

WHY GRANDDADDY
EXPLODED THAT SPRING
Second Thoughts
By J. B. Leftwich, Columnist
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When Filly was born in the spring of 1919, everybody was excited about the new foal. Granddaddy told me much later. The excitement apparently continued for quite a spell while everybody suggested names for her.

“What are we going to name that little filly,” Granddaddy would ask, and everybody would make suggestions which he said were not worth a dang, so the little filly remained unnamed.

Periodically, the subject would surface, but everybody continued to call her “that little filly.” Well, as time went on, the subject shifted to naming the new baby, me. When I arrived in November, the unnamed filly was all but forgotten. So, everybody just called her Filly.

Filly seemed quite normal as I rode her along a wagon road up to the low gap where she grazed contentedly as I lowered two rails and led her over the fence. Turning to replace the rails, I saw another rider headed toward me in a fast gallop. I waited for him to overtake us.

“Where are going anyway?” Portfolio, my verbose friend, wanted to know.

“Filly here has a date with Mr. Homer’s jackass,” I said, winking slyly at Portfolio to show how sophisticated I was.

“I thought you wanted a little horse, not a mule,” Portfolio said. “So how come the jack?”

“Because Granddaddy say so,” I said.

Well, Portfolio tired of this unproductive conversation and headed back across the field. Filly and I moseyed on toward Mr. Homer’s for an unromantic climax to Filly’s romance.

Well, spring melted into summer, and summer faded into fall. Winter came with its snow and ice. It seemed Spring of ’34 would never appear, but finally it phased in.

One day in late April, I meandered into the barn where Granddaddy was mending harness.

“Filly’s colt is here,” he said in tones that would have frozen a polar bear.

“Uh-oh,” I said, turning to leave.

“Just a minute, young man, where do you think you’re going?” he demanded.

I was going anywhere to get away from Granddaddy who was working himself up to a high pitch of temper.

“What in the name of all that’s mighty did you breed Filly to?” he yelled. “That’s not a little mule in there, that’s a little filly.”

It was pretty obvious Filly’s rendezvous with the Homer’s jack never occurred.

“You bred her to Homer’s stallion,” Granddaddy fumed.

Time passed and so did Granddaddy’s agitation. Pretty soon, he was bragging to everybody about what a pretty little filly Old Filly had delivered.

“What are we going to name the little filly?” he ask occasionally.

Everybody had his or her own suggestions, but we never arrived at a consensus. So, we just called her Filly’s filly sort of running the words together and getting Fillisfilly which evolved into Phyllis, a good enough name for any female.

(J.B. Leftwich is a veteran journalist and a columnist for *The Lebanon Democrat*.

Email: leftwichjb@charter.net)

<http://www.ajlambert.com>