



≈ HISTORY LESSON ≈

THE BRUNK DYNASTY, PART VI: *Grace Brunk Woods*

Grace Brunk influenced a diverse pool of Morgan breeders by bringing important horses from the family dynasty eastward. Due to their association with the legendary trainer Tom Bass,

By Brenda L. Tippin

Grace and her husband, Johnny Woods, also brought with them Upwey King Peavine, the Saddlebred grandsire of Upwey Ben Don. Grace was a colorful horsewoman, and her story is both unique and dynamic.

GRACE BRUNK WOODS—EARLY LIFE

Grace Harriet Brunk was the fourth of seven children born to Joseph Chase Brunk and Minnie Alice Husband Brunk, only the

second to survive, and the oldest daughter. Born March 15, 1894, she was a year younger than her brother Roy, three years older than John, five years older than Helen, and eight years older than

ABOVE, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Grace Brunk Woods; Grace and Red Ethan; and with Jubilee King in 1941 (photos courtesy of Renee Page, from Brunk CD).

Thomas. Like all the Brunk children, she inherited a deep love for Morgan horses and a natural acumen for handling, training, and showing Morgans and recognizing the best crosses.

Although Grace ultimately would follow a very different path from the rest of the Brunks, nevertheless, she retained a wealth of knowledge which she generously shared both with her family and other Morgan breeders. Like the ripples of a pebble thrown in a lake, her circles of influence grew ever wider and would change Morgan history forever.

Grace remembered her first riding horse, Brown Bess, as a beautiful brown mare with left hind foot white, 15 hands tall, and weighing nearly 1,100 pounds in her prime. She was foaled in 1886 by Colby's Young Green Mountain, out of Jessie by Hanley's Young Morgan Black Hawk. Brown Bess, registered in Volume I of the *Morgan Register*, was, in fact, the very first registered Morgan J. C. Brunk owned. She was bred by D. E. Sayler of McHenry, Illinois, and later sold to the Morgan Horse Company of Carpentersville, Illinois, from whom J. C. bought her. Her sire, Colby's Young Green Mountain, was a son of Turner's Sir William (Hale's Green Mountain by Gifford x mare by Gifford), and out of Colby's Young Morrill (Morrill x mare by Hale's Green Mountain, 2d dam by Justin Morgan). Young Morgan Black Hawk was a large, muscular bay with white face and two white feet, standing 16 hands tall, and weighing 1,200 pounds, tracing his sireline back through Morgan DeForest (Cock Of The Rock [Sherman x mare by Justin Morgan] x mare by Justin Morgan)]. Brown Bess's second dam, Dolly, was a daughter of Waterman's Claybank Morgan, a buckskin. Brown Bess was the dam of six foals, and has many descendants today, especially tracing through the breeding of the Jackson Ranch, C. X. Larrabee, and Thomas Adams. Some of her descendants were found in Triangle Ranch breeding, and she also has descendants among Tennessee Walking Horses.

Another early Brunk mare important to Grace was the pretty chestnut Jenny C. (Chetco x Jenny Lind by Chase's Mountaineer), foaled in 1899. It was Grace who broke Jenny C. to ride, as well as driving her a lot, and she won her first blue ribbon at the age of 14, riding Jenny C. in an Open Ladies' Saddle Class at the Illinois State Fair in 1908. According to Renee Page's Brunk CD, Grace remembered being the only one ever to ride Jenny C., who was later sold for \$500 to Elmer Darling at the 1909 Vermont State Fair at which she won the Wardner Sweepstakes Trophy for best stallion, gelding, or mare shown in harness. Jenny C. went on to become the dam of six foals and has several descendants today, including some full-Lippitt Morgans.

J. C. wanted his daughters to be as competent as his sons in presenting his show horses and saw that both Grace and her younger sister, Helen, were given lessons by the Ball brothers, prominent Saddle Horse show trainers from Kentucky. Both girls became skilled competitors and regularly rode at the Illinois State Fair and at other fairs throughout the state, presenting their own horses as well as those owned by others.


As shared on Renee Page's Brunk CD, in a letter to her sister, Helen, Grace recalled that her father and older brother, Roy, brought Jubilee De Jarnette home when she was just a small girl, and showed him at the Illinois State Fair in 1901 and 1902. She remembered her uncle, Talbot, drove Jubilee De Jarnette while her



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JOHN C. WOODS

TOP TO BOTTOM: Jenny C, one of the early Brunk mares Grace trained, later sold to Elmer Darling (from 1916 joint catalog of early Vermont breeders); Hook & Woods trainers: (left to right) Johnny Woods, John Hook, Lonnie Hayden, L. B. "Splint" Barnett (*The Saddle and Show Horse Chronicle*, Vol. 1, Dec 1911); Hook & Woods ad (*The Saddle and Show Horse Chronicle*, Vol. 1, Dec 1911).

father drove Saint L for an Open Stallion Class in Light Harness. They had worked on his Cake Walk (an exaggerated, very high-stepping diagonal walk or slow trot, patterned after the cake walk dance of southern plantations and popular with top Saddle Horse trainers during those years) and when he won the class and trophy, she remembered Jubilee De Jarnette Cake-Walked around the ring three times. She also recalled that at least one of those years he defeated either the famous trotter Guy Axworthy or his equally famous sire Axworthy in this class.

Grace often helped her father with the training of young horses and she handled the stallions as well as the mares. Saint L (Rancho x Ben's Daisy), foaled in 1897, was one of the earliest stallions she rode regularly. The first of eight foals produced by old Ben's Daisy (Ben Franklin x Daisy), Saint L won the Stallion Championship at the 1898 Illinois State Fair. A later favorite was Red Ethan, the last foal of 12 produced by J. C.'s old foundation mare Daisy (Billy Bodette x mare by Billy Folsom) in 1910 when she was 26 years old and Grace was 16. Red Ethan's sire was Black Dan (Dan L by Chetco x Black Bess by Jubilee De Jarnette).

Grace attended schools in Springfield, Illinois, and two years of college at Ward Belmont College in Nashville, Tennessee.

JOHN C. WOODS

John Carter "Johnny" Woods was born October 7, 1881, to John Cardwell Woods and Laura Currie Green Woods in Mexico, Missouri, known as the Saddle Horse capitol of the world, largely thanks to the widely-known trainer Tom Bass. Johnny was one of 13 children. Seven of these were half-siblings, born to his father's first wife, while he and five full siblings were the children of his father's second wife, Laura Green. His grandfather, William Woods, was one of the early settlers of Audrain County and helped lay out the city of Mexico.

Johnny was born with a love of horses and a natural aptitude for showing. As a boy he began working for the famous horseman Tom Bass, who would remain his lifelong friend. Directly from Tom he learned many of the finer points of showing, handling, and training top horses. From 1902 to 1913, he ran a very successful show and training barn in partnership with Hall of Fame Saddlebred trainer John Hook, located in Paris, Missouri. John Hook was the winner of the first \$15,000 saddle stake in the world. Hook was said to have developed more outstanding riders and champion horses during his career than anyone else of his day and was later named to the International Saddlebred Hall of Fame.

The Hook & Woods barn was large, and generally in charge of 30 to 50 of the top Saddlebred prospects owned by the wealthiest clients. For a decade they had been one of the largest establishments in the country devoted to the breeding, training, and selling of Saddlebred horses, and dominating Western and Midwestern shows. One of the greater tragedies at this time in Johnny's life was the great fire that raged through the show barns in Ft. Worth, Texas, in March 1911, claiming the lives of countless horses in a matter of minutes. The fire burst out in the loft above the stalls and fell on the horses before any attempt could be made to save them. When the alarm sounded, they arrived minutes later to behold a most horrible sight. Rows of barns stretching two blocks were engulfed in flames, a thousand horses with manes, tails, and blankets on fire, and dozens

of men stampeding. The whole place was destroyed in 20 minutes. Hook & Woods lost six of their 14 horses in this fire. They managed to regroup from the tragedy with even greater winnings for the year, and the profitable partnership continued for two more years.

Johnny continued to train and show on his own after the partnership with Hook dissolved, taking time out to serve in World War I and then returning to the show ring. Whilst competing at shows across the Midwest he would eventually cross paths with Grace Brunk.

GRACE AND JOHNNY

Grace and Johnny were married in Marion County, Indiana, on September 10, 1921, when she was 27 and he was not quite 40. Although Grace loved Morgans, she often rode Saddlebreds (as well as Morgans) when riding for others at open shows, and she especially enjoyed the three and five-gaited saddle classes. She was a skilled competitor who won many ribbons and was a favorite with the crowds.

Not long after their wedding, the Woods moved to Shelburne, New Hampshire, and began training and showing both Morgans and Saddlebreds for O. B. Brown at Sutherland Farm. Their first child, Ann, was born in Berlin, New Hampshire, September 18, 1924, followed by two sons, John Chase Woods, known as Jack, in 1928, and David Brunk Woods in 1930. All the children learned to ride at a young age. Ann in particular remained deeply involved with horses. She began riding at the age of two, and skiing at the age of six, pulled by a horse. While still very young during the 1930s she was National Junior Women's Dressage Champion and did steeplechasing.

In addition to horse training, Johnny supplemented his income whenever he could by working for the Brown Company in Berlin, New Hampshire, during the period from 1919 to 1933. The Depression years were difficult, especially with three young children. They returned for a time to Springfield, Illinois, and were living at the Toronto Farm, the family farm of her mother, Minnie Husband, which was to be part of Grace's inheritance.

About this time, Johnny's old friend, Tom Bass, asked him to take over training of a Saddlebred colt that had been given to him as Bass's health was failing and he was no longer able to ride. Eventually known as Upwey King Peavine, this horse would change the course of Morgan history forever.

TOM BASS

Tom Bass, born into slavery on January 5, 1859, in Boone County, Missouri, became one of the most well-known and highly respected horsemen in history. He was the son of William Hayden Bass, who owned a Boone County plantation, and Cornelia Gray, one of William's slaves. Tom knew horses from his earliest memory, being taught to handle them at a very young age by his father and grandfather, and his natural talent with horses soon became apparent. He remembered sleeping in the stables when he was so small he was easily lost in the straw; and riding the old mares when just a tiny boy, barely old enough to walk. William took the boy for rides across the plantation by the time he was three, but mostly he was raised by his maternal grandfather, Presley Gray, who taught him the finer points of handling horses. However, Tom's natural ability to communicate



LEFT TO RIGHT: Tom Bass; Tom Bass & Belle Beach (photo by George Ford Morris, both photos public domain).

with animals—and horses in particular—was unique. The Civil War freed Tom from slavery at the age of six. His grandfather, like many slaves, had no place to go and chose to continue working at the plantation as a freed man. Tom stayed as well.

His father, William, recognized Tom's unusual ability when he caught him giving a demonstration to his white sons with a stubborn old mule he had gaited and taught to rack with perfection, and even the-believed-to-be-impossible feat of cantering backwards. He often took Tom to the auction sales after this, enlisting the boy's talent to retrain outlaws he could then sell for a profit. Tom was able to save some money from the share his father gave him for his efforts. One day at these sales, Tom met the influential horseman, Joseph Potts. Following Potts's advice, Tom went to Mexico, Missouri, when he was 18. He worked as a bell boy in the famous Ringo House Hotel and soon after became a stable boy in the Potts training barn. His reputation as a trainer spread rapidly, and he soon went into business for himself, although he was too cautious to make much money. His methods of kindness and patience in handling horses were legendary. Unlike many trainers of the day, he never used a whip or club and seldom even raised his voice. He invented the Tom Bass bit, still in use today, to enable riders to control the horse without punishment, but refused to patent it, saying it was his gift to the horses to make their lives easier.

Tom trained the famous gray Saddlebred mare Miss Rex, a daughter of Rex Denmark out of Roy by Pat Cleburne Jr. Rex Denmark's dam was a daughter of the registered Morgan Star Of The West #98 and was solid Morgan on both sides of her pedigree, tracing her sireline to Justin Morgan in just five generations. Rex Denmark's sire, Crigler's Denmark, was also out of a Morgan mare, Bettie Crosby, tracing her sireline through Black Hawk. Bettie Crosby's dam Queen (listed as a Hall of Fame Saddlebred mare) was

in fact by Lail's Tom Hal # 854, (also known as Bald Stockings), a son of old Tom Hal by Justin Morgan. Queen, a great-granddaughter of Justin Morgan, is the dam of the noted Saddlebred sires King William #67, Diamond Denmark #68, Latham's Denmark # 69, and Jewel Denmark #70. In addition to her daughter Bettie Crosby, Queen was also the dam of the Dr. Roe mare, who was the second dam of Saddlebred sire Brookwood King. This line also appears in many Morgan pedigrees through Brookwood King's daughter, Ladelle. Through her dam, Miss Rex also traced to the registered Morgan Davy Crockett #603. At the Chicago World's Fair in 1893, Tom and Miss Rex performed before international audiences, and she was crowned First World Champion of the Columbian Exposition. Tom's fame skyrocketed after this. He is also credited with founding the famous American Royal show in Kansas City.

Modest and humble, Tom had friends among all classes of people. He rode before many famous people, including in the first inaugural parade for President Grover Cleveland, once before Queen Mary of Hungary, and twice before President Calvin Coolidge. Tom Bass was so highly regarded he was frequently visited in Mexico, Missouri, by many important people, including Presidents Teddy Roosevelt, William McKinley, and William Taft; Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan; and numerous others of national importance.

Tom also trained the well-known Saddlebred stallion Rex McDonald, crowned World Champion Saddle Horse of America at the 1903 World's Fair in St. Louis, as well as training horses for Buffalo Bill Cody, Teddy Roosevelt, and Will Rogers, and supplying all the American circuses with their top high school horses. His most famous high school horse, world champion Belle Beach, who was said to be the greatest high school mare of all time, won all the nation's shows from Madison Square Garden

on down, and was among the most beloved of all Tom's horses. Belle Beach, a beautiful black Saddlebred daughter of Forest King marked with a white star, had numerous close Morgan crosses to Tom Hal, Copperbottom, old Pacing Pilot, Davy Crockett, Black Hawk, and Hale's Green Mountain. Tom had heard about this filly when she was born and sought to buy her as a weanling. Though he haggled with her breeder for weeks the price the breeder insisted upon was much higher than Tom could afford. She was sold for an astronomical sum as a buggy mare for an army captain's wife. Clueless about training the spirited filly, the captain was more than happy to sell Belle to Tom for a reasonable price a few months later, after she had thrown his wife through a plate glass window.

Slowly and patiently, Tom used his gentle methods to win Belle's trust, and kept her training a closely guarded secret. When he finally brought her out, Tom cantered into the ring on the elegant mare, bringing her to a halt. Then, rearing, with her forelegs reaching for the sky, Belle turned daintily in a full circle, dropping gracefully, and without missing a beat, began performing a perfect, collected Spanish trot. Tom then had her canter backwards around the ring to the immense delight of the crowd. After this, Tom dismounted, facing the mare as the band began to play "After the Ball Was Over," and Belle glided and waltzed with her master in perfect time to the music. The band then played "Turkey in the Straw," and she performed a hoedown, kneeling to the cheering crowd when she was done. No one had ever seen anything like it.

French authorities, the greatest judges of high school horses in the world, delayed sailing to Paris for a week solely to see Belle Beach and Tom Bass perform at Madison Square Garden. They declared Belle Beach to be the finest high school horse they had ever seen with absolutely perfect action. Belle Beach retired in 1928 at the age of 24.

In 1931, at the age of 72, Tom suffered a heart attack while competing in the show ring. Though he never fully recovered and was unable to ride again, he never lost his passion. In 1933, his friend Noble Hite presented him with a flashy yearling colt to train, which he was planning to register under the name Bass's King Peavine, in honor of the legendary horseman. Tom thought the colt was one of the finest prospects to wear a halter, but when Belle Beach died in his barn that year Tom lost heart and asked his friend, Johnny Woods, to take on the colt. Tom died less than a year after his beloved mare, on November 4, 1934.

UPWEY KING PEAVINE

Upwey King Peavine was a chestnut stallion marked with a wide blaze extending over his nose, both front ankles, and both hind stockings, bred by Noble Hite, and foaled in 1932. Hite, a friend of Tom Bass, was a small farmer and breeder of fine Saddle Horses, from Auxvasse, Missouri, a small, neighboring town of Mexico, Missouri. He owned and stood the stallion Astral Jones (Astral King x Psyche B), a double grandson of Bourbon King (Bourbon Chief by Harrison Chief x Annie C [Wilson's King by Harrison Chief x Kate by Richelieu]). In 1931, he purchased the mare Old Hockaday (Dr. Hockaday by Rex Peavine x mare by Rex Denmark), a great-granddaughter of Rex McDonald, expressly to breed to his stallion Astral Jones.

Hite filled out the registration application with his first choice intending to name the colt Bass's King Peavine, in honor of his friend Tom Bass, to whom he gave the colt. However, Hite delayed sending in the registration. Possibly he was upset that Tom placed the colt with Johnny Woods instead of training it himself. According to Bill Downey, who wrote *Whisper on the Wind*, the most authoritative biography of Tom Bass, all properties and possessions were willed to Tom's wife, Angie. However, the colt, according to Tom's wishes, was given to Johnny, much to Johnny's surprise. Some of Tom's friends did not believe Tom had left the colt to Johnny, but he retained the horse and continued to train him as Tom had asked him to do. Meanwhile, beginning in 1933, Johnny and Grace began to work for Owen Moon of Upwey Farms in Woodstock, Vermont, dividing their time between shows on the East Coast and in Illinois and the Midwest. Johnny showed King Peavine at the 1935 Illinois State Fair and won the Model Class for Stallions Three Years Old and Over. The judges left their seats and came to the ring to admire the last Tom Bass horse.

Following the death of J. C. Brunk in August of that year, the process of settling the estate was underway. The Woods family soon moved back East, taking King Peavine and the rest of their show string, which included a few Saddlebred crosses as well as some purebred Morgans. Owen Moon was very impressed and purchased several of these horses from the Woods, including King Peavine. Owen worked with Noble Hite to finally clear the horse's registration as a Saddlebred, and applied to register the horse as a Morgan using the name Upwey King Peavine for both.

These were lean years for the Morgan breed. The Standardbred had taken the top spot on the trotting track and automobiles had become so widespread there was little need for a family driving horse. Likewise, modern farm equipment was swiftly replacing the use of horses for farm work. The direction and future of the Morgan breed was primarily guided by the Executive Committee of The Morgan Horse Club. In 1921, they had modified the rules for registration, published in Volume IV of the *Register*, as follows:

"Rule I—The produce of a sire and dam both registered in the American Morgan Horse Register.

"Rule II—To register any horse in the American Morgan Horse Register which is not the produce of a sire and dam both registered therein, application with full particulars should be made to the Executive Committee of The Morgan Horse Club, at 3 East 44th Street, New York, N.Y., whose decision will be final."

At the time this revision of Rule II was made, it was intended to allow the Executive Committee some latitude in registering horses, with the unwritten understanding that those to be considered would of course be of provable Morgan ancestry. By the 1930s, however, the open-ended wording of Rule II was much less clear and left a lot of room for interpretation. King Peavine did have Morgan crosses, but they were comparatively remote. In the first five generations of his pedigree there were only three registered Morgans, one of which appeared twice for a total of four, but these were all in the 5th generation and on his dam's side. King Peavine's



UPWEY KING PEAVINE'S INFLUENCE

The Saddlebred stallion **(1 & 2)** (photo by W. W. Dexter, *The Morgan Horse* October 1999) was a legacy of Grace and Johnny Woods's association with famed Missouri horse trainer Tom Bass. Grandfathered into the Morgan Registry under the old Rule II, he influenced the breed as sire of Upwey King Benn **(3)** (*The Morgan Horse* January 1987) (x Audrey) who, from the mare Quietude, sired Upwey Ben Don **(4)** (*The Morgan Horse* archives) and Upwey Benn Quietude **(5)** (*The Morgan Horse* August 1977 and September 1954, photo by Freudy), shown with her 1954 foal Waseeka's Nocturne **(6)**.

dam Old Hockaday was a daughter of Dr. Hockaday (Rex Peavine x Bessie Shearer by Lynn Boyd). Rex Peavine, a son of the famous Saddlebred champion Rex McDonald, was out of Daisy 2d, a daughter of the Morgan stallion Peavine #636, a grandson of Black Hawk with a line to Brutus by Justin Morgan through his sire's dam. Daisy 2d also had a line to Tom Hal by Justin Morgan through her dam's sire. Bessie Shearer was a granddaughter of Tom Boyd #3448 by Cabell's Lexington #1223. Old Hockaday's dam was a daughter of Rex Denmark who was out of a daughter of Star Of The West #98. Further back he had other crosses to Tom Hal, Copperbottom, old Pilot, Davy Crockett, as well as Black Hawk, Hale's Green Mountain, and others, but even with all of these distant lines combined Upwey King Peavine had only about 4 percent Morgan blood, and his type and appearance were strongly Saddlebred. Even more unusual, his sireline did not trace to Justin Morgan at all, but rather went back to Messenger. In fact, none of the sirelines of any of his four grandparents traced back to Justin Morgan. However, the way Rule II was written at the time allowed him to be registered, and the Executive Committee approved his application.

Upwey King Peavine was shown in five-gaited and fine harness classes in 1937 and 1938, but in 1939 he was shown at the first Morgan

National Show, which Owen Moon hosted at his Upwey Farms. Although he was a handsome and showy horse, King Peavine was not a particularly popular sire. However, the U. S. Government Farm, always willing to engage in breeding experiments, sent four good mares to him in 1938. At the 1942 National, two of the resulting offspring, Jefferson out of Audrey (Bennington x Carolyn) and Joyce out of Redfern (Bennington x Artemisia)—a full sister of the famous brothers Mansfield, Canfield, Ulysses, and Querido—won Champion and Reserve Champion Three-Year-Old, respectively. They were shown with King Peavine for the Get-of-Sire Class and won, beating the U. S. Government leading stallions Goldfield and Mansfield for the honor.

The first consignment sale in the history of the Morgan breed was held in conjunction with the National Show that year, and Jefferson topped the sale. He was purchased by Owen Moon who renamed him Upwey King Benn. Audrey, the dam of Upwey King Benn, was a daughter of Ethan Woodbury (Ethan Allen 3d x Lady Laura), who was a full brother of Artemisia, well-known for her golden cross with Bennington. Carolyn's second dam was another daughter of Ethan Allen 3d, and out of a daughter of Black Morgan, tracing her tail female line to a daughter of Sherman Morgan, so her breeding was quite like that of Artemisia and crossed exceptionally

well with Bennington. Carolyn produced a total of nine foals, eight of which were by Bennington, and is also known for her sons Rockwood and Swanton (full brothers to Audrey) and who were important in Midwestern pedigrees with many descendants today. Audrey went on to produce seven foals, only being bred to Upwey King Peavine once, but this colt, Upwey King Benn, was by far the most important offspring of both his parents. A handsome show horse, he was admired by many top breeders of the day and went on to sire 41 registered Morgan foals. He remained at Upwey Farms until Owen Moon's death in 1947, after which he was sold to Judy Shepard of Ballardvale, Massachusetts.

Upwey King Peavine sired a total of 29 registered Morgan foals, with one additional Saddlebred registered foal included in the online database who sired a few Morgan foals. Of these, 18 (including the Saddlebred) were bred by Owen Moon, four by the U. S. Government Farm, and eight by other breeders. In Morgans today, crosses to Upwey King Peavine primarily appear through Upwey King Benn, and in particular through King Benn's most famous son and daughter, Upwey Ben Don and Upwey Benn Quietude, both out of the mare Quietude (Troubadour Of Willowmoor x Ruth by Reynard), and bred by Owen Moon. This golden cross truly did change the history of the breed.

Bred by the U. S. Government Farm, Quietude was foaled in 1923, and was the dam of 13 foals. The government sold her in 1935 to Cassius Seeley of Middlebury, Vermont, after weaning her colt Sonfield (x Mansfield) who would go on to be a famous Western sire for California rancher Roland Hill, and then have a second career as foundation sire for Beckridge Farms in Washington, siring a total of 236 registered offspring. Mr. Seeley sold her in 1941 to Robert Backer of Brandon, Vermont, and he a few days later sold the 18-year-old mare to Owen Moon. Owen bred her to Upwey King Benn and she produced Upwey Ben Don in 1943, and Upwey Benn Quietude, who would be her last foal, in 1944. Both these exceptional foals were very strong in Morgan type. Evidence points to Quietude being almost certainly a double copy mare for the large heart gene. Her sire, Troubadour Of Willowmoor, traced his tail female line directly back to a daughter of Justin Morgan, and his daughters were all phenomenal producers. Quietude also had multiple opportunities to inherit the large heart through her dam. Her son, Upwey Ben Don, went on to sire 137 offspring and was also known for the legendary quality of his daughters.

Owen sold Ben Don as a yearling to Wesley Nieman of Rome, New York. Mr. Nieman sold him in 1946 to Mrs. Tina Wood of Bouckville, New York, and she sold him in 1947 to Ted Davis of Windsor, Vermont, for his foundation sire. Ben Don himself was inducted into the AMHA Show Horse Hall of Fame, and his famous daughter, Windcrest Dona Lee (x Ingrid by Mansfield), also inducted, is just one example of the many outstanding daughters he produced.

Upwey Benn Quietude was truly a beautiful mare with a kind and sweet disposition gentle enough to be trusted with a child yet also a spirited show mare. She went on to produce 11 foals. Owen sold Upwey Benn Quietude as a yearling to Elbridge Witham of Lynnfield, Massachusetts. He sold her in 1946 to Judy Shepard, who then sold her in 1948 to Ted Davis. Davis kept her for several years, and then sold her with her foal by Starfire at her side to Waseeka

Farm in Ashland, Massachusetts, in 1954. That colt was to become yet another AMHA Hall of Fame Show Horse, the great Waseeka's Nocturne, who has dominated the sireline for Morgan show horses ever since, going on to sire 98 registered offspring (see "The Starfire Enigma," *The Morgan Horse*, January/February 2021). The golden cross of Upwey Ben Don and Waseeka's Nocturne blood became a hallmark among show breeders for many years.

In 1944, Owen sold Upwey King Peavine to George Biddison of Baltimore, Maryland, who sold him the next year to Garland Clutz, also of Baltimore. His last registered Morgan foal was the mare Pamalette (x Analette), foaled in 1948. After this, the horse which Tom Bass saw greatness in, yet which stirred up much controversy among Morgan breeders for his Saddlebred blood, faded quietly from the pages of Morgan history, leaving a remarkable legacy behind him.

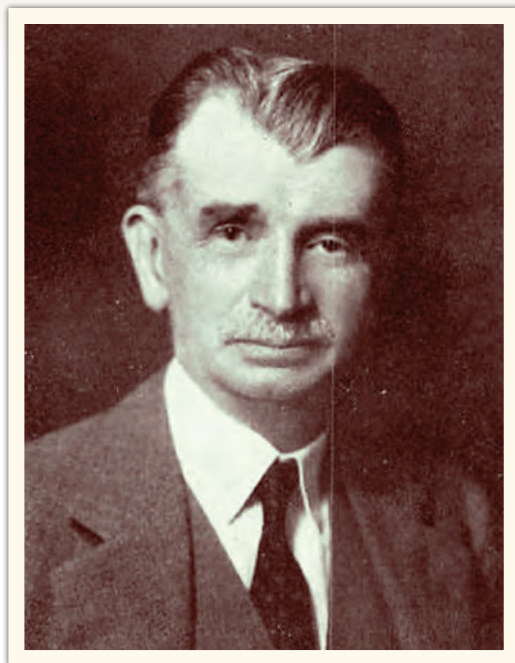
OWEN MOON

Owen Moon Jr. was born December 6, 1872 in Penn Valley, Pennsylvania, the youngest of three children of Owen Moon Sr. and Elizabeth Buckman. He married Margaret Scott in Delaware, Pennsylvania, in 1899, and the next year they moved to Trenton, New Jersey. In 1909, the Moons traveled to Woodstock, Vermont, in search of a summer home. They bought a farm in South Woodstock known as the Kendall place and named it Upwey Farms as it reminded them of the scenery near Upwey, England, at the head of the Wey River. Owen was a descendant of James Moon, born in Somerset, England, in 1639, who had come to America on the ship *Welcome* in 1682, and who was among the early settlers of Pennsylvania. Margaret's ancestors had also come to America around 1680, and were from the vicinity of Upwey, England.

Over the next several years, Owen purchased ten neighboring properties, and the Moons busied themselves with restoration projects and reclaiming the land. Owen wanted the best of everything, and his livestock was no exception. He raised Suffolk sheep imported from England, Jersey cows with the highest production records, Suffolk Punch draft horses, and Morgan horses. All these animals were shown and won many ribbons. He started his breeding program with the stallion Tarik (LaPorte by Billy King x Modest Morgan by Brainerd Horse, son of Hale's Green Mountain), bred by Dr. A. H. Hinman of Dundee, Illinois, and foaled in 1907. He purchased the stallion in 1915 from Spencer Oden of Fall River, Massachusetts. During the 1920s and 1930s, many New England breeders had given up trying to breed Morgans, turning the horses to pasture and losing track of the records. Owen advertised in local papers to try to find these horses and would often drive hundreds of miles to locate them.

Due to his interest in the old Army Remount endurance rides, Owen felt the area surrounding Upwey Farms, with its hundreds of miles of old wooded trails and stagecoach roads, would be an ideal location for such a contest. With the help of the Green Mountain Morgan Horse Association, which he had succeeded in persuading to locate its headquarters nearby, Owen was instrumental in establishing the historic 100-mile Vermont trail ride first held in 1936.

Meanwhile, before J. C. Brunk died in August of 1935, he had experimented with a few Saddlebred crosses at the encouragement



LEFT TO RIGHT: Owen Moon (*The Morgan Horse* magazine, August 1957); Upwey Farm (*The Morgan Horse* magazine, October 1999).

of Grace and Johnny, who were hoping to add them to their show string. In all, there were just five of these horses, three colts which were gelded young, Upwey Drum Major (Anglo Peavine ASHR x Senorita by Charles Reade), bay, 1931; Upwey Northern Light (Forest Whirlwind ASHR x Golite by Go Hawk) chestnut, 1934; Aujada (Forest Whirlwind ASHR x Katie Hughes by Knox Morgan) bay, 1934; and two mares, Upwey Jubilee Kay (Jubilee King x Melody Queen ASHR), gray, 1934; and Upwey Ruby Reade (Astral King ASHR x Ruby Reade by Charles Reade), golden chestnut, 1932.

Grace had also located and purchased two daughters of Jubilee King which neighboring breeders had bred from Saddlebred mares. These were Upwey Carmelita (Jubilee King x Ruth B unregistered by Grand Whirlwind ASHR; 2d dam Ruth Rollins 02271 by Charles Reade), bred by Earl Bremmer of Jacksonville, Missouri, and foaled in 1934 and Upwey Swiss Miss (Jubilee King x Mary Ann, unregistered by Rex Basil ASHR; 2d dam Roberta 02208 by Charles Reade).

These horses also remained unregistered until later, after the Woods returned to the East Coast and began working for Owen Moon at Upwey Farms. Owen was impressed with these horses and, in addition to King Peavine, purchased the mares Upwey Jubilee Kay, Upwey Ruby Reade, Upwey Carmelita, and Upwey Swiss Miss, although he ended up selling Swiss Miss back to Grace. He persuaded her to go ahead and register all the horses with the Upwey prefix, except Aujada who retained his original name. These included those horses Grace continued to own, to be shown as Morgans at the first National Morgan Show in 1939 held at Upwey Farms in honor of the 150th anniversary of the birth of the Justin Morgan horse. Owen continued to host the National Morgan Show for the next several years.

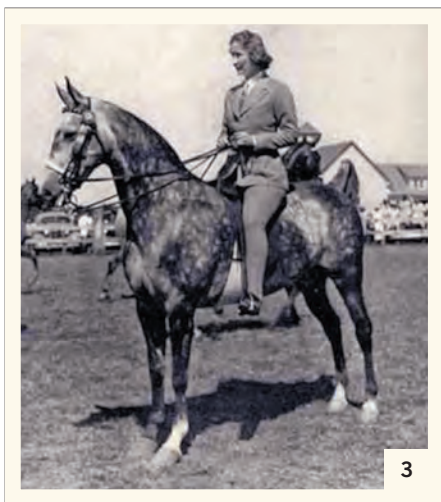
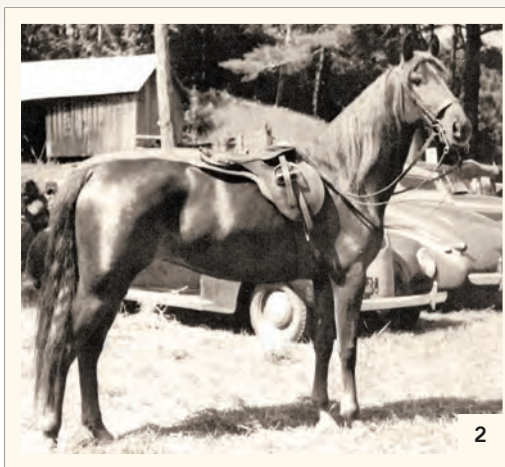
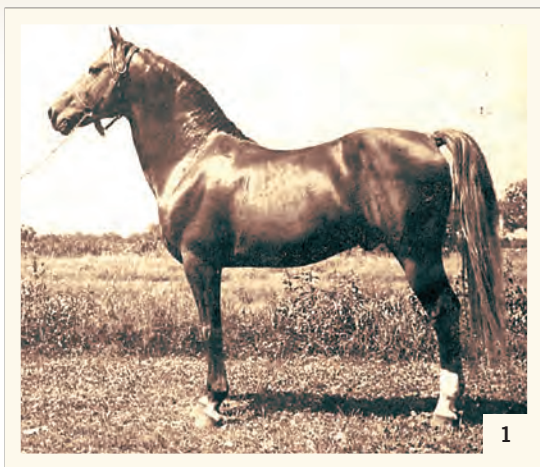
From Grace, Owen also purchased the pure Morgan mares Jarnetta (Jubilee King x Daisy Knox), a chestnut and full sister

of Red Vermont; Analette (Panall by Go Hawk x Mrs. Lewis by Charles Reade); and with her help, the Brunk-bred mare Penona (Penrod x Patrona) and her yearling 1936 filly by King Peavine, bred by Lewis Pape of Pawnee, Illinois. Owen registered the filly as Upwey King's Penona. Altogether, about 70 registered Morgans went on to carry the Upwey prefix, the most famous of which were the full siblings Upwey Ben Don and Upwey Benn Quietude.

Owen Moon was also a newspaper man and publisher, and in further support of the Morgan breed took it on himself to begin publishing *The Morgan Horse* magazine in 1941, producing, printing, and distributing it practically singlehandedly, which he continued until his death in April 1947.

THE 1939 NATIONAL MORGAN SHOW

As Grace and Johnny continued their work for Upwey Farms, they were very busy preparing for the First Annual 1939 National Morgan Horse Show, which Owen wanted to hold in honor of the 150th anniversary of the birth of the Justin Morgan horse. Grace's string, which she worked hard to train and show herself with Johnny's advice, included Red Vermont, Paragraph, and Upwey Jubilee Kay, all of whom she had brought to Vermont in May 1937. In preparing, Grace won championships with all three of them under saddle in 1938. Jubilee Kay, Grace wrote in a letter to *The Morgan Horse*, October 1962, was the most sensational of the trio, winning many first prizes and championships at smaller shows. Grace then took her to the Three-Gaited Saddle Championship Show at the Eastern States Exposition in 1938 where she defeated some of the top American Saddle horses, all four-year-olds and over, for the Saddle Champion title. Grace noted she was most proud of the fact that all her winning was done with an eight-ounce shoe and normal toe. All were winners at the 1939 National as well, along



1939 SHOW STRING, THE NATIONAL

After moving east, the Woods were greatly encouraged by the success of the first string they showed at The National in 1939. It included Red Vermont (1), Paragraph (2), and Upwey Jubilee Kay (3). Also, Upwey King Peavine (4) was shown there for the first time as a Morgan (photos *The Morgan Horse* magazine, December 1950, July 1984, January-February 1942, and courtesy of Renee Page, Brunk CD).

with many of the other Morgans Grace and Johnny had brought East, including Upwey King Peavine, who was shown for the first time as a Morgan. Also at the National Show, Red Vermont won the Gold Medal, presented by the Congress of the State of Vermont for the horse most nearly resembling Justin Morgan, in honor of Justin Morgan's 150th birthday anniversary.

JOHNNY'S DEATH

With the huge success of the National Show behind them, Grace and Johnny were feeling like they had finally turned a corner in achieving their goals. Johnny had just accepted a new job, being put in charge of the Tobini Stable in Walpole, New Hampshire. Grace had assembled a formidable group of Morgans with apparent intent to begin her own breeding program rivaling those of her sister and brothers, as well as taking her own turn at showing horses she had trained herself with Johnny's help.

1940 proved to be a terrible year. In February, Grace's younger brother John suddenly died, at the age of just 43. Four months later, Johnny unexpectedly suffered a stroke, and after three weeks

at the Veteran's Hospital in White River Junction, Vermont, he too passed away on July 2, 1940, at 58 years of age. Grace found herself widowed at 46 with three young children to care for. Ann was 16, Jack 12, and David 10 when their father died. Grace never complained. The children came first, and she had to plot a different course for the future.

GRACE'S INFLUENCE ON THE MORGAN BREED

From her father's estate, Grace acquired the young stallion Red Vermont (Jubilee King x Daisy Knox), chestnut, foaled 1934; the colt Rarben (Raragraph x Benita), chestnut with silver mane and tail, foaled 1935; and the mares Benita (Knox Morgan x Ben's Daisy), chestnut, foaled 1917; Virginia Dubois (Night Tide x Benita), bay, foaled 1937; Nira (Jubilee King x Benita), chestnut with silver mane and tail, foaled 1934; Analette, dark chestnut with light mane and tail, foaled 1932; Jurita (Jubilee King x Jeanne by Knox Reade [Knox Morgan x Mrs. Lewis by Charles Reade]) chestnut, foaled 1934; and Katette (Jubilee King x Katie Hughes by Knox Morgan).

She already owned the mares Jarnetta, foaled in 1931, and

Paragraph (Jubilee King x Nella), golden chestnut with silver mane and tail, foaled 1933. Later she also purchased the mare Vesta (Mansfield x Daisy by Troubadour Of Willowmoor); and from her sister Helen, the mare Zorina (Romax Light x Gizea by Go Hawk), both apparently purchased for the purpose of facilitating sales to other parties. From Mr. W. B. Capron, she purchased the government-bred mare Ambition (Bennington x Quietude), whom she bred to Red Vermont for a 1940 foal. Finally, in 1943, she purchased the Jubilee King son Glider (x Gizea by Go Hawk) from George Cross, and bred one foal from him before selling him the following year.

Like her younger brother Toby, Grace favored the blood of the great show Morgan Charles Reade, as well as the blood of Jubilee King and Knox Morgan. In addition to the horses mentioned above, Grace had also acquired the Charles Reade daughter Columbia Girl (x Maud by Rattler Morgan out of Mollie Golddust, a great-granddaughter of Golddust) and bred from her the palomino Golden Girl, foaled about 1930 by crossing to the Saddlebred Golden Eagle Denmark, as well as Golden Girl's daughter Ramona B, also palomino, foaled in 1935 by the Saddlebred Stonewall King. She did not register these horses but sold Ramona B in foal to Red Vermont to Kathleen Daley of San Gabriel, California. Kathleen Daley registered the foal, Jubilee Vermont, bred by Grace, and later bred and registered three full siblings: the palomino Jubilee Gold in 1941, the palomino Jubilee Victoria foaled in 1942, and the chestnut, Jubilee Royal, in 1944.

As Standardbreds had fully taken over the top spot from Morgans on the trotting tracks by the 1930s, and the automobile and modern farm machinery were largely replacing them as driving horses and farm animals, the Morgan breed was struggling to find its niche. A few breeders believed that some Saddlebred crosses would help save the Morgan breed by more firmly establishing their value as show horses, much like the U. S. Government Farm had introduced some Saddlebred mares a few years earlier in hopes of improving saddle horse type and adding size. The wording of Rule II at the time did allow outcrosses with little restriction, resulting in divided opinions between those who believed the Saddlebred crosses were helpful, and others who saw it as diluting foundation bloodlines. Some saw J. C. Brunk's Saddlebred crosses as evidence that he, as one of the most respected long-time breeders, supported the idea the outcrosses would improve the breed. Evidence indicates this was unlikely. J. C. understood the largest breeders of Morgans for several decades had been ranchers, and he had been very successful in the show ring with the lifetime breeding of pure Morgan bloodlines without the need of outcrossing. It had been his hope, in selling Jubilee King and some mares to Tom Burnett of the Triangle Ranch, that this would result in another nucleus of Morgan breeding stock on a well-known ranch. Unfortunately, Burnett failed to register most of Jubilee King's offspring while he owned him, though many were absorbed into the Quarter Horse breed.

In addition, the fact that J. C. only made five of these Saddlebred crosses, gelding all the colts as foals, and leaving the horses unregistered for two or more years after birth, indicates that he never intended to incorporate this blood into his breeding program. Even Grace herself, despite the fact she had married a Saddlebred trainer and competed with both Saddlebreds

and Morgans, seemed to agree with her father's philosophy of maintaining pure Morgan stock.

However, Grace only ended up breeding a total of four registered Morgans herself as, with Johnny's death in 1940, she had to adjust her plans by selling most of her beloved horses. Some would go to small breeders or owners who simply wanted a good horse, but the most valuable breeding stock needed to go where they would be used for the furtherance of the breed. Grace and Johnny had already made a tremendous impact by bringing Tom Bass's horse to Vermont, ultimately resulting in the Upwey Ben Don-Waseeka's Nocturne cross that ruled the Morgan show world for decades. But even more was yet to come.

RED VERMONT AND JACK DAVIS

Jack Davis was born John Charles Davis on May 7, 1876, to David Davis and Mary Jane Montgomery Davis in a log cabin in the remote backwoods near Allendale, Michigan. His father, born in Wales, had come to America as a child with his parents and the Davis family were among the early pioneers of the area, raising Morgan horses since about 1850. The Davis Morgans were true old-fashioned Morgans used to clear the land, skid logs over the frozen snow in winter, drive the family to church on Sunday, and race on Sunday afternoons. Jack's father gave him two Morgan colts to raise and train as a team when he was 12. At the age of 17, Jack went to work for his uncle, Walter Carey, who raised Morgans in northern Illinois with a band of about 100 mares and stallions, primarily fast trotting stock. Jack worked as a trainer and handler, and the horses were divided and typed according to three classes. Mr. Carey would keep the fastest trotters suitable for racing for his breeding program. Flashy and stylish horses would be sold to doctors, lawyers, and other wealthy customers for driving in the fashionable sections of Chicago. Heavier and sturdier types were sold to butchers, bakers, and others needing dependable delivery animals.

Jack took time out to serve in the cavalry of the Spanish-American war of 1898, then went back to working for his uncle. A few years later, he traveled through several states, eventually settling in California. In 1915, he went into the wholesale seed business, becoming one of the largest suppliers of vegetable seeds in the state until his retirement in 1930. Meanwhile, he continued to work with horses, training and showing gaited, fine harness, and stock horses. Jack helped establish the first Palomino registry and introduced refinement into that breed, however, he missed the Morgan horse of his youth and was searching for a Morgan stallion of this type that would pass on the qualities of conformation, disposition, action, and refinement he sought in his breeding program. In searching the West Coast, he had been unable to find what he was looking for, which led him to correspondence with Dr. W. L. Orcutt. Dr. Orcutt informed him that the only stallion in the East who would meet his requirements was Red Vermont, owned by Mrs. Woods. Grace was quick to see that Jack was a serious horseman and would provide an unmatched opportunity to spread the blood of Red Vermont on the West Coast. A deal was reached in February 1940, and according to Renee Page's Brunk CD, Jack paid a five-figure sum for the horse. Jack continued to show Red Vermont in three-gaited and driving classes, Western



RED VERMONT'S INFLUENCE

Red Vermont (Jubilee King x Daisy Knox) was acquired by Grace Brunk from her father's estate. He was then wisely purchased by prolific California breeder Jack Davis, pictured riding the stallion in two photos (1 & 2). Red Vermont is the sire of Domino Vermont (x Nona), retained by Jack's son Gene, shown in the saddle (3 & 4); Ginger Vermont (x Dawnglo), driven by Leo Beckley (5), also with her 1957 colt Montey Vermont (by Keystone) (6); and Dina Vermont (x McDonna) (7), dam of Delilah Vermont (by Legend of Caven-Glo) (8) (photos *The Morgan Horse* magazine, June 1948, March 1962, April 1964).

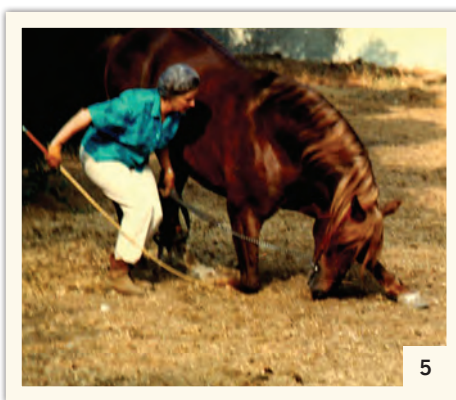
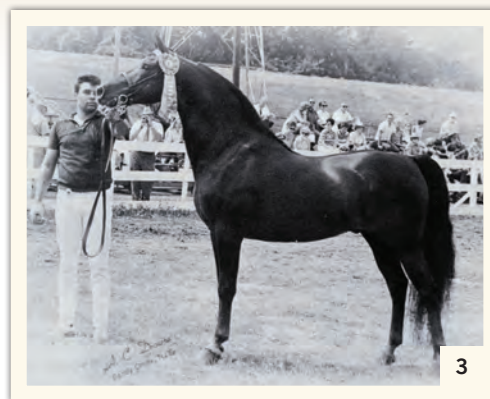
pleasure, parades, and was rarely defeated in halter classes, winning the Equestrian Award for Most Outstanding Morgan Stallion in Southern California in 1945.

Red Vermont went on to sire more than 1,500 colts sold all over the world, including 67 registered offspring, many of which are important in Western and sport Morgan pedigrees today. His son Domino Vermont (x Nona by Chestnut Chief) carried on the Davis breeding program after Jack's death for his son Gene, siring 28 offspring. Myrtle Neeley of Rexburg, Idaho, sought Grace's advice on starting her breeding program which Grace generously shared through several years of correspondence. Accordingly, Myrtle sent her mare Birdie Kellogg C K to Red Vermont, resulting in the colt Sireson, who became her first foundation sire with 26 offspring. Red Vermont daughters were like gold. The full sisters Dina Vermont and Redonna Vermont (x McDonna by McAllister); Ginger

Vermont (x Dawnglo); Bonnie Heather (x Heather Angel Field); and Shron Vermont (x Piedmont Arabella) are just a few examples, finding their way into the breeding programs of Caven-Glo, La Serena, Quietude, Kellstrom, Beckridge, Willow Glen, and many more.

JUBILEE KING AND FRANCES BRYANT

Following the death of Tom Burnett of Triangle Ranch in Texas in 1940, and the settling of his estate several months later, his will directed that Jubilee King should be returned to the Brunk family. Roy, Helen, and Tobby felt they all had plenty of Jubilee King blood in their breeding programs and were not particularly interested in taking him. However, Grace wanted him, despite her difficult situation. She would have liked to keep him, but she also knew she could find the right home for him where he would be of most value to the breed. After keeping him a year, she placed him



JUBILEE KING'S INFLUENCE

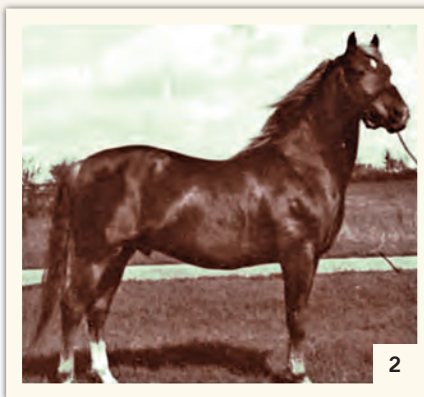
With the passing of Texas breeder Tom Burnett, where Jubilee King had become a foundation sire for the Quarter Horse breed, Grace brought the already legendary stallion back into the family, then astutely sold him to Vermont Morgan breeder Frances Bryant (1), ensuring his continued influence (see "The Never Ending Influence of Legacy Breeder Frances Bryant," by Brenda Tippin, *The Morgan Horse*, August 2019). From him Bryant bred the mare Cathy Serenity (x Lippitt Robrita) (2), dam of Bennfield's Ace (by Bennfield) (3) and maternal granddam of Courage Of Equinox (by Chasley Superman) (4). Eve Oakley founded her Caven-Glo program with the Jubilee King grandson Cavendish (Jubilee Courage x Paragraph) (5) and the mare Jubilee's Gloria (Jubilee King x Townshend Lass) (6) (photos © A. C. Drowne, Hal Hoover, from the National Museum of the Morgan Horse and *The Morgan Horse* magazine).

with Frances Bryant, along with his daughter Paragraph. Through placing Jubilee King with Frances, he founded the Eve Oakley's Caven-Glo Morgans, as well as the Lamberts of Quietude, which have found their way across the United States and several countries around the world. Eve Oakley's foundation stallion, Cavendish by Jubilee's Courage, bred by Frances, was a grandson of Jubilee King and out of Paragraph, and her foundation mare, Jubilee's Gloria, was a Jubilee King daughter Frances bred out of Townshend Lass. Also among Paragraph's offspring, the mare Mansphyllis went on to become the dam of Parade, foundation stallion for Cecil and Margaret Ferguson's Broadwall Morgans. Parade and his son Broadwall Drum Major were the only Morgans ever to tour and perform with the famous Lipizzaner stallions. It is also worth remembering that because Grace sold Jubilee King to Frances, Frances bred the lovely mare Cathy Serenity, dam of Bennfield's Ace who won six Grand National and World Champion Stallion titles between 1970 and 1980; and his full sister, Katy Bennfield. Besides winning National Grand Champion Mare titles at both the Eastern and Mid-Atlantic National Morgan shows alongside Bennfield's Ace in 1970, her foals included two full siblings—twice World Champion Mare Special Kay (by Chasley's Superman) and

her brother Courage Of Equinox, the most prolific sire in modern Morgan history. More of this story is detailed in the historical article on Frances Bryant in *The Morgan Horse*, August 2019.

GRACE, LATER YEARS, THE WHATLEY RANCH

Although Grace did not maintain a breeding program or heavy involvement with The Morgan Horse Club as her brothers and sister did, she spread her influence in countless other ways. She generously shared her knowledge with other breeders, including her siblings. She used her skills to support her children by starting a successful riding school in Pennsylvania, and later by judging at horse shows. Her daughter, Ann, became an accomplished horsewoman, earning a master's in journalism from the University of Maryland, and going on to write articles for horse journals. During her mid-20s Ann worked as a horse trainer in Ireland. She married a veterinarian, William James Whatley, in 1950 and they raised Hereford cattle on the Whatley Ranch near DeBeque, Colorado, while the boys pursued military careers. Jack went on to become a Colonel in the Army, earning a Silver Star and Soldier's Medal for his heroic actions in Vietnam. David became a Technical Sergeant for the U. S. Airforce, also earning



PARAGRAPH'S INFLUENCE

The Brunk-bred mare Paragraph (Jubilee King x Nella) (1) came to Vermont with the Woods in 1937. She was the dam of Cavendish (by Jubilee Courage) (2); Prudence Ashmore (by Lippitt Ashmore), shown here with Frances Bryant (3); and, sired by Mansfield, the mares Manzanita (4), dam of Townshend Cornita (5); and Mansphyllis, pictured with her son Parade, Cecil & Margaret Ferguson, up (6) (photos from the National Museum of the Morgan Horse and *The Morgan Horse* magazine).

many honors. Grace moved to Aspen, Colorado, for a number of years to be closer to Ann's family, and then lived with them at the Whatley Ranch for several years. Both Grace and Ann judged at horse shows all over Colorado. In 1966, Ann and her husband sold the ranch and divorced. Grace moved to Grand Junction, Colorado, where she spent her final years, passing away in 1971 at the age of 76. Her grandson, William Whatley, fondly remembers

Grace as “GaGa,” and she and his mother teaching him to ride English when he was just four or five years old. He called her “the fastest cane in the West.”

Overcoming many hardships, Grace made remarkable choices, impacting the breeding programs of Morgan lovers across the country, and leaving a legacy that will continue to endure for future generations. ■

RESOURCES

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