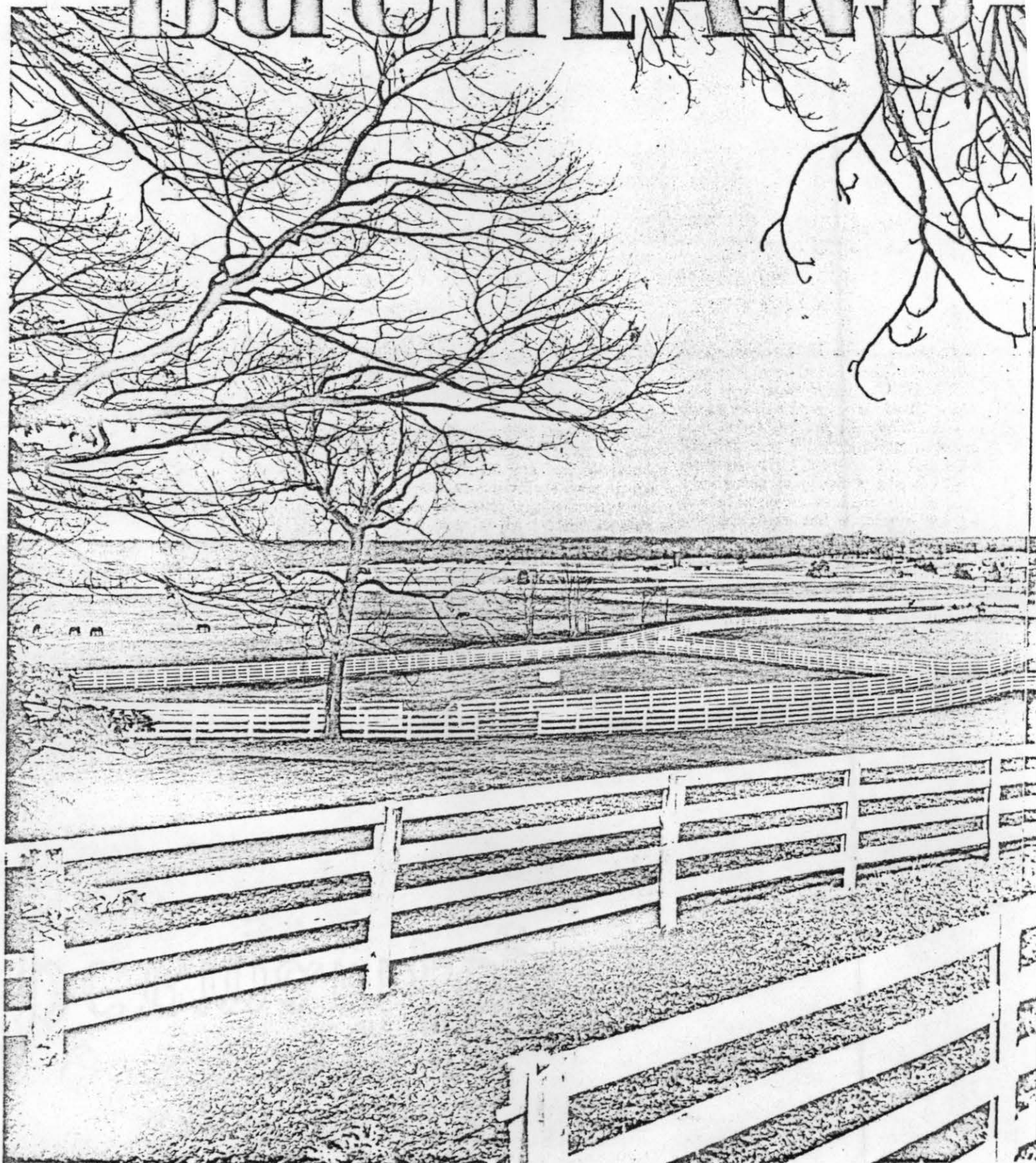
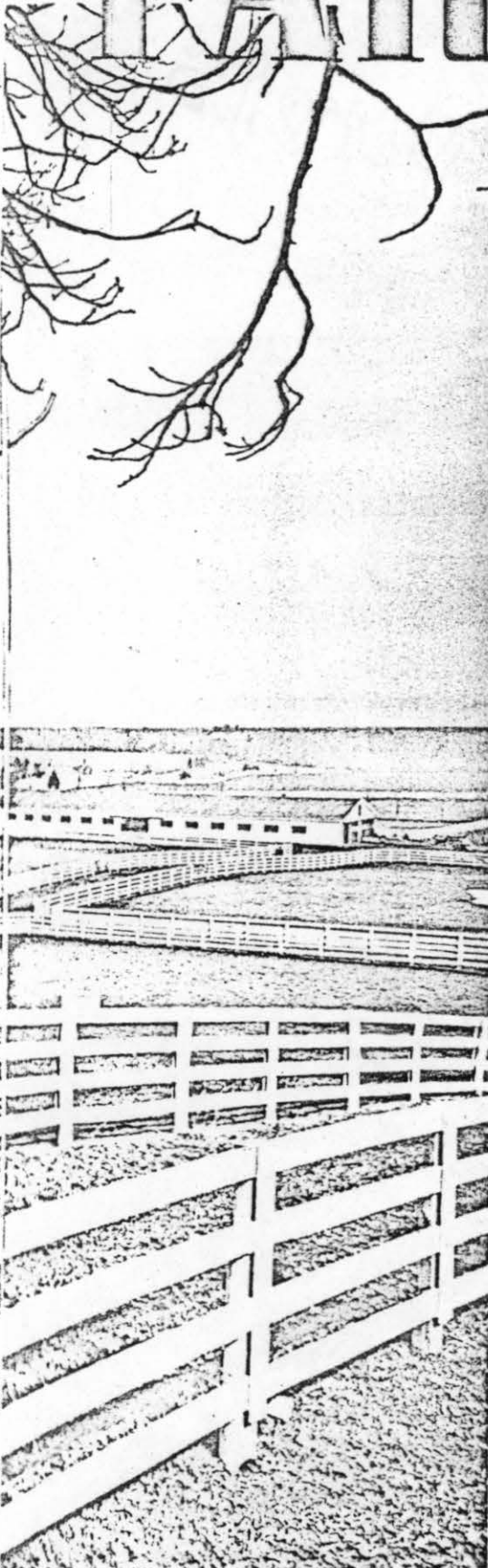


# BUCKLAND



# FARM

**F. Julia Shearer**  
*Photos by Howard Allen*



In December of the year 1956, Mr. Thomas Mellon Evans, of Pittsburgh, and other places, purchased a property known as Buckland, which is situated just south of Route 211 between Warrenton and Gainesville, with the latter town its official Post Office. In days gone by, the P. O. was just Buckland, as there was a small village there of that name, named after the property, not the other way as one might suppose. The farm had recently been the property of one Jack Solomon, owner of Gallagher's Steak House in New York City, and, while in Virginia, breeder of registered Angus cattle. Whether he used the product of his farm in his restaurant is not known. In any case, the herd was quite successful and he held some sales of breeding cattle on the place which proved first rate. When the herd was later dispersed, their sale must have been most profitable and gratifying. However, for one reason and another, there were about 40 cows which were not sold and went with the farm so that Mr. Evans found himself in the Angus business.

Presumably these animals were not the "living tops" and in time must have proved a disappointment to their new owner for in 1962 the herd was sold as a unit and were replaced by steers. During this time, old Jimmy Ironsides was managing the farm and the cattle but by then he was a bit past his prime, he had been one of the top of the older school of Scotch herdsmen. He had turned many animals out for both the show ring and the sales in prime condition but most probably had not had much experience managing farms. By 1964 Mr. Evans disposed of the steers and decided to go into Thoroughbred horses, both the breeding and racing ends of the business. He hired the very

personable and competent young man: Don Robertson to manage the operation. Don is the son of the late Harris Robertson who had been with the Hancocks, both father and son, first at Ellerslie in Virginia near Charlottesville, and subsequently at Claiborne in Kentucky. This young man had a splendid background in the business and already valuable experience and is doing a fine job at Buckland.

Buckland Hall, as it was originally known, was built about 1850 by one Samuel Love who had acquired a large tract of land in Prince William County and set about building his home and developing his estate. As architect, he selected a man named William Buckland, whom George Mason had brought over from London to design Gunston Hall and who is also credited with having designed several buildings in Annapolis. Love was so delighted with his house that he promptly named it after its designer, hence the name. The only other fact which is definitely known about Samuel Love is that he died in 1787 and left his property to his son John. He is buried on the farm in a small graveyard situated in a grove of trees which was not even fenced until Mr. Evans had a neat plank fence to be put around it.

John Love and his brother, Charles, applied for water rights on Broad Run, which runs through the property, and built both a grist mill and a woolen mill on it. Whether they had these two mills simultaneously, or one after the other, is not quite clear. Nor, if the latter is the case, which one came first. In any case, both ventures seem to have proved profitable to the owners and given considerable employment to the local citizens. The next step was to lay out a town, so





The residence at Buckland is an early Colonial stone house (left) whose original classic lines may be much better seen from the rear than in the often published front view of the home (below).



John Love applied to the General Assembly of Virginia in 1797 for permission to found what was the only inland town in Prince William County. The permit was granted and is dated January 15th, 1798. He was, undoubtedly, influenced by the fact that the waterway in nearby Dumfries was no longer navigable due to the cultivation of tobacco in that area having caused the channel to fill up and the thought that the swift-running Broad Run could not get in this condition. While it would appear to us today that Broad Run would not make much of a waterway, presumably things were otherwise in the 18th century.

The town of Buckland no longer exists and it is almost impossible to determine exactly where it was. Just a few scattered houses seem to be all that's left. One of the streets, known as William Street later became known as "The Pike" and is now the more prosaic Route 211. There is still a stone building on what was called Mill Street which was a wagon tavern, was built before 1825, builder unknown, and was used as a rest stop for the four- and six-horse teams hauling goods to and from Alexandria. Here the teamsters unhitched the horses, tied them up and fed them, then went into the tavern for a meal, before bedding down in their wagons to sleep. There were no beds available in the tavern. It is reported that Lafayette once stopped here on his way from Charlottesville and environs,

where he had been paying farewell visits to his old friends Thomas Jefferson, to Oak Hill, the home of James Monroe in Loudoun County for the same purpose. Here little girls strewed flowers in his path and some ladies read poems they had written in his praise.

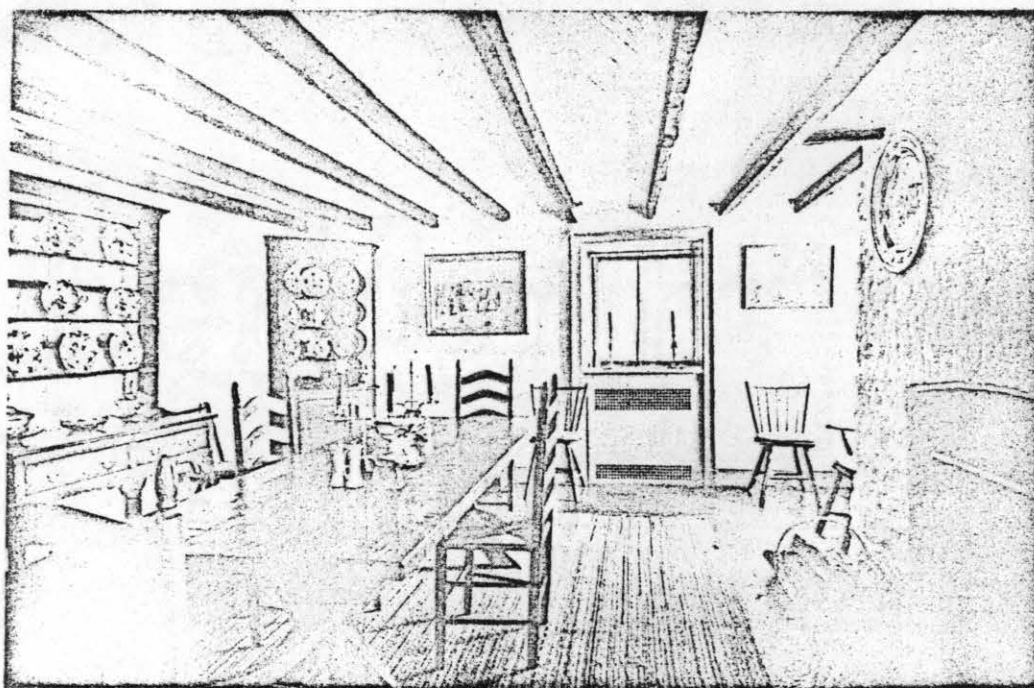
From the hands of John Love, Buckland passed to one Temple Washington in 1822, thence to Major Richard Bland Lee, nephew of Light Horse Harry Lee in 1853. In 1875 it became the property of another Richard Bland Lee. Here the picture is a bit vague but, eventually, it became the property of Philip H. Lee who sold it to Mitchell Harrison, wealthy Philadelphian, who was the son of C. C. Harrison, Provost of the University of Pennsylvania. The younger Harrison was more interested in things agricultural and sporting than in things educational, however, and went about building up a lovely farm with the very best in purebred livestock that he could find. Actually, Buckland Hall was only a small part of his property, Vint Hill, which adjoins it and is much larger and on which there is now a military installation, was where he lived. From there he showed a very fine string of show hunters, predominantly Thoroughbreds that showed at all the larger Eastern shows with considerable success. From the Duke of Argyle (?) in Scotland he obtained some very good Shorthorn cattle and had a splendid flock of Hampshire sheep. What he may

have had in the line of dairy cattle and swine is not known but you may be sure that, if he had any, they were the best available. The best was always good enough for him.

When Mitchell Harrison died, about 1928, he left Buckland Hall to a daughter, Mrs. Natalie Roberts. After a few years she sold the place to a Mr. Post who was hoping to interest his two daughters in country living. When this proved unsuccessful, he sold it to the above-mentioned Jack Solomon.

The residence at Buckland is a most charming early Colonial stone house with a slate roof and lovely, classic lines which have not been improved by having a sort of pediment of unknown lineage added to the upper story in front, giving it, at first glance, the appearance of a suburban dwelling. The original lines may be seen much better from the rear, where there is a small flight of stone steps with a most graceful iron balustrade. These steps go down from the back of the main hall which runs right through the house as most of them did at that time. The main hall is spacious, there is a most graceful curved stairway, with cherry handrail, leading to the upper story and the woodwork around the front door is exceptionally fine. A splendid Remington bronze of a bucking horse stands on a radiator cover just inside the front door.

The main floor has fine old pine floors throughout, both the hall and living



The basement dining room showing the corner cupboard, Welsh style dresser and a Remington painting.

room have the old wainscoting while the den or library has a fine chair rail. The mantle in the living room is particularly delicate, the one in the den a bit heavier but very fine. There is also an especially good overdoor in the latter room. The antique furniture in these three rooms has been chosen by someone with great knowledge and taste and is a joy to behold. There are not only one but two genuine lowboys and these are at this time in the same category as the old hen's teeth.

In true colonial style, the dining room is in the basement but it is a light and airy basement and, with its old flagstone floors and large brick mantle, it is a most pleasant room. Here the furniture is early American pine as opposed to the English pieces above and the whole effect is charming. There is a fine, large pine sawbuck table for a dining table, a good open corner cupboard with scallops around the opening and a dresser with some decorative old china adds a nice touch of color. A good Remington painting adorns one wall.

When Mr. Evans decided to go in for horses he, very sensibly, began at the beginning, which so many do not. The first step was to fence for horses and adapt such buildings as could be made suitable for their use. One large barn converted very well into a broodmare barn with twelve large stalls and one of double size for a foaling stall. There is also a feed room and watching and warming room (for the men) besides. The two-sided building used as a cattle shed with a big feed room in the corner was easily adapted into an L-shaped

yearling barn with the addition of a wall on the open side and stalls and aisles in each section of the L. Large concrete water tanks were put in each of the big fields having no water supply.

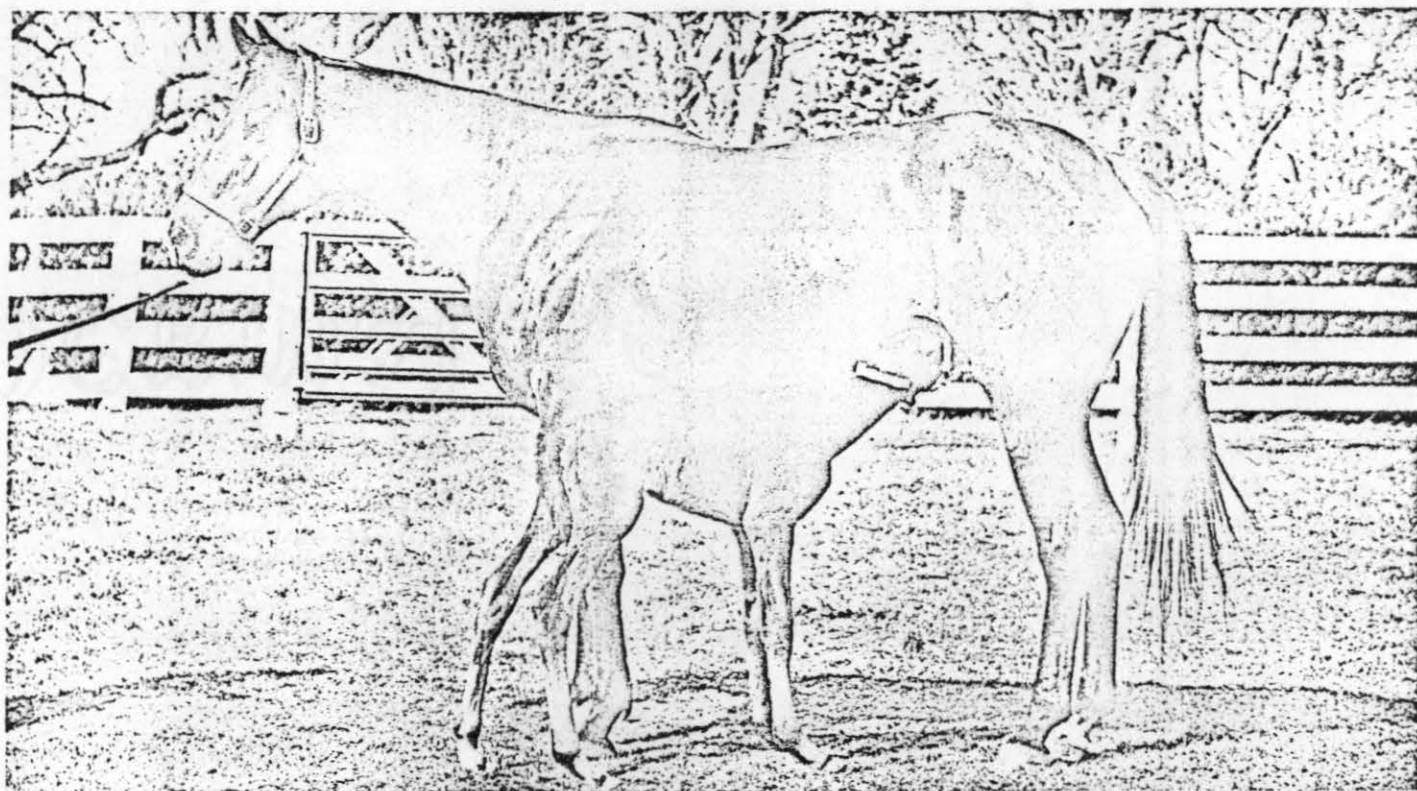
While all this was going on, Mr. Evans bought a few broodmares and started acquiring a few horses of racing age, began racing with Tom Waller as a trainer. A most promising 2-year-old, Sailor's Son, by Sailor and out of Floral Park was among his racers and showed quite a potential, racing in good allowance company at the New York tracks and was fourth in the Tyro. Unfortunately a fractured coffin bone put an untimely end to his career and he is now standing at stud at Buckland. In France Mr. Evans secured the good French 2-year-old, \*Gallup Poll, that had won four out of five starts, including the Prix des Yearlings at Deauville. The latter track is the French Saratoga, the only first class flat racing in that country outside of the Paris area. In this country \*Gallup Poll was doing well, winning a \$10,000 allowance race and finishing second to Assagai in the Man O' War, he was also third in another stake. At present he is back at the farm "for repairs" but should be back in competition before too long.

The next step was to build a training barn and to acquire some really top mares, both of these steps have been completed, at least the former has been, it is quite possible that still other mares will be added. When Mr. Evans really got into operation, the best was quite good enough for him and the present

roster of mares is really "mouth watering". Absolutely first-class mares from both England and this country have now taken up residence at Buckland Farm. From England have come the stakes winner \*Mamounia by Chanteur II, out of stakes winner Minaret, in fact all her first three dams are stakes winners. To make her even more attractive, she was purchased in foal to the Epsom Derby winner, Santa Claus. Another from overseas is \*Fixed Star, winner and out of a stakes winner. Her third dam is the good producer, Rosetta. Two more English mares are \*Timid Tilly and \*Tanned, the latter came from the famous Astor Stud via the Hackman sale at Saratoga last August. \*Timid Tilly is the dam of a lovely Charlottesville filly now a 2-year-old that is working at the farm. \*Tanned, by the good French sire, Sunny Boy, is in foal to \*Ribot.

Very especially noteworthy among the American mares is Shama from the Charlton Clay dispersal. This perfectly beautiful mare is by Bold Ruler and out of Mr. Clay's exceptional producer, Lea Lark by Bull Lea, dam of two outstanding stakes winners and granddam of five. Shama was a good winner herself and stakes-placed and very recently gave birth to a Round Table filly. From the same sale comes America, winner by Spy Song from the excellent multiple stakes-producer Sari Omar. Out of the Bieber-Jacobs reduction sale Mr. Evans bought Miz Carol, dam of the nice Regal Gleam and Treachery, half-sister to the terribly successful sire Hail to Reason and winner herself of over \$150,000.



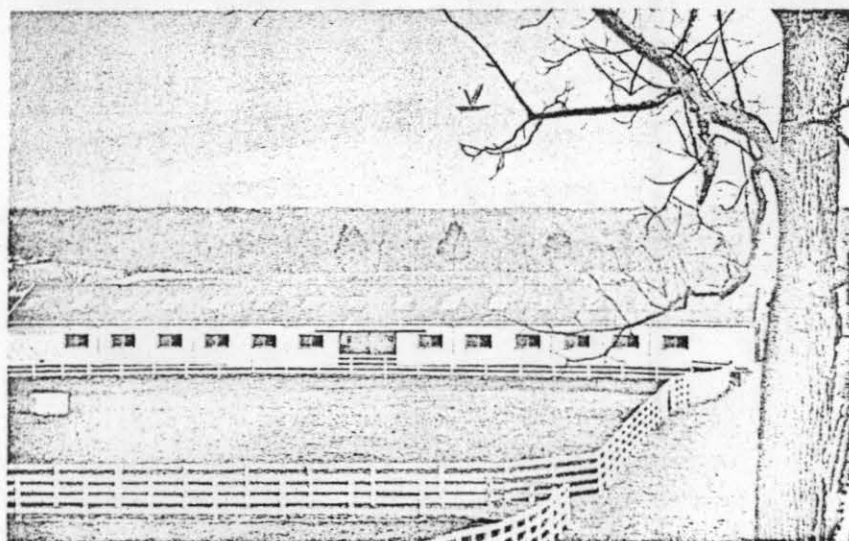
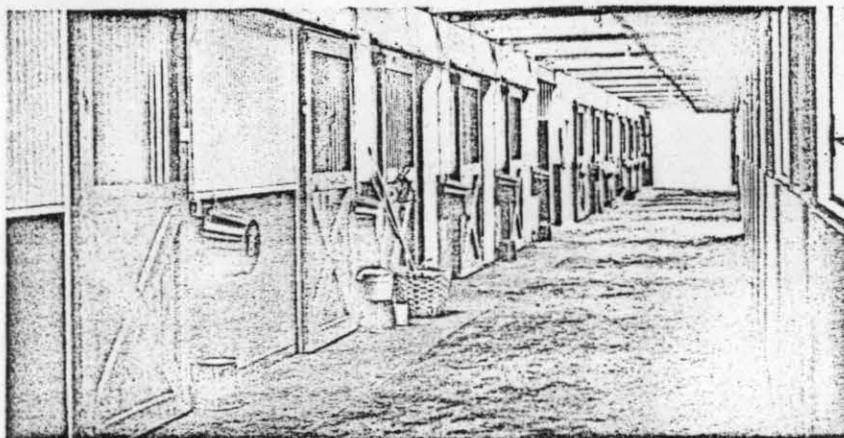


**The Bold Ruler mare Shama with her Round Table filly, who was foaled on March 13.**

Mention should also be made of Maya, stakes producer of two fine daughters and Sailor's Pick that came from Wheatley stable, she half-sister to a stakes winner and to two that were stakes placed.

No story of Buckland would be complete without a word on the new training barn. This useful and strictly utilitarian building has 24 stalls, 12x12, feed room, tack room and warming room. It also has a covered passageway around the stalls quite large enough in which to work horses which is must useful in bad weather. The general design was made by the manager, Don Robertson, but the final plans were drawn up by the Reynolds Aluminum Company in Louisville and it was built there and erected on the farm by a local contractor from Warrenton. As one might expect, the outer walls are of aluminum, the lower part of the stalls are of plywood but lined with sturdy oak and the upper portion of color-welded aluminum.

While he was in Kentucky last fall Mr. Evans bought the good, stakes winning son of Citation, Get Around, and he is standing at stud at Buckland this season. The next step planned for farm improvement is the construction of a stallion barn which will probably be built this summer. ●



**The new training barn at Buckland as viewed from the outside and the interior (above). The 24-stall barn has outer walls of aluminum, the lower part of the stalls are of plywood but lined with sturdy oak, and the upper portion of color-welded aluminum.**