

# WHAT IS A LIPPITT MORGAN

by Jim Alexander

The Lippitt Morgan is many things to many people. To some it is a coarse, anachronistic little creature, which serves only to confuse current versions of what correct type is and what acceptable pedigrees are. To many of us longtime Lippitt Breeders however, it is indeed one of the only means of survival of the "Real Morgan". But probably to the vast majority of Morgan enthusiasts it is simply a member of one of the four or five Morgan Families still prevalent today within the Morgan breed.. That said, here is what I understand a Lippitt Morgan to be and why I have spent almost thirty years devoted to its perpetuation.

By definition, the Lippitt Morgan traces back on all lines of its pedigree to one of what are referred to as the "Foundation Stock". The Foundation Stock is made up of twenty-five old-blooded Morgans, each of who carries a high percentage of the blood of Ethan Allen 2nd, 406. For this reason, he is often referred to as the "Cornerstone" of all Lippitt Breeding. He was considered one of the best sources of type and breeding both In his day and in fact up to the present. What makes these Lippitts unique is the concentration of this blood to the practical exclusion of almost all other lines of breeding. By focusing on this blood, exclusively, generation after generation a simple understanding of genetics will tell us two things. First, in comparison to the other lines of Morgan Breeding, the percentage of Justin Morgan blood will have to be quite high. But breeding this way is by some definitions very close to what some would call inbreeding. Line breeding and inbreeding are both valuable tools used by breeders involved in animal husbandry successfully for centuries. It does however, present some problems that breeders of some of the other, less intensely bred lines do not have to concern themselves with.

When one talks breeding within the Morgan Breed, we must constantly remind ourselves that most terms used are comparative. This is especially true when words like "pure" are used, as obviously there is no such thing as a "pure blooded" Morgan, in the strictest sense of the word, for this cannot be. However, relatively speaking, a Lippitt Morgan is a pure blooded Morgan. So, the Lippitt Morgan is a relatively, cleanblooded Morgan, who's percentage of Justin Morgan's blood is extremely high. Beyond that it gets hard to describe just what one looks like and just how one behaves. They come in all shapes and all sizes and there are good and bad actors among the Lippitt population. Some of the larger ones tend to lose type and some of the smaller ones can be very muscular, almost too much so. My observation here is that both these characteristics are more common within the Lippitt Family than in other, less intensely bred families.

So, can you breed a better Lippitt Morgan, assuming that you believe all that I have just told you? It will not be easy. A few breeders have done it and some of them know how it happened, and some of them do not have a clue. My advice: Go find one who has done it. Look at what they have bred in doing their part to save this aristocratic bloodline. Shake their hand, hug them, but let them know you appreciate what they have done and inform them that you want in. That you know how tough it is and still you want to go for it just the same. The big Lippitt breeders are mostly all gone these days. The successful continuation of the line has fallen to smaller breeders. You too can make a contribution. Just let me ask you this: If you could breed an outstanding Morgan, just one, that was an okay size, was typey like the Morris painting of Hales Green Mountain, could move with a trappy action like the best of the old ones could, and he or she had a wonderful, using personality wouldn't you want to do that? And what if this 'Wonder Morgan" had just as much of the blood of Justin Morgan as was available? Just imagine the contribution to the Morgan Breed if you were to accomplish something like that?? A very high percentage Morgan who was beautiful, typey, with a wonderful personality and could really go ? Why more Morgan breeders do not feel this way when it comes to producing quality Morgans remains a mystery to me to this day.

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