

• Curlycue, a yearling Bashkir or curly filly in summer coat, raised by Damele & Sons and owned by Susanne Swanson, Magalia, California.

## MORE ON THE CURLY HORSES

By PETER J. DAMELE

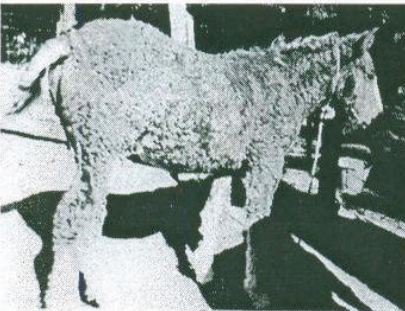
Photos courtesy of Susanne Swanson

WE READ with a great deal of interest the story in *The Western Horseman* about the *Fur Covered Horses*, June, 1960. We have bred and used these horses on a limited scale for the last 60 years. My father, Peter L. Damele, moved to the Three Bar Ranch in 1898. It is located in the central part of Nevada in Kobiah Valley, some 30 to 40 miles northeast of Eureka, Nevada. There were a few curly horses running with thousands of other wild horses on the Pete Hansen and Roberts Mountains. There was a rumor that these horses descended from curly stock owned by a man, name unknown, living some 50 or 60 miles to the south in Antelope Valley. I feel certain that the horses pursued by Morton Bell in 1912 (*Fur Covered Horses, The Western Horseman*, May-June, 1947) were descended from this same stock.

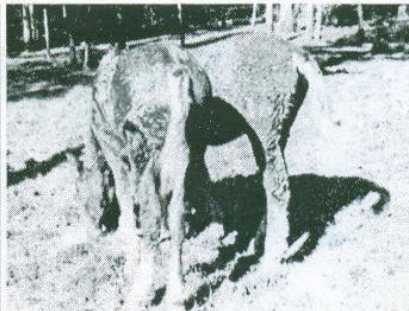
My father caught some of the horses running on the Pete Hansen Mountain, and all of our present day curly stems from these horses. We now have a curly stallion and some 20 mares with curly bloodlines on our Dry Creek Ranch at Eureka, Nevada. Some evi-

dence suggests these horses were imported from the State of Bashkir, eastern Russia, possibly in the 1870s or 1880s. The Bashkir horse is known along the Black Sea and prized by the horsemen of North China.

We have all sizes, colors, and shapes, for they have been crossed with everything from Percherons to Arabians, and the fact that the curly hair continues to appear at all is amazing, for the blood is far from pure. An occasional "typical" curly appears from otherwise normal parents, providing one or both have curly blood. The most noticeable difference in a "typical" curly is the curly hair all over the body, especially in winter when the coat is long, little or no mane, a thin tail, an unusual head, which is rather long and narrow, and a slightly Roman nose with small nostrils. They seldom weigh over 900 pounds, but a few are known which were much heavier. They are not noted for their speed, but they can endure a winter on open range which would kill all other livestock. They are easily broken, and our curly stallion has a very fast and easy walk.



• LaRaine, weanling Bashkir in first year coat, owned by Susanne Swanson of Alasu Arabians, purchased from the Dameles.



• Curlycue and LaRaine, as weanling fillies, showing the 3D brand of the Dry Creek Ranch on the left thigh.

AUGUST, 1960

Thank you Penny Johnson, for securing the permission to print this historical article that was written by

Peter J. Damele



Dry Creek Ranch branding irons.



Dry Creek Ranch, 2010, by Joan Henning.

