

The Ghost Family

→ When only the best will do

UK breeders have long appreciated the qualities of the Ghost family. Imported from Canada in the nineties, the family is renowned for making great cows, and show-stopping type. In this issue of Hotspots we look at the story so far, and examine what makes this family so popular amongst British breeders and why AI's are expressing an increasing amount of interest amongst the family.

Canadian roots

During a visit to Canada's Royal Winter Fair in 1993, Scottish breeder Jimmy Hodge visited Robin Parish's Robrook farms, in Woodville, Ontario. At the time he was looking to purchase something that extra bit special, intent on taking it back to grace the UK show ring. On arriving at Robrook, Jimmy remembers being really impressed, by a milking heifer that was just 4 or 5 days fresh. "Ghost really stood out, she was tall and dairy and nearly all white. She had a fantastic bone structure, and even though she was only a few days calved she already had a great mammary". Backed by 4 generations of VG dams, and out of a Triple Crown dam, the deal was done and on a spring day in 1994, Ghost arrived into Manchester airport, mid-way through her first lactation.



Ridgefield Shottle Ghost VG-89 3yr
Currently one of the family's biggest stars- owned by Willsbro Holsteins

Facts:

- Since the first member of the Ghost family was born in the UK in 1995 -1948 females and 146 males have been registered from the family!
- Every female member of the Ghost family has tested over 3 points on GPTAT
- There have been 6 successive generations of Ghosts' classified over 92 points in the UK!
- Riverdane Gallant (James X Ridgefield Storm Ghost 2 EX-93 2E) is the first proven sire from the Ghost family - 92% of his dtrs GP or better

The Challenge

Witbourne Counselor Ghost EX-92 as Jimmy puts it was "a challenging cow to work with", put her in amongst the herd and she was without doubt the "head cow" the challenge was working with her on an individual basis, or indeed trying to get anywhere near her with a needle for flushing!

The next year in her 2nd lactation she enjoyed considerable success in the show-ring including Honorary Mention at the 1995 National Holstein Show, and Reserve All Britain Junior Cow in Milk.

The Counselor bred 6 daughters, sired by Skychief, Chesapeake, Royce, and Storm which averaged nearly 89 points. At Lemington the family still runs into double figures, and undoubtedly the strength of the cow family is in their fantastic mammary systems.

Skychief success

Soon after arriving in the UK Ghost was bred to Donnandale Skychief, who was one of Semex's top type sires at the time, so successful was this cross that breeder Jimmy flushed the Counselor again to him years later. This proved to be the catalyst of the cow family, resulting in Lemington Skychief Ghost. Following Counselor Ghost's success during 1995 Jimmy decided to consign the Skychief calf to the Black and White sale in the November, and she sold for 6,000gns to the Bown family. Richard Bown really admired the calf "she was really stylish, with a super sweep of rib and tremendous length of body, I thought she had great potential and wanted her for the Holstein show the following year". She continued to develop and in the February of 1996 she won her class and went on to win Champion calf under Canadian judge Don Johnston. Upon calving she classified VG-88 as a 2 year old winning milking heifer classes at the Cow of the Year show,

3 generations of Show winning type



Witbourne Counselor Ghost EX-92



Lemington Skychief Ghost EX-95 3E



Castlerhydd Milan Ghost EX-94 4E

and the Royal Welsh, her mammary system was picture perfect, she had a tremendous rear udder with superb veination throughout—something which all the Ghost family have notably inherited. Every lactation she won shows, and she went on to win classes at the Royal show in 2000 and 2002, classifying EX-95 3E. Her Counselor dam perhaps wasn't the greatest milker, and Skychief's were not renowned for massive yields either, but Skychief Ghost was a great producer and twice gave over 15,000kgs in 305 day lactations!

Traditions

The tradition of selling the first female of the family continued, when Castlerhydd Holsteins (now known as Richaven) consigned the first heifer from the Skychief - Castlerhydd Milan Ghost to the Semex Celebration sale in 1998. As a calf the Milan, was very dairy and long, but inherited a little too much set in her leg like her paternal sire and grandsire, she realised 2,700gns, selling to Ridgefield Holsteins. At Ridgefield she developed into a great cow, and typical of the family got better with age, scoring EX-94 4E, with yields of up to 13,797kgs, she bred 6 daughters which averaged over 90 points classification, including Excellent daughters by Lee, September Storm, and most notably the type specialist and legs and feet transmitter Storm, which resulted in amongst others Ridgefield Storm Ghost 2 EX-93 2E a key cow in this family.

There and back again

Storm Ghost 2 was sold as a milking heifer as part of a package of 4 animals to Ridgefield's ET vet and well known Holstein breeder Mark Nutsford, She calved in 2003 for the second time at Riverdane, and proved to be a formidable cow on the shavings, winning her class at both the National Holstein Show and the Royal - the UK's two premier shows, and was awarded All Britain Junior Cow in Milk. At this time and with new management in at Ridgefield, Storm Ghost 2 was re-purchased privately for a considerable amount by Ridgefield, to headline their show team. She made a successful

Chris Norton, Auctioneer, Norton and Brooksbank

Over recent years the Ghost family has been incredibly in demand in the UK auction ring. It is one of the best uddered families in the world in my opinion and this reflects in the auction prices the family has commanded in recent years.

comeback to the show ring in 2005 when she was Reserve Champion at both the National and Royal shows and repeated her All Britain success as a third calver.

Successful brood cow

Storm Ghost 2 has proven herself to be an exceptional brood cow as have the generations before her, 11 classified dtrs from her average 88 points! Her natural calf that she had at Riverdane - Riverdane Terrason Ghost went on to break the UK record for an in-calf heifer sold at public auction when she realised 27,000gns selling to Eurogenes member Bev Baker of BB Holsteins, she is now classified EX94 2E and already her first 2 dtrs by Allen are both classified EX-92 in Bill Nadins Sterndale herd, and she has a VG-87 2yr dtr by Damion (EX mam) at BB.

During her time at Riverdane Storm Ghost 2 was flushed to Spirit and James, the James cross resulted in the bull Riverdane Gallant VG-88 being marketed by Kingstreet Sires – a joint collaboration between Bill Nadin and Mark and Sue Nutsford. “Having worked with and admired the show type of several generations of the family, it was easy to market Gallant off the back of this” says Mark. Gallant's daughters display the type typical of the cow family particularly great udders, he has 27 daughters classified of which 25 are GP or bet-

Name	Sire	Dam	Selling Price (gns)
Riverdane Terrason Ghost EX-94 2E	Inwood Terrason	Ridgefield Storm Ghost 2 EX-93 2E	27,000
Riverdane James Ghost EX-91	Shormear James	Ridgefield Storm Ghost 2 EX-93 2E	13,000
Ridgefield Shottle Ghost VG-89 3yr	Picston Shottle	Ridgefield Storm Ghost 2 EX-93 2E	9,000
Ridgefield Sho Ghost VG-86 2yr	Picston Shottle	Ridgefield Storm Ghost 2 EX-93 2E	7,000
Ridgefield Ghost Shottle	Picston Shottle	Ridgefield Storm Ghost 2 EX-93 2E	6,600
Ridgefield Ghostlet	Picston Shottle	Ridgefield Storm Ghost 2 EX-93 2E	6,200
Ridgefield September S Ghost EX-91	Pursuit September Storm	Castlerhydd Milan Ghost EX-94 4E	6,200
Ridgefield Ghostly Talent	Ladino Park Talent	Ridgefield Storm Ghost 2 EX-93 2E	6,000



Mike Halliwell, Five Star Breeders, Wales

I worked with 3 successive generations of the Ghost family. They were all great cows to work with. Our Customers are farmers who appreciate milking good cows, when we were looking to invest in a young sire from a proven British cow family, the Ghosts were at the top of the list!

ter! Upon moving back to Ridgefield she was successfully flushed to Shottle, this flush resulted in all 4 female progeny scoring VG 2yr olds and an average selling price of over £7500 for each of them!

Eurogenes members

Many UK members of Eurogenes have Ghost family members within their herds, BB, Drointon, Richaven, Roevalley, Sterndale and Willsbro, such is the transmitting capability of this cow family.

At Sterndale the family continues to go from strength to strength and they are milking potentially the 7th consecutive generation of EX in the form of VG-88 2 year olds by Shottle and Goldwyn from Sterndale Allen Ghost EX-92. Sterndale Shottle Ghost VG-88 2yr has been shown with considerable success and was 2nd Jnr Heifer in milk at this year's National Holstein Show' when asked how the Ghost family has impacted his herd Bill is quick to point out that they are a great asset to Sterndale, "They have excellent udders and are just such consistent breeders" says Bill.

At Roevalley they have a show-winning Morty grand-daughter from the Skychief- Aldingham SM Ghost 3 EX-94 2E, whilst at Drointon they have the final daughter from the Storm Ghost, a really exciting RC Talent heifer that is due soon to Jotan. At Willsbro, Ridgefield Shottle Ghost VG-89 3yr is attracting a lot of attention and is internationally contracted, having completed a first lactation of 11,754kgs in 305 days 4.25%^f 3.18%^p, her first son by Goldwyn is in AI and being tested by Five-Star Breeders.

Breeders satisfaction

It is incredible to think that in the space of less than 15 years over 2000 Ghosts, have been registered in the UK herdbook. It's clear to see that this family is held in very high esteem amongst the British breeders, and rightly so.

From a personal note, and having worked with many of them, I have never seen a family that consistently delivers this level of type. Now with the introduction of genomics the family is seeing more interest from International AIs and in the future we can fully expect to see the Ghost influence continue to grow as bulls from this family enter AI.



Ridgefield Storm Ghost EX-93 2E
2X All Britain in milking form



Riverdane Terrason Ghost EX-94 2E
Sold for 27,000gns (EUR 34,000) as a bred heifer



Sterndale CB Allen Ghost EX-92

Genomics

Ridgefield Shottle Ghost VG-89 3yr owned by Willsbro Holsteins is one of the current stars within the family, with a GTPI +1966 and GPTAT +3.07, she has been at her height amongst the Top 25 GTPI cows in Europe. Few would have expected such a successful genomic result, with sires like Storm X Milan X Skychief X Counselor X

Triple Crown in quick succession, but then one of the benefits of this new technology is highlighting new cow families and alternate bloodlines. Ask any breeder in the UK that has worked with the family, and they will quickly confirm the qualities of the Ghost family, Genomics has only told the geneticists what breeders have

known for years, as a result of her genomic test, now sire analysts are paying attention to the family. Ridgefield Shottle Ghost is dam to the #1 and #2 Duplex daughters in Europe, Willsbro Duplex Ghost and Ghost 2 both of whom have GTPI scores of over 1800 and over 3 points on GPTAT!

The Ghost family

♀ **Bruwin Judy VG-CAN 2***
(s. Cornerset Centurion Medalist)

♀ **Troybrook Reflection Jolly VG-CAN 1***
(s. Dwnalane Reflection Emperor)

♀ **Troybrook Senator Angel VG-86-CAN**
(s. Nelacres Johanna Senator)

♀ **Withbourne Triple Aimee VG-86-CAN**
(s. S-W-D Valliant)

♀ **Witbourne Counselor Ghost EX-92-UK**
(s. A Carnation Counselor)

♀ **Lemington Skychief Ghost EX-95-UK**
(s. Donmandale Skychief)



→ 2 EX & 5 VG dtrs in the UK
3 EX & 5 VG gr. dtrs in the UK

→ 2 EX & 2 VG dtrs in the UK
7 EX & 3 VG gr. dtrs in the UK

♀ **Castlerydd Milian Ghost EX-94**
(s. Shoremar Milian)



♀ **Ridgefield Storm Ghost 2 EX-93**
(s. Maughlin Storm)



♀ **Riverdane Terrason Ghost EX-94**
(s. Innwood Terrason)

♀ **Riverdane James Ghost EX-91**
(s. Shoremar James)

♀ **Riverdane Hanover Ghost EX-90**
(s. Hanover-Hill-R Spirit)

♀ **Ridgefield Gibson Ghost VG-85**
(s. Silky Gibson)

♀ **Ridgefield Ghost Shottle VG-86**
(s. Picston Shottle)

♀ **Ridgefield Sho Ghost VG-86**
(s. Picston Shottle)

♀ **Ridgefield Ghosttlet VG-86**
(s. Picston Shottle)

♀ **Riverdane Shoremar Ghost VG-86**
(s. Shoremar James)

♀ **Riverdane Silkya Ghost VG-88**
(s. Silky Gibson)

♀ **Ridgefield Shottle Ghost VG-89**
(s. Picston Shottle)

♀ **Riverdane Spirity Ghost VG-85**
(s. Hanover-Hill-R Spirit)

♂ **Riverdane Gallant**
(s. Shoremar James)

♀ **Ridgefield Shottle Ghost VG-89**
(s. Picston Shottle)

♀ **Ridgefield Storm Ghost VG-89**
(s. Maughlin Storm)

♀ **Ridgefield Lee Ghost EX-90**
(s. Comestar Lee)

♀ **Ridgefield Ghost Lee EX-90**
(s. Comestar Lee)

♀ **Ridgefield Stormatic Ghost VG-88**
(s. Comestar Stormatic)

♀ **Ridgefield September 5 Ghost EX-91**
(s. Pursuit September Storm)

♀ **Richaven Astre Ghost 2 EX-91**
(s. Duregal Astre Starbuck)

♀ **Richaven DP Ghost VG-86**
(s. Duncan Progress)

♀ **Aldingham Stormatic Ghost 2 EX-93**
(s. Comestar Stormatic)

♀ **Aldingham SM Ghost 3 EX-94**
(s. Stouder Morty)

♀ **Richaven Raider Ghost VG-87**
(s. Hanoverhill Raider)

♀ **Aldingham Ghost GP-83**
(s. Hanoverhill Raider)

♀ **Richaven Raider Ghost 2 EX-91**
(s. Hanoverhill Raider)

♀ **Richaven Raider Ghost 4 VG-85**
(s. Hanoverhill Raider)

♀ **Sterndale Allen Ghost EX-92**
(s. Canyon-Breeze Allen)

♀ **Sterndale CB Allen Ghost EX-92**
(s. Canyon-Breeze Allen)

♀ **BB Damion Ghost VG-87** (s. Erbacres Damion)

♀ **Petteril Talent Ghost VG-88**
(s. Ladino-Park Talent)

♀ **Holmland Talent Ghost VG-87**
(s. Ladino-Park Talent)

♀ **Petteril LPT Ghost VG-87**
(s. Ladino-Park Talent)

♀ **Holmland Final Cut Ghost VG-85**
(s. Ladino-Park Talent)

♀ **Huddlesford Blitz Ghost VG-85**
(s. Fustead Emory Blitz)

♀ **Riverdane Sept Ghost VG-87**
(s. Pursuit September Storm)

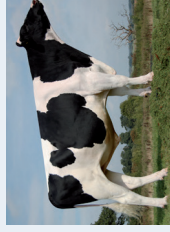
♀ **Berryholme Sept Storm Ghost VG-86**
(s. Pursuit September Storm)

♀ **Huddlesford SS Ghost VG-86**
(s. Pursuit September Storm)

♀ **Riverdane ED Ghost VG-87**
(s. Erbacres Damion)

♂ **Willsbro Gambler**
(s. Braedaale Goldwyn)

Additional pictures



Riverdane Gallant



Aldingham Stm Ghost 3 EX-94



BB Damion Ghost VG-87

♀ **Sterndale Bradley Ghost VG-86**
(s. Rockalli Bradley)

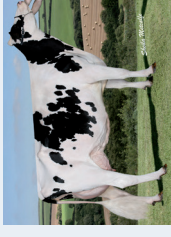
♀ **Sterndale Goldwyn Ghost VG-88**
(s. Braedaale Goldwyn)

♀ **Sterndale Shottle Ghost VG-88**
(s. Picston Shottle)

Additional pictures



Riverdane Terrason Ghost EX-94



Ridgefield Shottle Ghost VG-89



Sterdale CB Allen Ghost EX-92



Sterdale Allen Ghost EX-92



Sterndale Bradley Ghost VG-86



Sterndale Shottle Ghost VG-88