



DISCOVER HOW THESE IOWANS IMPACTED
THE 1920s AND 1930s EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF THE AMERICAN CREAM

Saturday, June 10

JEWELL MUSEUM, 2 PM

Jewell Veterinarian Dr. Erick Christian

by Barbara Knox Homrighaus and Nancy Eich Kayser

Saturday, July 8

ELLSWORTH LIBRARY & MUSEUM, 2 PM

Ellsworth Farmers John and Jessie Lakin Yancy

by Barbara Knox Homrighaus

Saturday, July 15

RADCLIFFE DAYS, in the Park, 2 PM

Lyon Township Farmers Charlie and Hattie Hildal Knox

by Barbara Knox Homrighaus

*Developed in Iowa, the American Cream is
the only draft horse breed native to the United States*

National American Cream Draft Horse Day is declared July 11

American Cream Draft Horse Association

Dr Erick Christian

1858 - 1932

Jewell veterinarian and visionary
in the early development of the American Cream Draft Horse

By Barbara Knox Homrighaus and Nancy Eich Kayser
10 June 2023 Presentation at the Jewell Museum in Jewell, Iowa (1)

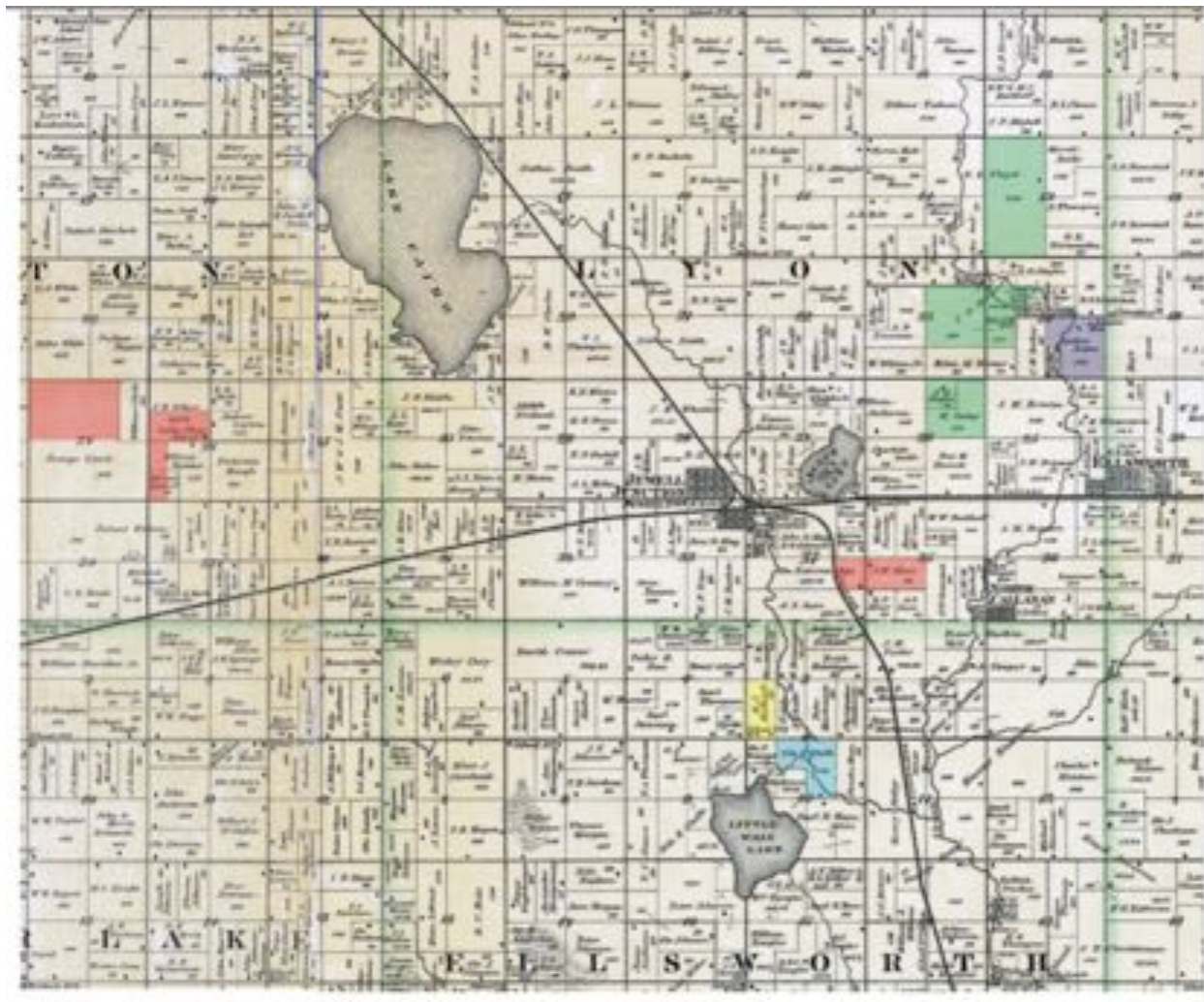
If there's one thing you take away from today's presentation, I would like it to be that Jewell's veterinarian, Dr. Erick Christian, was right — Hat Lakin's mare's great-looking foals were unusual — Old Granny and her babies were something unique — they were actually a whole new draft horse breed.

Everybody knew Harry 'Hat' Lakin, the stock buyer born and raised in Lakin Grove as one of Luther and Emilie Staples Lakin's fifteen children. His parents had moved to Hamilton County in 1854 about two weeks before Hat's grandfather Elisha Lakin, former resident of Kane Co and Dekalb Co Illinois, arrived there with 100 head of cattle and horses.



2. Fred, Bessie, and Hat Lakin

The Lakin farm is on this 1883 map in purple, 3 miles east and 1 mile north of Jewell (3):



When Hat Lakin died in 1942 his obituary said

"The Lakin family has always been closely identified with Ellsworth and each of the boys who remained here has been a power in the community. Harry was no exception. Strong in his convictions, and quick to speak, he was an adviser to many who sought the honors of the town and county."

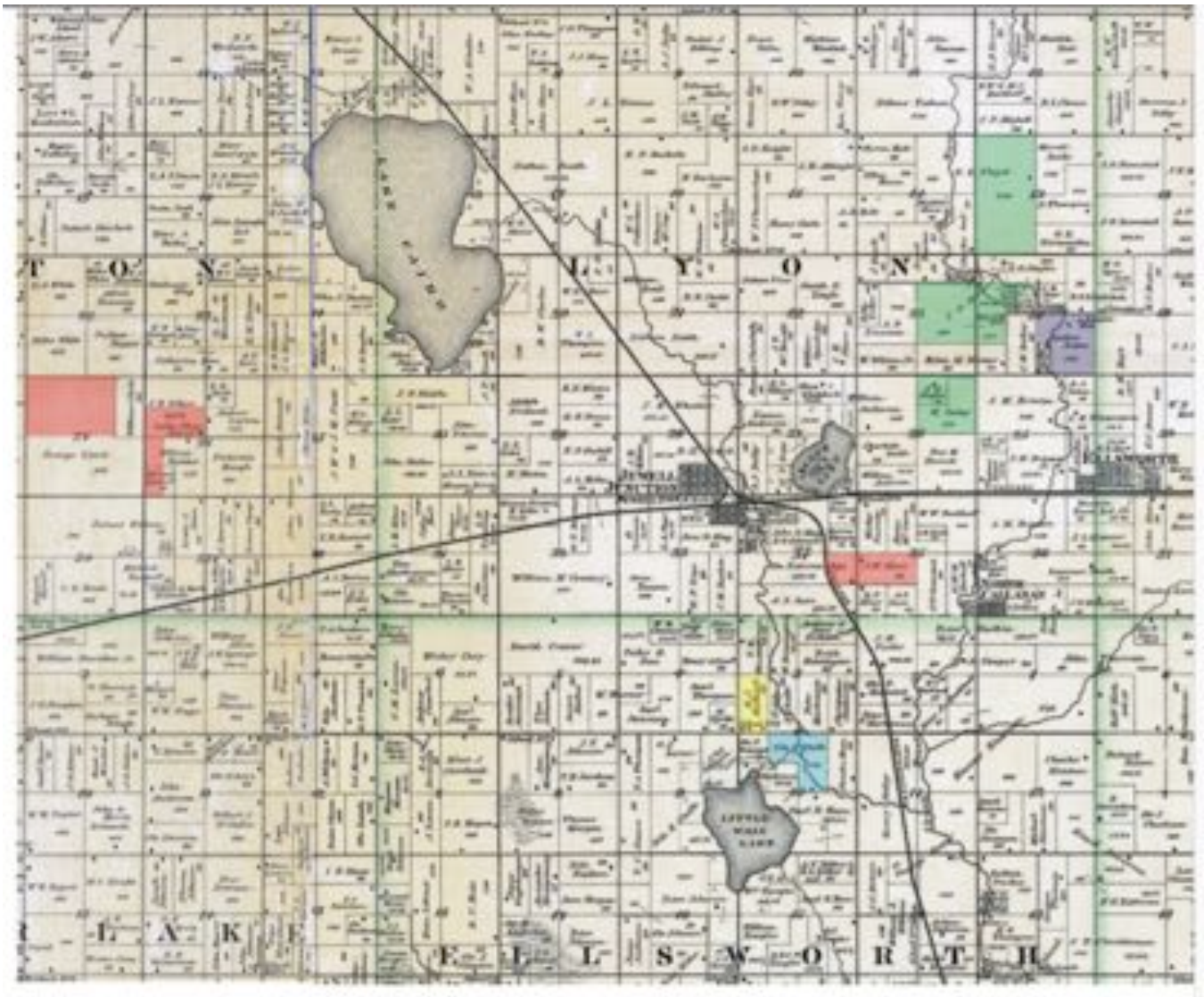
And everybody driving east out of Jewell would have seen Old Granny out in Hat's pasture, sleek and richly champagne-colored with her white mane and tail, her amber colored eyes, her pink skin,

accompanied every two or three years by her latest matching foal. Hat had purchased her over in Story County at a farm auction back in 1911. (4)

As they say “Who owns the mare, owns the foal”. Old Granny was placed on the American Cream Draft Horse Registry in position No 1 as foundational mare to the new draft horse breed, when the ACDHA was chartered in 1944 by the State of Iowa. You’ll see Dr Christian’s name with horse No 4, and my grandfather, Charles Knox, with horse No 5:

<u>Horse</u>	<u>Breeder/Owner</u>	<u>Date</u>
1 Old Granny	Hat Lakin	1911 purchased
2 Nelsons Buck	Hans Nelson	1920
3 Yancy	Hans Nelson	1923
4 Eureka	Hans Bergeson Owner: Dr Erick Christian	1926
5 Knox 1st	Charles Knox	1926

Eventually Hat Lakin sold her to his neighbor to the West, Hans Nelson and his sons, the Nelson Bros, sometime before 1919. They bred black Percheron drafts. Sure enough in 1920 following a cross with their black Percheron stallion, Old Granny and her next matching champagne-colored foal Nelson's Buck, were out there in the Nelson's pastures just east of Jewell. (See green-colored farms on this 1883 map) (3)



According to the ACDHA, Jewell veterinarian Dr Erick Christian, is known to have persuaded the Nelsons to keep Nelsons Buck as a stallion, and they did so, but only for about a year, (4) during which Nelsons Buck sired a cream colt in 1923 named Yancy, when crossed with their black Percheron mare Queene. (If there were known photos of the Nelsons or these horses, I would share that documentation.)

These are the clues we have that from 1911 with Hat Lakin's purchase of Old Granny, to 1923 when the Cream called Yancy foaled at the Nelsons, that Erick Christian, the Jewell veterinarian, had been paying attention to it all. Because two years after that, just as the young stallion Yancy turned two, Erick went after arranging for a Cream foal sired by that stallion: and he had been noticing these local horses for fourteen years.



5. Erick Christian

Erick had “horse-sense”, and there were several sides to Erick’s horse-sense, for each of which he was well-known. First, way back in 1886 when he left Kendall County Illinois and came to Iowa at the age of 28, married Fannie Garrison in Radcliffe in 1888 (he was 30; she was 19), and ran trotter horse races on his private track three miles north of Radcliffe, Erick had an eye for running his own horses and winning purses. His farm in Hardin Co was in Section 9, and the track and farmland south of it in Section 16, located just a mile East and two and three miles North of Radcliffe itself:

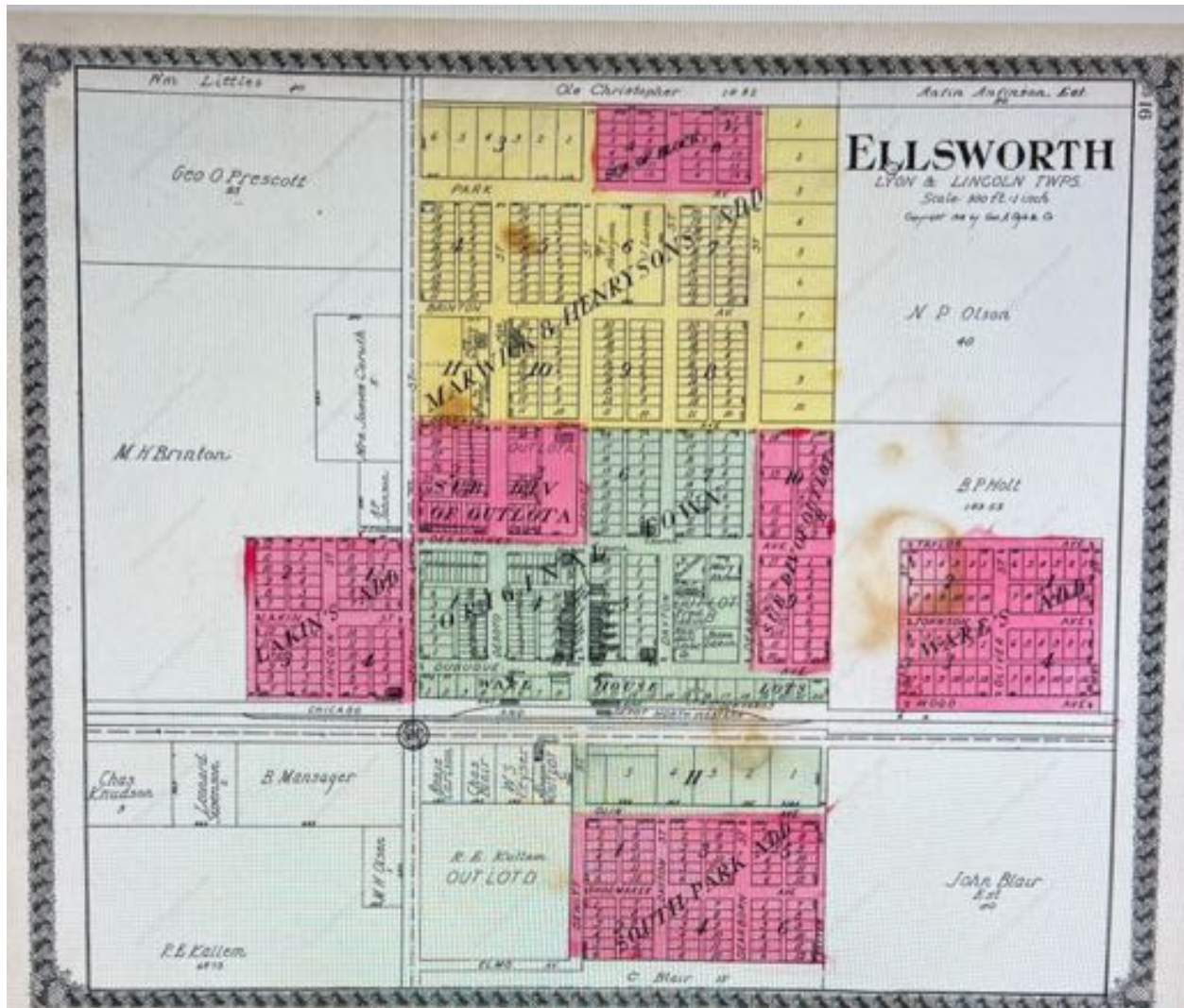


6. 1892 Map of Sherman Township, Hardin County.

By 1893 when he was a family man with two young daughters, local newspapers were calling men women and children to attend Erick's track matinees. This is an 1895 example of Erick's self-promotion: (7)

Erick Christian writes down from Radcliffe, that there is to be a Racing Matinee at his track, 2 miles north-east of Radcliffe, commencing at 10 o'clock Thursday June 6th. Some splendid races will be open, such as a yearling, a two year old, a three year old and a free for all trotting match, besides numerous running and pony races. Radcliffe's splendid Military Band is to furnish the music. Good eating houses will be on the ground and a general good time will be had. Let all of our citizens interested attend, as we are to have one in Roland before long and we will need support from Radcliffe horsemen, besides they did well by us last fall. Everybody go and have a day of sport.

Second, after running a track and horses that won, Erick was known for parlaying his horse-sense when he moved and established a livery and feed store as a business owner residing on Dayton Street in Ellsworth in 1897: (8)



As a businessman owning a town establishment, he became equally esteemed there for growing his reputation as an auctioneer. Erick ran ads in Ellsworth for years that always said “15 years experience” (9):

Auctioneer.

Erick Christian will cry your sale.
15 years experience. Charges rea-
sonable. Call, or address me, at
Ellsworth, Iowa.

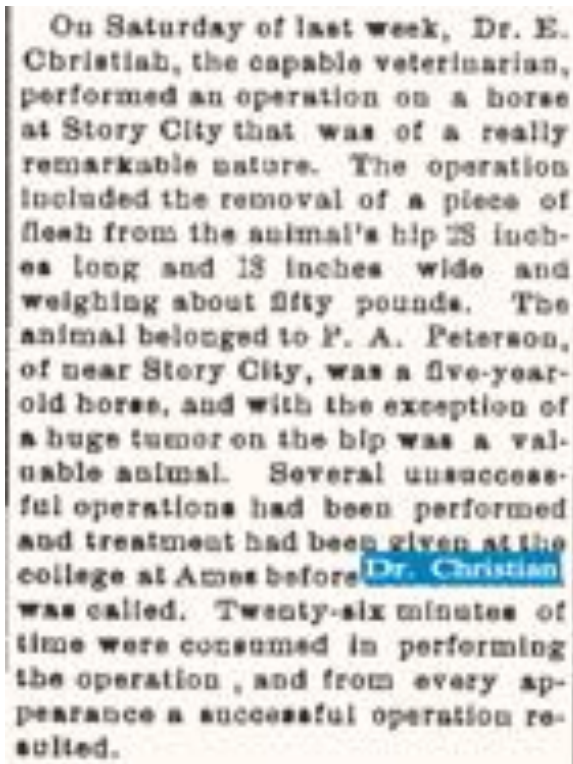
Third, Erick's horse-sense continued in 1902 when he and Fannie and their daughter Cleo moved to Jewell, where he lived for the next thirty years, which was for rest of his life. Because it was three years later, while in Jewell in 1905, that Erick lived advertising as a Veterinary Surgeon and Dentist (10)

E. CHRISTIAN, Veterinary Surgeon and Dentist.

Treats all diseases of domestic animals.
Chronic diseases a specialty. Calls
promptly attended to day or night.

Telephone No. 71 - Jewell, Iowa.

With his horse-sense, Jewell's Dr. Erick Christian came to be well known regionally as an old time veterinarian who traveled a wide area, and had success when others didn't, such as this incident just two years later, from 1907 (11)



On Saturday of last week, Dr. E. Christian, the capable veterinarian, performed an operation on a horse at Story City that was of a really remarkable nature. The operation included the removal of a piece of flesh from the animal's hip 23 inches long and 13 inches wide and weighing about fifty pounds. The animal belonged to P. A. Peterson, of near Story City, was a five-year-old horse, and with the exception of a huge tumor on the hip was a valuable animal. Several unsuccessful operations had been performed and treatment had been given at the college at Ames before Dr. Christian was called. Twenty-six minutes of time were consumed in performing the operation, and from every appearance a successful operation resulted.

Erick was very successful as a veterinarian. In 1910 the Nevada Representative newspaper said "Erick Christian of Jewell, the noted veterinary surgeon has been practicing his profession here the past week." And weekly news reports of Erick's "professional caller" visits in Hamilton, Hardin, and Story counties continued for many years. He reported his good livelihood on the 1915 Iowa State Census as property worth \$2500 and earnings of \$1200 the prior year. However, it isn't clear what the extent of his training and education might have been for his capability as a vet and surgeon. Because on the 1915 Census he indicated his education as Common 4, Grammar a "dash", High School a "dash", College a "dash".

All of this — Erick's property, his moves from rural Radcliffe to Ellsworth, to Jewell, from farm and track and horseracing, to auctioneering, to town businessman with a livery and feed store, to the veterinarian profession — all describes the background of Erick Christian who was right about Old Granny and the possibility of a new draft horse breed. Erick who as Jewell's veterinarian, had been paying attention. He was fifty-three when Hat Lakin bought Old Granny in 1911; it was with Erick's whole life-experience that he noticed Old Granny's matching foals in the pastures east of Jewell over the next fourteen years.

- When Nelsons bought Old Granny and crossed her with their Percheron stallion, it was with experienced foresight that Erick asked the Nelsons to keep Nelsons Buck a breeding stallion after he arrived in 1920. Nelsons Buck turned 2 in 1922, was crossed with the Percheron Queene, in 1922, and Yancy foaled in 1923. By then John and Jessie Lakin Yancy had been farming the Luther Lakin home place for four years, after Jessie's father, Fred Lakin, a stock-buyer residing in Ellsworth like his brother Hat, purchased it in the estate sale following their mother Emilie Staples Lakin's death in 1918, and had asked John and his daughter Jessie Lakin Yancy to farm it for him when he took possession in March 1920. (12)



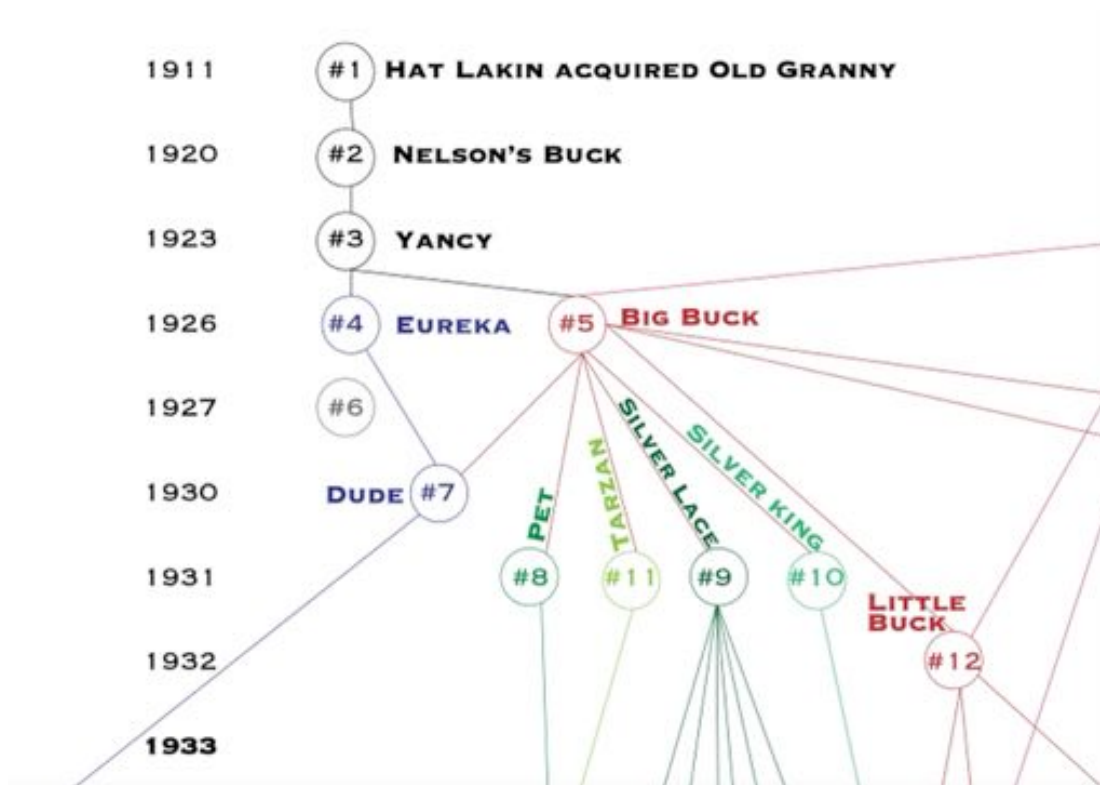
- It was Erick, the great horse lover, who noticed when Yancy, the foal sired by Nelsons Buck arrived in 1923, and when John and Jessie Yancy over on the nearby Lakin farm became Yancy's owners.
- Two years later, when the Cream stallion Yancy turned two — the American Cream Draft Horse listed in third position on the ACDHA Registry in 1944 — Erick Christian made a deal with Hans Bergeson and John & Jessie Yancy to try for a Cream foal sired by that direct descendant of Old Granny. The deal was that Erick would pay Hans Bergeson for his mare to be crossed with Yancy No 3, and he, Erick, would pay to own the foal.

So 1925 was all about Erick taking action to develop the new breed he had talked so much about: he made arrangements for Hans Bergeson to breed his light bay mare to John and Jessie Yancy's Cream stallion, with a feature of prior agreement being that Erick would pay the fees and own the foal when it was born in 1926. I can imagine him yelling "Eureka!" when the gold — the new Cream foal — arrived., No 4 on the Registry.

Erick knew when he made the deal that his vision for Eureka and developing the new breed of draft horse would take time. The process was known then as 'fixing the genes' by line-breeding and in-breeding horses for several generations to establish desired traits.

What he didn't know when he began making arrangements for Eureka in 1925, was that at the age of 67 he only had seven more years to live.

As you can see in the diagram below, (13) Eureka No 4 had an important place in the early development of the new draft breed. But



before I further describe Eureka's impact, and ask you to admire Dr Erick Christian as the town of Jewell's claim to fame in the American Cream Draft Horse world, I would like to mention that Erick wasn't perfect.

Erick and Fannie had been scathingly pilloried in the Webster City Journal a month before their divorce was granted in 1910: (14)

HARD ON HUBBY.

Elisworth News: Erick Christian of Jewell, has asked for a legal separation from his wife, Fanny Christian, on the grounds of cruel and inhuman treatment. It is no more than right that he should have it. Erick is a horse doctor and we have heard of times that he would come home, all fixed up with horse medicine, and his wife, who promised to obey him, wouldn't get out of bed to get him his supper. If that isn't cruelty to animals, we would like another guess at the same price. Why actually; we have heard of times when Mrs. Christian wouldn't give him a half dollar to go out and get a pint of roof varnish when the tar covered roof of his mouth was so dry that his grandmother over in South Africa could hear it tingle. If that isn't inhuman treatment we'll go out in the back yard and pull a knot hole out of a ten dollar bill. Why, it's just shameful the way Erick has been mistreated—sometimes he didn't miss being treated—and misused. By all means let him be granted a divorce. A man whose very life of his association with a lady who cannot afford to furnish him with the "elixir of rapid hereafter," and who refuses to get meals at all hours of the day and night should be taught a lesson. Let this be a lesson to other ladies who enjoy the company of like husbands.

One year later, after Erick's mother had passed away in March, Erick and John McDonald were arrested September 19th, 1911 on a charge of public intoxication in Jewell, and charges dismissed. But a month later, when bills for the costs in the case, called Town of Jewell vs Eric Christian, were taxed to the town, because the defendant only paid them if convicted, one Councilman protested payment saying when the Mayor gave greater weight to the testimony of "certain men whose testimony could not be considered reliable and unprejudiced", who had testified that the defendant was not drunk, and acquitted the defendant and forced the town to pay the costs, the Mayor "had not done his duty." The Mayor then explained there had been "considerable preponderance in number" of witnesses testifying at the trial that the defendant was not guilty, and that he, the Mayor, "had absolutely disregarded trial testimony given by the Councilman, influenced by his (the Mayor's) own belief that the Councilman's reputation and character were such that no credence could be given to his testimony." The councilman forthwith tendered his resignation.

News coverage continued.

During that week of the Council Resignation story, it was reported that Dr Erick Christian had gone to South Dakota to register in the government homestead land drawing. It was also reported that Fannie was on a trip to Montana, where she was marrying the well-known and successful Ellsworth business man Emery Elisha Anderson: (15,16) (Since Emery's mother,



Elizabeth Lakin, was a sister of Hat and Fred Lakin, Emery was thereby Jessie Lakin Yancy's cousin.)

The fact of Fannie's remarriage was announced in local print a little more than a week after the Councilman Resignation. And less than two weeks after that it was reported that Erick and J T McDonald left on a trip to Kansas City October 30th.

Why was all of this notoriety happening?

The divorce and all of this drama and upheaval and life change around Erick in 1910 and 1911 followed a terrible tragedy in 1908.



17. Possible photo of Cleo Christian 1889-1908. Courtesy Ann Omvig Maine.

Erick and Fannie's daughter Cleo had just graduated from Jewell High School in May of 1907, turned 18 in July, and contracted tuberculosis in April the next Spring. She died three months later in July, 1908 shortly after her 19th birthday.



18. Postcard of Jewell High School from Cleo Christian's postcard album. Courtesy Ann Omvig Maine.



19. Undated, unlabeled loose photo of Cleo Christian's classmates found loose in the back of her Post Card Album. Courtesy Ann Omvig Maine; List of Jewell High School Alumni, Class of 1907. Courtesy Richard Steffen, Jewell Museum Director.

It was said at her funeral that “Cleo’s unusual popularity, and the high regard and esteem in which she was held by everyone was evidenced by the vast crowd that filled the church, overflowing out on the lawn and in the street.” Her pallbearers were six girls from her Jewell High School class: “The remains were laid at rest in the cemetery at Radcliffe, beside the body of an other child of Mr and Mrs Christian’s which died in infancy.” The other child was Attie Christian, still 2 when she died of cholera thirteen years earlier when Christians had the farm and racing track near Radcliffe; Erick’s reaction in 1895 was to say the day after Attie died, that he’d sold his farm (though it may have taken more time to sell the farm and the trotter track than that because Erick and Fannie and Cleo Christian weren’t relocated from Radcliffe to Ellsworth until 1897). After the tragedy of Cleo’s death in July 1908, which echoed losing Attie 13 years before, Erick’s marriage didn’t survive. Erick fell apart. Drinking, divorce, and drama followed for some time.

I’m mentioning Dr Erick Christian wasn’t perfect, and tragedy in his life, before showing you Eureka’s impact on the early development of the American Cream Draft Horse, because Eureka only foaled after Erick, despite everything, went forward with his vision for developing a new draft horse breed in 1925. Don’t get distracted and underestimate what he achieved at the end of his life. Don’t underestimate whether or not taking bold steps in 1925 at the age of 67 to build a new uniquely American draft horse breed was a smart thing for him to do. Whether it was notable then. Whether it’s even worth celebrating today. July 11th is newly declared National American Cream Draft Horse Day by the ACDHA, and in the 1940s the ACDHA regarded Jewell’s Dr Erick Christian as very important to the early development of the breed. But for all his horse-sense, was he really someone to be admired?



And wasn't he a little clueless making breeding arrangements for Eureka back in 1925, when draft horses were on the way out? Mechanization was well underway and tractors had won — car production for example had jumped from 11,000 model Ts in Ford's first year of production in 1903, to 20 million model Ts produced in 1923. The car was on all roads, and the tractor had already pushed draft horses out of agriculture, right?

Well, in 1925 the part about tractors was not quite true.

For the previous fifty years, Iowa had led the way in breeding, raising and selling draft horses, becoming the top state for draft horse production by 1900. Percherons, Belgians, and Shires were particularly popular, prized for their size and ability to work. Draft horses were literally used everywhere for anything requiring “horse power”. In the peak years of 1910-1915, there were at least 1.5 million horses on Iowa's farms, worth an average of \$120 a head. (A Model T car cost \$440 in 1915.) The number of horses on American farms kept growing, reaching an all-time peak of 25 million in 1920, while cars were quickly replacing horses on American roads — and Yes, the shift from horse power to tractor power in rural life seemed inevitable. But it was controversial, for quite a long time, whether or not tractors were going to replace draft horses on farms. (21)

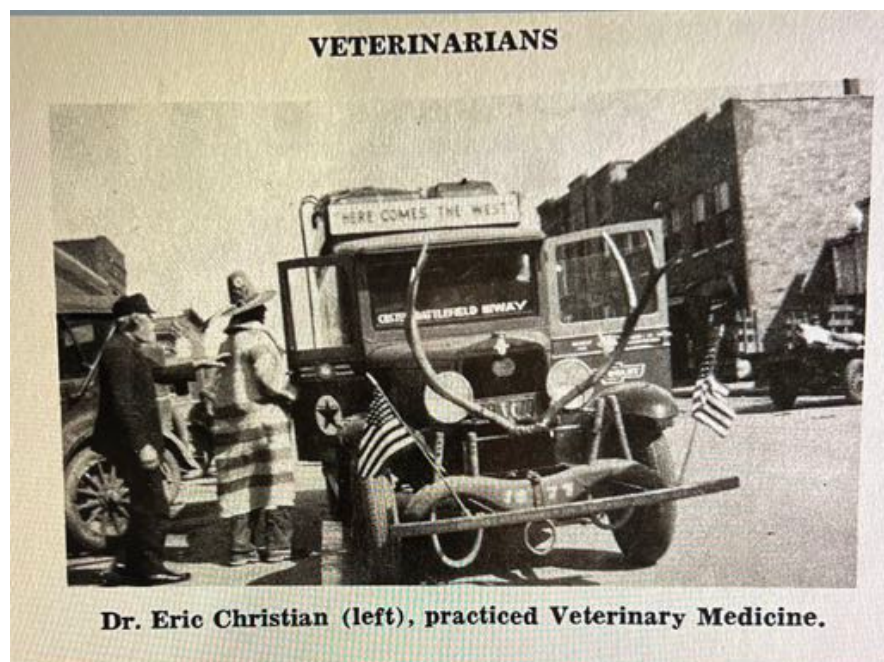
- In Iowa in 1925 the Webster City Freeman said
“The tractor has come to stay, but the draft horse will be here for a long time, because tractors cannot wholly replace him.
- The Hamilton County Census in 1925 recorded that of their 2,171 farmers, only 611 owned tractors.

So Yes, we know mechanization prevailed. Cars prevailed. Tractors prevailed. But it wasn't until 1945 that more hours of horsepower were provided by tractors than by horses nationwide, for the first time — a full 20 years after Erick Christian's decision to try for a Cream foal in 1925. (22) So, when I note Erick wasn't perfect, it's not to say Erick was hapless. Erick Christian's interest in making arrangements to own a Cream foal was not a drunken fumble; it was not an eccentric misstep, oblivious to which way the economic winds were blowing. In 1925 Erick Christian's action was a conscious, shrewd, informed decision, consistent with other gambles and decisions he

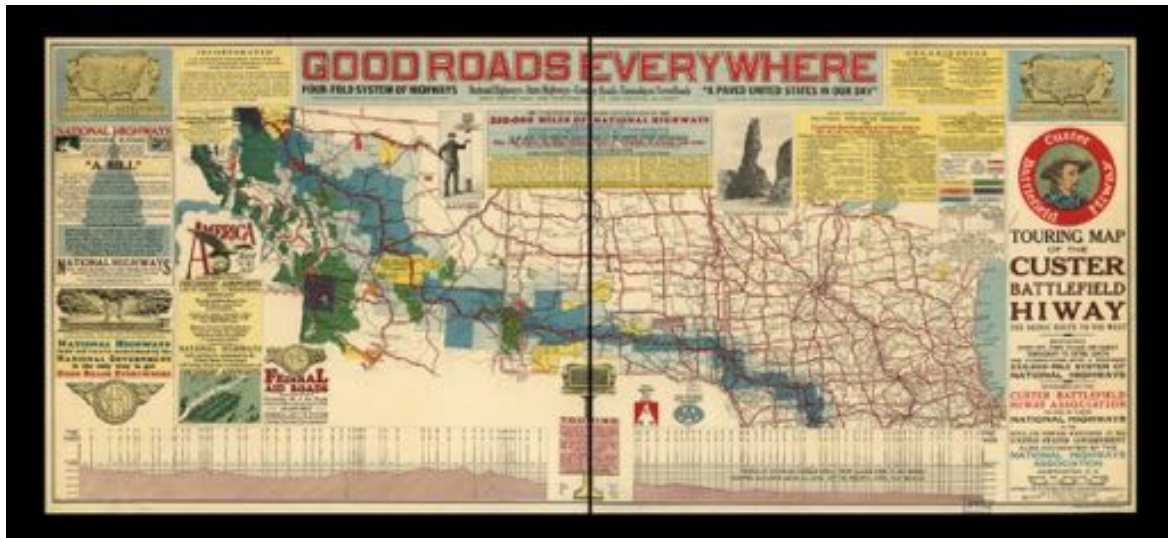
made where horse-sense was concerned during his life as a self-made man. It is the context in which I say Eric Christian was right about Old Granny and her foals as a possible new draft horse breed, aware of the potential of that breed to fit the changing times.

Dr. Christian retired in 1932 when he was 74. Before his retirement, but after after Eureka foaled in 1926, three years went by during which he was also in the local news as a more grandfatherly town citizen. For example,

- He challenged Marshalltown, Laurens, and Des Moines claims to the IA State Record for the Largest Ear of Iowa Corn, with an ear of corn that had twenty-eight rows with fifty-two kernels to the row, 1,456 kernels. Oral Thorn living near Indianola however beat that number by 8 kernels, with twenty-two rows with sixty-one kernels in each row, for 1,464 kernels. So with 8 fewer kernels Erick was Second. (23)
- Erick's St Bernard dog "Myrtle" made the newspaper when she had 15 pups, 3 females and 12 males.
- Erick greeted the Custer Battlefield Highway representative visiting Jewell sometime after the advent of that auto route opening in 1925. In this photo, Erick's shoes are shined and his elder presence is pro-Jewell. (24). According to the Library of

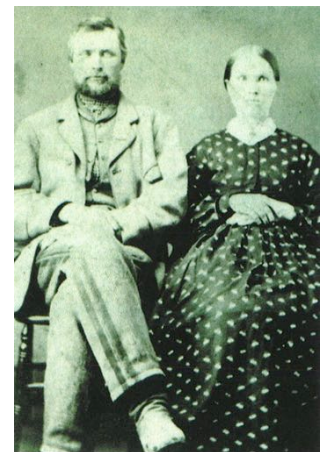


Congress and the World Digital Library, the establishment of the Custer Battlefield Highway came at a time of widespread enthusiasm for highway construction, and the route quickly became one of the most famous of its era. It was based mostly upon existing roads, but it served to add historical signage, upgrade maintenance, and build new bridges to improve the route. (25)



Besides documenting Erick's work, and his grandfatherly town persona, other newspaper items reveal Erick's abiding family ties in Central Iowa.

Erick's parents and grandparents had emigrated together in 1847 from Norway to Lisbon, Big Grove Township, Kendall County, Illinois. Iowa historian Arlen Twedt recently wrote extensively about Lisbon, Illinois, sixty miles southwest of Chicago, as the original settlement area for the very same early Norwegian immigrants who later settled in Central Iowa. When some of Erick's family left Illinois for land available in Iowa, they were part of a second migration — one that established two large settlement areas on open Iowa prairie. The two



26. Erick's parents (left) and grandparents (right)

centers were southwest of Cambridge and east of Story City — and over 25 years there were 6,500 people in Story County, spreading into the contiguous areas of Hamilton and Hardin counties to the north, and Polk county to the south, where there had been no settlers before. (26)

However, after arriving in Illinois in 1847 Erick's father didn't next leave Kendall Co with the ongoing wave of Norwegians getting land in Iowa, nor did his father's sister Elizabeth. But his father's brother John went to Roland in 1857; father's brother Charles went to Story Co and Roland in 1865; their widowed mother (Erick's grandmother) went after 1868; his father's brother Ole was farming in Story County by 1885. The year after that, Erick went to Iowa. He was 28. Two years later, Erick married Fannie Garrison. Only two years after that, in 1890, Erick's father died, leaving Randall, the youngest son, farming in Illinois.

Though as a boy, Erick had been baptized and confirmed in the Lutheran faith at nearby Helmer, Illinois, and worked on the



family farm (27) as the middle of seven children (28), from 1888 on Roland, Iowa and Kendall Co, Illinois are often mentioned as Erick's



28. Back: Martin, Julia, Ellis; Front: Erick, Randall, Lewis, Franklin. Courtesy Laura Obrien.

destinations for family visits, or as the places Erick's visitors in Jewell, Iowa came from. 12,000 American Norwegians lived in Central Iowa settlement areas by 1905, and that number included Erick's cousins, their parents, and his cousins children's families throughout his life in Jewell. A photo of Erick with his brothers, probably taken back in Illinois after his sister Julia Christian Hilliard died in 1914, shows Erick at the age of 56, i.e. after Cleo died in 1908, after his divorce from Fannie in 1910, and after his mother died in 1911:



29. Martin, Lewis, Randall back row; Ellis, Erick, and Franklin Christian, front row. Perhaps taken in 1914. Courtesy Laura Obrien.

As I previously mentioned, Dr. Christian retired in 1932 when he was 74, and before his retirement, but after after Eureka foaled in 1926, three years went by during which he worked, was in the local news as a more grandfatherly town citizen, and kept up with family visits. Then, in 1929, Erick did something rather unexpected: in 1929 Erick decided try for another Cream foal. He decided to cross 3 year old Eureka No 4 with Charles Knox's Cream stallion Big Buck No 5.

Why 1929 and why Charlie? Well, the year prior, Erick's options would have been to take two year old Eureka to Hans Nelsons near

Jewell to be crossed with a Percheron — their Cream stallion Nelsons Buck No 2 was gelded before 1928, so a Percheron stallion was Erick's option if he went there. The second option was to take two year old Eureka somewhere locally other than Hans Nelsons. His third option in 1928 was about 30 miles away in Dows where John and Jessie Lakin Yancy were contract farming, to cross Eureka with Yancy No 3, thereby "fixing the genes". And Erick's fourth option in 1928 would have been to take two year old Eureka to a farm about 17 miles away in Buckeye Township, Hardin Co, where Charles and Hattie Hildal Knox were contract farming in Section 17, to cross Eureka with Big Buck No 5. But in 1928, Erick chose none of those options.

There were several reasons he may have decided to collaborate with Charles Knox the next year, in 1929. One reason might have been that Eureka was three. Another that the Yancys had moved from Dows, to contract farm in Martin County Minnesota where they were even further away from Jewell. A third reason might have been that the Knoxes had moved to contract farm in Section 25 of Williams Township— they were still about 22 miles away from Jewell, but back in Hamilton County. More compelling than any of those reasons however was the fact that Charles had just surprised everyone in 1929.

Charles had decided to "prove" Big Buck as a Cream stallion in 1928 by crossing him, when he turned two, with the two draft mares Flody and Bonnie that he farmed with. The results were that each foal in 1929 was a Cream: Silver King had all the Cream attributes and ended up being the one Cream Grandpa never sold; Billy Boy had the Cream coloring but a black mane and tail, and was kept as a gelding.

30. Charles Knox with Big Buck aka Knox 1st No 5. About 1930. Esther Knox Murray photograph collection. Courtesy of the Esther Knox Murray family.





31. Hired hand Glenn Goretzka with Silver King; Charlie Knox standing and son Charles Knox far right, threshing with Billy Boy and Maud harnessed nearby.

For whatever reason Erick did not collaborate with Charles Knox in 1928 when Eureka and Big Buck were both two year olds, Charles' decision to "prove" Big Buck with his own draft mares, and the Cream foals that were born in 1929, seems to have influenced Erick. He could have continued to wait and do nothing with Eureka; he could have hoped she would be like Old Granny and have Cream foals no matter what the breed or color of the Sire; he could have made arrangements to take Eureka to Minnesota to the Yancys for a cross with Yancy No 3. But Erick chose none of those options. After waiting in 1928, it was rather unexpected that he wanted another Cream. But he chose to collaborate with Charlie Knox in 1929. That is, to cross his Eureka No 4 with Charlie's Big Buck No 5.

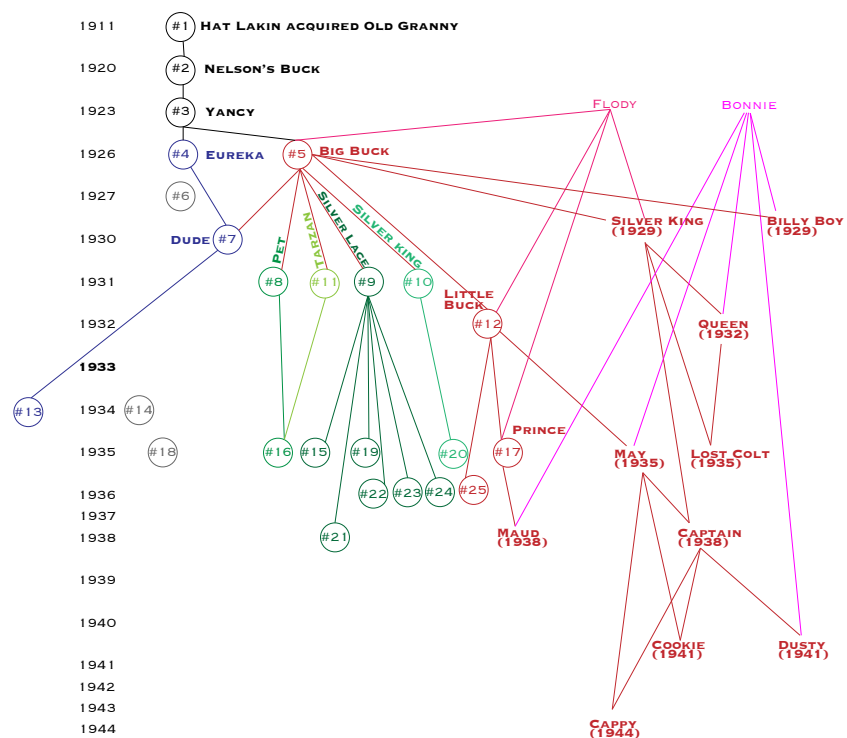
What did make sense was that they would be "fixing the genes" crossing these two American Cream Draft Horses both sired by the Cream Yancy No 3. in that it would be the first "Cream on Cream" cross: it was the first time there was more than a 50/50 chance that the foal in 1930 would be a Cream.

When Erick's Cream colt Dude No 7 arrived in 1930, Erick was set for any future breed-development plans he might have ever hoped for. By that I mean, Yancy No 3, Big Buck No 5, and Silver King were the Cream stallion options for breeding Creams, but independently of those draft horses, it was just a matter of time before Dude No 7 would turn two and Erick could proceed with developing the new breed extensively with Eureka No 4 and Dude No 7.

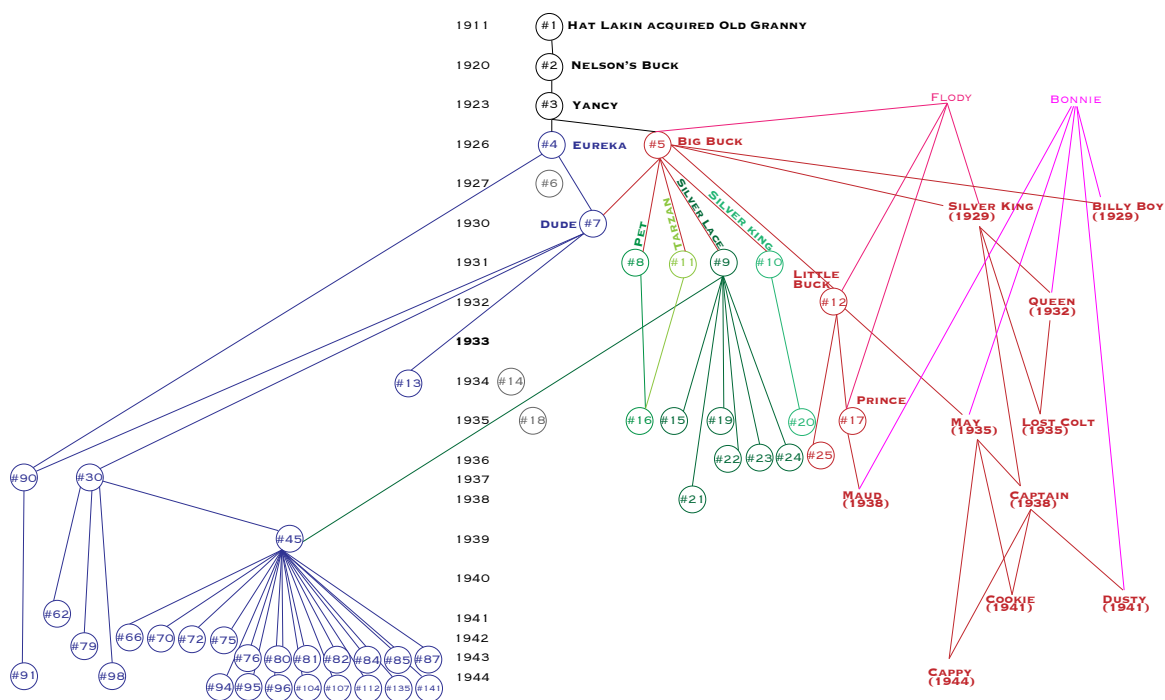
However, in 1930 another parallel scenario was set in motion once Charlie's Big Buck No 5 sired Silver King and Billy Boy and Dude, because important foundations for American Cream Draft Horse development in the 1940s also began. As Dude arrived in 1930, my grandfather Charlie ended up with Henry 'Hank' Johnson, Fred Johnson, and GA Lenning as three new clients, whose new foals in 1931 i.e. Pet No 8, Tarzan No 11, and Silver Lace No 9 were the beginning of CT Rierson's successful breeding program in 1933 with Pet and Tarzan, and GA Lenning's famous breeding stallion Silver Lace, from whom about a third of all Creams are descendants today, and whose many fillies were purchased from 1935 on by CT to include in his breeding program with Pet and Tarzan.

The next three diagrams illustrate early American Cream Draft Horse development. They begin with Old Granny No 1 in 1911, and include the impressive results of Dr. Erick Christian's vision and decisions resulting in Eureka and Dude, as well as their descendants. These diagrams also allow us to see Charles Knox's impact with Big Buck No 5, and CT Rierson's subsequent development of the breed, plus the successful expansion of the breed within the ACDHA Association in the 1940s. You will be able to look at these diagrams and see how, and why, the ACDHA printed The History and Development of the American Cream Draft Horse in 1946, and CT Rierson included both Erick Christian and Charles Knox among the list of "pioneer breeders". (32)

LINEAGE RELATIONSHIPS OF ACDHA REGISTRY HORSES NOS. 1-25
SHOWING CHARLES KNOX'S REGISTERED & UNREGISTERED CREAM DRAFT HORSES IN RED



SELECT LINEAGE RELATIONSHIPS OF ACDHA REGISTRY HORSES, 1911-1944
 SHOWING CHARLES KNOX'S REGISTERED & UNREGISTERED CREAM DRAFT HORSES IN RED
 ERICK CHRISTIAN'S REGISTERED CREAM DRAFT HORSES FOR THREE GENERATIONS IN BLUE



While achieving his vision for America's new draft horse breed, Erick's health changed. As early as 1930 some of those changes can be seen in Christian Family Reunion photos: (34)





By 1932 Erick spent the winter months of October, November, and December at the Hamilton County Home near Webster City. County residents could check themselves in and out of this facility and be cared for. It was not unusual for elderly citizens to do so during the winter months for care, meals, sociability. (35)



Erick died there December 31st 1932 at 12:15 a.m. of acute cardiac dilatations, date of onset unknown. The death certificate also said "A contributory cause of importance not related to the principal cause of death" was "senility". He was 74. He'd only been retired for three months.

Before his death, when Erick could no longer care for his horses, he looked for a buyer and settled on Sam H Twedt of McCallsburg in Story County. (36). Sam happened to be a farmer, a



37. Hans Twedt Family. Back row Ole H, Abel H, Joe H, **Sam H**, Andrew H, Henry H; Middle row: Johannes H; front row: Harriet, Hans J, Julie H, Gloria, Jane E.

banker, and was Erick's shirt-tail relative by marriage. Sam's first wife was Erick's cousin Alice Christian (38), the daughter of Erick's Uncle, John Christian, one of those early Illinois immigrants in Erick's family that historian Arlen Twedt documented leaving Lisbon Township to become an earliest settler in Story County in Central Iowa. Alice Christian had married Sam Twedt in 1890. After Alice died in 1901, Sam remarried in 1903 and was a farmer with a lot of land and a lot of draft horses when he purchased Eureka and Dude from Erick sometime before Erick Christian's death in 1932.



38. Alice Christian Twedt 1871 - 1901.

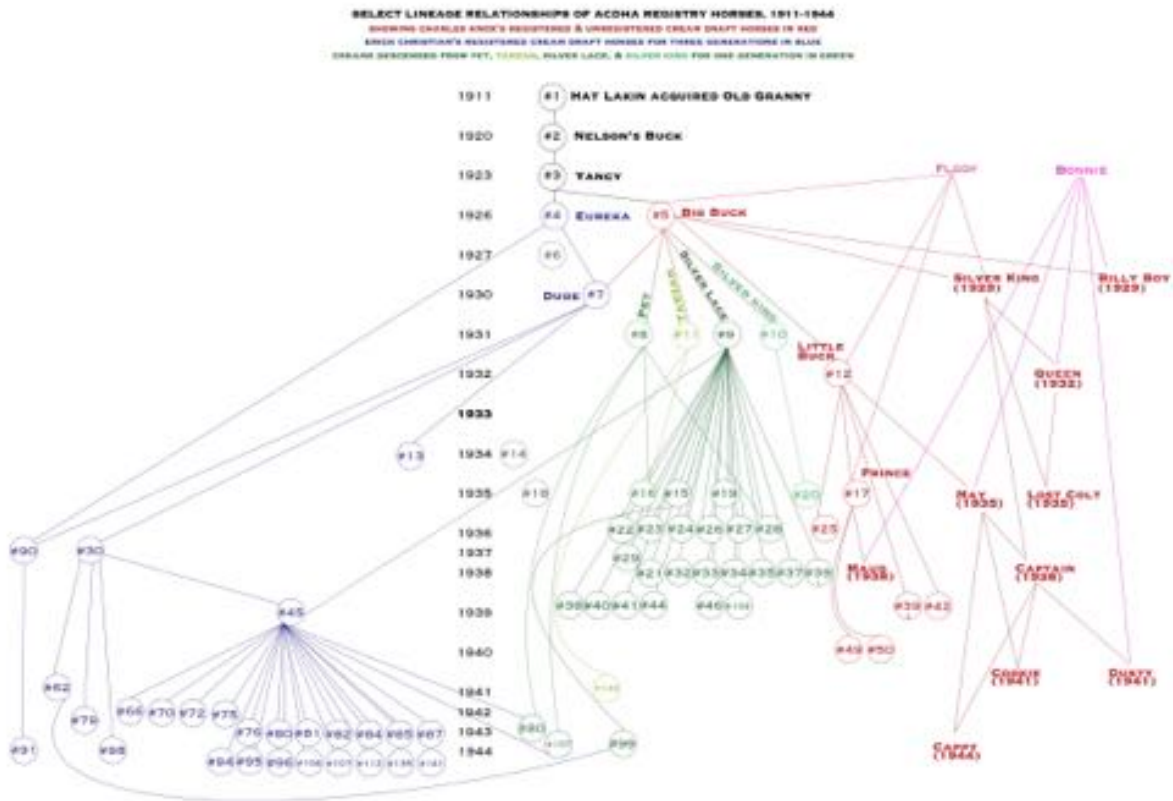
Sam Twedt, and his brother Joe even more so, furthered Erick Christian's Eureka-Dude line after 1932. Regarding a c1920 photo of Sam Twedt farming with draft horses, Barbara Schulz said:

"The one who only ever farmed with horses and raised his beloved daft horses...walking behind...his oldest son Allison (b 1906), is far right...if 14 then Yes this photo might be from about 1920".



39. Sam H Twedt with son Allison and nephews Arthur and Clarence Twedt c 1920. Courtesy of Steven Twedt from the Photograph Collection of Samuel Harold and Dorothy Halsted Twedt. 2023 phone interview with Barbara Schulz.

The third diagram, repeated below, illustrates the Twedt involvement in Erick Christian's legacy:



See note 33.

In closing, I would like to share a photo of Erick, and a copy of his obituary. (40).



Death of Erick Christian
 Jewell Record: Mr. Erick Christian, long-time resident in this community, died at 12:15 o'clock last Saturday morning. His death resulted from cerebral hemorrhage and the debility due to his age; and occurred at the county home east of Webster City where he has been spending the winter months.

Erick Christian, son of Christian and Anna Christian, was born at Lisbon, Ill., Sept. 26, 1858, and died in Hamilton County, Iowa, Dec. 31, 1932, at the age of 74 years, 3 months and 5 days. He lived in Illinois until in the early eighties, then came to Iowa, residing since at Jewell where he has lived for many years past. For years he engaged in his work as a veterinarian, throughout Hamilton and adjoining counties, and he enjoyed an exceptionally wide acquaintance and had an unusual number of good friends throughout the wide territory in which his work took him.

He was married at Nevada, Iowa, Sept. 28, 1888, to Miss Fannie Garrison. Two daughters were born to this union, Attie, who died at the age of 3 years, and Cleo who died when about 16 years old. He is survived by four brothers, Louis of Manooka, Ill., Martin of Fort Dodge, Ellis of Scranton, and Randall of Newark, Ill., as well as many cousins, nieces and nephews.

He was baptised and confirmed in the Lutheran faith at Helmer, Ill.

Mr. Christian was genial and friendly; he had many good traits and was noted for his fondness for and kindness to children and to dogs and for his fondness for flowers and shrubbery in the growing of which he seemed to have peculiar talent.

The funeral was held at one o'clock Wednesday afternoon at the A. L. Fleenor funeral parlors in Jewell, the Rev. F. F. Stover officiating. Songs were sung by Mrs. Otto Fenton and Mrs. A. L. Fleenor; and John Foster, J. E. Glaman, Chas. E. Glaman, R. T. Wise, Ed Perry and B. S. Millet served as pall bearers. The body was taken to Radcliffe for interment.

Dr Erick Christian, Jewell veterinarian and visionary in the early development of the American Cream Draft Horse in Central Iowa, is the town of Jewell's claim to fame in the Cream Draft Horse world.

Erick's horse sense, his veterinarian surgeon expertise, his opinions about Old Granny and advice to Hans Nelson, the fact that he told everyone about his belief Old Granny's descendants were possibly a new draft horse breed, the actions he took in 1925 and 1929 to begin developing the breed himself at the end of his life, all were essential to the early development of the breed.

I am here today to encourage your appreciation of the crucial role he played. When he died more than 90 years ago, Erick was right — Hat Lakin's mare's good-looking foals were unusual — Old Granny and her babies were something unique — they actually were a whole new draft horse breed, developed in Iowa, and the only draft horse native to the United States.

Endnotes

1. Nancy Eich Kayser is a Hamilton County historian whose breadth of experience and knowledge of local history and resource materials completely informs our work together for this presentation today. Her contributions to local history include researching The History of the Hamilton County Fair, the History of Horse and Car Racing in Webster City, the History of Highway 20 Names, the Painted Ads 1915-1926 at the Hamilton County Fair, Indexing the Hamilton County Map of 1883, preparing Hamilton County township maps from 1918 for online availability, creating and administering an American Cream Draft Horse Breeders survey, and developing a repository of Iowa articles on American Cream Draft Horses for the Ellsworth Museum. A longtime resident of Webster City, she has been a photographer, news reporter, Depot volunteer, theater costumer, 4-H leader, golfer, avid horsewoman, and Saddleclub member. Nancy currently resides in Lowden, Iowa.

Nancy is unable to be here today, recovering well from a recent surgery.



Barbara Knox Homrighaus grew up attending the Hildal-Maland Reunion at Little Wall Lake where about 200 Espe, Espeland, Hildal, Maland, and Knox relatives gathered for a picnic each June. She was born in Fort Dodge, went to grade school in the Mesabi Iron Ore Range in Minnesota, then North Polk at Sheldahl and Alleman in Iowa, followed by high school at United Community west of Ames. She received a BA in History at Grinnell College, and has an MA in modern European History from Bloomsburg University in PA. Her most recent publication Silver King Charles Knox & The American Cream Draft Horse 1925 - 1945 is about her Grandfather farming with American Cream Draft Horses. Charles Knox was born and raised on the Knox home farm 1.5 miles east of Jewell, Section 35 (Currently the Cathy Jensen farm). Barbara resides in Green Bay, WI and Madrid, IA.

Jodi Knox of Ames for created the powerpoint deck for today's talk and is presenting the images documenting today's presentation. Thank you Jodi!

2. Fred Lakin, Bess Bainbridge, Harry 'Hat' Lakin at the Staples-Lakin Reunion. Prior to 1942. Courtesy of Janet Adix from the Leon Coates Photograph Collection

3. Composite of 1883 Hamilton County Map showing American Cream “Pioneer Breeders” Hat Lakin (Purple, Lakins Grove), Hans Nelson & Sons (Green), John & Jessie Lakin Yancy (Purple, Lakins Grove), Erick Christian (town of Jewell), and Charles Knox (home farm East of Jewell in Red, 1877-1904 and 1910-1929; and the Knox farm West of Jewell in Red, 1904-1910).

4. As stated in History and Development of the American Cream Horse, Composed by Karene Bunker, Secretary, February 1946

“As to the lineage of Old Granny, we cannot say. She may descend from a long line of cream horses but no one knows. Trying to trace her would be more or less guess work on our part. Due to the keen memory of the older breeders of the cream horse, we do have a clear and fairly complete record of Old Granny’s descendants. The names of these men appear throughout the entire history of our horses.

Old Granny raised several cream colored colts on the Lakin farm, all of which sold at far above average prices. She was then sold to the Nelson Bros. Of the same community, and there she spent the remainder of her long and productive life. It was here that the breed really began and it was due we believe, to the foresight of Eric Christian of Jewell, Iowa. Eric an old time veterinary and great horse lover, was very much attracted by the beauty of one of Granny’s stallion colts and persuaded them to keep him for a stallion. This colt later became known as Nelson’s Buck No. 2 and may be regarded as the progenitor of the breed. Eric was much interested in the possibilities of creating a new breed of these attractive draft horses, but unfortunately he did not live to see his dream materialize.

Buck was kept as a stallion only a year but during that time sired one cream colt of which we have record. It was the stallion, Yancy No. 3 foaled in 1923, out of a black Percheron mare owned by the Nelsons. He attained a weight of around 1600 pounds and ran true to the real American Cream type. This stallion was later sold to John Yancy, who moved to Minnesota some time later taking the horse with him. There Yancy No 3 died at about fifteen years of age after siring several cream colts of which we have no record.

Eureka No 4 and Knox No 5 are the only two recorded creams sired by Yancy before he was taken out of Iowa. The mare, Eureka, was foaled in about 1926 by a light bay mare and was owned by Eric Christian. He had planned to use her in the founding of the new breed he had talked so much about. Due to his inability to care for her and her stallion colt, he sold them to Sam H Twedt of McCallsburg, Iowa, where they carried on. ...”

5. Enlarged inset of Erick Christian from photo “Christian Siblings in Illinois”. Photo courtesy of Laura Obrien.

6. Sherman Township, Hardin County Map of 1892
Section 9 Erick Christian farm 80 acres
Section 16 Erick Christian Track 200 acres

“The "gentlemen's passion" of owning fast trotters and pacers began in the early 1880's. A driving track shows on the Sherman Twp, Hardin county, Section 16 property of Erick Christian. It may have been there when he bought the property or it may indicate that he had an interest in driving/training fast horses. There was a lot of side bets going on during training and during the racing meets. Webster City had a big interest in the fast horses and members of the Driving club established a well laid out driving park on the west end of town. Race meets were held here quite often in the 1890s & early 1900s. Local horse owners brought in out-of-town and out-of-state trainers for their horses. It was a big deal for the city on race days. From newspaper research apparently every town or prosperous farmer with fast horses built tracks during this time period.” Nancy Eich Kayser

BKH Ellsworth Example:

Webster City Tribune May 12, 1886, page 2

Ellsworth.... B. A. Lakin is arranging to have a driving track on which to train his "fleet of foot" horse stock. Gill Sanford to manipulate the reins during the season of training.

7. Roland Record Newspaper Archives May 23, 1895 p 5
8. 1918 Hamilton County Historical Atlas map of Ellsworth town. Outlet B: Dayton Street.
9. June 3rd 1897 Ellsworth News, “Erick Christian, auctioneer Ellsworth, Iowa” in Ellsworth News, December 16th 1931 page 2, Wednesday: “Thirty-Four Years Ago”. Note: This may not be the earliest time Erick Christian was an auctioneer. The search engine for Ellsworth News currently on line begins 1/1/1899, so the example is earlier than that parameter. Other examples: Ellsworth Chronicle 16 Sep 1899 p 1; “Auctioneer Erick Christian will cry your sale...” runs weekly 23 times, ending toward the end of 1902.
10. Jewell Record, 21 April 1905, p 8 Ad.
11. Jewell Record published in Webster City, Iowa on Thursday, March 7th, 1907 p 5.
12. Kendall Young Library. Ellsworth: Slide #41 Inside the stockyards - Fred Lakin on the job. Hamilton County Historical Association 1975-1976, Led by Ed Nass, Iowa Central Community College and Dr Lloyd Oakland, retired. NEK
13. ACDHA Registry 1911-1933 graphic, designed by Ruth Homrighaus for BKH.
14. Webster City Journal, September 29, 1910, p 2 “Hard on Hubby”
15. Emery Anderson. Courtesy of Ellsworth Museum, Janet Adix, Director.
16. Emery Elisha Anderson. Public photograph shared by bellis7264 on [ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com)

17. Post Card Album "Presented to Miss Cleo Christian by her Sunday School Teacher W C Cole December 24, 1907." Courtesy Ann Omvig Maine. Possible photo of Cleo Christian, unlabeled and undated, found loose in the back of her Postcard Album, 2023.
18. Post Card Album "Presented to Miss Cleo Christian by her Sunday School Teacher W C Cole December 24, 1907." Postcard of Jewell High School from Cleo Christian's postcard album. Courtesy Ann Omvig Maine.
19. Post Card Album "Presented to Miss Cleo Christian by her Sunday School Teacher W C Cole December 24, 1907." Courtesy Ann Omvig Maine. Undated, unlabeled loose photo of Cleo Christian's classmates, found in the back of her Post Card Album ; List of Jewell High School Alumni, Class of 1907. Courtesy Richard Steffen, Jewell Museum Director.
20. The Palimpsest Vol XLVIII Oct 1967 No 10, pp 441-505; p 461.
21. Jewell Record 13 January 1921 p 3 "Co. Farm Bureau Dews Department. Horse Outlook is Bright."
22. "Horses Finally Lose their Jobs: Tractor Power Overcomes Horse Power in 1945." US Dept of Commerce data.
23. Des Moines Tribune, 21 Oct 1930 p 1 "Many Others Nearly Equal High Count, but Maybe There Are Larger Ones."
24. Jewell the Gem 1988. Dr. Erick Christian (left) practiced Veterinary Medicine. Courtesy of Richard Steffen, Directory, Jewell Museum.
25. "Touring Map of the Custer Battlefield Hiway: The Scenic Route to the West". Library of Congress (.gov) image.
26. Erick's parents Christian Christianson & Anna Larson Ness, and grandparents Christian Christianson & Ales Jonsdotter Soellsvik. Public photos shared by David Hill and ckgage on [ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com); See [The Central Iowa Norwegians](#) 3 Vol, by Arlen Twedt.
27. Christian Brothers threshing in Illinois, and enlarged Insert of Erick Christian. Courtesy of Laura Obrien. Erick is sixth from the left in the row of standing workers.
28. Erick Christian and Siblings. Back row Martin, Julia, Ellis; Front row: Erick, Randall, Lewis, Franklin. Courtesy Laura Obrien.
29. Christian Brothers, perhaps after Julia's death in 1914. Martin, Lewis, Randall back row; Ellis, Erick, and Franklin Christian, front row. Courtesy Laura Obrien.

30. Charles Knox with Big Buck aka Knox 1st No 5. About 1930. Esther Knox Murray photograph collection. Courtesy of the Esther Knox Murray family.

31. Hired Man Glenn Goretzka with Silver King, about 1931, courtesy June Knox Nemecheck and Esther Knox Murray Photograph Collections; Threshing with Billy Boy and Maud: Charlie Knox standing middle, son Charles Knox far right. About 1944 Courtesy Lois Patzoldt Knox Photograph Collection.

32. History and Development of The American Cream Horse, Karene Topp, Feb 1946. P 1.

33. ACDHA Registry data courtesy of Secretary Kerrie Beckett. Diagrams researched by Barbara Knox Homrighaus, designed by Ruth Homrighaus. Note: the central section of the third illustration is in process. When finalized, there will be more than 60 additional green circles in the central section.

34. Christian Family Reunion in 1930 with two inset enlargements of Erick Christian. Lewis, Randall, Ellis, Erick, and Martin Christian at the Reunion. Courtesy of Laura Obrien and Mark Christian.

35. Nancy Eich Kayser information. Community History Archive of the Hamilton County site and Daily Freeman Journal, 8 June 1957 p 41.

36. History and Development of The American Cream Horse, Karene Topp, ACDHA, 1946.

37. Hans Twedt Family. Back row Ole H, Abel H, Joe H, **Sam H**, Andrew H, Henry H; Middle row: Johannes H; front row: Harriet, Hans J, Julie H, Gloria, Jane E. Posted on [ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com) public tree by tgoulooze.

38. Alice Christian Twedt 1871 - 1901. Posted on [ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com) public tree by mickey1168.

39. Sam H Twedt with son Allison and nephews Arthur and Clarence Twedt c 1920. Courtesy of Steven Twedt from the Photograph Collection of Samuel Harold and Dorothy Halsted Twedt.

40. See endnote 29 regarding this Dr Erick Christian photo inset. Obituary from Ellsworth News, 11 Jan 1933 p 1. "Death of Erick Christian".

Thank you

Thank you to co-researcher Nancy Eich Kayser; Jodi Knox for technical expertise and editing support; the Knox family for their ongoing encouragement; Jewell Museum, and Director Richard Steffen; to the Ellsworth Library and Museum, Librarian Salena Schmitz, and Director Janet Adix; to the ACDHA, President Belle Davis, Secretary Kerrie Beckett, and Associate Member Clair Rierson; to Wendell, Renee, and Maggie Lupkes for their kindness and generosity allowing the public to see their American Cream Draft Horse Goldie after the presentation; and most of all to the love of my life, Barry Homrighaus.

Since the 1980s registered Cream draft horse numbers have doubled so that there are now about 450 left in the world. The next goal is to double that number again.

The American Cream Draft Horse Association exists to preserve and promote the breed. In support of that mission, and in honor of my grandparents Charles and Hattie Hildal Knox, I've made the second edition of Silver King: Charles Knox & The American Draft Horse 1925-1945 available through the ACDHA only, to support their mission.

The Cream horse story is uniquely American, beginning right here in Hamilton County. Currently there is a Bill in Committee in the Iowa Legislature to declare the American Cream Draft Horse the State Horse of Iowa.

Lets make that happen.