

FOUNDATION SIRE

SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT

ASH REG 50

BY JOY POOLE IOAMI

'He was a beautiful horse, a very kind horse, if you needed to bring him in out of the paddock you could catch him anywhere and lead him in off the horse you were riding. He was the quietest stallion I ever had anything to do with!'

One of the Australian Stock Horse Society's most influential families comes from the two matings of Bobbie Bruce with Bert Griffith's Scrumlo mare Flame. The two foals produced were SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT, who went on to become a Foundation Stallion and SCRUMLO VICTORIA, his sister, who produced the Impact Stallion, SCRUMLO VICTORY.

Scrumlo Station, north of Aberdeen in the Hunter Valley, goes back to the earliest land grants in this area. The MacKays, who were the early owners and whose descendants, the Lee-Warners, still hold some of the original



Bert Griffith campdrafting on the dam of SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT, Flame

country, were renowned over the years for their horses. At its height Scrumlo Station covered approximately 100,000 acres and many families worked on the property, all riding and many of them competing on the Scrumlo horses. Not only did Scrumlo produce excellent Stock Horses but also

some outstanding Thoroughbreds including Royal Sovereign who won the Sydney Derby and the outstanding Thoroughbred horse, Valerius.

Well known horseman, Ray Merrick, who worked for several years at Scrumlo remembers SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT well.

"I broke him in," recalls Ray, "he was a beautiful horse, a very kind horse, if you needed to bring him in out of the paddock you could catch him anywhere and lead him in off the horse you were riding. He was the quietest stallion I ever had anything to do with! He was a very good walking horse with a lot of ability but unfortunately he was never performed at rodeos and campdrafts but only used on the place. Long time Scrumlo employee, the late Nelson Clifford, used to use him during the winter as his work horse and in the Spring he would be put out with the mares. He was like a lot of the Bobbie Bruce horses, he had that beautiful, broad, flat forehead and those big brown eyes out the side of his head. He was what I would call a very good type of ASH about 15hh. He was a bay horse solidly built with a star on his forehead."

"When I worked at Scrumlo, I had a beautiful mare by him called X Ray. When she was 3 years old she was already cutting out cattle but just wasn't quite ready for a start in a campdraft. After I left, Nelson Clifford took her over as one of his work horses and prepared her later for a campdraft. He got Reg

1st	2nd	3rd	4th
			Chariot
			Macarthur
			Benegal Light
	Bruce		
		Little Nell	
Bobbie Bruce		Silvers	
		Sylvander	
		Unknown Dam	
Cudger			
		Isobars	
	Bonnie		Unknown Dam
SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT			
US 807189 30			
		Cecil	Red Cammer
			Monika II
Sirene			Goldborough Colt
			The Blanche
			Unknown Dam
Flame			
		Bruce	
		My Bruce	
			Unknown Dam
Gary Dawn			
		Port Rush	
		Branga Prudence	
			Gentle Arrow

Mitchell to ride her and she won a maiden and a novice on the one day."

Much of the success of the Scrumlo horses can be attributed to an event that happened in 1929 and it also had a bearing on SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT.

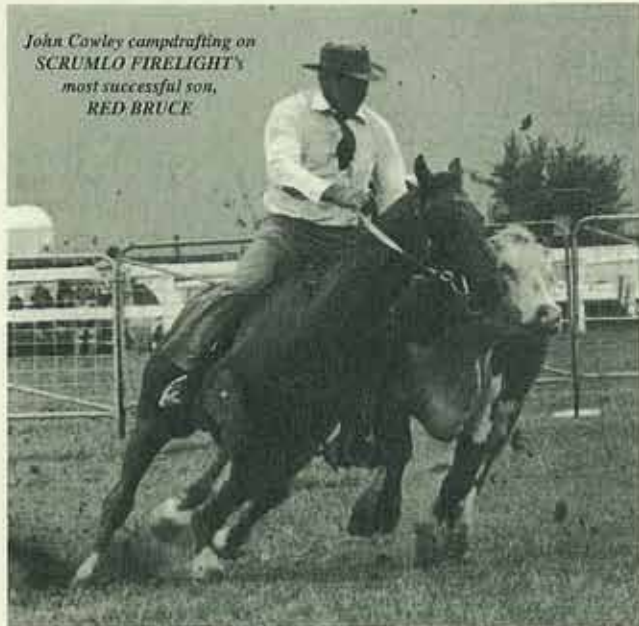
The MacKays owned a lot of country and in 1929 decided to sell a property they owned at Walcha called Branga Plains. This property was being managed by HLG (Bert) Griffith's (Co-Founder of the ASH Society) father. Mr Griffith (Snr) was to move to Maitland to manage, 'Anambah' (covering an area around Maitland Polocrosse grounds) another MacKay property and Bert was transferred to Scrumlo as a stockman. Bert was instructed to bring two horses with him.

Bert's daughter, Mary recalls, "Nearly all the Branga Plains horses were Thoroughbred because of the flatter country, with a lot of them by Port Rush and Secundas."



John Cowley as a teenager on the legendary sire Bobbie Bruce - Sire of SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT.

John Cowley campdrafting on
SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT's
most successful son,
RED BRUCE



No-one is sure about one of the horses that Bert brought with him but the other, a mare called Branga Prudence, by Port Rush out of Gentle Annie, was to be the foundation of the Scrumlo horses for the following 70 plus years. Not only is she a major influence on the Scrumlo horses but she also appears in the breeding of three Australian Stock Horse Foundation mares, SCRUMLO NITA, SCRUMLO VICTORIA, SCRUMLO BRANGA PRUDENCE, the Impact Mare, RAYS GIFT, the Foundation Stallion, SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT and an Impact Stallion, SCRUMLO VICTORY!! This Taproot Mare had a massive impact by anyone's stretch of the imagination.

Brian Brooker of 'Main Camp', a property not far from Scrumlo, tells a great story about Branga Prudence.

"There was a bush race meeting at Rouchel not long after Bert Griffith arrived from Branga Plains," said Brian. "He brought the long coated Branga Prudence down to start in the top event of the day. Locals tactfully suggested it might be better to start in the scrubbers' race but Bert stuck to his guns and contested the Open. Needless to say she streeed the opposition with an easy win!"

The breeding of the Scrumlo horses taps into the Bobbie Bruce bloodlines very heavily and of course SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT is by this great Taproot Stallion. Amazingly, for this time, (the late 60s and 70s) SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT had 110 registered/recorded ASH progeny. He produced some very good sire sons and some outstanding daughters. Even though he was more or less out of the public eye he still obviously had a very good following.

His sire sons included the very popular and successful, RED BRUCE. This horse was a story in himself. John Cowley, son of Bobbie Bruce's breeder, Ernie Cowley, was concerned that he was losing the Bobbie Bruce bloodlines so organised with former Scrumlo horseman, Allan Ward, to ask if he could see if it would be possible to put SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT to SCRUMLO MYSTERY and he would buy the resultant foal and get some of the bloodlines back.

"We got the call to come and pick him up," said John. "When we arrived this little hairy thing was waiting for us. He was an out of season foal and I think they ended up weaning him quite young, he could have been as young as three months old. I took him home and turned him out on the mountain until he cut his leg. After treating the leg he was ready to

break-in. Well known Singleton horseman, Darcy Richards, broke him in and did a very good job."

John was never to look back after purchasing RED BRUCE. When the cattle market collapsed in the early seventies, RED BRUCE was to keep the Cowley's heads above water with his popularity as a sire and went on to win many led and working classes and also campdrafts for them. He lived to a ripe old age, 31 years and has 180 registered/recorded progeny. RED BRUCE was SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT's most successful son. Other well known stallions by SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT were PALMERS DANNY BOY, a successful sire himself who also produced the very successful sire sons, NABINABAH SINGH and PALMERS FAME. Another SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT colt, REE BRUCE, stood in Queensland and had an influence there and BROOKLYN FIERY LAD proved successful in the Hunter Valley.

Two outstanding SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT mares were ROSEBROOK WARBONNET and SCRUMLO RACHAEL. Terry Blake, well known ASH breeder, bought Warbonnet at a Scone Sale and bred 15 outstanding foals from her that included a mare registered as BARNETTS HOLLY that was an outstanding performer for the Barnett Family, a colt, ROSEBROOK BRIGALOW who is still standing in New Zealand and is the sire of all top New Zealand polocrosse player, Steve Bryant's playing horses and the great showing performer ROSEBROOK MOCCONA. SCRUMLO RACHAEL was a brilliant performance horse for Barbie Brown before her untimely death. Her father, Ken, then bred 10 foals from her that included the winner of the first National Maturity in 1990, BROWN EXPO

and the brilliant little mare, BROWN PEBBLES who took out the Australian Campdraft Championships at Bundarra in 2003. These two mares are only the tip of the iceberg of other great mares SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT produced, including many that were used as broodmares on Scrumlo itself.

The pedigree of SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT is littered with horses that have had a major impact on the Australian Stock Horse breed

both on the sire and dam's side.

SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT's sire, Bobbie Bruce was probably the most influential sire in the early days of the Society. Unfortunately, Bobbie Bruce passed away in January 1967 and his breeder, Ernie Cowley, in April the same year, so two of the greatest influences on The Australian Stock Horse Society were never to see its foundation.



SCRUMLO EDA one of the
SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT
mares kept for breeding.

Bobbie Bruce was also the sire of the Foundation Stallion, MUSTER. It is interesting that when I asked those connected with MUSTER about his temperament, all who had anything to do with him said he was the quietest stallion they had ever seen, John and Marion Cowley even stating their children had learnt to ride on him. With Ray Merrick declaring the same about SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT we can assuredly state that Bobbie Bruce horses had great temperaments. Bobbie Bruce horses were outstanding performers in all fields of endeavour, campdrafting, polocrosse, jumping - in anything they were tried at they seemed to excel.

Bobbie Bruce was out of the outstanding mare, Cadger. Many of the great wins Ernie Cowley had in stockdrafting and peg events were on this great little mare. She won the stockdrafting championships at Wallamba, near Nahiab, three times including NSW Championships. Wallamba was the home of campdrafting in the lower North coast and lower Hunter in the 20s and 30s so when it was time to breed from Cadger, Ernie looked for the best sire he could find. He settled on a pony Thoroughbred (Under 14-2 hands) called Bruce. He was standing at Dalwood (Lower Hunter, NSW) with a Mr Dooley who had purchased him

Bruce



On SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT's dam side, his mother Flame was a very good campdraft mare and station mare for Society founder Bert Griffith. She was by Serene, a horse that had several names including The Branch Creek Horse. The late, great Alex Wiseman of Belltrees, once quipped to Ray

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from the Longworth Family of Weemeloh. Bruce was a wonderful performer on the track and in 17 starts from 2nd November 1910 to 29th March 1911 he won 11 races, was second four times and third twice making him placed at every start. Bruce not only figures in the breeding of Bobbie Bruce but also is the sire of Cool Bruce, Bright Bruce and My Bruce.

Moorefield, the sire of Bruce, was born in 1889 and was a successful performer, winning the AJC The Shorts in 1893 and the AJC Villiers Stakes in 1894.

Branca Prudence (circa 1929) The great Scrumlo Matriach appears in the breeding of three ASH Foundation Mares, SCRUMLO VICTORIA, SCRUMLO NITA and SCRUMLO BRANCA PRUDENCE



Cadger was by Sylvander who was by Silvius, a brilliant performer on the track who won the MVCR Moonee Valley Cup, The VCR CB Fisher Plate and the VRC Melbourne Stakes. These races were over middle distance courses, 10 to 12 furlongs. Silvius has had a massive influence on our Australian Stock Horses for, as well as being the grandsire of Cadger, he is the sire of Doreen, the dam of Dimray and is double crossed in the pedigree of Jane, the mother of SUNDOWN.

Cadger's dam, Bonnie carried Docken bloodlines. Docken was an imported pony and it is uncertain whether Bonnie was by Docken himself or, most probably, by one of his sons.

Merrick, "You should ride Serene, he's so light you could ride him over a setting of eggs and you wouldn't crack a shell!" Serene was by the fabulous Taproot sire, Cecil, who was also the sire of Radium.

Serene's dam, The Blanche, was a polo mare. Flame's dam Gay Dawn was a Thoroughbred mare who was sent to Sydney to race but was sent home in disgrace as, when she was asked to gallop, she went through the opposition not around! Back home she became legendary Scrumlo horseman, Allan Ward's pride and joy, winning campdrafts including the big campdraft at Muswellbrook and numerous bush races. Gay Dawn was also the dam of SCRUMLO BRANCA PRUDENCE, an Australian Stock Horse Foundation Mare described in an interview with Allan Ward in 1976 as, "The greatest campdraft mare I ever rode!" Gay Dawn was by MY BRUCE giving SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT a double cross to Bruce. Gay Dawn was out of the legendary Taproot Mare Branca Prudence.

SCRUMLO FIRELIGHT is the result of breeding champions to champions over many years and it is not surprising that, even though he lived a life away from the showing and campdraft arena, he still had tremendous outside appeal as people strove to tap into these amazing genetics. A.

Cadger

