

Stud Series: Foundation Scottish Herds

No. 6 The Galloways of Castle Milk

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Submitted by Steve Gapes, Irrabina Galloways

Volume 1 of the Galloway Cattle Society published in 1878 contains registration details of fourteen females carrying the Suffix Castle Milk, registered by the grandfather of the present owner of the herd. The preface to the volume states that it consists of a reprint of the entries in the first four volumes of the Polled Herd Book. It is also explained that the main purpose in establishing a separate herd book for Galloway cattle was owing to the Polled Herd Book being privately owned, the breeders had no power to determine the qualifications which animals ought to possess to entitle them to admission into the Herd Book, and in fact, they had no direct control over its management in any respect. There was the further drawback that its proprietor and editor resided in Banff and contact with breeders in the South West was extremely difficult. It is safe to assume that black cattle of Galloway type were bred and reared at Castle Milk for many years before the first Galloway Herd Book appeared in 1878.

The foundation stock of the Castle Milk Pedigree Galloway herd was therefore fourteen females of which nine were home bred. The original Pedigree Herd sire "Cunningham" (824) also appears in this volume. This bull was from the stock of a breeder who was in the forefront for many years, the late Mr James Cunningham of Tarbreoch, Dalbeattie. The bull, "Cunningham", must have been an animal of desirable type for he had a noted showyard career gaining First Prize at Castle-Douglas in 1871, Second at Dumfries Union Show 1872, First Stirling Highland 1874, First at



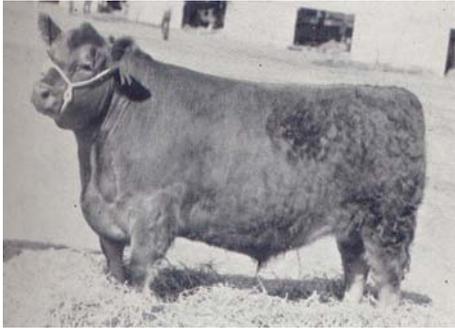
"Norval of Castle Milk" – 1st Prize over 15 months Steer, Smithfield 1959

Dalbeattie in 1875 and First at Castle-Douglas and Gold Medal winner at Aberdeen Highland in 1876.

Other bulls leaving their mark in the young herd around the 1880's were "Black Douglas" (668) bred by the Duke of Buccleuch from a Cunningham bred sire; "Beaconsfield" (1344), a half brother to "Black Douglas", and a winner of top awards at the Kelso Highland 1880. His son, "Premier of Castle Milk" (1642) followed up his success by winning First Prizes at Stirling Highland 1881 and Glasgow Highland 1882.

A young bull purchased for the herd, "Roger of Oakbank" (3590) was exhibited at the Highland of 1884 winning First Prize as a two year old and thereafter sold for export to America at the then extraordinary price of £150. Along with this bull went two females –

notable “Mary 4th of Castle Mill” (9123) who was a granddaughter of “Beaconsfield” and a noted prize-winner.



Females from Castle Milk herd were also prominent showing winners. “Susan” winning First Prize at Stirling Highland in 1881 and “Lady Soney” First Prize cow at Glasgow Highland 1882.

In 1886 the Castle Milk herd was augmented by the purchase of the greater part of a noted Kirkcubrightshire herd belonging to Mr Andrew Montgomery, Netherhall, Castle-Douglas, who at

“Nato of Castle Milk” – 3rd Prize steer over 21 months
Smithfield 1959 2nd Prize fat steer, Royal Highland 1960

that time was regarded as an outstanding breeder and judge of Galloways. This purchase was balanced to some extent by the sale in 1887 to Mr Montgomery for export to America, of fourteen two-year-old heifers described in a record of the transaction as a very level topped, deep flanked batch of heifers on grand legs. Two yearling bulls with strong Beaconsfield – Black Douglas lines accompanied these heifers to America. At the same time Mr Montgomery purchased a two-year-old son of “Roger of Oakbank” for export to Belgium.

The following year, possibly as a result of the favourable reception of the larger consignment of heifers, two very choice females “Nettie 2nd of Castle Milk” (10357) and “Black Lass of Castle Milk” (10361) were exported to America.



A Royal Occasion

During the 1890's the herd continued to hold a prominent place of the prize lists of the National Shows as well as in local events, notable animals being “Nonpareil of Castle Milk” (6163) who was First Prize bull at Darlington Royal, Dumfries Highland in 1895, and also held the same position at Leicester Royal and Perth Highland in 1896. “Druid of Castle Milk” (6159) won First Prize and was Champion Male at Edinburgh Highland in 1899, while his herd

mate “Mario of Castle Milk” (7052) was Second Prize bull. Both bulls were sold to America and when exhibited at Chicago 1900 “Mario” was made First and Champion, while “Druid” took second place to him.

In females the “Nancy Lee” family scored many successes, principle of which was First Prize cow and Champion Galloway at Edinburgh Highland in 1899, with “Nancy Lee 2nd” followed by similar awards to “Nancy Lee 3rd” at the Stirling Highland in 1900.

During the early 1900's Castle Milk stock was much sought after and Volume 25 contains the entries from Twenty seven herds with substantial Castle Milk breeding lines.

The "Alice" family now takes its place in the showring winning top awards with "Alice 3rd" (16867) who was First Prize cow at the Royal 1903, First and Champion Galloway at the Royal 1904, and with "Alice 2nd" (16352) winning First at Park Royal in 1905, and also First and Champion at Dumfries in 1905.

"Alexa of Castle Milk" (19452) contributed to the showyard successes by taking First Place at Paisley Highland 1913, First and Champion at both Hawick Highland and Shrewsbury Royal 1914.

The purchase of an outstanding type Galloway bull – "Jovial of Blackcombe" (11716), further strengthened the herd about this time. This bull was the Champion Galloway at the 1914 Highland at Hawick and took the same honours at the Edinburgh Victory Highland in 1919, when exhibited from Castle Milk.



Galloway Cows and Calves at Pasture

Following the war years, exhibits from Castle Milk featured prominently in the showing with "Ivy of Castle Milk" (30918) taking top honours at Aberdeen Highland in 1928, and Harrogate Royal in 1929. "Lady Elite of Castle Milk" (30321) followed this up by winning First Prize at Dumfries Highland 1930, and Galloway Championship at Manchester Royal 1930. The home bred bull "Excelsior of Castle Milk" (15884) was First Prize old bull and Galloway Champion at Inverness Highland 1932, while "Nazette 3rd" (30930) took First prize and was Reserve Champion Galloway at Dundee Highland in 1933, and similar awards at Aberdeen Highland 1935.

The stock bull at this period was "Warfare of Waterside" (15721) and animals with a formidable run of show successes, being First Prize and Reserve Champion Galloway at Harrogate Royal 1929, First Prize at Alloa Highland 1929, and at Manchester Royal 1930.

In 1936 two home bred bulls won First and Second Prizes at the Melrose Highland. Top honours was given to "Ideal of Castle Milk" (20113) followed by "Flashlight of Castle Milk" (20114) exhibited from the Grange Herd of the late Mr Walter Biggar. The following year at the Alloa Highland Show the positions were reversed with "Flashlight of Castle Milk" (20114) becoming Galloway Champion and "Ideal" taking Second Prize.

"Minsca Mosstrooper" (20865) became junior stock bull at this time. As well as being First Prize winner at Edinburgh Highland Show in 1939, he proved himself an outstanding breeder and his progeny was much sought after.

In 1944, the present owner of the herd, Sir John Wm. Buchanan-Jardine, Bart., decided that it would be a pity if the dun colour in the Galloway breed believed by some to be the original shade of Scandinavian cattle brought to Scotland by the Norse invaders, was allowed to disappear entirely and he set out to establish a herd of Dun Galloway Cattle. The Council of the Society had in 1921 decided to open registration in the Herd Book to dun-coloured animals. Doubtless, many dun animals had appeared in Galloway herds prior to this date, but none had been registered as being dun in colour. Volume 43 of the herd book shows the registration of two dun females and two dun bulls, notably the entry of one outstanding bull "King Priam" (15143) whose blood can be traced in practically every dun animal registered since that time.

Meanwhile, black Galloways from the herd continue to flourish in the showring. "Mignonette of Castle Milk" (42391) taking First Prize and Galloway Championship at the Royal Show at York in 1948, and Second Prize cow at Inverness Highland in the same year.



Head of a Champion

At Inverness in 1948 a heifer from the dun herd "Cressida of Castle Milk" (Dun 45833) led her class while in the following year the Dun bull "Drum Major of Castle Milk" (24489) was Second Prize bull and Reserve Champion Galloway at Shrewsbury Royal.

In 1950 at Oxford Royal, another dun "Dominica of Castle Milk" (46638) was First Prize cow and Reserve Champion Galloway.

During this long run of showyard successes the final objective of a beef animal was never overlooked and Castle Milk Galloways featured prominently at Smithfield Fatstock Show. Records state that a Galloway steer exhibited from Castle Milk won his class and scaled 22cwt. in the year 1887. Further exhibits in the carcass classes took the Championship over all breeds with Galloway steers from Castle Milk in 1929 and 1932.

Gradually the dun herd increased by the purchase of foundation cows from the herds of Shiel and Barkhask'ne, and by the use of dun bulls from the Craigeston and Glaisters herds of Gourlay fame. Indeed the late F. N. M. Gourlay did much to keep the dun colour from disappearing altogether in the early twenties. During the 1950's dun animals bred at Castle Milk appeared regularly in the National Show's awards list, "Drum Major" taking First Place in old bull class and Champion Male at Dumfries Royal Highland in 1954, while "Farquhar of Castle Milk" (Dun-25491) took Second Place old bull and Reserve Champion male at Nottingham Royal in 1955.

At Smithfield Show in 1955 the three steers, all duns, taking the first three places in the senior steer class were all sired by Castle Milk dun bulls, the Second and Third Prize animals being exhibited from Castle Milk.

Coming down to present times, the dun cow “*Ida of Castle Milk*” (53677), had a run of successes in 1959, being Second Prize cow at Aberdeen Royal Highland, First Prize cow at the Oxford Royal, Dumfries and Lockerbie Shows, while stock bull “*Invader of Castle Milk*” (Dun-26921), was First Prize old bull and Champion Galloway at both Dumfries and Lockerbie Shows, being exhibited there after being withdrawn from the cows.

This year, of course, “*Invader*” has had a remarkable run of successes, gaining First Prize and the Championship at both the Royal Highland and the Royal Shows, and was a member of the Galloway team which for the first time won the inter-breed groups prize at the former show.

At Smithfield the same year (1959) a son of “*Ida*” took First Place in the 15 to 21 month class and a son of “*Invader*” was placed Third in the over 21 month class. Both steers were included in the group of three animals representing the Galloway breed competing for the Duke of Norfolk Trophy for which award the Galloway trio were placed Reserve.

The popularity of the dun coloured Galloway soon became apparent, 9 yearling heifers, entered at the Society’s Autumn Sale in 1953 at Castle-Douglas, averaged the record price of £161. Selected animals from Castle Milk have been exported to New Zealand, Jamaica, South Africa, United States, Rhodesia and Canada, the owners in these countries write in very enthusiastic terms of their stock. It is interesting to note that Volume 79 of the Herd Book contains the registration of 233 dun females alone.



“*Ida of Castle Milk*” – 2nd Prize cow, Royal Highland 1959; 1st Prize cow, Royal Show, Dumfries and Lockerbie 1959; 2nd Prize 1960 Royal at Cambridge.

The Castle Milk dun herd at present numbers Ninety-four cows with a round Forty females in the annual younger age groups. All the cows are fully pedigreed and many carry dun breeding on both sides of their pedigrees up to the fifth and sixth generations. Further back in their pedigrees it is interesting to note the frequency with which such outstanding sires as “*Minsca Mosstrooper*”, “*Keystone of Wintershields*”, “*Ideal of Castle Milk*” “*Grange Olympus*”, and “*Jovial of Blackcoombe*”, appear. The stock bulls are “*Invader of Castle Milk*” mentioned earlier, “*Hero of Shiel*”, “*Kitchener of Castle Milk*”, a home bred son of “*Dominica*”, “*Marksman of Castle Milk*” – a son of “*Kitchener’s*” and “*Mentor of Castle Milk*”. This last bull carries the lines of “*Farquhar of Castle Milk*”, “*Keystone of Wintershields*”, “*Ideal of Castle Milk*” on the male side as well as a link with “*Dominica*” on his sire’s side. While his dam traces back to one of the original Castle Milk cows in Volume 1 of the Herd Book.

The breeding policy in the herd adheres as closely as possible to maintaining all the characteristics of the Galloway, strong constitution, depth and width of frame with sound straight legs of good bone, and soft wavy hair.

Cows calve in the open, mostly from December to March and are never housed. The young stock are carried outside at all times, apart from steers which may be brought into yards to fatten. From December onwards through the winter months grass silage is fed to all stock and in the very severe weather the calved cows receive a little hay as well. This is put to encourage the calves to fend for themselves on roughage, and it is surprising to note how soon young calves will nibble a little good hay.

The weaned crop of heifer calves are wintered where they have access to open shed, where a ration containing some protein can be fed in troughs. This is fed at roughly 3 lbs. per head per day and consists of molassed palm kernel meal, a little linseed cake and bruised oats. Silage is also fed to them once a day up to 15 lbs. per head.

Boxes containing mineral salts are placed in each field so that all cattle can help themselves.

Most of the steer calves are carried forward to finish beef grazing off the pasture at around 2 years 5 months and averaging 10 1.2 cwts. live weight.