

Reminiscences of My Boyhood in Roslyn.

Our White Horse

By Roy Moger

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In 1907, the year I was born, my father had our present driveway built. He also had our "barn" built and hired Billy Jenkins and his wife, Sarah, to come and live in the upstairs of the "barn" and work for us. Billy took care of the garden and grounds and the animals, and Sarah did the cooking and took care of the house.

The "barn" was really a stable and carriage house, not a barn in the usual sense of the word, but for some reason our family always spoke of it as "the barn." On the south side of the ground floor was the carriage house with large sliding doors on the west side. On the north side of the ground floor was the stable with a box stall in the northwest corner and two regular stalls along the north wall. There was a sliding door between the stable and the carriage house.

(The cow was kept, when indoors, in the box stall and the horses in the regular stalls.)

In the center of the building, taking some space away from the carriage house, was a tack or harness room and the stairs leading to the second floor. Billy and Sarah lived over the carriage house in a paneled room which was heated by a wood stove. On the other side of the second floor was a loft for the storage of hay and grain for the animals and a large water tank. This room had a trap door through which the hay and feed could be lowered to the stable below.

Toilet facilities consisted of an outhouse to the north of the barn near the chicken house and the corn crib.

To build the new driveway, a horse was needed to do the heavy work, such as pulling the dirt scoop, stone boat and road grader. Our horse "Dick" was a carriage horse, not a work horse, and not suited to such work. My father, therefore, some time in the summer of 1907, bought a work horse at an auction in New York City and had it sent to Roslyn by steamboat.

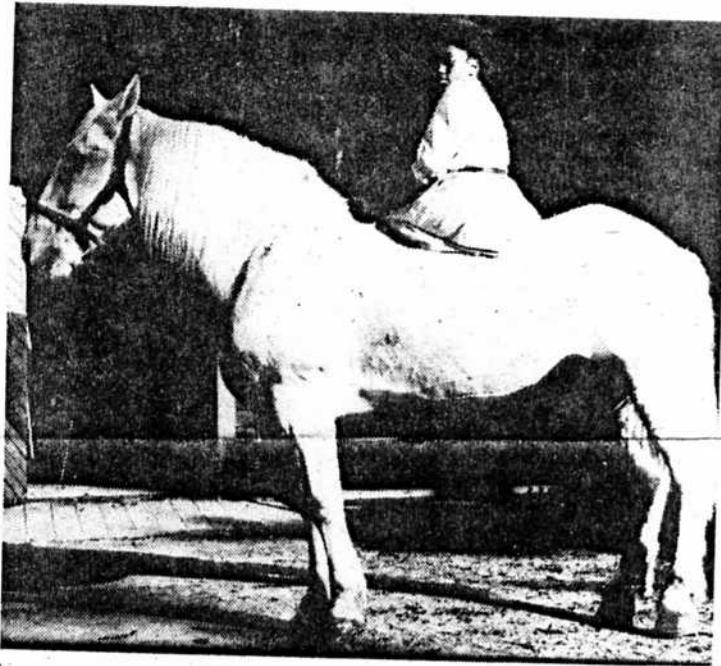
Father saw the horse put on the boat and then he came home by train. The boat took three hours, the train an hour, so Father was home a long time before the boat. When he got home, he told Billy to drive to the steamboat dock to get

the white horse he had bought. The steamboat got to Roslyn about six o'clock in the evening.

The family had dinner and waited for Billy to return with the horse. Eventually Billy returned home, but without the horse. My father was somewhat surprised for he had seen the horse put on the boat. When questioned by Father, Billy allowed that there

Father's purchase, he sent Billy back to the steamboat dock to pick up the white horse.

Father learned some time later just what Billy's problem had been. Billy was very proud of our carriage horse "Dick," which was indeed a very beautiful horse, and he was wont to boast among his friends in the village of my father's judgment of horses. The white horse that Father had bought in New York was indeed a disreputable animal. It was an old



JENKINS' DAUGHTER on the "disreputable" white horse Moger's father bought. (Circa 1907)

had been a white horse, but it couldn't be Father's. Father would never have bought such a disreputable horse. When questioned further, Billy admitted that this white horse had been shipped to G. F. Moger, but he had not accepted delivery, for the horse was in such poor condition.

As Billy's description fitted

horse purchased to work on the driveway and then be sold. Billy had bragged so much that he was ashamed to be seen with a horse that in no way lived up to Billy's idea of Father's standards of horseflesh.

I'm told that Billy, having brought the white horse under cover of darkness, never took the horse off our property until it was sold. He managed to shoe the horse himself rather than take it to the blacksmith shop, where it could be seen and be the ruin of my father's reputation as a judge of horses.

I was too young to know, but I suspect that Billy encouraged my father to get rid of the white horse as soon as the driveway and stone gutter were completed.