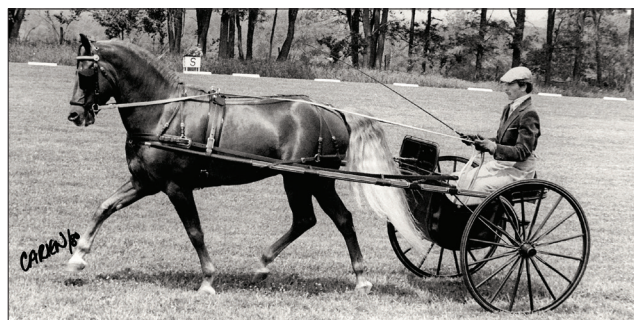
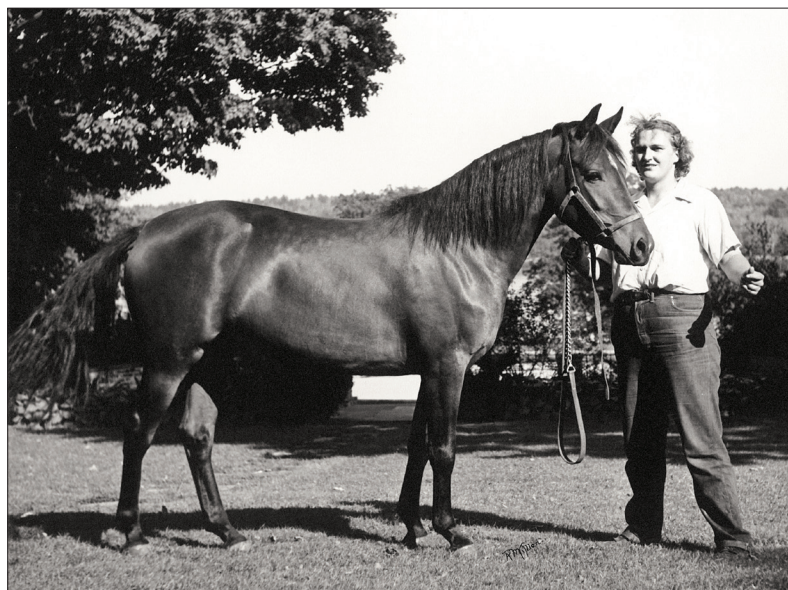


Helen May 07646

The Research of Marsha Valance, 2023



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Helen May with longtime owner, Margaret Gardiner; Helen May's significant sire Sonfield with Roland Hill's daughter, Jean Hill at age 12, in 1947; Helen May with her filly, Kennebec Ethel (photo © Warren Patriquin); Larry Poulin driving Kennebec Count (photo © Carien).

Helen May 07646 (Sonfield x Helen Mala) • Brown, large star, snip • **Foaled:** April 1, 1948, Tres Pinos, California • **Bred by:** Roland G. Hill • **Sold to:** Margaret Gardiner in 1949, Woolwich, Maine • **Died:** circa 1974 • 23 crosses to Sherman Morgan 5; 22 crosses to Hale's Green Mountain Morgan 42; 21 crosses to Billy Root 9; 21 crosses to Gifford Morgan 30; 17 crosses to Black Hawk 20; 12 crosses to Ethan Allen 50 • **Eight Generation Coefficient of Inbreeding:** 9.53893661499023 percent • **Registered Morgan Progeny:** Ten

In the February 2011 issue of *The Morgan Horse*, for a feature on "Queen Mums," Margaret Gardiner profiled Helen May: "In the fall of 1949, I went to Tres Pinos, California, the ranch of the legendary Roland Hill, and bought the filly Helen May, a beautiful bay yearling. She was by Sonfield and her dam, Helen Mala, was by Querido ('beloved' in Spanish). Her grandam, Hemala, was W. T. Carter breeding. He raised a lot of very good old type Morgans in California (with Vermont roots). Helen May matured to 14.1 hands. She was eight years old before I got her bred because my foreman, Jim Dunton, wanted to ride her. He loved to show; he showed her in-hand and under saddle. ... [Helen May produced nine foals between 1956 and 1967.] Her last foal, a stallion, her biggest and best, in 1970 was Kennebec Count from Kennebec King. Several more attempts to breed her were made, but to no avail. Helen May lived to age 26. All this time she was being ridden, shown in local shows, and was used for teaching English-style riding to 4-H clubs. She was a remarkably kind little mare and was beloved by all."

"Helen May left a legacy of descendants that still appear in today's pedigrees. [She] was the dam of Kennebec Count (by Kennebec King) who was the sire of 60 foals and was three

times National Pairs Combined Driving Champion with his son, Kennebec Russel. Larry Poulin was once quoted as saying, 'When I first went to Europe with Count and Russel, many European drivers had not seen Morgans work. We shipped over early, before the Worlds, to do more training and to adjust after the lengthy travel time coming overseas. The morning I was warming the chestnut pair up for the dressage test I saw this Land Rover barreling toward me. When it finally came to a stop near us, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, jumped out of the vehicle, ran over to me and asked, 'Are these the Morgans?' Obviously, word had spread about this breed of horse.'"—Richard Trower, *History of the Morgan Horse in California*, 18 March 2021.

For a *TMH* article on broodmares modern breeders would love to have in their barns, Nancy Caisse chose Helen May, commenting "Helen May was a nice mare, beautiful head—saw her many times and always liked her."

Helen May provided show horses, sport horses, and family pets to the Morgan breed. Her descendants may be found in Austria, Canada, Germany, Great Britain, Norway, Sweden, and the United States. ■