

Orcland Youlenda *and the silver dapples of Fiddler's Green*

by Laura Hornick Behning



***Orcland Youlenda** (Ulendon X Paleface), 1955 silver dapple mare, with Claire Murphy up.*

What is it that draws us to a specific horse? Is it their power, the beauty of their graceful lines, the feeling we get when we are near them? For Claire Murphy of Fiddler's Green Morgans in Cazenovia, NY, one horse in particular attracted her for a reason many of us will understand. Because anyone who saw Orland Youlenda could not help but notice her striking color!

Claire and her family have bred some outstanding Morgans at Fiddler's Green over the past half century. Fiddler's Contender (sire of Tedwin Topic), Fiddler's Blackriver, Fiddler's Trustee, Fiddler's Majesta (dam of Tug Hill Commando) and many other well known show and breeding horses have proudly carried the Fiddler's prefix over the years. In a recent videotaped interview for the New York State Morgan Horse Association (*available on their website at <http://www.nysmhs.org/history/fiddlersgreen/index.html>*), Claire, now 81, reminisces at length about one of her first Morgans, the mare named Orland Youlenda (Ulendon X Paleface), foaled in 1955 and the ancestress of a number of today's most successful show and breeding horses. We now know that Youlenda was a silver dapple, although with the limited color genetics knowledge available at that time she was mistakenly registered as a chestnut, as were her silver dapple offspring. I contacted the Murphys for permission to share some of the pictures on the NYSMHS site with you all, and Janie Murphy, Claire's daughter, was very generous with information and even more photos, which I hope you all will enjoy seeing.

Claire first saw Youlenda at a show in 1958. "She was silver gray...she was dappled. Her name was Orland Youlenda. She looked to me like the horse you went for on the merry go round," Claire recalls. "Everybody said, 'You're crazy! That's not a popular color!' Nobody liked silver... if you had any Parade blood or western blood, it usually came through with the silver mane and tail".

And she is right, because that "western blood" is exactly where Youlenda got her silver dapple coloring. Her dam, Paleface, was a silver dapple bay who traced back in an unbroken line of silvers to the source of the silver dapple color in our breed, the chestnut stallion Dan (by the famous stallion Headlight Morgan). And Parade was bred to mares of similar breeding to Paleface's silver dapple dam, Zona Skinner, when his owner J. Cecil Ferguson purchased a carload of mares from the Theis Ranch in Kansas. Some of these mares may have been actually silver dapple, but most were flaxen chestnuts, a color that can mimic silver dapple. Since silver only expresses ("shows") on black-based colors, it "hides" on chestnuts, if it present on that "red" base color. This makes it difficult to determine if a chestnut horse (with a silver dapple parent) is actually carrying the gene itself- until it produces an obvious silver when bred to a black-based mate.

Orland Youlenda was one of three offspring that Paleface produced- all three by Ulendon and all 3 silver dapples! Her sister, Orland Queen Bess (f. 1953), would produce 5 offspring, none of which bred on with the exception of the chestnut (carrying silver) Shar Lyn's A OK. He in



*Janie Murphy (here at age 5) learned to ride on **Orland Youlenda**.*

turn sired three, one of which, the late Shar Lynn's Moonbeam, was a confirmed silver. She had one registered-as-chestnut foal who as unfortunately gelded. Youlenda's other full sibling was the silver dapple gelding, Orland Silver Don.

Fiddler's Carrousel

"Linda", as Claire called her, "was a wonderful horse. She was 'my' horse. She took good care of me... she never let me get hurt," says Claire. The even tempered mare was used to teach her daughter, Janie, to ride. "Linda's" beautiful disposition as well as her striking color were passed on to her first foal, Fiddler's Carrousel, by Orland Dondarling. Janie remembered how "Lyman" (his barn name after Lyman Orcutt of Orland Farms) came to be. "Lyman Orcutt assured my mother that Orland Youlenda bred to Orland Farms' black stallion Orland Dondarling should produce a black foal. Mom took Lyman's advice and the following year (1963) Orland Youlenda foaled a dapple gray colt with a silver mane and tail on my birthday!! We named him Lyman and registered him Fiddler's Carrousel because he looked like the horse on the merry go round."

Carrousel was a very kind horse, even as a stallion, and Janie showed him quite successfully as a junior. She remembers their show ring triumphs together very well. "Lyman started his show career winning NYS Futurities and In Hand classes. At age 8, I showed him in Amateur Park Saddle because he had much too much motion for pleasure at that time. At the 1969 Granite State Morgan Show we had Lyman stabled with Bob Brooks of



Left: **Fiddler's Curtin Call** (Fiddler's Carrousel X Donna Mae Pepper), 1966 silver dapple stallion (later gelded), Janie Murphy (then age 13) riding at Northhampton. Right: **Fiddler's Carrousel** (Orcland Dondarling X Orcland Youlenda), 1963 silver dapple stallion (later gelded) and Janie (who began riding the stallion when she was 9), with another tricolor ribbon. Both photos courtesy of Janie Murphy.



Storybook Stables. Bob suggested I show Lyman that night in the Amateur Pleasure Driving Stake. Although Lyman drove beautifully, I had never shown in a harness class at a major show before. As I was getting some last minute instructions from Bob right before the class Nancy Caisse of Townshend Morgan Farm yelled to me 'Just follow me' as she entered the class herself. I stayed right behind Nancy the entire class right into the line-up only to be called out first place! From then on Fiddler's Carrousel began a winning streak in Pleasure Harness and Saddle that stretched from New England to Mid-Atlantic for many years to come as a stallion. To me, he was the best stallion in the whole wide world with his unique color, tremendous personality and ALL that show horse talent that started on my birthday and became a dream come true."

"Lyman" sired two foals before he was gelded at age ten in 1973, shortly after being sold. "Carrousel was sold under the condition that he was NOT to be gelded or we would buy him back!" Janie states emphatically. "In the words of my brother Patrick Murphy, 'You never

should have sold Lyman, Mom, he was a Murphy.'"

At least one of Carrousel's two offspring was a silver dapple, the 1966 gelding Fiddler's Curtin Call (out of Donna Mae Pepper), who like his sire was gelded as an aged horse, but not before siring 8 offspring himself. Curtin Call was, like his sire and granddam, a gentle horse, even as a stallion. Unfortunately, of his 8 offspring only one, the registered as chestnut mare Curtin Call's Star, bred on. From her pictures, Star appeared to be a silver dapple. She produced two foals, a said-to-be silver dapple gelding named Jo Farm's Tinkertoy, and the brown mare Justawee Shannon.

Carrousel's other offspring, the registered as chestnut mare Fiddler's Mame (out of Fiddler's First) may have been carrying silver herself; she had four offspring, two black and two chestnut. One of the chestnuts was a gelding and the other, a mare named Port Hill Dawn, has no offspring, so there is no way to determine if the silver dapple gene came on down through this particular branch of Youlenda's family.



Fiddler's Carrousel as a young horse, being shown in hand. Photo courtesy of Janie Murphy.

Fiddler's Rainbo

Youlenda's 1970 foal was the registered as chestnut mare, Fiddler's Rainbo (by Waseeka's Vivo). Years ago when I saw her black and white photos in old issues of THE MORGAN HORSE magazine, I was pretty sure she was a silver. Janie graciously shared color photos of her recently that confirm that Rainbo was indeed a bay silver. Like the other silvers of Fiddler's Green, Rainbo had a "colorful" name- with an interesting story behind it. Janie explains "Folks would stop by the barn to see the foals and they would ask Mom, 'What color is she, Claire?' Mom always answered, 'she's every color of the rainbow!'"

"Rainbo was a big (15.2h) mare that could really

cover ground at the road trot in pleasure saddle and harness,” Janie continues. “When the judges didn’t object to her color they loved her, and we had major wins in Pleasure Harness at New England and Mid-Atlantic. At the N.Y. Regional Show we went Res. Champ. Jr. Exhibitor Pl. Saddle. Rainbo became a broodmare shortly after Waseeka’s In Command arrived at our farm. That cross produced a beautiful bay filly that we sadly lost in our barn fire. Rainbo’s daughter sired by Casland Anquish, Fiddler’s Diamonair is the dam of Fiddler’s Cash Command, Grand National Western Pl. Champ. Fiddler’s Cash Command is the sire of this year’s Grand National Champ. BlkOrchid Ace Commander and Melendy Cash Bonus. Its such a thrill to see these bloodlines winnin at the shows.” Sadly, this color line is a dead end, as Rainbo only had 3 offspring- 2 bays and a chestnut. The chestnut, Fiddler’s Diamonair, only had two gelded offspring.

Other possible silver dapple offspring of Youlenda

Youlenda had 7 offspring all together, two of which are confirmed silvers which were registered-as-chestnuts, 3 are bays which cannot carry the gene (if a bay has the silver gene, it will “show”, making the horse a silver bay), and 2 are chestnuts. Since silver, like all dominant genes, statistically is passed on 50% of the time, it stands to reason that at least one of Youlenda’s other “chestnut” offspring might have actually been silver - or if truly chestnut, carrying the silver gene. The possibilities? The first is the 1974 chestnut mare Fiddler’s Pandora (by Kadenvale Don), whose only offspring is the chestnut 1987 stallion, Winterset Bijou. The second is the 1965 chestnut stallion Fiddler’s Blue Chip (by Windcrest Flair), whose only offspring, the chestnut mare Vanderland Coquette, has in turn produced the chestnut mares Berkhill Tiara and Tari Wey, full sisters by Roman Conquerer. Tiara is the dam of WR Corianna, also chestnut. Corianna’s 2001 son, the flashy chestnut sabino Menomin Flash Dancer owned by Ultra Morgans, is just beginning his



Fiddler’s Rainbo (Waseeka’s Vivo X Orcland Youlenda), 1970 bay silver dapple mare, Janie Murphy (then age 17) up. Photo by Bob Moseder. Below photo: ***Fiddler’s Rainbo*** (center) in the pasture at Fiddler’s Green. Both photos courtesy of Janie Murphy.

career at stud. Tari Wey is the dam of two chestnut sons, Flair A Way (f. 1993) and Tari Wey Conqueror (f. 1994), both by Bustin Loose. Is it possible that the silver dapple gene has made it down through all these intervening generations of chestnuts? Only time will tell. The descendants of Youlenda are numerous in the non-colorful ranks, however. Many of those trace their heritage to her bay daughter Fiddler’s Dolly, the dam of the late great stallion Fiddler’s Blackriver, owned by Anne Wyland; still others descend from her bay daughter Fiddler’s Moonglow, dam of Deer Run Command and several prolific Deer Run prefixed broodmares.

I wondered if Claire and Janie had any idea of what color their silver dapples actually were. Janie replied “we really didn’t know, however the registration application at the time was limited so my mother guessed chestnut!”

We hope that a silver dapple may yet appear from the heritage of Orcland Youlenda. With the gene as rare as it appears to be in the Morgan breed at present, it would be a shame to lose this very valuable source of silver dapple- “the horse of the merry go round”!

