



The hardy Galloway calf

HISTORY

In the first edition of the North American Galloway Herdbook (1883), Mr. D. McCrae, Guelph, Ontario, made reference to an early Scottish Society report (1743) which, while describing black as the predominant Galloway color, outlined mixed herd colors of Red, Dun or White as being considered very pure. Galloway cattle and their origins in Scotland are recorded in the historical writings of Youatt (early 1800s). He describes black as the typical and predominant color, with a reference to Whites with black ears—which claims their excellence as milkers and possibly being the “real” pure Galloway breed.

Little or no mention of the White Galloway appears again until 1912, when Grant Bisher, a central Montana rancher, traveled to Nebraska to obtain some Black Galloways. In that shipment appeared one white heifer with black points, reportedly of Galloway type. She proved so gentle and such an excellent milker, that she became the family milk cow, and during her lifetime, she produced numerous white calves—mostly heifers—sired by Black Galloway bulls. Over the years the Bishers developed a small group of Whites in addition to their large herd of Blacks, a tradition carried on by their daughter Jeanette and son-in-law, Bud Gibson, who ranched under the Anchor Galloway name at Springdale, Montana. All present-day White Galloways in the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand can be traced to Anchor Galloway stock.

The White Galloways of Great Britain had a similar history. About 1919, Mr. John McG. Wilson, owner of the Kirkmabreck Galloway Farm in Scotland, purchased a group of Black Galloways at a farm sale. This group included a black-tipped white cow and her white heifer calf. In the ensuing years, and now under the direction of sons John and William Wilson, this White Galloway herd has become famous throughout the nation. All present-day

White Galloways in Great Britain and Europe are descendents of that herd.

In both America and Great Britain, the exact origin of the White Galloway cannot be proven. Due to the passing of all initial breeders, researchers have been unable to prove the White of different origin than the Black. No exportations of Whites from either country were made prior to 1980. All White Galloways today trace origins to the Anchor Galloway and Kirkmabreck Galloways herds. The exact origins of the White will likely remain a mystery.

RECOGNIZING THE WHITE

The White Galloway line may demonstrate varied color characteristics. Among the most common are: large black ears; mascara-lined black eyes; black nose; freckling (particularly around neck and shoulders); generally, black hooves; black about the poll; black socks and usually, but not always, black teats. Variations range from larger, profuse freckling to a paler coloring almost lacking dark points. Skin pigment is usually dark in the ears, eyes, teats and nose even on pale colored cattle. Pink skin on the nose or around the eyes, while uncommon, is not desirable.



Examples of the color variations of the White Galloway

GENETICS OF THE WHITE

A homozygous White will always produce White. White Galloways will not produce exclusively white calves unless at least one parent is genetically homozygous (white genes only). The heterozygous state (both black and white genes) is not visually apparent, and generally, matings between two heterozygous Whites will produce 75% white calves, 25% black. Mating heterozygous Whites to Blacks will usually produce 50%



Black Galloway with white calf

white, 50% black. Occasionally, White or Black can carry a recessive red gene which may result in a red or red pointed calf. White Galloways with Red or Dun points are acceptable for registry.

A breeder of White Galloways should expect a percentage of black offspring, but it is important to recognize that several U.S. Agricultural University studies have demonstrated a White can only be produced through White/White or Black/White breeding—Black/Black parents should NOT produce White offspring.

Commonly, breeders mate White to Black in order to broaden the gene pool, therefore, the White's physical characteristics are fundamentally the same as other solid colors of the breed. They are virtually indistinguishable in conformation, performance, carcass, efficiency or other breeding considerations.

THE WHITE ADVANTAGE

Very simply, aesthetic coloration plays a strong role in color preference. It would be accurate to say that light colors reflect the sun's rays and attract fewer insects, making the White Galloway coloring an economic consideration in warmer or insect infested climates. An additional point may be day/night pasture visibility.

CROSSBREEDING

Commercial cattlemen producing crossbred calves will find a heterozygous White Galloway bull sires approximately 50% calves with sire coloring, with the remaining favoring the respective dam. In the case of the Angus, inheritance will be similar to Black Galloways. A Hereford cow on the other hand will have 50% white calves and 50% black baldies; there could be an occasional red-pointed calf. Crossing with other breeds will depend on the specific color genetics involved.



White Galloway-Hereford crosses

REGISTRIES

In the early 1970s, The American Galloway Breeders' Association accepted the White Galloway as having the same rights and privileges as other Galloway colors. The Canadian National Live Stock Records and Canadian Galloway Association recognized the Whites in an Appendix as late as 1991, but their registry does not recognize Blacks from White parentage—this policy may be subject to review. In Great Britain, registry began in 1981 and is maintained through the Belted Galloway Society. The rules and regulations in Great Britain and other countries are just being formalized.