to be of English blood.

This from the Farmer's Monthly Visitor page 104 for July 1940. The writer says in an article on Col. Samuel Jaques Stud, Ten Hills Farm: Jaques having "reared" Black Hawk and being present on his farm the author says this about the horse. "Black Hawk is of a beautiful black color, measuring unusual length from the joint of the hip to the knee, with large muscles on a **delicate leg below the knee**, denoting swiftness of foot." This Black Hawk characteristic is substantiated in The May 1849 edition of the Prairie Farmer. An illustration made from a daguerreotype of the horse: "Morgan" was shown and in the accompanying article was a description of his legs. The author points out: "Many prefer a large leg, affirming that it is that which goes the last ten miles. The owners of "Morgan regard his legs as one of the best things about him. Our readers will notice a very marked contrast between the legs of this animal and those of his cousin, in our April number." The horse illustrated in that April issue—**Black Hawk**.

.....Not the leg of Justin Morgan!!!

Riley Adams, owner of Flying Morgan, writes to Wallace's Monthly in July of 1887 saying: Black Hawk was a short-bodied animal,, pony build, high on the withers, extremely short on the back, **not very heavy limbs**, ears and **crest fine**---a very handsome and rangy horse.....

This, is a description by Allen Thomson from his own observations at the great fair of 1852.

"Both sides called the Black Hawks, Morgans. Yet there was as plain a difference in looks, shape, size, color, and travel of the two breeds of horses as there is between the small Arab and the large English racer. The Black Hawks were more rangy built than the Morgans, average much larger, as many of them were 16 hands high, and weighed over 1,100 pounds. They averaged much faster than the Morgans. They were genteel, handsome, showy carriage horses and very nice drivers."

Jonathan Brewer Farnsworth was told by John McKenzie of South Woodstock an observer of the 1852 fair that 'when the band began to play the Morgans began to dance and their line became anything but straight. The Black Hawks on the other hand kept their line with great dignity. On account of their greater activity he preferred the Morgans over the Black Hawks.'

These descriptions cover size shape, appearance and manner of action. These descriptions of the Black Hawks **do not** reflect true Morgan type as personified by Justin Morgan.

Many mares brought to Black Hawk were of Messenger type and other than Morgan mares. This could be the reason for much less Morgan type seen in those offspring of Black Hawk.

An article appearing in Colman's Rural World Jan. 17, 1884 says when comparing a man's horses.... "Next to Clay came the Morgan. But the Black Hawks descending from the Morgan were **too light-boned and too light-waisted**".

However, the **Hallmark of the old Morgans was that they passed along the true Morgan type for generations.**

Every horse on the Black Hawk side of the track was an own offspring of Black Hawk, only one generation from what was purported to be a Morgan horse. The truth is that the Black Hawks did not look like the Morgans. If Black Hawk was a strong sire which seems to be the case, he would have sired Justin Morgan's type. It is easy to count the many black offspring in Battell's Morgan Register. He will say he sired many black ones, but not of the True Morgan type as shown in the above descriptions.

Whether Morgan or otherwise Black Hawk was an evil influence on the True type Morgan and through Ethan Allen he yet transmits to the present Lippitt Horse that same evil influence to true type.

Copyright © 2011 Lyle F. Horton Ancient Morgan Archive