

CRIBAN VICTOR

A FOUNDING FATHER OF THE SECTION B PONY

auteur Claudia Novak for the 1986 American National Welsh Pony Yearbook

In the 1930's the Welsh Pony and Cob Society recognized the need for the registration of "ponies of riding type". Up until this time, the Section B designation had been used for ponies of Cob type standing between 12.2 and 13.2 hands. The early days of the registration of Section B "ponies of riding type" held much confusion. Many Cobs and what could be termed by today's standards as "part-breds" crept into the Section B registry. Ponies of Oriental, Thoroughbred, Polo pony and Welsh Cob breeding played important roles in the development of today's Section B pony. Certainly, the Section B pony had more "growing pains" than any other Section of the Welsh.

By the 1960's the type and objective of the Section B pony of riding type was well planted in the minds of breeders both in the UK and the United States. During the period of "growth" for the Section B pony certain stallions have proved to be landmarks. One of these ponies is Criban Victor (1775) (Criban Winston x Criban Whalebone) born in 1944. Criban Victor is the best example of Section B ponies with the "outside" influence of Cob breeding. To quote Dr. Wynne Davies from a recent letter "though if (Criban) Victor had been foaled after (19)50's, he would have been in Section C (registry)". Certainly, the history of Section B ponies would have to be re-written if Criban Victor had not been part of the foundation of this section!

The story of the Criban stud is one that is steeped well in the history of the Welsh Mountain Pony and Cob. The love of the land which according to old records had been in the family since 1697 was a controlling interest of the family along with their equal love for their livestock and Welsh Ponies and Cobs. Criban Victor was a product of this love. To quote a 1964 article by Nell Pennell, "From this hardy stock the Criban ponies are descended, their records going back for 200 years." Mr. Howell Richards, who registered the prefix Criban with the Welsh Pony & Cob Society, died in 1963 at the advanced age of 97. Howell Richards was notorious for his riding talents. To quote the same article written by Nell Pennell, "He rode ponies of about 13 hands, very similar in type to the Champion Welsh Pony of today, Criban Victor. Mr. Richards was a fine horseman, and being a light weight, could easily ride ponies. He had no use for cob or pony that lacked the conformation to be good ride or the limbs and feet to stand the work."

Not only did Criban use stallions of their own breeding but they went outside and used many stallions. This fact can be proved many times over but an exceedingly good example of this is Criban Victor's sire, Criban Winston. Criban Winston was one of the first sons of Coed Coch Glyndwr (1617) (Revolt x Dinarth Henol). Criban Winston's claim to fame does not just come from his most famous son, Criban Victor, but careful study of the early stud books will prove the tremendous numbers of ponies he sired. Criban Winston influence was felt at Dyrin, Bowlder and Revel along with many other studs as he was a premium stallion for ten years.

Criban Victor's dam, Criban Whalebone (9138) (Mathrafal Broadcast x Criban Mulberry) was the product of crossing one of the oldest lines of Criban's Welsh Mountain ponies to that of a Cob. Criban Whalebone was a bay mare about 13 hands. Not only did she produce Criban Victor but also Criban Gay Snip, the grand-sire of Solway Master Bronze. Whalebone did not have a great disposition herself. To quote Dr. Wynne Davis's book *Welsh Ponies And Cobs*, "When she was five years old and only broken to halter, the Richards brothers decided that she would make a good shepherding pony and endeavored to break her to saddle in one day. Whalebone would have none of this; perhaps she realized that as long as she kept bucking off her riders she would be allowed to return to the hills and concentrate on producing more excellent foals!" Certainly, the heritage of fine performance ponies with marvelous dispositions played heavily in the characteristic that Criban Whalebone gave her progeny.

Criban Mulberry (Criban Cracker 1308 x Criban Rasberry (7971) traces directly to the stallions Invincible Taffy (593) and Criban Wild Wonder (11 79). Invincible Taffy's dam was Chocolate Lass (3442) born in 1905 and out of Ystrad Jewel (273) foaled in 1893. Invincible Taffy was a small pony (under 12 hands) but a pony that could take a rider all day on the hills either hunting or herding. Criban Wild Wonder was a son of the grey mare Wild Flash (3552) foaled in 1897 and one of the favorite driving ponies of the Richards' family because "few ponies could pass her on the road".

Mathrafal Broadcast (1502) (Mathrafal Eiddwen x Plasgwyn Polly) came to Criban in 1935. Mathrafal Broadcast was the personal mount of Llewellyn Richards. In 1937, Mrs. Alice McLean of Long Island, New York saw Mathrafal Broadcast and took a fancy to him. Along with eight lovely Criban mares, Broadcast was exported to the United States. Mrs. McLean used Broadcast on her Polo Pony mares but shortly after his importation, Mrs. McLean died. The ponies and Broadcast were sold without a trace.

Mathrafal Eidden was a fine example of a Cob being a Royal Welsh Winner four times. Mathrafal Eidden's most famous influence in the Cob world was through his son, Eiddwen's Image (1703) who in turn produced Pentre Eiddwen Comet. Pentre Eiddwen Comet (1796) is the sire of Llanarth Flying Comet, Nebo Black Magic and Parc Welsh Flyer to name only a few.

Criban Victor was sold to Mrs. Cuff (Downland Stud) at the Criban Sale in November of 1946. Criban Victor was shown at the Royal Welsh in 1947 and then sold to Lord Kenyon, Gredington Stud, where he stayed until his death in 1973. Criban Victor chalked up a very impressive show record winning the Royal Welsh in 1956,1958,1959,1960 and 1964. He also won the Ponies of Britain Championships in 1959, 1962, 1965 and 1966 plus the National Pony Society Shows in 1956,1959,1960 and finally, at twenty-five years of age, the Section B Championship and Reserve Supreme Championship in 1969. When you are in the Offices of the Welsh Pony & Cob Society in Wales, Criban Victor still watches you. If you are a stamp collector, you are sure to own a copy of the Criban Victor stamp that was issued in 1978. To the best of my knowledge (my son is the stamp collector!), Criban Victor the only Welsh Pony that has been honored with stamp in his image. FOR a little less than \$1, you can purchase from any big stamp collector a memento of a Welsh pony that has been a landmark!

The influence of Criban Victor on Section B breeding both here and in the United Kingdom is monumental. Except for people that do exclusive linebreeding and in-breeding, Criban Victor can be found in many Section B pedigrees in the U.K. Here in the United States, the influence of Criban Victor can be felt even more. Out of the nine imported founding fathers of Section B breeding in the United States: Bowdell Buccaneer, Brockwell Spider, Coed Coch Ballog, Coed Coch Blaen Lleuad, Cusop Sheriff, Downland Drummer Boy, Farnley Lustre, Kirby Can Jay and Wickenden Osprey, two are Criban Victor sons (Coed Coch Ballog and Coed Coch Blaen Lleuad). The most influential imported sire of Section B breeding (Cusop Sheriff) is a great-grandson of Criban Victor. Another major imported stallion of influence, Wickenden Osprey, is a Criban Victor grandson. The Section B stallion with more get on the ground in the last ten years, Findeln Blue Danube, is a great-grandson and double great-grandson of Criban Victor!



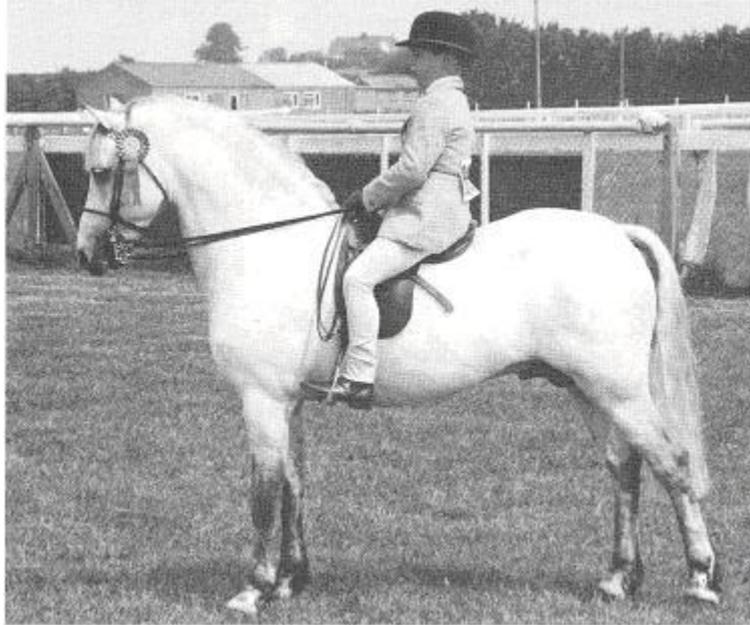
**Cusop Sheriff at GlanNant Farm, N. Y. a great-grandson of Criban Victor.*

Criban Victor has certainly played a major role in the development of Section B ponies here in the United States. Three sons of Criban Victor have played important roles at several major studs. The first son of Criban Victor that was imported to the United States was Ankerwycke Victor 2231 (2391) (x Ankerwycke Criban Snowdon (9555)) a brown stallion born in 1955 and imported in 1956 by Bray's Island Plantation, Yemassee, SC Ankerwycke Victor spent his last years at Neilsondale Farm, East Caledon, Canada and died in the fall of 1984. While at Neilsondale Stud, Ankerwycke Victor produced several foal crops and his blood will continue *on*.

Coed Coch Ballog B2919 (2518)(x Berwyn Beauty(9270)) is a bay stallion born in 1956 and imported in 1958 by D. H. Fraser, North Sidney, Nova Scotia., Canada. While at Duntulm Stud he produced numerous get. In more recent years, he has been owned by Cherry DeSpain of Bristol Pony Stud, Channelview, TX and is currently owned by the Burkharts of Rambur Stables, Newton, KS. Coed Coch

Ballog is still alive and siring foals. Coed Coch Blaen Lleud B-4962 (2222) (x Berwyn Beauty (9270)) was a chestnut roan stallion born in 1953 and imported in 1959 by Elliot Bonnie, Urbana, OH. Coed Coch Blaen Lleud spent the rest of his life at the Bonnie's and his get are most commonly seen under the Buckeye prefix.

The influence of Criban Victor upon breeding in the United Kingdom is tremendous. Criban Victor daughters have also been used in Section C Welsh Cob breeding programs.



The last son of Criban Victor Wharley Taliesin (x Rawthey Top Note) F. 1971 at the Plush Stud, UK



**Coed Coch Blaen Lleud (Criban Victor x Berwyn Beauty) – Imported USA. 1959.*

The influence of one Criban Victor son, Coed Coch Blaen Lleud, has left its most lasting mark. Dr. Wynne Davis devotes a whole chapter of his book to Coed Coch Blaen Lleud. Even though Blaen Lleud (Welsh for "new moon") only spent three mature years in the U.K. his sons and daughters have changed Welsh Section B breeding throughout the world. In an interesting letter from Mrs. Colbatch-Clark (Collena Stud) she retold the story of seeing the 1959 Coed Coch Sale that Coed Coch Blaen Lleud was sold at. She remembers Mr. Eckley of Cusop Stud bidding on Blaen Lleud almost until the gavel landed for the last time. Coed Coch Blaen Lleud sold for 320 guineas which is little by today's standards but a great deal for pony in those days. How the history of Section B ponies would have to be re-written if Coed Coch Blaen Lleud had stayed in the UK. where he could have seen the best of

Section B mares. I am sure that it couldn't be anticipated that Blaen Lleuad would be such an outstanding sire and would be lost forever to the British Section B breeders.

Two daughters of Blaen Lleuad were retained by Coed Coch and went on to produce the noteworthy stallion Coed Coch Pedestr (Mrs. Smalley, Mynd Stud) and the dam of the Royal Welsh winner Coed Coch Targed. Most famous of his sons are Chirk Crogan (3566) and Chirk Caradoc (3331) who were the only progeny of Chirk Heather (1899-F.S. 2) (Criban Victor x Gredington Bronwen 312 F.S. 1). Chirk Caradoc was retained by Lady Margaret Myddelton (Chirk Stud) and produced many fine ponies for Lady Margaret. Sadly in 1984 most of the ponies had to be sold since Lady Margaret's husband gave up farming with only four mares being retained. Chirk Crogan had gone to the Weston Stud where he produced many winners and finally in 1970 went to Mrs. O. M. Weston of Seaholm Stud. Two other Blaen Lleuad sons bear mentioning and they are Coed Coch Pawl (3350) (x Coed Coch Pluen) who sired the Royal Welsh Winner Cusop Banknote and Rhyd-Y-Felin Selwyn (2720) (x Rhyd-Y-Felin Seren Wyb) who was sold to Sweden and then re-imported by Mrs. Mountain of Twyford Stud and now lives with the Buckett's at Moorsfield Stud on the Isle of Wright.



Rhyd-Y-Felin Selwyn (C C Blaen Lleuad x Rhyd-Y-Felin Seren Wyb) F. 1956. Photo 1980 from the Neilsondale Farm, Canada



Rhyd-Y-Felin Selwyn at Isle of Wright 1982.

One test of the greatness of a stallion and his influence are the number of people that continue his blood through a line-breeding program. In the U.K. Lady Margaret Middleton (Chirk), Mrs. Colbatch-Clark (Collena) and Mr. and Mrs. A. P. Allen (Bleachgreen) just to mention a few are using this program. Here in the States, Mrs. Karl Butler (GlanNant) and Cherry DeSpain (Bristol) are currently doing Criban Victor line-breeding. In Canada, Anita Neilson (Snow Pony) has one of the largest groups of Criban Victor relatives that I know of in the world.

What impresses me most with these ponies is their bone, type and athletic nature. Snowgoose (Duntlum's Pride of Erin by Coed Coch Ballog), a Criban Victor grandson, dominated the AHSA Medium Pony Hunter circuit for many years. Two AHSA Open Pony Hunter winners have been by a Criban Victor grandson (GlanNant Epic). In the last six years, 10 ponies related to Criban Victor have been in the AHSA top six Welsh Pleasure Pony including the 1979 winner of Section B Welsh Pleasure Pony, Timbercreek Morning Mist by Lithgow Grenadier (Criban Victor grandson) and the 1985 winner of Welsh Pleasure Driving, Bristol Salome (Cusop Sheriff and Coed Coch Blaen Lleuad granddaughter and great granddaughter of Coed Coch Ballog). Whether you are doing combined driving, the hunter pony circuit or just want to go out for a good ride, these ponies will carry you to the day's end. Perhaps more than any other stallion, Criban Victor has carried on the true legacy of the Criban stud



Chirk Eos - A Chirk Caradoc granddaughter



Collena Nest (Nebo Dafydd x Merlin Verbena) Section "C" Criban Victor granddaughter.



Bristol Salome (Cusop Sheriff & Coed Coch Blaen Lleuad granddaughter & great-granddaughter of Coed Coch Ballog