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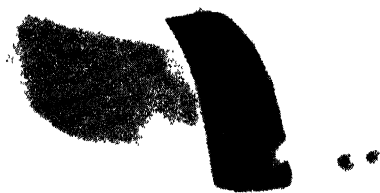


## A TRAINER TO TWO KINGS









*Photo: Bertram Park*

**RICHARD MARSH**

A Trainer to Two Kings  
*Being the Reminiscences of*  
Richard Marsh, M.V.O. ❀ With  
a Foreword *by the* Rt. Hon. the Earl  
of Durham, K.G. ❀ ❀ ❀ ❀

*With Twenty Plates*



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**Dedicated by special permission to**  
**His Most Gracious Majesty King George the Fifth**



## AUTHOR'S NOTE

THE knowledge of His Majesty having graciously accepted the dedication of this book gives me a feeling of deep gratitude and satisfaction such as I find it hard to express in words. Alone for that further mark of the King's kindness and favour the telling of the story of my long life's work was, I humbly suggest, well worth while. I value most highly the fact of the Foreword having been contributed, at my special request, by the Earl of Durham, K.G., to whom our modern world of racing in this country, if I may so express it, owes an immense debt for his wise and sagacious administrative work as a Steward of the Jockey Club. In suggesting that the reader may be interested in the book's contents I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my grateful thanks to my friend, Mr. Sidney Galtrey, O.B.E. (Mil.), for his invaluable assistance, which I would not like to pass over without this expression of appreciation.

Since the work of creating this book was started, and, indeed, after it was completed, certain events have occurred, which make it a sincere pleasure as well as an obligation to place on record for all time



my grateful acknowledgments. First there was the dinner given to me by the Newmarket trainers, and the beautiful silver cup presented to me on their behalf by the Hon. George Lambton, with the following inscription: "Presented to Richard Marsh by his brother trainers on the occasion of his retirement, as a mark of their warm appreciation of his long and honourable connection with the Turf.—1925"; together with a magnificent cabinet of cigars. Then there followed the most generous testimonial, organized by Sir Walter Gilbey and Mr. Somerville Tattersall, and subscribed to by those whose tributes have overwhelmed me by the kindness which inspired them. And, surely, no man could have been more signally honoured on quitting active service than I was, on receiving personally from His Majesty the decoration as a Member of the Royal Victorian Order—His gracious Majesty's own personal Order.

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## FOREWORD

**I**T is a pleasure to comply with Mr. Marsh's request for a few words of introduction to his book. After fifty years' experience of racing and intimate acquaintance with Newmarket, I can appreciate the part he has so worthily played. Of course, he and I, in our septuagenarian minds, believe that Newmarket was more amusing, more exciting, and more delightful when we were young. We knew the old school of sportsmen, Admiral Rous, George Payne, Lord Falmouth, Lord Wilton, Colonel Forester, Matt Dawson, Tom Jennings, and many more, and such brilliant jockeys as Fordham, Osborne, Tom Cannon, Archer, Watts, and Webb. Marsh had the talent to assimilate the good points of the old methods of training and riding and to adapt himself to modern variations.

In those days a race was a far "prettier" thing to watch, and "horsemanship"—especially in a finish—was more patent to the eye, but I have never seen Fordham or Archer show more consummate skill than Danny Maher possessed in placing his horse or in extricating it from difficulties.

I must regretfully grant that the ugly modern seat affords a horse from 7 lb. to 10 lb. advantage in a strongly run race, though it is difficult for old

stagers to approve of the hammer and tongs style of riding of two-year-olds in the first four furlongs of a race. Had *Persimmon* been subjected to such treatment he would not have won the Derby.

There are, and always have been, good trainers who could turn out a good horse in good condition, but if I were asked to give two pre-eminent examples I would name *Ladas* at his best, and *Persimmon* when he won the Gold Cup at Ascot. The latter was the perfection of fitness and the ideal of a great horse. On that day *Ormonde* and *St. Simon* would have had a doughty rival. When *Persimmon* won the Eclipse Stakes I noticed a slight deterioration and symptoms of an inclination for paddock ease in preference to racecourse exertions. But Marsh had accomplished all he tried to do, and what more can a trainer do?

In his reminiscences he modestly leaves us to surmise how much his successes were due to his patience and careful study of the idiosyncrasies of his various classic winners. They differed greatly in temperament and type, but he drew out what was best in each of them. *Persimmon* was undoubtedly his greatest horse and his greatest pride; but I think he would confess that the progeny of that horse—sire though he was of *Sceptre* and *Zinfandel*—caused him more trouble and anxiety in training than all his good winners. It was a great day for the Turf when *Persimmon* won the Derby, and possibly even more gratifying when King Edward

led in his Derby winner *Minoru*. Marsh has well described those stirring scenes. But he has omitted one phase.

I have watched with curiosity and sympathy the demeanour of many owners who have led their horses into the cramped and crowded weighing-in enclosure at Epsom. They had every excuse for emotion, elation, and satisfaction, and none but a churl would sneer at their varied ways of manifesting their delight. King Edward was incomparable—the personification of dignity and good-humour and of genuine pleasure at the wonderful receptions accorded him. I award *Proxime Accessit* to Mr. “Boss” Croker. For nonchalance, assumed or real, I half admired the owner who lolled against the wall with his hands in his pockets when *Merry Hampton* was led in.

Marsh may well write affectionately of the patrons whose confidence he gained by his unremitting zeal in the management of their horses. I have often heard people say, when inspecting one of his horses in the paddock, “He has all Dick Marsh’s usual polish and bloom.” For years his establishment was famous for its thoroughness and smartness, beginning with the master of it. I do not like to flatter a man in private or in print, but I must pay an honest tribute to one I have known and respected for many years. It is no easy matter for a prominent trainer to possess the gift of dealing tactfully and circumspectly with all sorts and conditions of men ; but Marsh’s courtesy, admirable



manners, and attractive personality have achieved for him universal popularity.

His many friends will hope that he may long continue to frequent the scenes of his former triumphs where his character and record as a trainer have honourably sustained the best traditions of Newmarket and of the Turf.

DURHAM.

# A TRAINER TO TWO KINGS

## CHAPTER I

### EARLY DAYS

The Beginning of Things—Early Training—First Race and First Winner—Rides on the Flat and in Steeplechasing—Trainers of the Sixties and Seventies.

‘CONGRATULATIONS, Marsh. But . . . I suppose you are laughing on one side of your face and crying on the other!’

The words were spoken by Lord Rosebery soon after *Jeddah* had returned to the weighing-in enclosure after winning the Derby of 1898. The buzz of astonishment had scarcely died down, and that rather sticky silence, which is in such contrast with many of the victory scenes of my long racing life, had hardly been broken. It is true I had won my second Derby with a 100 to 1 chance, but I had also trained *Dieudonné* for the Duke of Devonshire, and that horse had started at a short price. I had reached an important milestone in my career, and in due course we shall arrive at it in this book. It is as the task is entered upon that I recall Lord Rosebery's words, and fit them now to express my feelings of gratitude that I have been spared for so many years, during which I have been permitted by good health and signal honour to make my humble contribution to the splendid history of the British Turf. On the other hand, I have an uneasy feeling that this

embarkation on a new and far less familiar career of autobiography is a grim sort of reminder that the great days are over and past recall except in the form of reminiscence.

Mention in 1925 of personal matters which occurred in 1851 is indeed like viewing distant things through the wrong end of a telescope, but there is ample evidence to satisfy, at any rate myself, that December 31st, 1851, was the actual date and year of my birth, and that this not unimportant incident, so far as I am concerned, occurred at Smeeth in the good county of Kent. At least I had the distinction at birth of being the eldest son of Richard and Matilda Marsh, and, having made mention of the fact that my father was a farmer in hops and every sort of arable land, there is no need to dwell further on what most readers of autobiography invariably regard as dry-as-dust details. Yet most certainly I must have been born a man of Kent, as my grandfather, I most distinctly remember, had a farm between Dover and Folkestone.

Possibly I was about ten or twelve years old when I came to admire so much an uncle, General Joseph M. Marsh, who was in a cavalry regiment, and who went through the Crimea and the Indian Mutiny. One day, during a shoot at Sandringham, I was standing next to a well-known general, who asked me to direct him to the luncheon tent and would I also tell him the location. I told him it was half a mile away, and remarked to the old gentleman that he looked tired, at the same time offering to carry his heavy mackintosh. He gratefully accepted, and, as we walked together, I mentioned that my uncle had been in the Indian Mutiny.

"What," he queried, "do you say his name was . . . Marsh? Was it Joseph Marsh?" And when I remarked that it was so the general declared that my uncle had been his oldest friend. "Why," he added, "I remember when we served together I was 11 st. 4 lb. at the beginning of the campaign, and what with chasing black men, who put dead donkeys in the wells, and living on bad food, I came down to 9 st. 4 lb." Appropriately enough we at that moment arrived at the luncheon tent on this day at Sandringham.

In those childhood days we had a governess, and while I have some reason for remembering her I like to dwell rather more lovingly on my first experiences of riding. My father and my uncle used to hunt with the East Kent Foxhounds, and I had a pony to ride just as soon as I could sit on one. We also had an extraordinary horse. He stood 16 hands, and yet at ten years of age he would do anything for me. He really was a marvel of perfect manners and would jump anything. I was riding this horse one day with hounds when they met at Waldershire Park, and somehow I had the good luck to be up at the death. Hounds broke up their fox and they gave me the brush. But that was not all. They proceeded to blood me, and indeed I thought it was a filthy and most unpleasant business until I realized all it signified, and then, indeed, I was proud beyond words.

Schooling was endured at a grammar school at Folkestone, and the fact is merely put on record in passing because it was on every half-holiday and every stolen opportunity that I found my way to a riding master's school at Sandgate. The thrills

of riding out with his pupils remain with me over the long span of years to this day. Some happenings in a long lifetime never seem to fade. My heart must have been on the back of a horse, as it were. Is there not an old Arab proverb which says that paradise is in the heart of a woman and on the back of a horse? It was applied many years ago by a dashing cross-country rider in India to the late Lord William Beresford. "You are all there in both parts," said that writer of Lord William, at that time military secretary to a Viceroy of India.

I was lucky enough to make friends with a man named Ward who had some steeplechasers at Sandgate, and I expect I did myself a bit of good through riding them in their exercise work, but perhaps the greatest thrill I experienced about the time—I must have been twelve years old—was in getting permission to sit on the back of *Lord Clifden* when that horse was taken from his stable at Dover to the boat on his journey to run in the Grand Prix de Paris. I know for some time afterwards I was most anxious to hear how he got on. *Lord Clifden* must have been a pretty good horse as he was the winner that year of the St. Leger, though he misfired in France.

It was while I was still at school that one day my father called and asked me if I would like to ride a horse called *Manrico*, belonging to a friend of his, Captain Smith, at Dover races. That, again, was a wonderful moment. I do not suppose I kept him waiting long for an answer. Only once before had I been on a racecourse. It was when I went under proper escort to Wye, but now I was to get into breeches and boots and wear a silk jacket. We drove to Dover in the family dogcart, and on arrival

some breeches and boots were borrowed for the occasion from an obliging jockey. Captain Machell, who was a notable personality on the Turf, and whom I was destined to know rather well in later years, was there. Dover races were, I suppose, a pretty big affair in those days.

Now, two years before, the horse I was going to ride, *Manrico*, had won the Lincolnshire Handicap. As a four-year-old he had carried 6 st. 12 lb. and won in a field of fourteen. I expect after a lapse of two years he had gone off a bit, but it will be understood that it was not exactly a duffer on which I was going to be given the leg-up. He was certainly a charming horse to ride, and as we slipped away all right at the start I was able to win my first race and at the first attempt by six lengths.

In the circumstances I suppose it was an event of some importance in my young life. It was to be the forerunner of many more winning rides, and so I beg the reader's permission to give the details as recorded in "The Racing Calendar" of the period.

*August 24th, 1866.*

THE MEMBERS' PLATE, a handicap of four sovereigns each, half forfeit if declared by August 14th, with 50 sovs. added ; the winner of any race after August 10th at 11 a.m. to carry 5 lb., of two, or the Town Plate or Railway Plate 8 lb. extra ; the winner subscribes to the next year's meeting ; about three-quarters of a mile (twelve subs., one of whom declared forfeit—)

Captain Smith's b. h. <i>Manrico</i> , by	
<i>Tadmor</i> , aged, 8—7.....	Marsh 1
Mr. E. W. Taylor's <i>Volhynia</i> , 3 yrs.,	
7—11 (including 5 lb. extra) ....	H. Jackson 2

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Mr. York's <i>Kingmaker</i> , 3 yrs., 8st.	Loates 3
Mr. J. Nightingall's <i>Astonishment</i> , 3 yrs., 7-7 (incl. 5 lb. extra)....	Elphick 4

6 to 4 on *Kingmaker*, 3 to 1 *Volhynia*, and 4 to 1 each *Manrico* and *Astonishment*. Won by six lengths. The owner of *Volhynia* objected to the winner for not carrying the proper weight, but the stewards overruled the objection.

I am rather more hazy about the objection than I am of the fact that Captain Smith gave me £5 for winning on his horse. That fiver interested me quite a lot, as also did the congratulations of Captain Machell, who told my father that he must certainly make me a jockey.

I am quite sure, looking back all that way, there was no intention on my father's part of my going into racing.

I had an idea that I was going into the Army, but that win on *Manrico* must have rather diverted the current of thoughts. For it was while I was on holiday with a Mr. Collard, who had a pack of harriers in the Isle of Thanet, that the fateful telegram came. I was watching them with their muzzle-loaders shooting over dogs. The telegram said that if I liked to go to Newmarket I had my father's permission. I returned home the very next morning, and the following week my father and I were in the train bound for Newmarket, the place with which I was to be associated for so many years. It will be seen that a most important link in the chain of events was then being forged. The all-important plunge was being taken.

For three weeks we stayed at the Rutland Arms

Hotel, and, if my father found things rougher than he had expected, I found it splendid enough, being able to ride some of the horses belonging to Captain Machell at exercise. I was too keen to be particular, and it was just as well. Keeness carries you far and gets you over many an awkward fence in life. The horses were trained by the brothers Charles and George Bloss, who were both characters in their way. They were biggish men, and, compared with the present day, were perhaps rough in their methods. But they knew their job, and, also, they were good sportsmen. I remember they were rather noted for the good ponies they rode on the Heath, bitted as they were with very sharp bridles. They both of them loved cock-fighting. Many is the time I have held a bird while they trimmed it for a fight.

Those old-time methods of training must have been right as they certainly achieved big things. I have no doubt stable management has improved, but at all times much has depended on the lads serving you ; and I must say that although discipline was ever so much stricter, wages were poor, and the lads were rougher, they were better than the lads of to-day with their higher wages, relaxed discipline, shorter hours, and immensely better feeding. At the time of which I am writing the lads used to be locked up for the night at eight o'clock, the same time as the horses. Stalls were more in use than boxes, and the lads used to sleep on contraptions which looked like corn bins in the day time, and then would unfold and be converted into settees or beds.

Thinking I would like to be on the same terms as the others, though I was never apprenticed, I elected to be locked up at eight o'clock and sleep



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on one of those queer beds just outside the stall. So, quite unsuspectingly, and taking the stable lad at a truly lofty estimate, though his bad language had rather frightened me, I dutifully got into my nightgown and prepared for a good long sleep. Alas, for my trustfulness ! The sight of that nightgown draping the new-comer was enough. "Hello," said one of them, "what have we got here ? Why we've got a —— parson !"

It was more than enough. In less time than it takes to tell it they had divorced me from that gown, leaving me as I was on my first birthday. Another time, just as I was going off to sleep, I felt a tug at one of my toes. It half woke me until, on dozing off again, the same thing happened. The enemy had got a length of string on to one of my toes. Well, of course, it did me no harm, probably, indeed, any amount of good. It did not prevent my making friends with them and getting on with my riding. Oh yes, one's eyes used to be opened in a racing stable 'way back in the sixties. One day I would be challenged to run for sixpence and they would let me win. When the stakes were increased to a new pair of breeches and leggings I was second ! Be quite sure there was no harm in them. They looked forward to the hamper which periodically arrived from home, and if I was very good I was allowed to have something out of it ! Good lads they were.

If I did not progress it was not for lack of opportunity of riding in the fast gallops. I suppose I must have done, as I had the good fortune to ride in one of *Hermit's* trials. Yes, that very famous horse was in the stable, and though it was only in later years I understood what an influence he had had on

the breeding of the thoroughbred, and knew, too, of the romantic circumstances under which his Derby triumph was achieved, I have memories to this day of the sort of horse he was—a beautiful chestnut full of quality and delightfully tempered. At exercise he was a particularly free goer, and wanted very careful and delicate training. I forget whether I rode in his Derby trial. I may have done so, as many years later his owner, Lord Chaplin, reminded me of the time when I rode his great horse.

I believe I had a chance of riding him in the Derby, as Daley, who rode for the stable, had a prior claim on him. However, the horse he was going to ride went amiss and so he was claimed for *Hermit*. My association with the sensational Derby winner of 1867 was brief enough, but it was to the scene of his triumph that I went after a stay of eighteen months with the brothers Bloss. In the interval my father had moved to Epsom, and there I joined him to become associated with the stables of Sherwood and Reeves. The son of the old man Reeves married my sister at a time when I was winning a lot of races for the trainer on a little mare named *Paté*. She was by the Derby winner *Macaroni* out of *Polly Peachum*. I rode her once at Bedford when she beat that fine classic winner *Formosa*. It was about this time as a full-blown jockey I rode two smart two-year-olds trained by Sherwood. One of them was a colt named *Temple*. On the other, named *Piccaninny*, I won a half-mile maiden plate at Epsom. I remember getting smartly away, so no wonder, perhaps, that I still think the official of that period, Mr. McGeorge, the best starter I have ever known.

As I had £50 on my horse—jockeys were not forbidden to bet in those days—it was of some importance that I beat Tom Cannon by a head.

It was after that win that we thought *Temple* was sure to win the Woodcote Stakes. Such a good thing did I think it that I sought out old Mr. Smith, the father of a well-known “vet” of that name who later practised at Midhurst in Sussex. I asked him to put me all my winnings on *Temple*. However, he had more sense than I had in those days and would only let me stake £100. Unfortunately for me we ran up against a smashing good one, and I was beaten easily. Later, on this same colt, I won the New Stakes at Ascot, beating Tom French a head on one of Lord Falmouth’s.

By this time I had begun to put on weight, and, being a fairly big-boned sort of fellow, it was obvious that my career as a jockey on the Flat was not going to be a long one. The winter before I won on *Temple* I walked 10 st. 6 lb. and I rode *Temple* at 8-7. Of course I had to waste awfully hard, and it really was a most depressing business. The day before *Temple’s* race I had got down to the weight and then had a glass of sherry and the lean part of a small chop. When I came to weigh two or three hours afterwards I found I was 3 lb. heavier. It meant more rigorous wasting, but the next day I did the weight all right. Of course it could not go on, and I fancy my last ride on the Flat was at Brighton on a full brother to *Temple*, which was named *Templar* and which we bought at the Hampton Court sales. He was a pretty good horse, too.

The transition from riding on the Flat to steeple-chasing and hurdling was natural enough. My heart

was in it, and I had all, and perhaps more than, the necessary confidence. I believed in myself and my future, and in that highly commendable frame of mind I went into the west country to ride for the stables of Mr. T. Golby and Mr. Teddy Weever. The former was at North Leach in Gloucestershire, and the other at Bourton-on-the-Hill. I took rooms at Chipping Norton Junction, between the two, and about five miles from either place. I had a horse and trap in which I would drive, say, to Golby's, aiming to reach there at half-past seven each morning. The trainer was a worthy sort in every way, and unquestionably a fine man at his job. He was my principal master, and no one could have wished to go into a better school, for he was a wonderfully efficient stableman, and by keeping my eyes open I learned much of what became so valuable to me in later years when I came to take up training myself. A great stickler he was for punctuality.

One thing he used to do which I had never seen before. On reaching the gallops and schooling ground he used to send the horses over four flights of very small hurdles, each flight about twenty yards from the other. In this way his horses would begin their jumping education and would start with confidence. Those were indeed great days, for as an antidote to work there was any amount of hunting, coursing, and dancing.

On one occasion I was sent with one of Golby's horses to a really jolly and sporting meeting which a Mr. Powell used to run in Wales. One day there would be racing, the next hunting, and then a day's racing again, with high jinks at night. Tom Pickernell, who was a famous amateur rider over fences,

thought it would be diverting to dress me up as a Welsh girl in national costume and take me to the theatre. The disguise was obtained, and I must have been a fair imitation as I chuckled to note the winks given to Pickernell as we entered the theatre full of racing folk.

It was in the dress that later in the evening I attended a meeting of trainers and their representatives to discuss what should be done in case of anything happening to Mr. Powell, who had been taken seriously ill. I was introduced as the representative of Mr. Golby, but "Garry" Moore, who seemed to smell a rat, exclaimed: "Hullo! why . . ." and made as if to violently embrace me. Thinking that he was behaving like no gentleman, the others pounced on him, dragged him off, and in the end I was introduced to him as Dick Marsh. I never saw a man look quite so ridiculous in my life as poor old "Garry" Moore did at that moment. He could be devilish mischievous himself when he liked.

I must have been a success in the make-up, as when I got back to Mr. Golby's I let him into the joke, and told him to introduce me to his wife as the new servant whom Dick Marsh had engaged for her. I was shown into the drawing-room and she appeared to be delighted with me until she began to ask me some extraordinary and embarrassing questions, and then I simply had to disclose my identity. I was forgiven, but not at that moment.

Teddy Weever was a different character to Golby. He was very fat, most amusing, and had an infectious laugh. I really believe he loved nothing better than doing his friends so well that they got tight. He

was, I remember, singularly successful on one occasion. It was a night when I had driven over to spend the evening with him. A very pleasant evening it must have been, too, for I appear to have had at least one glass of whisky too many. Anyhow, I started on the journey home by the light of the moon, and must have fallen asleep, for I had a horrible dream that first one wheel of the trap had come off and then both of them. When I was awakened by the man at the toll-bar the horse was looking over the turnpike gate. However, I paid the toll and still had four miles to go.

I blush to think that I dozed off again, but the fact enables me to record a singular instance of intelligence on the part of a horse. That good horse must have found his own way back, but in entering through an archway to the stable yard one wheel of the trap had been caught. The horse had the good sense to stand still, and at six in the morning we were so discovered by the ostler, myself fast asleep and the horse still doing guard duty. In later years, when living at Lordship near Newmarket, I was driving home after visiting some friends, and someone for a joke had apparently cut one of the traces nearly through. After going half a mile the trace broke and the pony set off. Luckily for me it was a moonlight night, and the road was clear, so that after covering a mile I was able to pull up the pony at a gate by the roadside. It was a stupid sort of joke which might have ended disastrously. Certainly there would have been no question of these reminiscences many years after.

## CHAPTER II

### MAINLY ABOUT STEEPLECHASING

Famous Jockeys of the Past—Riding in the Grand National—  
Notable Grand National Winners—The Tragedy of *Moifaa*—  
Distinctions in Horsemanship.

**I**T will be understood that a trainer who was so thorough in his methods and successful as was Golby had a fine schooling ground for his steeplechasers. It was in fact a wonderful course, and it so happened that the first steeplechase I won was on a mare called *The Nun*. She had been taught her business at North Leach by Golby. She was a brown half-bred mare by *Fly-by-Night*, and was favourite when on the 10th March, 1870, the day after *The Colonel* had won the Grand National, I won the Sefton Handicap Steeplechase on her. She was owned by Mr. E. Green, and though it happened so long ago I remember that she was far from an easy sort to ride. She used to pitch a lot on landing over the fences, but we were lucky enough to win after a good race with a horse ridden by G. Holman.

When I look back now over that stretch of years I rejoice to think that my first win should have been over the best steeplechase course in the world. I rode in a number of Grand Nationals without once having the great good fortune to win. And, long after my riding days were over, I witnessed with an untold sense of joy *Ambush II* win in the colours of our beloved King Edward. Perhaps I ought to

add that the win on *The Nun* was not my first success at Liverpool. At that same meeting I had won a mile hurdle race for the same Mr. Green, but *The Nun* was my first steeplechase winner as also my first ride in a steeplechase.

It must have been about this period that a distinguished contemporary rider, Bob I'Anson, came on view. An odd thing is that, as in my case, his first steeplechase was the "Sefton," which he, too, won. His success was the year before my own. I do know that we became very close friends from that time, and certainly no one admired him for his great talents as a rider more than I. I have always thought that he and Johnny Page were the two best steeplechase jockeys in my time. But there were also some extraordinarily good amateurs at that period. Thomas Pickernell, for instance, who won the "National" on *The Lamb*. The son of a Birmingham clergyman, he rode in the name of "Mr. Thomas." Then I think of Peter Crawshaw, George Edwards (Mr. Ede) (who was killed when riding *Chippenham* in the National at the fence before the water), J. Maunsell Richardson, E. P. Wilson and F. Godwin. To me, at any rate, they seemed far ahead of the amateurs of my later days.

Bob I'Anson was a quiet fellow with a nice sense of humour, which did much to endear him to me. He was one of the best men I ever saw going at a fence. He must have been a great horseman, as he seldom fell, and he sat a horse so very quietly and never seemed to be interfering with it, that is, unnecessarily so. Another professional who was first class in every sense was Johnny Page. He used to ride for the



Duke of Hamilton and very often in France. It is on record, however, how he won the Grand National on that bargain horse *Casse Tête*.

Many years afterwards I had a letter from my old friend in which he said : " What a lot of dear old friends we have lost ! Mr. Pickernell was the finest man over the Grand National course I ever saw. He took some catching. Mr. Crawshaw, Mr. I. M. Richardson, also Mr. Ede on *The Lamb*, were hard to beat ; but I never hear of Johnny Page now. He was a good man over a country."

One of my most vivid recollections of rides in the Grand National has to do with a horse called *Footman*, which, until I got on his back to go to the post, I thought was a certainty, if there can be such a thing where the great steeplechase is concerned. He was trained by Weever, who was a very hard man on his horses and invariably produced them looking very light. The methods worked all right with *Emblem* and *Emblematic*, both of whom won " Nationals," but they were produced looking horribly light and tucked up. Some horses, of course, can stand gruel of that sort, but it has been my experience all through life that they are exceptions. Now, *Footman* was treated to the same sort of preparation, but the sequel was to show that he could not stand it.

Three weeks before the race he was given a gallop as hard as he could go four and a half miles over fences. For the last two miles he was joined by a brilliant two-miler that had been winning steeplechases under 12-7. *Footman* won the trial, for such it was, very easily, and if he kept well I thought my chance had come to ride a Grand National winner. I next renewed acquaintance with him at Liverpool, though

after the trial I had called on the father of the present Lord Penrhyn, when passing through London, and told him that I thought *Footman* was sure to win. When, however, I got on his back at Liverpool I knew it was all up, though he was favourite at 100 to 15 against. So stale and lacking in dash was he that I had to rouse him up to make him jump the "preliminary," which in those days was a hurdle.

Actually we got about one and a half times round, and then he crashed and no mistake. I and the saddle were flung many yards in front, so violent was the toss. When on the ground *Footman* must have been jumped on by a following horse, for he never was any good afterwards, and when a post-mortem came to be made on his death it was found that four of his ribs had been broken and that a lung had been penetrated. I am afraid he had been in pain ever since the fall. That particular Grand National, I may add, was won by Mr. Maunsell Richardson on *Disturbance*.

I have mentioned a very violent fall, but I think the most uncomfortable one I had at Liverpool was on a horse called *Purlbrook*, the year when "Mr. Thomas" won on *The Lamb*, that is, in 1871. *Purlbrook* was brilliant up to two and a half miles, and I had won many races on him. He was such a fine jumper that they persuaded themselves to let him bid for a "National." He used to take a terrific hold. I don't think any man breathing could really hold him. I know that he made the running until reaching the brook in front of the stands, all the while jumping in great style, but I knew he could not last when I felt him tire very rapidly as we turned into the country. If I had been last I should

have pulled up, but as I was in front on a dead-beaten horse I could not do so.

It was only a question now how long he could remain on his legs, as I knew he must fall very soon. With about twenty-five horses galloping behind me I thought I might just as well look about for the right place to fall in. You see, I wanted to have the fall all to myself, having no desire to be mixed up with the others! I hugged the left side of the next fence, which we crossed all right, but we went right through the next. You never saw such a mess made of a fence, but fortunately we did not interfere with any of the others and neither of us was hurt.

I think I trained four horses for the Grand National after my riding days were over, and each, with the exception of *Moifaa*, completed the course. One was quite a remarkable horse called *Terrier*. When he ran as a five-year-old he was not really five until June of that year. He was a plain chestnut horse with straight forelegs, and looked anything but a 'chaser. Yet he was a great jumper and stayed well. Mr. Dan Thirlwell rode him into fourth or fifth place. The only time he ran before was in a maiden hurdle race at Manchester. But, looking back now, I think I was very unlucky not to have won the race for the Duke of Hamilton with *Eau de Vie*, also ridden by Thirlwell. Of course, I know how every Grand National brings with it its trail of bad-luck stories. You need some luck, as well as a good horse and a bold and cool man on his back. Thirlwell did his part all right, and I am confident to this day that but for the mishap *Eau de Vie* would have won this particular "National" for the Duke of Hamilton. The mare was only cantering when,

at Becher's, the second time round, one of Thirlwell's stirrup leathers broke and, of course, *Eau de Vie* had to be pulled up. She was a good mare and won us many races. I remember driving down with the Duke to Mr. Cartwright's sale, and we bought *Eau de Vie* for a brood mare, but, finding her barren, we put her to jumping, on the off-chance, to make the pleasant discovery that it was the game she loved.

Then at one time I had the training of *Cloister*, though not when he did such big things as a winner at Liverpool. He belonged at the time to Lord Dudley, but he was not the best horse owned by him. A better one in my opinion was *Royal Meath*. Lord Dudley had bought him after winning the big hurdle race at Auteuil. Regarded as a Grand National proposition I had no doubt that he was an even better horse than *Cloister*, as I have said. Much against my wish, Lord Dudley insisted on running him at Sandown Park when the ground was very hard, and although the horse had 12 st. 10 lb. to carry. He won the race all right, but in doing so he jarred a suspensory ligament, and that was the end of *Royal Meath*, though I believe he became a noted sire of steeplechasers afterwards. We had to fall back on *Cloister*.

Now, *Cloister* was quite a big horse. I should say he stood 16-3 hands, and, though he may have been a trifle long in the back, he was tremendously wide-hipped and had beautiful shoulders. Over his quarters he had a boldly defined jumping bump. How rarely do you find a horse with this bump that is not a rattling good jumper! *Cloister* was a great and a wonderfully bold horse at his fences. He was, too, exceedingly good-tempered and an awfully nice

horse to ride. His head was intelligent and his expression kind, while you could not have wished for a sounder horse.

In the year that he was beaten a length he was ridden by "Roddy" Owen, and Harry Beasley was on the winner. I shall always think that the defeat was due to "Roddy" following Beasley too closely and trying to come up on his inside after jumping the last fence. All would have been well had he come round the other one on the outside, but as it was Beasley may have exercised his right in shutting *Cloister* off. Anyhow, the result was that Owen had to snatch up his horse and in the end lost by a length. He was furious when he came back to unsaddle, declaring that he proposed doing all sorts of things to Beasley.

"I don't think I should if I were you," I suggested, and added: "You might be second again, you know!"

It was after that experience that *Cloister* found a new owner in Mr. Charles Duff, afterwards Sir Charles Assheton-Smith, who, before he died, won other Grand Nationals with *Ferry M.* and *Covertcoat*.

The fourth horse I trained for the big steeplechase was the rather notorious *Moifaa*, the elephantine 17-hand horse that won the "National" of 1904, and was then purchased by Lord Marcus Beresford for King Edward. He was a good-limbed horse, though decidedly on the leg, and I find it impossible to describe him as other than plain. Neither was he a very nice horse to ride over fences, because he had a bad habit of always jumping to the left. King Edward had won the famous steeplechase in 1900, and it is undoubtedly a fact that the victory gave

His Majesty immense pleasure and satisfaction. There was unquestionably a desire to have another shot at the Blue Riband of steeplechasing, and with that end in view Lord Marcus Beresford opened negotiations with Mr. Spencer Gollan, the owner of the New Zealand-bred horse, whose colours it had carried in the previous year.

It was in February of 1905 that I first heard of the coming of *Moifaa* to Egerton House stables when Lord Marcus Beresford wrote to me the following letter :—

His Majesty wished to be represented in the Liverpool—after *Ambush's* death—and so I have bought *Moifaa*. He is the ugliest, lightest devil you ever saw ; but there was no other horse suitable that could be bought. I asked His Majesty to let you train it, and though you will probably hate the horse, still we can't do anything if we don't try. . . . You have not much time to improve the looks of a starved elephant and keep him going at the same time.

It was a dismal discovery when shortly after the horse had arrived at Egerton, and on being given his first working gallop, he was found to be wrong in his wind, though, of course, he had been “vetted” in the ordinary course. But before this was known and when Lord Marcus was obviously building highly on the horse I received the following letter from him :—

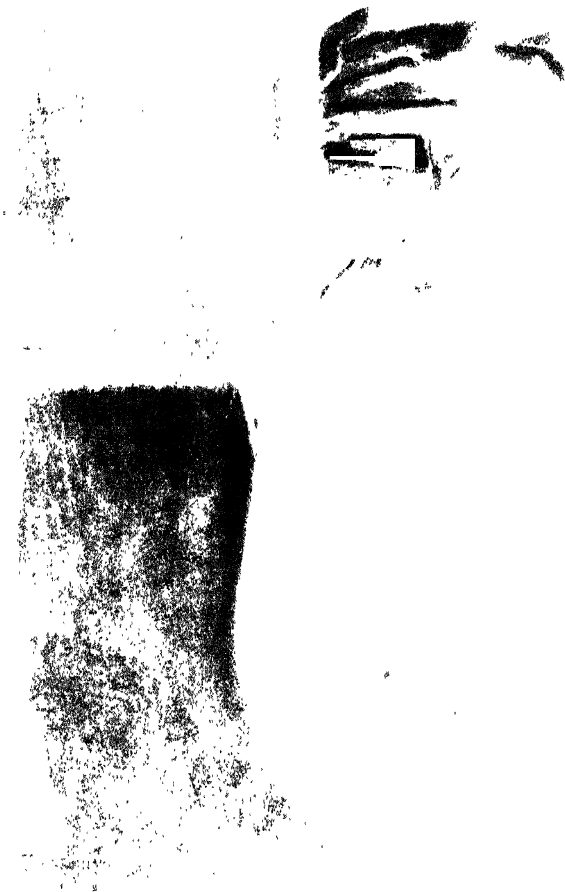
“ I have thought of nothing else but the way Williamson should ride *Moifaa* in the Liverpool, and, from what I have found out, Williamson must not try and ride the horse at all. I mean he must let him run his own race to the Canal Turn and then settle in a good place. If he pulls

him about the first mile the horse will jump wild and tire Williamson. When he sees a fence he *must* go at it. It is not a horse : it is a great machine at high pressure over fences, and therefore Williamson must be satisfied to remain on the horse and *guide* him. He will try and bolt into the flat racecourse at every opportunity, so we must be on the look-out for that. I should have liked, if you agreed, to let him jump three or four fences made up not too high, then pull him up and trot round again, and jump them again, so as Williamson may get accustomed to ride him over his fences.

He ought never to have a horse near him schooling, but one leading him fifty yards ahead. Digest all this and see what you think. I have grave doubts with the additional strength and go you have put into the horse whether *any* man could hold him straight with *one* snaffle; anyway he must have a martingale. He knows (the horse) as much as anyone.

I need hardly say that the revelation of the horse going wrong in his wind was a tragedy, and deeply upset that kindest and best of men, Lord Marcus. It is so very rare for an old horse like he was to develop roaring, but, of course, it got worse every day, and when he came to compete in due course I knew he could have no chance, not even of completing the course. George Williamson, after all, was not able to take the ride. I fancy a horse kicked him on the foot, and his place was taken by Dollery, who had won on *Cloister*. *Moifaa* looked well enough in himself, but after going rather more than once round he fell, as you would expect him to do.

It was surely typical of King Edward's never-failing thoughtfulness and graciousness that he caused



MR. LEOPOLD DE ROTHSCHILD'S *THORNFIELD*, ON WHOM THE AUTHOR FINISHED  
THIRD IN THE GRAND NATIONAL

*(From a Painting)*





Lord Marcus to send me the following letter a day or two after the "National":—

The King desires me to thank you for the admirable way you turned out *Moifaa* in the face of the greatest difficulties, and begs me to say that he is satisfied that it was no fault of yours that the horse did not win.

Actually the nearest I came to winning the Grand National was in 1881, when I trained and rode *Thornfield* for Mr. Leopold de Rothschild. He was a beautifully turned bay horse of rare girth, with wide hips, splendid shoulders, and altogether was a lovely horse to ride. He had the reputation of being an awful thief, and it seemed that they were continually having a lot of trouble to get him on the Heath at Newmarket. At that time I had taken up my training quarters at Lordship Farm, and Mr. de Rothschild in sending me the horse was hopeful that I might be able to do some good with him as a jumper. I found him to be the most natural jumper a man could wish to ride, and after winning one or two hurdle races with him I put him to steeplechasing. I soon made up my mind that here was very likely material to be turned into a Grand National winner, and so I made the big thing in steeplechasing my objective.

I should say that one of the hurdle races he won was the big one at Croydon at the first time of asking. There was no thieving, I thought, about this sort of thing, except maybe in annexing the stake too easily. Of course, Mr. Leopold de Rothschild, who loved his horses, was delighted. I have no doubt that he would certainly have won at Liverpool, but the tragedy of it was that it rained all that

week, and the result was that the course at Aintree was in such a state as I had never seen it before or since. It started to rain at Lincoln and it never left off all the week. Even going from Aintree station to the racecourse stables the horse's clothing got wet through. The morning of the race Mr. Arthur Coventry and I intended to go for a walk in order to get rid of a pound or two, but so bad was the weather that we had to take to the Turkish baths instead. At that time there was plough, which to the best of my recollections was in addition to the usual plough soon after leaving Valentine's and extended from the second fence to Becher's Brook. It included a field of growing mangolds. For the purpose of the race some had been pulled to permit of a lane down which the horses might pass.

You can imagine what it was like. My horse was so hopeless on it that he pulled up into a trot and even then floundered and took an awful lot out of himself. I saw the eventual winner, *Woodbrook*, go by as if he were travelling on the top of the ground. As soon as we got out of the plough *Thornfield* was a different horse, and half-way up the straight, with not so very much farther to go, I thought I had a chance until he rapidly tired and we could only finish third. It was after this race that I definitely gave up riding and started training.

It seems an appropriate place here to indulge in a few reflections on the great course. I know that when I was riding regularly in steeplechasing I would rather ride over Liverpool than, say, at courses like Sandown Park and Kempton Park, but, of course, it was of no use taking a horse there unless he was a thoroughly schooled jumper. The fences,

though big, are beautifully made, with perfect taking-off and landing, and with the exception of the two fences on the turn you are going straight out and straight back. I am sure it is safer than elsewhere to ride over, for you have plenty of room for jumping and the fact gives you and your horse confidence. I seem to have an idea the fences were more natural in my day than now. I know they had strong stumps with many years of growth on them. Certainly they would not stand hitting. All I know is that they gave you a fine "feel" to ride over them, and I say that though I had one or two proper tosses, as I have already related.

One occasion I remember when the fences, or some of them, were put to other uses than being jumped over by horses. On the day I rode *Purlbrook* immense crowds had come from all over the country by special trains, for it was also the day of the marriage of the Marquis of Lorne. At that time the course was not railed off as now, and alfresco luncheon parties were being held on the guard rails of the fences. They were still lunching when the race started, and to my amazement when we were quite close to the first fence I saw men, women and children scuttling from under it like a lot of startled rats.

Later I may find it impossible to refrain from some reflections on the crouching seat and short leathers, which to my eyes have dreadfully disfigured the art of race riding. The whole subject, I am afraid, is to me like a red rag to a bull. If a man with short leathers is to get safely round Liverpool it will be because he is lucky and flukes are on his side. His horse must not touch anything at all hard or do

anything seriously wrong. How they ride at all like it I don't know. When I was taught to ride I was told to have my leathers at a proper length and to feel my horse with my thighs, knees, and calves. In that way alone can you be in sympathy with every motion of the horse when galloping. You can feel him hesitate going into a fence, feel whether he is going on the right leg or the wrong leg, and feel whether he is tired or merely lazy. And that gives you twice the power over him. You can assist a tired horse simply because you can properly balance him.

May I put it in this way? When riding a horse as I call properly and he tips a fence or makes a bit of a blunder you have your hands down, and as you sit back in your saddle you are saving him and helping him to get up after he has pecked on landing. In that way you must save many a horse from falling, whereas in recent times I have seen many a horse fall that should not have done so had his rider been in the proper place so as to render first aid at the psychological moment. Does it not seem reasonable that when a horse makes a mistake, and his rider who is riding short is shot up his neck, the weight helps to keep him down and bring about the fall, or, alternatively, that the rider is just dislodged while the horse goes on riderless without actually falling? I have seen this sort of thing happen time after time in Grand Nationals of modern times, and yet people have wondered why there are so many casualties. It is the methods of jockeyship and not the fences that are to blame.

## CHAPTER III

### RIDERS, OWNERS AND HORSES

"Mr. Thomas," the Famous Gentleman Rider—The Start as a Trainer—*Jackal*—*Jannock*—*Scot Guard*—Dennis Thirlwell—  
Jim Adams.

I DO not suppose there will be many who can throw their minds back something like half a century to quarrel with my suggestion that probably the best horses ever to win Grand National honours were *Cloister*, *The Lamb*, *Manifesto*, and *Jerry M.* *The Lamb* was twice a winner, and my great friend Mr. Tom Pickernell, who rode as "Mr. Thomas," was on his back on one of those occasions. I do not think I ever saw such a grand jumper. He went round without touching a twig, and swept over the last fence as if it had been the first. I was riding in the race and watched him with astonishment. This splendid horse was a dark grey and tremendously thickset, with enormous power everywhere. Naturally, too, he was just as great a stayer as he was a jumper, and on the whole I think he impressed me more than any horse I have ever seen at Liverpool.

Tom Pickernell was a most dashing rider, and one of the gamest men I have come across throughout my life. At one time or another he must have broken every bone in his body. We had a good laugh out of him once as a result of his having given offence to a Frenchman. What it was all about I have no idea, but

when he arrived at Nice to ride in a race there he was handed a challenge to meet and fight the Frenchman. Now, duelling was not in Tom's line at all, but he determined to keep the appointment at a later date in Paris and took with him Mr. Peter Crawshaw, a delightful man and a very fine rider. On the morning of the duel Pickernell was informed that he would be expected to fight with swords, but as he had never handled one in his life he held out for the good old English way of fisticuffs. However, he had to give way, and the report given to me by Peter Crawshaw was that they certainly did face each other but did not come within several swords' length, and, finally, they finished off the duel by shaking hands and becoming good friends.

There was an occasion when I persuaded him to come with me to Baden-Baden and ride a horse called *Brigantine* for the Duke of Hamilton in an important steeplechase for gentlemen riders. He finished second, but notwithstanding the disappointment we managed to have a good time. A certain Prince told us that he had chartered a special train to Paris and that we might join him if we wished. Already he had broken the bank twice, and while we were waiting for him outside the Rooms he dashed out and was on the point of entering the cab which was to take us to the station when he said he must go back and have another go at the tables. In less than five minutes he was back with his hat-box full of more notes. The journey to Paris did not suffer on that account, for we breakfasted in truly princely fashion at Epergne and safely arrived in Paris.

My start as a trainer had been made when Golby retired from training and Weever left his old quarters.

It was then that I went to Banstead Manor, and was sent a few horses by Mr. Hector Baltazzi, who at that time had a lot of horses in England and whose brother had won the Derby with *Kisber*. Hector Baltazzi used to ride a bit himself, and was, I thought, rather keen on the jumping game. It was while at Banstead I had the luck to get hold of a rather remarkable horse named *Jackal*. He belonged at one time to a man named Forbes Bentley, who was something of a gambler. *Jackal* was a light chestnut horse, very sound and with marked quality. He had a very strong back and loins but a cunning little head. On the Flat he had the reputation of being a dreadful thief. He was incorrigibly "nappy," too, at any rate about this time. One day Captain Fry, who became the head of Kempton Park and lived to a very old age, wrote to me and said he had a horse standing in some mews at Charing Cross and would I take him and do the best I could with him. He was managing Mr. Bentley's horses. If I could get £60 for him he would be very satisfied and pleased. This was after he had let Bentley down very badly for the Stewards' Cup at Goodwood, and presumably Captain Fry had acquired the horse for an old song.

I went to London to fetch him and found the horse in a very bad state. He was standing in some unhealthy mews, and the first thing I noticed was that the frogs of his feet were nearly eaten away. I don't think I have ever gazed on such a deplorable object in the form of a horse. However, I got him away and for the next three weeks he was well looked after. During that time he was led about, and then I thought I would get on his back and use him as a



hack for the time being. He had other ideas—for a time ! He hated the idea of coming out of the yard, and rather than do so he tried to rub me up against a wall or a door, or, for a change, he would rear up and do everything except that which was required of him.

With patience he became tractable, and one day I took him on the schooling ground on Banstead Downs, where Lord Marcus Beresford was schooling some horses. As they went past me I thought I would follow them and see if he could jump. To my astonishment I found him an absolutely natural jumper. I went on with him for a month, and then asked Lord Marcus to try him for me with some of his horses. However, what he did was to ask me to ride the trial horse, and Jones (father of Herbert Jones) could ride *Jackal*. Mine, you see, was expected by Lord Marcus to win the trial. Well, the gallop came off, and before reaching the last flight of hurdles I was in front, when suddenly Jones on *Jackal* swept past me and looked like going on to win easily. But in going into the last flight of hurdles he took off much too soon and came down. Still I knew that he must be a smart horse as he had got my horse completely beaten at the time.

Straightaway Lord Marcus bid me £1,500 for him. As I have said, I could have had him for £60. I told Lord Marcus he was not for sale, and wrote to Captain Fry telling him he had got a good horse for jumping, and that I had entered him for a maiden hurdle race at Croydon. When the entries came out I thought the race to be a certainty for him. I had every shilling I possessed on him for this Croydon race, in addition to asking Lord Courtney to put

me a "pony" on him, while I sent my watch up to a certain man in London telling him that he would get £15 for it and that it was to go on the horse. You see, I knew exactly how much I would get on the watch. It had been there before in all sorts of circumstances! The idea was that the watch-holder in London should put the proceeds on with the list men, who at that period were permitted to carry on their cash betting business on races.

The watch came back all right. I rode the horse myself. He started at 5 to 1 and won in a canter. Here was a find indeed, and I did not hesitate to enter him for the big hurdle race at Auteuil. I fancy that was the first year it was ever run. I also had in the race a horse named *Duke of Cambridge*, belonging to Mr. Baltazzi. I knew, however, that *Jackal* was two or three lengths the better. Therefore, when the weights came out I thought I had a good chance of winning with *Jackal*. At that time Captain Fry was living at Folkestone, and when I wrote to him and told him I proposed taking the horse for the race in France he would not hear of it. However, I took the horse with *Duke of Cambridge* to Folkestone ready to cross, and wired to Fry to meet me. For a long time he remained obstinate—he could be obstinate, too, when he liked!—but at last he said: "Well, take him, but you must do so at your own risk."

When you are the age I was at that time you don't think of risks. I told the owner I thought I might be able to sell him to Mr. Baltazzi, and he mentioned that he wanted £1,500 for him. So away we went, and before the race I asked Mr. Baltazzi to buy *Jackal*. "No," he replied, "he's a damned thief, and I shall

beat you with *Duke of Cambridge*." To cut a long story short it was a desperate race, and *Jackal*, ridden by myself, won by a neck from a horse called *Sir John*, belonging to the Duke of Hamilton. *Duke of Cambridge* was third. I had ridden him for speed, being content to lay about sixth or seventh until coming to the last hurdles, and then I had only *Sir John* to beat. It was a rare tussle between us, but my horse had just the little bit more speed.

The only man that gave me a cheer was old Jack Coney, who used to keep a sort of night house in Panton Street off the Haymarket. There, on his sanded floors, you could have a devilled bone or kidney. Rather different from the night clubs of to-day ! The race was worth £2,000, and had Mr. Baltazzi taken my advice he could have had the horse for nothing. He now wanted to buy him, and though Captain Fry had sprung the price to £2,000 the horse passed into the possession of Mr. Baltazzi. For him I won many other races with *Jackal*, while it was in his colours I rode the horse in the Grand National. On any other course but Liverpool I have no doubt he would have won, but he could not quite get that big country. Still it looked to be 5 to 1 on him coming round the bottom turn. There was only *Pathfinder* in front of me, and his jockey was riding him for all he was worth, while I was sitting still on *Jackal*. In those days they had to jump two hurdles to finish, and it was only after jumping the last that he tired to nothing and was passed. The year was 1875, when "Mr. Thomas" won on *Pathfinder*. *Jackal* was fourth. He ran in more than one other "National," and once, I believe, after Lord Marcus Beresford had bought him.

Another recollection of *Jackal* is conjured up by what happened earlier in the afternoon of the horse's success in that Paris hurdle race. At that time they ran the big steeplechase on the same day. It was set to take place before the hurdle race. My mount was a horse called *Faliero*, and I remember the incident so well because there were nearly thirty runners. Half an hour before the steeplechase there came a perfect deluge of rain which fell on baked ground. The result was an extraordinarily slippery state of affairs. Horses simply could not stand up at the fences, and I have a distinct memory of finding it very hard to find room at the "bank" jump because of the many horses on the ground or in trouble. I do not think a single one of the many runners escaped falling or coming to grief in some way.

As for my own fate, my horse crashed into the post and rails through absolute inability to take off. He just slipped right into them, giving me a heavy fall. The brain acts quickly in these circumstances unless, of course, you are quite knocked out. I thought of *Jackal* and my hopes of winning on him, of the money already wagered on him, and how necessary it was that I should be fit to ride him. Be assured that I was scared to move as I lay on the ground in case I should be struck into by horses coming into the jump.

First home in that lively steeplechase was a horse ridden by "Mr. Rollo," who, as Lord Minto, was destined in later years to distinguish himself as Viceroy of India. I met him then for the first time. He, as I have said, had won the big steeplechase; I had won the big hurdle race. We travelled back to England that same night, and the companionship

marked the beginning of a warm friendship, which was unbroken to the time of his death.

He was an able and enthusiastic amateur over fences in particular ; he was a most perfect gentleman in all his thoughts and actions ; and beyond all question one of the kindest men I ever knew.

Mention just now of the Paris hurdle race at Auteuil is a reminder that I also won it with a horse called *Jannock*. At Manchester I happened to see what I thought was a fat horse that looked like making a hurdler. He was trained by Tom Wadlow. I bought him for £160, and on getting home I found, though to all appearances fat, he was fit enough for anything. He took splendidly to hurdling, and, continuing to improve, I had an idea he might be good enough to win in Paris. At this time we had a big jumping ring into which we used to turn the horses loose the better to begin their early education. *Jannock* had not yet shown me much, when one day the Duke of Hamilton asked me to put the horse in the ring. I demurred, fearing that he might bruise himself or knock up a joint.

"No," I said, "I'm going to win the Paris hurdle race with this one and don't want to chance anything."

"Very well then," he retorted, "how much do you want for him?"

I suggested £300.

"But," he argued, "you told me you only gave £160 for him."

"That's true enough," I reasoned, "but he was a cheap horse at that ; anyway, your Grace can have him for what I gave."

This pleased the Duke, and immediately he accepted, and said : "No, we'll not put him in the

school this morning ; we'll keep him for Auteuil." Which we did with the happiest results.

Another very good horse I had about that time was *Marc Antony*. When I bought him with the idea of jumping him the man with him asked me what I purposed doing with him. "Why, to make a jumper of him, of course," I replied, feeling slightly nettled. "Ah, well," was all he remarked, "others have had a go at him and can make nothing of him." I got Joe Cannon to have a ride on him and after him Jewitt, but when they said the same thing I really began to think I had made a mistake. The horse would have nothing to do with the business and seemed to have no intention of jumping. At this stage I thought it was time I intervened and took a hand with him. So, putting him in some caverson reins, and having two men on either side of him I got behind with a big whip.

At the very first challenge he whipped round, shook off the boys, and away he went towards Six Mile Bottom, leaving us looking at his flying heels. We recovered him at Six Mile Bottom, and the next day I got on his back and rode him round and round a heavy ploughed field until at last he could not even trot. Then I took him to where there were some hurdles. He went through the first flight, but for the rest of the round he never put a foot wrong. Never again was he in doubt about jumping, and a better performer you could not have wished for. A clear case, this, of strong measures being essential to gain mastery. He actually made his debut in the Paris hurdle race in the colours of the Duke of Hamilton, and Mr. Dan Thirlwell rode him. And again were the results of the happiest.

*Scot Guard* was a good friend, and, moreover, was of particular interest to me as he chanced to be the last winner I rode under National Hunt rules. He belonged to Mr. Deacon, and was a prominent horse if only because he was a grey in colour. Racehorses of the colour were rare in those times. He was powerful enough, but you would never have believed that a horse with such bad shoulders would have been able to jump. I nearly did not buy him on that account. Then, however, I had a saddle and bridle put on him, and found that although so strong in the shoulders he could use them to the right purpose. I at once gave £600 for him for the Duke of Hamilton.

He was in a race at Kempton Park, and it meant having to waste very hard to ride him at 10 st. odd. I stayed for the meeting at the Greyhound Hotel at Hampton Court, and particularly well do I remember the occasion, as they had a party the night before the race and I danced right through the night as an aid to keeping my weight down. The Duke was staying about four miles away with Mr. Wilkinson, and, putting sweaters on, I walked out to see him. I knew he was having rare dash on *Scot Guard* and that he would like to see me. He must have been on tenter-hooks in the afternoon, as it was terribly foggy and they could see nothing of the race until after the horses had come over the last hurdles. I won comfortably, but on returning to weigh in I was very seedy from the severe wasting. As I have said, it was to be my last winner. I had £50 on the horse I nearly did not buy because his shoulders looked so impossible for jumping, and the Duke made me a present of £250.



THE AUTHOR ON SCOT GUARD  
His last winner under National Hunt Rules.  
(From a *Painting*)





The good horse afterwards won another important hurdle race at Kempton Park, being ridden by Jim Adams. When some time later he was having a school over fences he hurt his back, which meant the finish of his racing career. He was a thoroughly good and honest horse, and I was glad when he found himself appreciated at the Compton Stud in Dorset, where I believe he sired the right stamp of hunters.

Another good horse, or, shall I say, rather sensational horse because of a dramatic incident we figured in together, that looms up in my memory, was one called *Mount Valerian*. He was a thick-set brown horse with a white face, not a particularly good mover, and he had not the best of legs. I bought him for a jumper, but from the start found him a very difficult horse to make to jump properly. I tried him a really good horse over a distance of ground, but he was a desperate fellow to ride over the first two fences. He used to take a tremendous hold with his head in the air, and it was more luck than judgment that would get him over those critical two fences. When they had been safely crossed he would settle down and become a charming horse to ride.

I had in view the International Steeplechase, which in those days was quite a big affair at Croydon. They used to start betting on it at Christmas-time, and so much had *Mount Valerian* pleased me that I told the Duke of Hamilton he should bet a "monkey" on him. I was riding him myself and made sure of having a good bet too.

I might have known it. Tragedy, of course, was lurking in that second fence—the distance was four and a half miles—and, sure enough, he galloped

completely through it, turning a somersault and making no mistake about knocking all the wind out of me. I have observed how quickly the brain acts in such emergencies, especially when you have a good deal of money at stake. Almost before I reached the floor I thought of the Duke's big bet and of my own. I certainly had ventured a little bit extra. And here I was on the ground.

Instinct, I suppose, made me hang on to the reins, and as the horse made no attempt to gallop off I was soon on my legs, rather shaky it is true, but able to swing myself into the saddle and set off after the disappearing field. But that was not all. In the fall the horse had broken one rein of the snaffle and one rein of the curb on the other side. By the time I had collected the odds and ends up they were quite two fences away, but, "you never know your luck" I thought, so away I carried on in what, of course, looked a very vain pursuit. I gave my horse plenty of time, and, what with one of those in front of me refusing and another falling, I found myself with only two left in front of me.

With a mile to go I was still nearly a fence behind, but my horse, being an extraordinary stayer, was now going well, and at the last fence I was almost a hundred yards behind the leader. We sailed over that all right, and, wonderful to relate, we went on to win by two lengths, thanks to the uncommonly long run in. As my horse had been favourite I need hardly say that I was given a cheer. Wonderful how winning money gladdens and expands the heart of the backer. It certainly had a pleasant effect on the Duke of Hamilton, for he presented me with £200 to mark what to me, at any rate, seemed quite a stirring

incident. I subsequently won the big steeplechase at Cottenham on *Mount Valerian*, and then I think he broke down and passed out of training.

Dennis Thirlwell was my brother-in-law, and as an amateur rode for me for many years. For six or seven years he lived with me at Lordship. He was a most amusing fellow to be with and not at all a bad musician. I don't think I ever knew a better tempered man, and, considering that he was constantly riding in steeplechases and hurdle races and in schooling, I fancy he must have had plenty to try his temper. I think he was one of the best jockeys I have seen over fences and hurdles on nice free-going horses, but as he was not very robust in health he did not seem to get on so well with rough horses. He was always schooling when at home, because I was a great believer in letting my horses do their long work over fences, believing that it would bring their jumping muscles into play and develop them. It is the same with the fighting man or the rowing man. They must train on the real thing.

He won lots of races on *The Sinner*, *Thornfield*, *The Captain* and *Eau de Vie*. On one of them he won a race at Manchester, and then, putting up a 10 lb. penalty, won at Derby under 13-3. He rode both *Marc Antony* and *Fannock* when they won the Paris Hurdle race, and *The Captain* when that horse went over to Baden-Baden to win the big steeplechase. I remember coming home with him from Croydon after he had received rather a bad fall there. At Dullingham station the brougham was brought to meet us, but there were something like three feet of snow at which the horse finally jibbed. I jumped

out to see what could be done, telling the coachman to drive right on as soon as I got the horse moving. This he did so literally that he did not give me time to jump in, and away they went into the night, leaving me with a three-mile tramp through deep snow. The coachman did not return, thinking I would take a short cut of which I knew, and I did not dare take it, thinking he would return. I have often wondered what my brother-in-law thought had become of me, whether I had dropped through the bottom of the brougham unobserved by him or whether he was feeling too seedy to spare me or anyone else a thought. His version was that he thought I had jumped up on the box seat with the coachman. I have no doubt he heard about it when finally I did arrive at Lordship on that horrible night.

Jim Adams was a first-class professional jockey over fences and hurdles in his day. He was extraordinarily game, and it was a hard blow that could knock him out for the time being. He was one of the bluntest individuals I ever came across, and yet he possessed a real fund of humour, which on one occasion at least immensely amused the Duke of Hamilton. There was a race in France, and so sure a thing did it appear for one horse that it looked like being a walk-over for him until the Duke declared he would take it on. Everyone thought it was folly to do so, but Adams was as keen as the Duke and our horse won.

"Well," reflected Adams when the Duke was thanking him for the good race he had ridden, "we were the only — game enough to run."

"What's that you say?" inquired the Duke, with affected horror at the epithet, and Adams had

no compunction about repeating it, whereupon no one laughed more heartily than the Duke, who was far from being without a sense of humour.

Adams had short legs, and when a horse he was riding hit a fence hard he would be bounced out of the saddle. Yet he always managed to come down in the right place again.

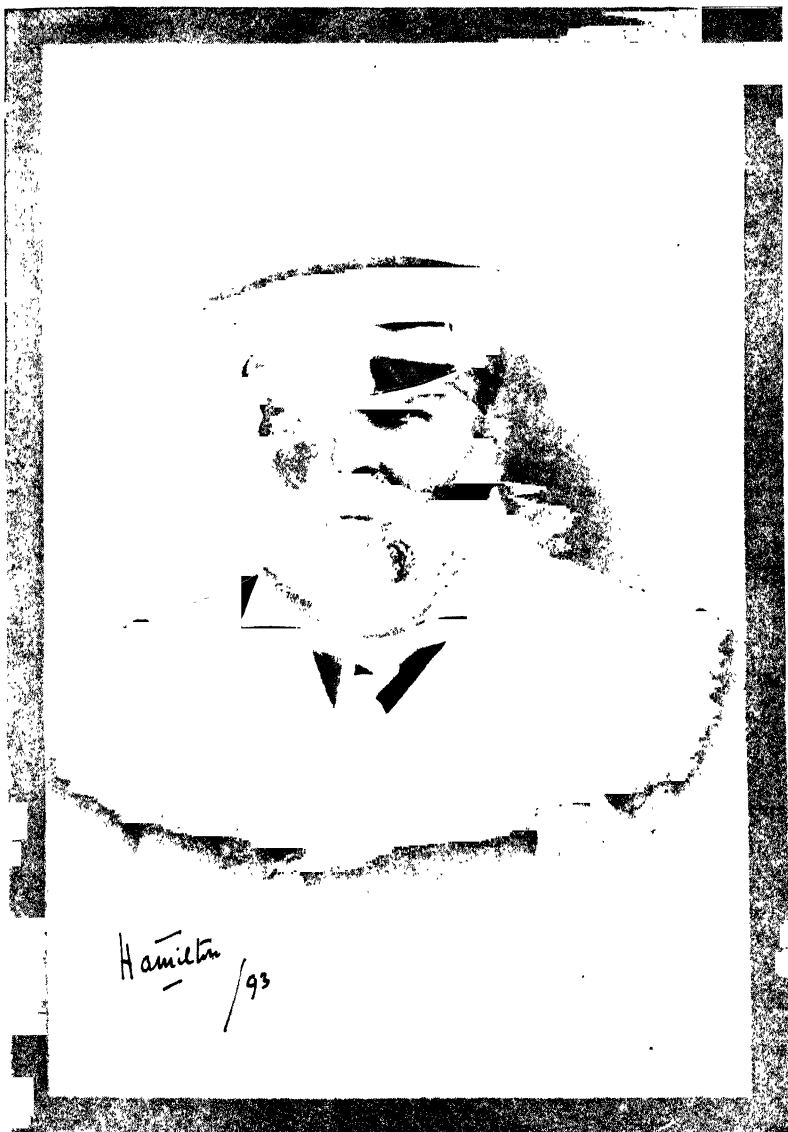
## CHAPTER IV

### TRAINING FOR THE DUKE OF HAMILTON AND OTHERS

The Duke of Hamilton—Removal to Lordship—Great Contemporary Riders—Captain Machell—*The Captain*—How Jack Watts was Started.

**A**PART from their Majesties King Edward and King George, certainly no one had played a bigger and more important part in my life than the Duke of Hamilton. When I first met him he was probably about forty years of age. The occasion was when I crossed over to France to ride a mare of his called *Molly Bawn* in a steeplechase. After she had won he asked me to remain and ride her at another meeting in the country, and after the mare had won again he told me that when he came to England he would send me some horses to train. May I say right at the outset of these references to him that no man could have been kinder and more considerate to me, though at all times he was most particular in maintaining that dignity which rightly belonged to one of his social status and his relation to me as an owner.

He was an unusually big man, standing six feet and weighing between seventeen and eighteen stone. Unquestionably he was immensely keen on racing, and especially on steeplechasing. For such a big man he was wonderfully made, with remarkably small hands and feet and a striking profile. Of his characteristic joviality many a tale could be told. Every



THE DUKE OF HAMILTON AS A YACHTSMAN





form of sport seemed to appeal to him, and I am positive that no man living had seen so much of life. Yet his incessant enemy was gout, to which he was in truth a martyr.

He kept his word and sent his horses to me to train at Lordship Farm. While the Duke was at Lower Hare Park I used to see him almost every day. To come out and see the horses jump pleased him more than anything else. He would come to my house every afternoon about four o'clock, and hear all the news about the horses, and this routine was only varied when he had gout and I visited him at about the same hour. I can only say that he treated me more like a son than as his trainer, and spared no thought to make my busy life a happy one. Every year I would spend a week with him at Easton Park, whether he had a partridge on the place or not. He insisted on my sitting next to him each night at dinner, and he invariably saw to it that I had a good place in the drives. After each Doncaster meeting we would go to the Isle of Arran for ten days' sport, generally shooting over dogs. To me it was the great event of the year.

If he cared for you he would give you his confidence, though he was a man with a deal of pride, which served him so well in maintaining the dignity of his position. On the whole I think he was the most accomplished all-round sportsman I have ever known. He was a splendid shot, both with rifle and gun; a wonderful whip; a fine boxer; and especially was he keen on yachting. The duke had a wonderful yacht called *Thistle*, which always seemed to me as big as a cross-channel steamer. He had very few intimate friends, but once he accepted a

man as his friend he invariably remained a friend. Mr. Dunn Gardner of Denston Hall was one, and others were Dr. Cooper and Mr. Peter Wilkinson, the latter being a great character in his day.

The Duke died on his yacht at Aden. He went under some treatment for reducing his weight and got down to 15 stone. I begged of him to give it up, but he said he felt so well that he did not see why he should abandon the treatment. Then, however, he did give it up and at once proceeded to put on flesh again very rapidly. One day I received a wire from him asking me to go and see him on his yacht at Harwich. He told me that he had broken a blood-vessel rather badly, and inquired how I treated horses that did the same thing. I naturally gave him every encouragement possible, but he never seemed to get over it. Gout seized him, followed by dropsy, and so this aristocratic, kindly, and great-hearted sportsman died. An odd thing is that the same afternoon as he died I won a race for him with a horse called *Nipper*. Years later I won a race at Kempton Park with *Witch of the Air* in the royal colours on the same afternoon as his gracious Majesty, King Edward, died at Buckingham Palace.

To show how the Duke gave his confidence to me, I may mention how one year he was going away for six months, and he told me to run the horses and back them or not back them according to my own judgment. To be saddled with such responsibility, though you may be sure you are trusted, is embarrassing and even worrying. Most men would avoid it, especially the betting part of it. It so happened, however, that I had a particularly good time with his horses, winning no end of steeplechases and hurdle

races and the One Thousand Guineas with *Miss Jummy*, a mare that later I had the good fortune to win the Oaks with. I was, therefore, immensely pleased when on his return I went to see him at The Durdans at Epsom and handed him a substantial cheque for his winnings.

What his death was to me I can scarcely tell in words. It was the greatest shock of my life up to that time. I lost perhaps the best friend I ever had, and I am sure the Turf was infinitely poorer for his death. He was a man who loved horses for their own sake. Nothing appealed to him more than watching them in their training and in their stables, which to my mind is the indication of the true sportsman and lover of the thoroughbred. He married the eldest daughter of the Duke of Manchester. A second daughter married Lord Gosford, and the youngest became the Countess of Derby.

It was in 1876 I moved to Lordship after a period at Six Mile Bottom. Up to that time the place had been in the occupation of Bob Musk, a farmer. The farm extended to about 350 acres, but the buildings were in a dilapidated state from the point of view of one who was proposing to found a training establishment. I do not suppose there were more than six stalls that were habitable for horses, but before long I had put up twenty-five boxes, and in course of time had room for thirty horses. Mr. Dennis Thirlwell, to whom I have referred as a steeplechase rider, came to live with me at Lordship, as also did a most amusing character named Sam Shirley. I put him up once or twice, but he was a wild fellow, without the suggestion of any balance. He really was a quaint mixture, for he could speak several

languages, he was clever at the piano, and a top-hole boxer, while he used to make a hobby of disguising himself so that no one could recognize him.

It was Shirley who accompanied me on a trip to Paris where we were running one or two of the Duke's horses. They were allowed to exercise in the *pelouse*, but apparently a ticket from the proper authorities should have been obtained. This we failed to get, for the simple reason that we had not seen the announcement to that effect in the French papers. The first shock I got was when I saw my horse in the distance being grabbed by a gendarme. Soon one of the lads was in a ditch and the horse was careering about loose. At the same moment a gendarme grabbed me by the collar, and to the best of my understanding demanded to know where was my authority for having entered the precincts with my horse. I gathered that I was trespassing. I may have been, but you can imagine my feelings on seeing my horse loose. His hold of my collar so incensed me that I swung him a hefty one in the place that matters, which sent him flying, and immediately I was scuttling towards where I knew the Duke was staying. I looked back, and saw two little blue legs showing from under a bush. By this time I was doing "Sheffield" time.

I found the Duke in bed, and when I explained what had happened he was very angry but hoped that I had not hit the gendarme. "No," I explained, "I only gave him a pretty good push!" When we got on the course the authorities were very sorry for what had happened, but advised me to clear out of Paris at once, as the gendarme was nursing himself in bed and would want his revenge. I took the hint,

and was only relieved when the train was whistled out of the station.

Most amusing in its way was the incident, in which Shirley was the leading figure, by which the well-known trainer of the period, Charles Blanton, was fooled. He dressed himself up as a German with freak trousers, and mounted a horse on which he rode with the stirrup on one side seven or eight holes shorter than on the other side. Fred Archer, Jim Jewitt, and myself followed at a respectful distance, and soon half Newmarket was following and jeering behind the freak on horseback. Arrived at Blanton's place he explained that he was staying with Dick Marsh, having "a pop-shot at the partridge," but wished to buy a mare.

"Oh well," said Blanton, "if you are a friend of Dick Marsh's come and have a glass of wine of your own country." Needless to say Shirley promptly accepted, and as readily agreed to buy the mare for £2,000. He said he would send a cheque as soon as he got back to Marsh's place. Nothing, of course, happened, and in a few days Blanton wanted to know about my German friend and his cheque. "Oh," I said, "I thought he had sent the cheque."

"Do you know his address?" inquired the unsuspecting Blanton. All I could think of was to say that I had no idea, and that he had just left by the four o'clock train.

Never shall I forget the impromptu "scrap," that followed on a visit we once paid to a theatre in London. We drove from the theatre to our hotel, and on Shirley handing up the fare the cabby looked at it and said angrily: "Look here, this isn't good

enough for me. I want——, and if I don't get it I'll set about you."

"Set about me, did you say?" said Shirley. "Drive us round to Russell Square and I'll fight you for a sovereign," he added.

To my astonishment the cabby showed himself a rare sport. "Jump in," he ordered, and we obeyed. We were soon at Russell Square, where there was a cab rank. Jumping off his box he asked a pal to hold his horse and handed his coat to another. There was a desperate battle, but in the end Shirley whipped him, and then thought him such a game fellow that he handed him a sovereign.

Poor Shirley! As light-hearted a fellow as ever lived. Towards the end of his time he rode *Paradox* for me in a gallop. He was a very high-couraged horse, and whether he was upset by something I don't know, but directly Shirley jumped off his back after pulling up the horse turned on him and savaged him. He was in agony for weeks afterwards. This born comedian went abroad and died soon afterwards from consumption.

The names of those contemporary and great riders, Mr. Pickernell and Bob I'Anson, have been mentioned more than once. The former, who I have explained rode as "Mr. Thomas," was rather inclined, towards the end of his brilliant riding days, to take a nip of something stimulating. On one occasion an owner was so anxious about a horse he was going to ride that he took care to look after him right up to the time of the race, which the horse did not win. It was decided to run the horse the next day, and this time the owner left him to his own free will. What happened then one may leave

to the imagination, but this time the horse won, after "Mr. Thomas" had ridden a brilliant race. After he had won the Grand National on *Pathfinder* he told a mutual friend of mine that, when they started, he might have gone the wrong way but for the boards or railings being there to tell him that the opposite direction was the right way !

Chris Waller was a fine horseman in his day, and he tells a story of an invaluable hint given to him by Bob I'Anson at the outset of his career.

"Do you mind if I tell you something ?" asked I'Anson of Chris Waller.

"Mind ?" said Chris. "Why, I should think it an honour to be told anything by you."

"Well, then," said Bob, "give your horse more rein at the fences. Don't take such a short hold. It's jumping wins steeplechases. Give your horse more rein, and then he is better able to get quickly away from his fences after jumping."

Chris took the hint, and admits that he profited greatly. "Mr. Thomas" and I'Anson were two splendid horsemen, and great jockeys over fences, with marvellous nerve and dash, and possessed of all the arts of horsemanship and jockeyship.

Captain Machell was a personality that at all times loomed large in the racing world. I may, perhaps, be permitted to say that he took a considerable interest in me, and though he used to describe my horses as being the products of a hot-house, he explained that he only did so because they invariably looked so well. He was a tall man, standing full six feet though slim of physique, very reserved in manner to the point of being absolutely taciturn, unless he chose to unbend. He must have been a



fine athlete in his day. Once I saw him run a hundred yards on the Bury road against a man named Jackson, who was supposed to be extra good. Jackson was second. One parlour trick he had was his ability to jump from the floor on to a mantelpiece. However, where racing was concerned he was unquestionably a very fine judge, and, of course, the betting side of it was his main thought from first to last. Many are the great coups he engineered, though some, of course, went badly astray. He liked, as so many of us in the world of racing do, to be in the good things. He was for one thing quite an excellent judge of yearlings, and frequently bought the high-priced ones and passed them on to folk for whom he used to manage.

I remember on one occasion winning a selling race over the last five furlongs of the Abingdon Mile with a horse which had appeared to win in a canter. Watts, however, told me that he was never so glad in his life to get to the winning post. That coincided with my own ideas of the horse and the race. He said he had hardly dared move on the horse lest it should refuse to have anything more to do with the race. Machell bought my winner for 500 guineas. The winner, I ought to explain, belonged to Baron Hirsch, and when Captain Machell told him that he had bought his horse out of a selling race and that it was worth £2,000 he was very annoyed. So I said to him: "Go and make a match with him with my little plater *Rags*, and I will stand £200 in the match. Stipulate to run the Rous course and *Rags* to receive 7 lb." The next day, on meeting the Baron, he informed me he had made the match and that it was to be run on the morrow. Unfortunately I told

Jewitt, who trained for Machell, to have a "tenner" on, and that *Rags* was 7 lb. better than the plater Machell had bought. Evidently he told Captain Machell he would be beaten, for somehow or other he got out of the match. The horse they had bought was exploited by them and heavily backed at Goodwood, but it was beaten, and it never did win a race.

Yet in spite of this story Captain Machell was something rather more than tepid.

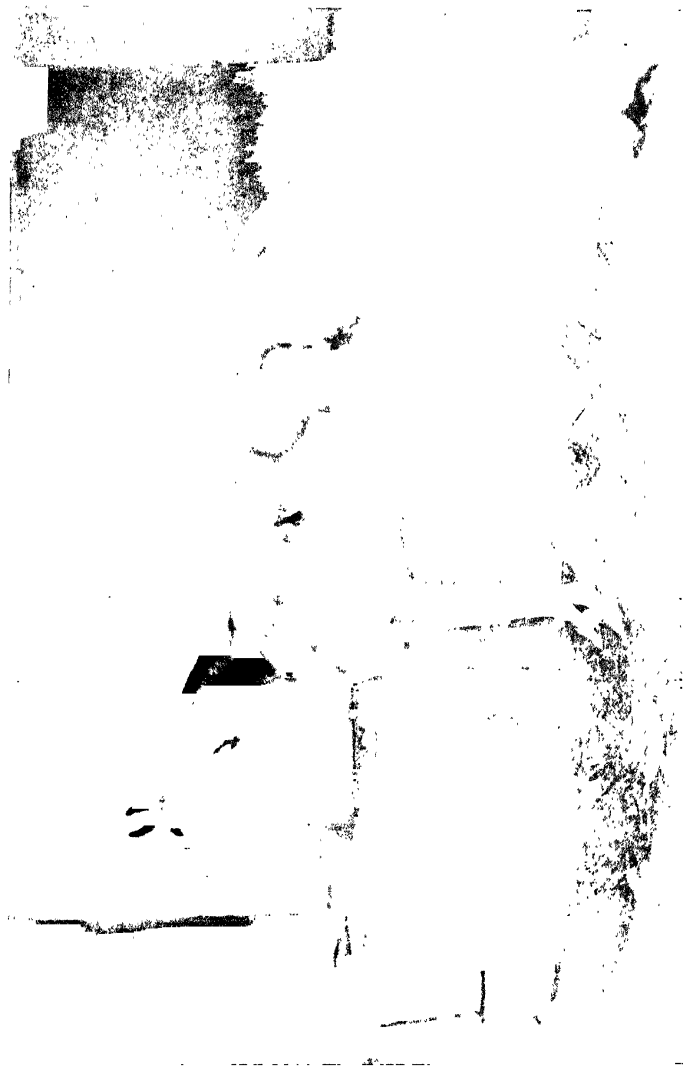
The first owner I had at Lordship was a charming young fellow named Mr. Robert Craig, who was connected with a firm of paper manufacturers in Scotland. He asked me to buy him some horses, and the commission took me to Ireland, where I laid out £600 and obtained three—a three-year-old named *The Sinner*, a mare called *Little Duck*, and a yearling named *Gloaming*. They were purchased from an Irish farmer and dealer named Ellison. As it turned out, it was a most auspicious deal from the point of view of myself and my new owner. As a matter of fact, *The Sinner* was only beaten once during the whole time I had him. He won all the best hunters' races in England; he was equally good whether over fences, hurdles or on the Flat.

I thought, for instance, he was so smart that he might have done well for the Cesarewitch, but we sold him just before. He was a great racing-looking brown horse, rather on the leg perhaps, a wonderful jumper, and with action just as it should be. Never once did he fall during the whole time I had him and, as I have said, he was never beaten but once, and then in mysterious circumstances. He was in a hurdle race at Manchester and the only horse with any chance of beating him was one I had already

given 21 lb. to and beaten at Croydon. The owner of the horse I am referring to came to me and said that if I would give him a tenner he would not run his horse.

Thinking that it would be merely throwing a tenner away I did not entertain the offer, and I told Mr. Thirlwell, who rode the horse in all his engagements, to give the public a good show and win as far as he could. *The Sinner* was leading a couple of lengths after jumping the last hurdle, and then collapsed in the most extraordinary way. On pulling up, the horse did not seem to be at all distressed, and we could find nothing wrong with him. Neither could a "vet" who was called in to make an examination. It was just one of those mysterious things that happen in racing from time to time and which cannot be explained. I did hear, though I cannot absolutely vouch for it, that Sir Humphrey de Trafford, who was losing £1,000 on the meeting, told his commission agent to back the horse for him to recover the amount and that he laid on and lost £20,000, as 20 to 1 on was *The Sinner's* starting price. Captain Machell subsequently became his owner and won races with him. *Gloaming* was a beautifully shaped dark grey horse, except that he was rather short in his neck, but he did well for us and was then bought by Robert Peck for his stable.

I dare say many of my older readers will remember that most interesting 'chaser I had the good fortune to train, *The Captain*. They might like to hear of him again now, while my younger friends may be interested to hear something about a horse which at one time seemed as hopeless a proposition as ever a horse could be and yet became one of the best 'chasers I



**THE CAPTAIN, A REMARKABLE WINNER OF HURDLE RACES AND STEEPLECHASES,  
USUALLY RIDDEN BY MR. D. THIRLWELL**

*(From a Painting)*



have known at two and a half miles to three miles. Most gratifying is it to the trainer—as also I am sure to the owner—to find to his intense surprise that he has been entertaining an angel unawares, that one which he had looked upon as no good at all should be a champion. These things occur but seldom, and in a long lifetime few such instances as *The Captain* can be recalled.

I bought the horse for the Duke of Hamilton from the Irish dealer Mr. Ellison, who was very well known at that period. He was a great big-boned horse with perfect manners and had a beautiful mouth, but when I got him home I found him to be absolutely the worst horse I had ever tried on the Flat. So bad was he that I thought his only use was for hack purposes, and I would hack him across the Heath to the races and leave him among the rest of the hacks at the back of the stands. There he was in the stable at that time—just a common hack to be used for the many purposes that the all-important though common hack is applied to. If we wanted a horse to put into the school to lead horses when loose over the obstacles he was the one chosen. He would go on jumping all day if necessary. Another day he would lead others over jumps on the training ground. There never was such a slave in a racing stable. Of course, I could not fail to notice what an extraordinarily fine jumper he was.

Then the pleasant discovery was made. I put him in a trial one day with a low weight, along with some horses that were going two and a half miles over fences. He jumped magnificently, but to my astonishment the common hack was never caught and won the trial with great ease. That was the first

real idea we got that he could not be a bad horse. A little later we tried him again, this time rather more seriously, and again he won easily. We were certain now, and from that time he went on to win no end of steeplechases over two and a half and three miles for the Duke. One of his achievements was to win the big steeplechase at Baden-Baden with Mr. Thirlwell riding him. It was a weight-for-age race, and he won very easily. I should say that he ran over every steeplechase course in England and France, and, whether schooling or in a race, I never knew him to fall or even make a mistake. What a very remarkable and wonderful horse he was, to be sure ! You must cherish affectionate memories of such a horse, just as you must of your classic winners.

Practically speaking, I only had four jockeys riding for me during all the time I trained flat-race horses. They were Jack Watts and his son, Otto Madden, and Herbert Jones. I could not, perhaps, do better than finish this chapter with some recollections of that very fine horseman and great jockey Jack Watts, whose name will ever be associated with that of *Persimmon*. One day at Alexandra Park, Watts, whom I had never seen before, came to me and said as he had nothing to do he would very much like to go into my stables and work. I liked the look of him, for he seemed so clean and respectable, but before engaging him I told him my place was not one for loafing gentlemen and that he would have to work hard. "If," I added, "you care to come and 'do' your horse like any of the rest I will take you on." In such very matter-of-fact circumstances did Jack Watts come to have his first start in life.

I soon realized that he was a horseman out of the

ordinary. He showed me all that and more in our gallops and trials, and after he had been with me a year, thinking that he might be induced to leave, I suggested to the Duke of Hamilton that he should engage Watts as his jockey. I am, indeed, glad to recall that he thought my advice worth taking. Watts rode for me continuously from that time until *Persimmon* had put up his magnificent triumph in the Ascot Gold Cup. He was about seventeen or eighteen years of age at the time he came to me. Before that he was with Tom Cannon, and why he left I never quite understood. From the outset he took a pride in doing his horse well; he was always there and I never had to find fault with him.

You would never see him in difficulties in a race, and he never tried to go where there was no chance of getting through. He was the same cool confident fellow in a Derby as he was in a selling race. No professional backers hung on to him; he kept himself to himself. Most reserved he was in his manner, and no amount of success would allow a smile to break over his set features. I remember, when in the struggle through the dense crowds on Epsom Downs I at last got to him after *Persimmon* had won the Derby, he looked solemn and glum to such an extent that I had to remind him we had won the Derby for the Prince of Wales. Only then did he permit a faint smile to flit over his features.

He was very nearly not riding *Persimmon* at all. About the Christmas-time before he told me in all seriousness that he wanted to give up riding as the wasting was telling on him and making him depressed.



It was only by talking most seriously to him, and telling him that he must help me to win the Derby for the Prince of Wales, that he agreed to carry on. But he was very much in earnest in his wish to retire. I thank goodness this fine jockey and superb horseman remained to be associated with the brilliant deeds of *Persimmon*.

## CHAPTER V

### RIDING AND TRAINING DAYS

Anecdotes of the Duke of Hamilton—*The Sinner* and other Good Winners—*Jannock's* Win in Paris—The Author's Record in the Grand National—Riding Accidents.

IN the preceding chapter I made some considerable mention of the Duke of Hamilton because of the happy years I was associated with him and the undoubtedly big influence he had in shaping my career. It occurs to me that it cannot be too clearly understood what a very important person he was by right of inheritance. That he was a very fine sportsman by instinct I have endeavoured to show. If anything, he was too fond of a gamble, but then he lived in a time when it was the fashion for certain individuals to set the Turf alight with their prodigious betting. I am not suggesting that the Duke was ridiculously rash in the sense, say, that the Marquis of Hastings was, but I know he would sometimes make me flush up with anxiety by the way he would bring his big guns to bear on the bookmakers. As a rule, a big win makes a man happy and contented with himself. The Duke was such a good loser that I sometimes used to think he was happiest when he had lost. Certainly I have known him to be most disgruntled at times when he should have been most delighted through having achieved a big win.

I have written of his pride. Sometimes he would let himself go to such an extent that if for a moment

you forgot the very high social station he occupied he also seemed to forget. And then there would be sudden remembrance. Always at the back of his mind was the knowledge that he must ever maintain the dignity of a distinguished line of descent. For it should be borne in mind that he was the premier Peer of Scotland. There was his magnificent descent from Princess Mary, daughter of Robert the Third of Scotland, in 1390. He did not intend that the circumstance should ever be ignored on those occasions when he thought it necessary to demonstrate his position. He was, too, the Duke of Chastellerault of France, as well as the Duke of Brandon of England ; while he was an hereditary Prince of Baden, his mother having been the Hereditary Princess of that Principality before the German Empire was formed. His sister married the Prince of Monaco and subsequently the great Hungarian magnate Prince Tassilon Festetics.

It follows that no one person possessed of these traditional claims could be ignored, and, indeed, I always understood that he was perfectly conscious of the fact that his mother claimed to be on an equality, if not superior, to our own royal family. I do know that on one occasion he caused me to get very hot and agitated over an incident which might or might not have been traceable to what I have been suggesting.

He was to meet the Prince of Wales at Egerton House about five o'clock one afternoon and accompany His Royal Highness round the stables. Five o'clock came but no Duke, though the Prince arrived with his usual punctuality. We waited and the minutes dragged. All this time the Prince chatted on the

lawn with those in his party. After an awful half-hour I saw the Duke in his pony cart coming leisurely in at the gate.

"Your Grace," I said, "is half an hour late. The Prince has been waiting for you on the lawn."

"Oh, that's all right, Marsh. Don't worry. I thought I would look in at the sale paddocks and I bought a yearling. Anyhow, take me into the house and give me a whisky and soda first."

"But, your Grace, the Prince. . . ."

"Well, that's all right," he rejoined, "but I must have a drink before going round the horses."

So we passed into the house, and hurriedly I helped him to a whisky and soda. Never did I see a man dally so with a drink. I felt as if I could have accounted for half a dozen in the time. But, I suppose, it was not a case of dallying really, though it struck me most forcibly that his deliberation was not that of a man who was conscious of having kept the Prince of Wales waiting for half an hour. He may, of course, have been regarding himself as the King of Scotland.

Like all of us, the Duke had a high regard for the riding of my brother-in-law, Mr. Dan Thirlwell. My good friend of many years, the Hon. George Lambton, has written of him: "Dan was one of the neatest and most accomplished riders I have ever seen, and when he appeared on one of Dick Marsh's horses in the pretty colours—cerise, french grey sleeves and cap—of the Duke, the combination took the eye of any lover of steeplechasing." I believe he won eighteen races on *The Sinner*, fifteen on *The Captain*, and fourteen on *Eau de Vie*, the latter being probably the best steeplechaser in England or France up to three miles or rather over, though I believe

Thirlwell thinks *The Sinner* was the best all-round performer he ever rode for me. "He was a horse that you simply dared not go slow on," once observed Thirlwell, referring to *The Sinner*, who, by the way, did not belong to the Duke but to Mr. Craig.

It is quite likely that my horses got into the way of jumping quickly because of my strict injunction to all who rode for me, whether in private or public, to make horses race into their hurdles and fences. I liked to see Dan Thirlwell sitting up in his irons, with his horse keen on the bit, as they went at a hurdle or fence. There might be some falling during schooling, but they were clever and quick jumpers when they were ready for serious hurdling and steeplechasing in public. *The Captain* was a horse that became first class because of the marvellous knack he acquired through his capacity to jump quickly. I do not suppose he would have beaten anything on the Flat at two miles, but no horse of his time could beat him at his fences, and I like to think it was due in the first instance to the schooling methods of teaching him to jump fast. A thoroughbred is taught from his yearling days to race and go at the top of his speed. It is why I thought it right to school my jumpers to *race* into their hurdles and fences. Once they acquired the knowledge they did not fall, and they won many races.

For twelve years did Mr. Thirlwell live with me at Lordship, and so successful was he that at one time he had ridden twenty winners for me in succession, fourteen of them being in the Duke's colours. I believe on one occasion he was the means of winning a big bet, stated at £20,000, for the Duke of Hamilton. He was on his way to Germany with some horses

and was asked by the Duke to stop at Chigendaal, near The Hague, where a new race track had been opened and on which they had a "mixed grill" of Flat racing, steeplechasing, hurdling, and trotting. During his stay Thirlwell had some practice with the trotting horses, and the Duke, who had decided to run two or three horses in response to a pressing request for his patronage, made a big wager that his jockey would win a Flat race, a steeplechase, a hurdle race, and a trotting race. And it was so. Dan did all that the Duke backed him to do on the same afternoon, and then resumed his journey into Germany.

Chatting about *The Captain* again, I am reminded of the way we discovered how he should be ridden. Thirlwell never used to take his hands off his withers. If he did the horse would cock up his head and dive at the roots of a fence. But he was a lion-hearted horse as a jumper. I remember a particularly fine show horse and jockey gave when they won the Prince of Wales's Steeplechase at Sandown Park. "Give them a good show, Dan," was all I said to the jockey as I gave him a leg-up. At the post he told Jack Jones (the father of Herbert Jones, who in later years became such a great help to me at Egerton House) that he would beat him on *Lord Chancellor*, who was regarded as the best horse of his day at Sandown Park. "I'll give you glory hallelujah to-day," he said to Jones. And sure enough, Dan and *The Captain* went away at such a "lick," never to be headed, that Jones and the rest were holloaing to him through the race to stop. After the race Jones turned to me and said: "That horse of yours and Dan will break their necks one of these days."

“Perhaps,” I replied, “he’s more likely to break yours if you try to follow him !”

It was during the days of *The Sinner*, a horse to which I have made frequent reference, that for once in a way I was rather more anxious than usual, and it may be that I showed it to Dan Thirlwell before he left the paddock. We were at Croydon, and my horse was meeting another very well-known horse named *St. Galmier*, ridden by Mr. Lambton and trained by Mr. Jenkins. I know *The Sinner* was unbeaten, and I fancy *St. Galmier* had also managed to avoid a defeat. The meeting of these two, therefore, created tremendous excitement, and I do not think I ever saw such a big crowd at the old Croydon race-course. One other runner there was, but the horse was of no account at all. Indeed, Dan Thirlwell went to his rider before the race and promised him £10 if he would see to it that his horse did not get in the way of either of the other two. He earned his £10 all right.

Now I have said that *The Sinner* was a horse you could not go slow on. Well, Mr. Lambton showed no anxiety about making it a strong gallop. He probably knew all there was to know about *The Sinner* and his characteristics, for he showed marked disinclination to get on with it. The result was that they dawdled for the first mile, and, because there was no pace, *The Sinner* plunged right into a plain fence. It was the nearest thing in the world that Thirlwell did not come off, but somehow he got back in the saddle and got his horse balanced again. Finding that *The Sinner* was not winded, he turned to Mr. Lambton, who had rather hung about for the company of our horse, and said : “Now come along. Let’s make a good gallop of it.” Then did he set

*The Sinner* properly alight, and the crowd saw him leave *St. Galmier* many lengths and win by a hundred yards. It showed what a stout-hearted and wonderfully good horse he was.

In a previous chapter I have had something to say of that very fine steeplechase mare *Eau de Vie*, on whom I feel sure Mr. Thirlwell would have won the Grand National but for the breaking of a stirrup leather about Becher's the second time round when they were going magnificently. It was this mare which figured in rather a dramatic trial by moonlight, the details of which might be more appropriate to a thriller from the glib and inconsequent pen of a fiction purveyor. I am sorry I cannot let the memory of this trial compete with the mythical tale of the first steeplechase by moonlight. In this far more prosaic case I had need, as I thought, to secure the greatest secrecy about a trial of four and a half miles over hurdles between *Eau de Vie* and a horse called *Athlacca*. The former, it will be recalled, belonged to the Duke of Hamilton. *Athlacca* was owned by a Mr. McDougall. Both were entered for the Grand National, and in order to shape what advice I might think it necessary to give to their owners without taking the rest of the world into my confidence I thought we might have a gallop by the light of the full moon.

I proposed riding *Eau de Vie*, and Mr. Thirlwell, with his light weight, could be on *The Captain*, and set us the best pace possible. My friend Bob I'Anson was always ready to help me, but the fact of his coming down specially would be bound to set tongues wagging. I therefore asked him to come for a week's shooting, of which we were both very fond and of which there



was plenty of the best in our part of the world. He duly came on the scene and we waited for a favourable night. We had not long to wait. I had to take my head man, John Gibbons, into my confidence, for he it was who went to the horses immediately the lads had left the precincts of the stable, took away their corn and tied up their heads.

By ten o'clock the whole place was as quiet as usual, and everyone went to bed, including I'Anson and Thirlwell. At midnight I wakened them and all three of us went to the horses, much to their astonishment, I imagine, saddled them, and took them to a gallop on which the Egerton estate came to be laid out. It really was a magnificent night, and as we moved quietly along through the belts of trees we evidently made too much noise for the wood pigeons, as they left their roosting places with such a clamour as positively startled us. Could anything have been more eerie?

*Athlacca* was a very big horse, standing 17-1 $\frac{1}{4}$  hands, and it follows that I thought something of him or he would not have been one of the actors in this little bit of midnight drama. We came the full distance of four miles and a half, and *Eau de Vie* won by half a length from *Athlacca*. For some time after pulling up, the horses were led round to enable them to cool off, and then on arrival back at the stables we each had to dress over our horse and do them up so that the lads would go to them at daybreak and find them just as they had left them. I know I'Anson and Dan had finished theirs off long before I had. *Eau de Vie* kept on breaking out again, and it took me two hours of hard work before I was satisfied that she could be left.

In addition to winning the Sefton Steeplechase and the Champion Steeplechase, *Eau de Vie* on one occasion won both the Prix de Drags and the Prix de Cascades in Paris. For the latter race of three and three-quarter miles there were only two runners, but for Harry Beasley and Linde, the Irish owner-trainer, the event was something of a tragedy. They had taken over to run a good horse named *Donny Carney*. He was, however, rather an unpleasant sort to ride, but as he was getting about 2 st. from *Eau de Vie* it is scarcely surprising that he should have been a hot favourite. Linde, it seems, had got him sold to a Frenchman for the big sum of £3,500 providing he won this Prix de Cascades.

Two fences from home, so well was the favourite going, that Thirlwell sang out to Harry Beasley: "Take your time, old chap. Make a race of it and let me down lightly." Sure enough, he did take things a bit easily, the while Thirlwell continued to keep a good hold of the mare's head, knowing that there was always one last spurt in her. Anyhow, they took the last fence together, and suddenly I saw Thirlwell call upon the mare for that last spurt. She responded so well that momentarily Beasley was taken unawares. Before he could get his horse going again, though travelling much the faster at the finish, he was beaten a short head. There is no doubt that Beasley should not have been taking matters quite so easily. Of course, he got into dreadful hot water with Linde, for the Frenchman refused to go on with the purchase of the horse, and I heard the Irishman went into the wood and wept in his agony. That would be after he had said a few words to his jockey!

While indulging in these recollections of old-

time steeplechasers and their riders, I may, perhaps, be permitted to refer to quite a remarkable horse which passed through my hands called *Serge II*. He belonged to Mr. Leopold de Rothschild, who throughout his life showed me the greatest kindness, for he was a very fine man in every respect. I certainly had immense admiration for him. It may be that he sent me this horse because I had reformed one or two so-called incorrigibles. One such had been *Marc Antony*, who became a very great hurdler and the winner of a Paris hurdle race.

Now *Serge II* was of the "kidney" that thinks it necessary to go down on the forelegs and savage the turf on which he is treading, or that would never miss an opportunity of bolting. I believe he once bolted with Fordham on the way to the post, and that great jockey was so disgusted that he got off his back and turned him loose. The horse liked the idea of walking about on his hind legs, and it would take half an hour to get him near a hurdle. For a fortnight I was trying to see what sort of a bit would suit him, since I always regarded as of primary importance the necessity of having horses adequately and comfortably bitted. *Serge II* probably ran away with his rider every day until I hit on the idea of putting two snaffles instead of one in his mouth. He was instantly cured, for now he could not get both between his teeth.

That stopped his pulling and bolting, at any rate for the time being. Revert to the single snaffle and it was "good-bye" with him. And when not doing that he would try and get your foot in his mouth. He was, indeed, "a perfect little gentleman." Yet Jack Jones won an international hurdle race on him

at Croydon, but later the horse gave him a bad fall which broke the jockey's leg and caused the horse to lose an eye. Dan Thirlwell rode him afterwards and won with him, but really his temper became such a nuisance that I asked Mr. de Rothschild to have him back.

It was after *Jannock* had won in Paris, beating a horse ridden by Mr. Lambton, that the same night there were certain rejoicings, which may have commenced at what was a *Jannock* celebratory dinner. The subsequent proceedings may have been rather protracted, and probably *Jannock* was toasted in more than one good bumper. At all events when I returned to the Duke's house in Paris, where we were staying, I was made the subject of one of the Duke's practical jokes. Thirlwell must have begun the business by suggesting to him that I had dined well if not wisely, and that I had gone to bed.

"Tell him," said the Duke, "I want to see him and wish him 'good night.' Tell him I wish to see him and know why he went to bed without wishing me 'good night'!"

Accordingly Thirlwell brought me from my room just as I was on the point of getting into bed, and told me the Duke wanted me on a matter of importance.

"Good evening, your Grace," I observed, as I went into the room.

To my astonishment he frowned and said sharply :

"Marsh, you're drunk!"

"Drunk?" I asked, when I recovered from the shock. And before I could find words to frame my next sentence he snapped out :

"Yes, Marsh, you're drunk. Come and see me in the morning."

The next morning he sent for me again when perhaps things were rather clearer than they had been overnight. But even so I was scarcely prepared for what was to come from one who had been a great friend as well as a distinguished patron.

"You were drunk last night, Marsh. Oh, it's no use denying it. And not only so, you were very rude to me. Isn't that so?" and he turned to Lord Charles Montague, who was in the room, and who nodded his head in acquiescence.

"Surely, your Grace. . . ."

"I suppose you don't remember telling me to take my horses away. Well, I'm going to take you at your word. I'm going to send my horses to another trainer."

Then I suppose he saw the look of positive dismay and consternation on my face. I really began to think I had been drunk, and that I had said these awful things of which I had no memory. For laughter suddenly broke over his big, genial face, and the joke was exploded. All the same, it was the sort of joke that gives a shock for the time being to the victim of it. I have laughed many times since, but did not do so at the time.

It may not be inappropriate to conclude these rather random memories of long-past steeplechasing, riding and training days with a brief summary of my Grand National rides. It is scarcely a record of which I can be particularly proud, seeing that the distinction of riding the winner never came my way in eight attempts. Yet it is not wholly a tale of vain endeavour. It will ever be a satisfaction to know that I was riding in the days of very fine riders and when horses, somehow, seemed better able than

they are now to encompass that always fair, though trying and severe course. Here, then, is my record in the "National."

1871. Mr. W. Bingham's *Purlbrook*, 6 yrs., 10-10. Race won by *The Lamb*, 5 to 1.
1872. Lord Conyngham's *Derby Day*, 10st. Race won by *Casse Tête* at 20 to 1.
1873. Mr. Moreton's *Footman*, 6 yrs., 11-5. Won by *Disturbance* at 20 to 1.
1875. Mr. H. Baltazzi's *Jackal*, a., 11-11. Won by *Pathfinder* at 100 to 6.
1876. Mr. H. Baltazzi's *Jackal*, a., 11 st. Won by *Regal* at 25 to 1.
1878. Duke of Hamilton's *The Bear*, 10-4. Won by *Shifnal* at 100 to 15.
1879. Duke of Hamilton's *The Bear*, 10-7. Won by *Liberator* at 5 to 1.
1881. Mr. L. de Rothschild's *Thornfield*, 5 yrs., 10-9. Won by *Woodbrook* at 6 to 1.

The nearest I got was third on *Thornfield* and fourth on *Jackal* when he first ran in the race. I have told how I honestly think *Thornfield* would have won but for the awfully heavy state of the course that year. When I determined to ride him I made a resolve on the first day of January that I would put the "muzzle" on, as it were. It was the day after my birthday, which was always made the excuse for some celebrations during Lordship days. On the first of the New Year I weighed round about 12 st. It will be noticed that I rode *Thornfield* at 10-9. It needed much self-denial and some starvation day after day to get down to the weight, and even on the morning of the race, on going into the Turkish baths, I found that I was 4 lb. over weight. As a matter of fact the man with the scales had made a mistake of

4 lb. though I did not know it until afterwards. This alarmed me very much, especially as you must have something in your stomach before riding the National course. Yet I had to undergo more wasting in the baths, and then on weighing again I found out, to my intense annoyance, the mistake which had been made by the weighman.

Of course, one came by frequent falls in steeple-chasing and hurdling, but on the whole I do not think I had my share. On one occasion I was going well in the "National" on *The Bear*, when a horse named *Tattoo* brought us down. On the Flat I only had one fall, and then through no fault of my own or through the fault of any other jockey. You seldom saw a fall on the Flat in my days, and yet they seem of fairly common occurrence fifty years later. My fall was a pretty bad one. It occurred at Hendon when racing used to take place at the Welsh Harp. I was riding a brute which I did not know at the time had run away just before with Maidment at Leicester and had bolted for two or three miles. Evidently it was a mad creature with no "mouth" at all, for as we made the turn on the racecourse in a false start, it simply bolted out of the track and made a most extraordinary jump over a hedge into a sunken road, where were parked rows of omnibuses and cabs. The horse cleared the omnibuses in its mad leap and crashed among the cabs being killed instantly. I was taken unconscious to a farm-house near by, and there I lay for two days without regaining consciousness. For a fortnight afterwards I could neither walk nor run, so badly was I shaken. It is surely a criminal thing to put up a jockey on a bolter and never give him a word of warning.

## CHAPTER VI

### MEMORABLE RACES AT GOODWOOD AND ELSEWHERE

*Ossian*, *Miss Jummy*, and *Friday*—*St. Simon*—How the Duke of Hamilton failed to Buy this Famous Horse—Goodwood Cup Races in the Past—*Vibration*.

LOOKING back into the 'eighties, a matter of forty and more years ago, some vivid memories are conjured up, and one seems to live again with such Turf history-makers as *Ossian*, the first classic winner I had the good fortune to train, *Miss Jummy*, who not long afterwards won the One Thousand Guineas and the Oaks, while in the early 'nineties *Florizel II*, *Morion*, and *Marvel* came flitting across the stage, leaving behind them a trail of stirring recollections. At this time the Duke of Hamilton was playing a big part on the Turf. He owed his possession of *Ossian* to a very good brood mare he had named *Music*, by *Stockwell*, for she bred him *Fiddler*, who was sired by a horse called *Preakness*. With *Fiddler* I won the Great Metropolitan Stakes at Epsom and then took him to Ascot to beat *Tristan* for the Alexandra Stakes. *Tristan* was then a four-year, and became the Ascot Gold Cup winner in the year following. However, it was intended that *Ossian* should bring more fame to the dam *Music*, though a more unpromising horse than *Ossian* in his early days you could not expect to set eyes on.

The Duke used to refer to him as "my horse." It was never by his name; but he would say, "How is



your horse getting on?" He was sickle-hocked and in at his elbows, and as a two-year-old was beaten in a Nursery with only 6 st. 5 lb. on his back. Yet at the back of my mind I always felt there was some good in him. Sure enough in the spring of the following year he improved out of all knowledge, and actually began to assume the shape and action of a pretty good racehorse. That being so I ventured with him to Ascot, where he was twice second, the first time to *Galliard* for the Prince of Wales's Stakes, and then for the Ascot Derby.

For the first-mentioned race a horse of Lord Bradford's, named *Laocoon*, was favourite, and before they went out for this race the Duke of Hamilton came to me and said: "Lord Bradford has just accepted a bet of £10,000 to £100 about his horse for the St. Leger." Then he added: "What do you think about your horse for the Leger?" For reply I suggested that if he could get the same bet he should certainly do so. Soon afterwards he returned and said that he had got the bet, and I asked him if he thought he could get it again for me. He tried the layer again, but he had had enough, and when the Duke told me he had failed to get another bet on, he also told me not to bother, as he would put me on £2,000 to nothing in the event of the horse winning at Doncaster later in the year.

At Goodwood *Ossian*, still forging ahead, won two races—the Sussex Stakes and the Drawing Room Stakes. The first event he had not the slightest trouble in winning by four lengths. Neither was his task formidable in the Drawing Room Stakes, which he annexed by a similar margin. But then came a nasty check. The Duke, much against my wish,



THE AUTHOR'S FIRST CLASSIC WINNER, THE DUKE OF HAMILTON'S OSSIAN (J. WATTS RIDING), WINNER OF THE ST. LEGER, 1883

*(From a Painting)*



insisted on running him a third time at the meeting, this time for the Racing Stakes. No doubt he was influenced by the fact that *Ossian* had hardly been out of a canter to win the two races, and in the third case there were only two others to beat, one being *Blue Grass* also trained by me, and the other a horse with not much of a chance trained by John Porter. As a matter of fact I knew there was not much between *Ossian* and *Blue Grass* at home—I was training for Mr. J. R. Keene at the time—and as Tom Cannon was about to mount *Blue Grass* he inquired : “ Which one shall I have my tenner on ? ” I replied with perfect truth that there was little or nothing between them, and that if he were a better jockey than Watts then he would win. He won on *Blue Grass* by a head. That *Ossian* suffered defeat was not, I think, due to the inferior jockeyship of Watts, but possibly to the fact that the pitcher had been taken too often to the well. When I begged the Duke not to run *Ossian* again, he took the view that he was not going to let an American have a walk-over. Fortunately *Ossian* very soon got over his over-dose of racing at the meeting.

I had further occasion to remember that afternoon of *Ossian's* defeat at Goodwood, for just before Fred Archer had won a selling race on *Perdita II* for Lord Cawdor, and the filly, then a two-year-old, was bought in for 500 guineas, after having been a 7 to 4 on favourite. Little did I think at the time that she was destined to become the dam of that illustrious brotherhood, *Florizel II*, *Persimmon* and *Diamond Jubilee*, and that I should have the training of them for King Edward as Prince of Wales and be associated with all their brilliant achievements.

So quickly did *Ossian* recover that he was fighting

fit when I took him to York for the Great Yorkshire Stakes, which he won, though only by a neck from the favourite *Chislehurst*. It was *Chislehurst* he beat again for the St. Leger though easier this time. In the following year he won a small race, the Claret Stakes at Newmarket, but he had seen his best day, and was sold to go abroad as a sire. He never reached his destination, as in a great storm he was swept overboard, and in that tragic way ended his career.

I have mentioned how *Ossian* was about the most unpromising horse in his early days one could look upon. I had three others that, oddly enough, had the same characteristics, and they all turned out to be very good horses. When you come to think about it the coincidence was really remarkable. They were *Florizel II*, *Jeddah*, and *Morion*. I shall have something to tell of them presently. It is simply a fact that they had no speed, and did not give the idea that they ever would have any, for they were clumsy goers. It was only because I thought Time would be their best friend that I never entirely lost hope. First, however, I may be permitted to explain that during the time I had Mr. Keene's horses *Foxhall* was one of them. The quite notorious winner of the Cesarewitch and Cambridgeshire was broken down when he came to me, and consequently never ran while I had him. *Blue Grass*, whose defeat of *Ossian* at Goodwood has been mentioned, was afterwards sold to Mr. Craig, for whom he won the Northumberland Plate. He was a slashing big chestnut horse, very strong, and a rare good stayer that also had much quality.

I have nothing but the most affectionate and kindly memories of *Miss Jummy*, who doubtless owed her

name to the fact that she was by *Petrarch* from a mare named *Lady Portland*. She was a bay all quality, in fact, quite a lovely filly, standing 15-3½ the year she won the classic races. One of the Duke of Portland's family used to ride *Lady Portland* in the Park, and, taking a great fancy to her, he decided to breed from her. *Miss Jummy* was the result of the alliance with *Petrarch* as well as a smart horse called *Export*.

Contemporary with *Miss Jummy* was a filly owned by Prince Soltykoff named *Argo Navis*. She was trained by Blanton, and Colonel Fludyer, who used to manage the Prince's horses, happened to be a good friend of mine. It was a long time before he would acknowledge that at Lordship we had a better filly in *Miss Jummy*. After we had beaten *Argo Navis* for the One Thousand Guineas, the Colonel threatened us with all sorts of dark revenge when the Oaks should come along, and then the fillies met a third time for the Park Hill Stakes at Doncaster in which *Miss Jummy* had now to concede 10 lb. To make it, as they thought, a greater certainty, they put a second filly in the race to ensure a good pace, and Colonel Fludyer assured me that I would be beaten this time. But we still won, this time by three parts of a length. My good friend had to acknowledge himself as satisfied that *Argo Navis* was no more than second best. Most regrettably our charming mare died while foaling her first foal.

It was in the 'eighties that *St. Simon* made such a tremendous stir, and though I know it is often the way, when a horse which has been sold by auction turns out to be something right out of the ordinary,

many folk claim to have been the under-bidder, yet I do know that *St. Simon* came very near passing into the possession of the Duke of Hamilton, and, of course, into my stable. I learned that the colt was to come up for sale consequent on the death of his owner, Prince Batthyany, and as a result of some discreet inquiries I had no doubt that he was already regarded as being something of a smasher. I immediately asked the Duke to be sure and make a point of buying him.

“What shall I give for him?” he inquired.

“What anyone else offers,” I said, “please give a little more.”

I never thought for a moment, therefore, that we should not buy him. At the sale the Duke proceeded to bid, according to what had been arranged, and I fancy he actually bid 1,500 guineas. Then some soldier friend whispered in his ear that the colt was suspected of being a cripple and that it might be impossible to train him. The Duke listened, and in that way we lost *St. Simon*. For something like another 50 guineas he did, as we all know, pass into the possession of the Duke of Portland. He turned out to be the biggest fortune maker and probably the greatest horse ever seen on the Turf. For the only time during our association I felt angry with the Duke of Hamilton. He had always accepted my word most faithfully in the past, and had acted on it with good results to us both. He did the same now up to the point when he listened to another. No one, however, was more conscious than I was of how he never ceased to regret that he had not gone on bidding until *St. Simon* was his. On the other hand, of course, the Duke of Portland might have been similarly

determined. However, the incident is merely related as a true bit of history.

I am, of course, merely stating my opinion for what it may be worth when I say that *Ormonde* was the greatest horse I have ever seen. He was a magnificent individual, and probably the field he beat for the Two Thousand Guineas was the best that ever went to post for that classic race. Any one of them, it seemed to me, would have won the Two Thousand Guineas or Derby in an ordinary year. Then, too, *Ormonde* won all his races in such impressive style. *Persimmon* was also a great horse beyond any question, when, as a four-year-old, he won a remarkable trial and then went on to confirm it by winning the Ascot Gold Cup in simply splendid fashion.

Again it was in the 'eighties that I began collecting a number of Goodwood Cups for various owners. Quite possibly the first Goodwood Cup winner I trained was the most sensational of all. The circumstances were so very dramatic, for they involved in defeat that very good horse *Tristan*, owned by Mr. C. J. Lefevre and ridden by Fordham. The one to inflict the damage was *Friday*, who had been acquired by me for the Duke of Hamilton to lead *Fiddler* and *Ossian* in their work. Just an ordinary lead-work horse, the hack of the stable as it were, and yet he gained Cup honours and not altogether unexpectedly, so far as I was concerned! *Friday* had done his work well, in that *Fiddler* had been assisted to win the long race at Epsom and the Alexandra Stakes at Ascot. In a shrunken field of four they laid 7 to 2 on *Tristan*, and not unreasonably so, in the sense that this winner of the Ascot Gold Cup in the following year had only to concede 13 lb. to



*Friday.* Teddy Martin was my jockey for the occasion, and he most faithfully carried out the orders to the letter.

Martin's orders were to set a nice gallop all the way, give his horse an easy on each of the two rises, and then let him take every advantage coming down the hill and make the best of his way home. *Tristan* failed by a neck to catch him, and though lots of people blamed Fordham, I am sure that great jockey was in no way to blame. My horse stayed, he was never so well in his life, and he was rather better than I even imagined. His starting price was 20 to 1, but the Prince of Wales and the Duke backed him. So also did the father of Mr. Somerville Tattersall. He invariably used to back any outsiders I ran in these important races, and was delighted with the race and its happy result for us.

It was at the same meeting that I suffered rather a smart reverse when a horse called *Vibration* was defeated for the Stewards' Cup, but made some amends by winning us the Chesterfield Cup on the concluding day of the meeting. Curiously enough this horse did exactly the same thing in the year following. Now *Vibration* first caught my eye at Lincoln. He belonged to a Dr. O'Connor, and as I saw him in the Trial Plate he had a very long mane and tail. Here, I thought, was a likely subject to be improved. I tried to buy him, but they would not listen to any overtures. Later I went, ostensibly to buy the horse's dam, but really to get hold of *Vibration* if I could, but they suspected me and would have nothing to do with selling. It happened, however, that he was soon to come up for sale at Tattersalls, and I asked the Duke to buy him. Charles Archer accompanied me to



**FRIDAY, A SENSATIONAL WINNER OF THE GOODWOOD CUP. ONE OF THE MANY GOODWOOD  
CUP WINNERS TRAINED BY THE AUTHOR**

*(From a Painting)*



the sale, and the Duke bought him all right for 1,500 guineas, which, let me add, was quite a fair price for those days.

The first time I tried him was for the Stewards' Cup and he won the gallop all right. He was a three-year-old and in at bottom weight with 6 st., and Martin, who later in the week, as I have related, was on the back of *Friday*, had the mount on *Vibration* for the Stewards' Cup. As a matter of fact he was too good a thing. Perhaps with another stone and a stronger jockey on his back he would have won. As it was the light-weight could not get the best out of him, and *Lowland Chief*, ridden by Fred Webb, beat him by half a length. He was a big, strong, resolute goer and a big handful for a boy. Yet, probably because he got a mile and a quarter as well as he got six furlongs, and for the reason that it was not such a scramble, he won the Chesterfield Cup with only 5-12 up, Martin again being the coachman. He was favourite again this time, and I have no doubt the Duke was going for his heavy losses over the Stewards' Cup. This time *Vibration* made no mistake about it. He won by ten lengths!

When he ran for the Stewards' Cup in the year following, his weight was 8-1, but I thought he would take a deal of beating, and I find, on looking back, he started second favourite at 4 to 1. He did not get as near as when a three-year-old, but it was all serene again on the last day of the meeting. With Rossiter riding, and carrying exactly the same weight as in the Stewards' Cup he won by two lengths. They had an extremely hot favourite that day in Lord Alington's *Geheimniss*, then a four-year-old. She was a very fine filly and ranks as an Oaks winner, but she

had no earthly chance on this day of giving 18 lb. to *Vibration*.

It was *Vibration* I used as a trial horse for *Medicus* for the Cambridgeshire. You may be sure it was a high trial, and that it was not without good reason I thought *Medicus* was about the best thing I had ever known for a big handicap. I am quite sure to this day that *Vibration* showed his form in the gallop. The one to let us down with a big bump when the time came was *Medicus*. We started backing him at 50's and 33's, and finally on the day his starting price was 7 to 4, a price which, I fancy, has only been exceeded for shortness in the case of *Polymelus*, many years later.

As the day of the race drew near, I remember, we came to have a suspicion that the horse might be tampered with, and for safety's sake I had his corn and hay kept in my smoke-room. The Duke of Hamilton used to come every evening and see me feed him, and then came the race on the Old Cambridgeshire course. He ran shiftily and was third to *Bendigo*. I was so horribly disappointed that I so far got my tail down as to go straight back home. I had not been there half an hour before the Duke came riding up on his pony and I heard his voice calling: "Hello Marsh, where are you? Well well, we should have had a devil of a night if we had won. Let's have one as it is."

And to be sure we did. Mr. Peter Wilkinson came and joined us, and between us we were so wound up that before morning we had sung every song known to either of us. The Duke went home just in time to refill his cigar case, and then, to my surprise, I saw him on the Heath in his pony trap to

see the horses at work. He was absolutely the best man to take a beating I have ever known. It brings to mind an occasion when we ran *Miss Jummy* and won with her as a two-year-old, and then she was disqualified for carrying wrong weight. It was my fault. In calculating her weight I had forgotten to include a walk-over, and the result was that she carried 3 lb. too little. I was talking to the Duke, and saying how very sorry I was, when some man, who had obviously lost his money, came rushing up to the Duke and said: "If I had a trainer who did such a thing as that I would sack him." Very quietly the Duke turned on him and bitingly remarked: "You are just the sort of man who would do such a thing. A man who never makes a mistake is a man that has got nothing to do."

Goodwood has bulked largely in this chapter, and it is, perhaps, fitting that I should make some mention now of other Cup races the winners of which it was my good fortune to train. The unusual case of *Friday* has been discussed. Many years later when *Magic*, a despised outsider trained by Felix Leach, beat that very high-class horse *Bayardo* by a neck for the Goodwood Cup, the trainer told me he had only entered *Magic* because of the impression *Friday's* success and the way he was ridden had made on him. In all I won six Goodwood Cups, my other successful horses being *Florizel II*, *Rabelais*, *Perseus*, *Red Robe*, and *Fortunatus*. The case of *Florizel II* can be discussed later. The others were by no means horses out of the ordinary, and especially is this true of *Red Robe*.

He belonged to the late Mr. Arthur James, and I brought him to Goodwood as he had been doing long

work with His Majesty's *Chatsworth*, and in consequence was wonderfully well. However, the hope of the stable was *Chatsworth*, but I was very anxious about him. He was all right when he went to Goodwood, but he had a doubtful leg, and I was afraid of what might happen after he had galloped the full Cup course on the Tuesday. He had to have such a gallop as he was a particularly gross horse. Fearing what might happen I brought *Red Robe* in case he might be wanted. Sure enough on the Tuesday night *Chatsworth's* doubtful leg was flushed, and I suggested to Lord Marcus Beresford that it would be wise not to run, as to do so would probably cause him to break down completely. Of course, he did not run.

The day before the Cup race Mr. James came to me, and was very angry because I had incurred the expense of bringing to Goodwood a horse which he would sell for £100. The next day he won the Cup and a stake worth about £2,000! At the same meeting I won the Prince of Wales's Stakes for Mr. James with *Mrs. Gamp*. He said he was pleased the filly had won, but that *Red Robe's* win had been a fluke. Mr. James had also the good fortune to own the other Goodwood Cup winners, *Rabelais*, *Perseus*, and *Fortunatus*. *Rabelais* was the best of them. He was a beautifully bred horse by *St. Simon*, standing barely 15-3 hands. He was rather light of bone and turned both toes in, but in due course he came to make a high-class sire in France. *Perseus* was a very moderate horse, and I rather doubt whether he won any other race. I sold the dam of *Fortunatus*, in foal to *St. Frusquin*, to Mr. James. The foal was *Fortunatus*, which,\* if I may say so, was another piece of Goodwood Cup fortune for this owner.

One other Goodwood Cup recollection, and I have done for the moment. It was when I had some hopes of bringing off what I did later with *Friday* with a horse called *The Bear*, belonging to the Duke of Hamilton. This time the jockey did not obey orders, as he was in altogether too big a hurry. So much so that when the other horses passed out of sight at the back of the hill *The Bear* was in sight on the other side. He must at one time have been half a mile in front, and I began to descend Trundle Hill, from which I had viewed the race, in the belief that it was all over and that no horse ever foaled could catch mine. Yet he was caught at the distance by *Isonomy* and beaten. It was a great performance on the part of *Isonomy*, which made a very deep impression on me. He was a grand horse and better than most people imagined. *The Bear* was a five-year-old and a maiden on the Flat, but as a hurdler he could show them how to do it, as I won the big race at Croydon on him and later the National Hunt Steeplechase at Cottenham. I rode him also in the Grand National, but he was a sour sort and refused at the second fence.



## CHAPTER VII

### TRAINING AT LORDSHIP

*Morion and Marvel—Unicorn—Removal to Egerton House—The Moss Litter Gallop—An Expensive Establishment—Breeding and Dealing.*

TWO horses of which I entertain affectionate memories are *Morion* and *Marvel*, both belonging to the late Duke of Devonshire, who, in the period of which I am writing, was the Marquis of Hartington. In the course of a long lifetime with some really great horses, some, even more than others, occupy a more defined niche in the memory. I have no doubt this was the experience of some very notable trainers who were contemporaneous with myself, and others who came right to the front of the stage at a later period. John Porter, we may be sure, had a positive affection for *Ormonde* apart from the mighty deeds of which he was the hero. I know he rejoiced in the great fillies he trained, and *Flying Fox* would yield him enormous pleasure and satisfaction in the closing years of his fine and lengthy training career. The classic winners *Ossian* and *Miss Jummy* had brought some renown to my stable, but early in the 'nineties I was destined to have some solid good fortune with those two handicap horses belonging to the then Marquis of Hartington. Both *Morion* and *Marvel* were most interesting individuals. The one won the Royal Hunt Cup and in the following year the Ascot Gold Cup; the other won two Stewards' Cups in three years.

Now *Morion*, as I visualize him to-day, was a nicely balanced 16-hand horse, beautifully tempered, but very gross, by which I mean that he took a great deal of work to bring him to fitness. He was a dark bay with black points. I have already mentioned that four horses stick out in my memory as being the most hopeless propositions until such time as they came to be subjected to serious training. It was because they yielded to training that they altogether belied their early promise. I can imagine some men would have despaired of them on first acquaintance, but something prompted me to persevere with each of the four. The case of *Ossian* and the way a high-class racehorse was evolved from a slovenly and clumsy goer probably had something to do with my hoping for the best where *Morion* was concerned, after he had put up only a very moderate show as a two-year-old. This son of *Barcaldine* only won one race as a two-year-old, but then he only ran once. The occasion was the Somerville Stakes at Newmarket, and he could only scramble home a short head from an animal which subsequently went on to Liverpool and was beaten in a selling race there. The fact that he only ran once shows how very backward and unfurnished, and, therefore, inefficient, he was. I was hoping for the best when he should come to race as a three-year-old.

It happened that quite early in his three-year-old career he won the Craven Stakes at Newmarket and then the Payne Stakes. Now this was something altogether better. These races as a rule are not won by bad horses, and as he had no engagements I entered him for the Royal Hunt Cup. He was given 7-9. I knew he would get the distance at

Ascot as he had won those races at Newmarket in the Spring, while I had *Marvel* of the same age and of whose speed I had no doubt at all. As a matter of fact, *Morion* gave 10 lb. to *Marvel* when I tried them together, and the upshot was I naturally came to regard *Morion* as a really good thing for the Hunt Cup. In a field of twenty-four he carried the record weight up to that time ever carried to victory in this race by a three-year-old. Two years later *Suspender* as a three-year-old won under 7-10.

To show how steadily *Morion* improved I may mention that he ran eight times as a three-year-old and won seven times. Once there was nearly a horrible fiasco. It was when he was competing for the Bunbury Plate on the July Course at Newmarket. There were only two runners—*Morion*, on whom odds of 3 to 1 were betted, and *Sheen*, who as a five-year-old and the winner of the Cesarewitch later in the same year was only conceding 7 lb. George Barrett was riding my horse, and he evidently thought the winning post was the far one on the top of the rise, whereas it was in the Dip. He was making no effort to win, but luckily he happened to be half a length in front of *Sheen* as he passed the right winning post, but he admitted afterwards that he had no intention of winning at that point. It was the merest luck that he happened to be in front then, and probably due to the fact that he was so very much better than *Sheen* at 7 lb.

Odds of 3 to 1 on *Morion* were again betted when he went to Derby to win the Breeders' St. Leger. He picked up the Great Foal Stakes, and then finished up the season with his only defeat. He was unplaced for the Cambridgeshire when second favourite,

but then he had the crushing big weight for a three-year-old of 8-13. As a four-year-old he ran for the Cesarewitch with 9-7 on his back, which was quite enough to stop him. Yet he was a fine stayer as a four-year-old, as I discovered when training him for the Ascot Gold Cup. With Jack Watts riding he beat *Queen's Birthday* and won the Cup all right.

So far he had given no trouble at all. Apparently he was the soundest horse in the world, but one day when he was being prepared for the Goodwood Cup he jarred himself on the Heath at Newmarket. Two furlongs of the long gallop finishing on Cambridge Hill had been left uncut and when he dashed into that the trouble must have been caused. He could not, of course, run for the Cup, but he was right enough later to win the Triennial Produce Stakes in the early autumn, while he secured the Jockey Club Cup for Lord Hartington, only, however, to be disqualified for bumping in favour of a horse called *Patrick's Blue*. Watts was exonerated from any blame. This was rather a vivid incident, which caused a good deal of commotion, for *Morion* had started favourite at 8 to 1 on. *Patrick's Blue* in the colours of Lord Zetland was the only other starter, and it did seem a virtual walk-over, but it was a race, with the outsider only a neck away at the finish. My horse did undoubtedly "hang," and though I hoped for the best I cannot admit that the decision of the Stewards altogether astonished me.

Considering his class he was a dismal failure at the stud. I had him at my own place at Lordship Farm. The very distinguished *La Flèche* was mated with him, the result, I believe, being a useful sort of filly named *La Veine*, that won the Clearwell Stakes.

Then also from *La Flèche* he got a horse called *Strongbow*, who won the Great Yorkshire Handicap. But on the whole he failed. I recall how on one occasion that very fine judge of a thoroughbred, Count Lehndorff, came to see him from Germany, bringing with him a blank cheque. "Put in any amount you like," suggested the Count to Lord Hartington, but the latter shook his head and would not entertain the notion of selling. I can only say I wish most devoutly he had been obliged by the owner of *Morion*.

Just to show what an extraordinary thing breeding is and how it seems to defy understanding just when you have penetrated all its mysteries and secrets, I may instance the case of a full brother of *Morion*. He was a chestnut horse and not a bit like *Morion*. Moreover, as a racing proposition he was a rank bad horse. The height of his achievements was to win a selling race at Liverpool when he was sold, only, however, to turn roarer. Eventually he was bought for a matter of £9 by the Swindon "vet," Mr. Lawrence, who died some years ago. Now that horse eventually found his way to Ireland, and became the sire of *Winkfield*, who in turn became the sire of *Bachelor's Button* (the winner among other races of an Ascot Gold Cup and a Manchester Cup) and of *Winkfield's Pride*, a very notable winner of the Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire Handicap.

The case of *Marvel* is interesting, if only because it was a near thing about his being allowed to live at all, so hopeless did he seem as a foal. One day at the request of the Duke of Devonshire I went to his breeding stud at Hardwicke Castle, where he said there was a colt by *Marden* that he thought would

have to be shot as being useless for racing purposes. He was apparently being looked upon as a hopeless cripple. He was not at all a bad sort except that his hocks were quite deformed. They seemed to stick right out behind him. Talking with the stud groom he told me that the mare had not done him well, which made me think the deformity might be due to weakness and that with strength the hocks would certainly improve. Accordingly I advised the Duke to wait for three months before having the colt destroyed. It was a fortunate decision, as the colt turned out to be *Marvel*, twice the winner of the Stewards' Cup at Goodwood.

By the time he came into training his hocks were just about as perfect as you could wish to see on a horse, being now right under him. The transformation was, indeed, quite wonderful, showing what is possible when a backward and immature youngster once begins to get strong and develop to his frame. All the same I tried him to be very moderate as a two-year-old, and the Duke was once more going to get rid of him. Again I had to plead for him. "He's in the Bedford Stakes at the July meeting at Newmarket," I said. "Let us give him a run in that race and see how he goes. Then we can consider getting rid of him if he should make a hopeless show." To our astonishment he won the race. It was afterwards I made the discovery that he was quite a different horse when in blinkers. From that time he always ran in them, and yet I am sure he was a very game horse. You usually resort to blinkers in the case of faint-hearted horses or horses that need some stimulus such as blinkers will sometimes impart. Yet they suited this very genuine horse and induced

him to run ever so much better. I can only suppose they roused him from some natural lethargy.

Of his type he was quite a perfect model. He was thick-set, and "chubby" is an expression which in his case may be permitted, but yet beautifully shaped and most muscular when fit. He was, indeed, extraordinarily strong and muscular for one of his type. When he won the Stewards' Cup for the first time as a three-year-old he carried 7-6. Two years later as a five-year-old he won under 8-8. Between those victories I had the good fortune to win the Goodwood race with *Unicorn*, so that it fell to horses in my stable for three years running. Now *Unicorn* was a charming little brown horse, standing 15-2½ hands. I found out that he had tremendous speed, but that he could not get a mile. That being so I in good time advised Mr. Brodrick Cloete, his owner, to keep him for the Stewards' Cup. I had an idea that he did not care much about betting, and when I told him he might wish to go for another race worth more and on which there was not the same amount of betting, he replied that he was not that sort of man. "If," he said, "I go in for a thing at all I do so pretty heavily." He at once gave me to understand that he would lay himself out to win a big stake over his horse. When the weights came out the horse had only 6-2. He was, I may remind you, a three-year-old. Knowing that he was going to be backed for a lot of money I tried him highly, and as he won his trial I had the satisfaction of telling Mr. Cloete that it was just a matter of the horse getting off all right. I could not find a better jockey at the weight than I had in my own stable—Otto Madden—though he had not received up to then much practice and

experience of race-riding. Still he knew the horse well.

*Unicorn's* owner had requested me to arrange for the horse to be backed to win him £30,000, telling me also that he would put me on £5,000 to nothing. I sought out my good friend Mr. Charles Greenwood, who at that time was the very able racing correspondent "Hotspur" of the *Daily Telegraph*, and he duly got to work. When the day came and I met Greenwood on the course I asked him how he stood, and he said the bets stood him to win £34,000. "Shall I go on?" he inquired.

I replied that it would be pretty good if what it was at present were pulled off, but I fancy Mr. Cloete had another £200 on at 9 to 1. The starting price was 100 to 8. I went on to the Stand to see the race, and was horrified when for some time I failed to find the horse in the crowd of runners. Then at last I spotted him behind the leaders. Madden had drawn a place close to the rails, which is regarded as being the best side from which to start at Goodwood. However, there was an awful chance that he might be shut off in making for the rails at the foot of the hill. The work my horse must have put in from that point was astounding. Madden won the critical race for the position, and so saved himself from being shut right out. Once *Unicorn* got his neck in front he kept it there to the end. It was a great win for Mr. Cloete, and, as I have explained, was sandwiched between the two wins of *Marvel*. Not bad sort of meat to find in the sandwich either!

What I have been touching on in regard to some not unimportant events at Goodwood took place on the eve, as it were, of my entry into residence at



Egerton House, an establishment which was to become famous as the home of the thoroughbreds owned by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, afterwards King Edward the Seventh, and of his gracious son, King George the Fifth. For thirty-two years did I live and work at Egerton House, entering there late in the year 1892 and bidding the splendid place farewell at the dawn of 1925. Over three decades were registered. It is the working lifetime of many men. They yielded me the proud privilege and honour of figuring in a position of such dignity and pride as I could never have dreamed of in my early days as a trainer. Looking back now I am filled with gratitude that I should have been so favoured by fortuitous circumstances. I like to think that the honour accorded me of being selected to train for the Prince of Wales late in 1892 was largely the outcome of my record and proven ability up to that time. What, however, may be more certain is that I had embarked on the ambitious plan of renting what was at that time by far the most elaborate and up-to-date training establishment in this country and may still be so up to the present time.

The fact that my lease of Lordship farm was about up unquestionably started projects running through my mind as to future plans. Then one day the idea of creating Egerton, with its splendid stabling, its stud buildings, and its thousand and one accessories for the breeding, rearing, and education of the thoroughbred, and its delightful residence, which was to become my home for so many years, emanated from Mr. Percy Heaton, the agent for Lord Ellesmere. The great stallion *Hampton* had amassed very considerable earnings by reason of his services at

the stud, and Mr. Heaton mentioned that as the estate had something like £50,000 from that source lying idle at the moment they would entertain the notion of building a training establishment if I would like to take up the tenancy.

During the years I had been at Lordship I had spent a lot of money on improvements. I had laid out new paddocks and established a stud farm. The landlords wanted to increase the rent because of my own improvements, and at the same time make me responsible for the insurance. This seemed altogether too one-sided for me, and it was then I began to entertain Mr. Heaton's suggestion, whereupon the Lordship people came to heel by offering to renew their lease on the same rental while they agreed to a sub-letting clause in the new agreement. That being so I took on the place for another fifteen years. It served my purpose, for I was able to remain there while Egerton was being built and laid out, and then I was able to sub-let my old home to Mr. Joseph Cannon.

They were two and a half years making Egerton House and all the ranges of stabling, while also converting the land from arable to grass. You see, till then it had been farmed on the four-shift system—turnips, wheat, barley, and seeds. There were a hundred and twenty acres, and my first business was to lay the whole of it down to grass. I created the gallops which girdle the place, and planted the beautiful belts of trees, which grew to maturity through the years and made the place so enchanting and the sanctuary of wonderful bird life. What gave me such satisfaction and proved of incalculable value to me as a trainer, when the gallops on the racecourse side

of Newmarket were hard and in such a state as to cause anxiety to a trainer, was the mile and a quarter moss litter gallop, which I had created. Some of my classic winners, indeed all of them trained at Egerton, have done invaluable work on that perfect stretch of turf which was laid out on the boundaries of the estate.

I first conceived the idea while enjoying a day's hunting with the Duke D'Aumale's boarhounds in the Chantilly Forest. While hounds were running very hard I found myself galloping along a "ride," on which the going seemed like a carpet of velvet. I asked someone who seemed to be a custodian why it was so good. At first he was exceedingly angry with me for having galloped on the place at all. It was, he explained, the Duke's private moss litter gallop and none was allowed on it. However, we became friendly, and he told me how it had been laid out.

I adopted the identical plan on my return to Egerton, and every year since the turf has improved. Six furlongs are absolutely straight. It took three years to bring it into perfect condition, and at least I can claim that it had something to do with influencing Mr. Marriott, the able custodian of the Heath at Newmarket, in having similar gallops laid out on the Limekilns and on the racecourse side of the town. The Stewards of the Jockey Club, with Mr. Marriott, came to see my gallop at Egerton, and the outcome, as I have said, was the adoption of the principle on Newmarket Heath. I had an idea that other trainers at Newmarket did not much care about it at first. They had a notion that it would break down their horses, but they came to appreciate it

very much afterwards, and now I do not know how they would do without such gallops. They are used by all in the dry weather of the summer months.

It is odd to think that this beautifully wooded estate of to-day had not a tree upon it when I first went there. When the then Prince and Princess of Wales, with their friends, equerries, and ladies-in-waiting once came down to see *Persimmon* do a gallop on this private ground I had a special platform erected from which they could see the gallop from start to finish. The trees of the belts and plantations were barely knee high. Thirty years later they were really trees, and from that same platform it would have been possible to view only a few furlongs of the gallop.

Surely, there never was a more expensive establishment to run by a trainer, who was his own tenant and had to make it a paying proposition in a financial sense. Rent, rates, and maintenance were extraordinarily heavy, and what with such items and the cost of labour and the feeding of the many horses in training and at the stud together with my personal expenses, I calculated that I had to make £13,000 a year before making a penny profit for myself. It became necessary, therefore, to deal successfully in the buying and selling of mares and horses of my own. Happily I was fortunate on several occasions in making one or two of those deals that are more usually dreamed of rather than actually experienced in real life.

There was the time when I went to Ireland to buy a mare from Mr. Ellison, a breeder. She was a beautiful mare by *Galopin* from *Sonsie Queen*, by *Musket*, and she had a foal by *Morgan*, for which I offered

him a hundred pounds. He refused the offer, but at Christmas that same year he offered me the foal for the same price and would undertake to deliver it at Lordship Farm. I accepted the suggestion and the foal became my property. Then came the pleasantest of discoveries. The foal prospered and as a two-year-old I had the satisfaction of trying him to be very smart. His name was *Tanderagee*. I kept him in reserve for the valuable Imperial Produce Stakes at Kempton Park, which I thought he would win, if reproducing what he had been good enough to show me in his trial. He had to meet some of the best of his age of that year (1892), but I had sufficient courage and money to venture £500 on him and he won all right.

As a three-year I first exploited *Tanderagee* at Chester, where he was beaten, but he was good enough a little later to win the Cup at Epsom, beating the Duke of Portland's horse that had been second for the Derby. That same year one of the well-known Lebaudys came from France, and when visiting me at Egerton House inquired whether I could sell him a three-year-old that would win him a race or two during his stay in England. The year before I had bought a two-year-old out of Sam Pickering's stable named *Ingebrigt*. On the day M. Lebaudy called I had sent *Ingebrigt* to run at Kempton Park, and I told him I had sent a horse to Kempton Park which had a very good chance of winning the race. I suggested that he should buy *Ingebrigt* for £1,500 and half the stake.

His reply was to ask me if I would sell him *Tanderagee*, and, being out to deal at that time, I put a price of £4,000 on that horse. He said he

would give the price if *Ingebrigt* should win. He backed *Ingebrigt*, who won, and he took both horses and had them sent to his stable in France.

Those were happy and fortunate days for me. The farm at Lordship did consistently well not only with the bloodstock but with cattle and sheep. However, the bloodstock was naturally my first and last concern, though the black-faced Suffolk sheep were interesting me much as a side line.

With *Ocean Wave* I won a maiden plate at Newmarket, and then sold her to Mrs. Langtry for £1,000. Including this one I sold by auction five mares which at one time or another I had picked up cheaply. They made 7,200 guineas, which was pretty big money for bloodstock in those days. One of the five was *Cheam*, for which I gave James Waugh 1,200 guineas. She was in foal to *St. Simon*, and when I sold her she made 3,500 guineas. The fact that she was bred on the same lines as *Perdita II* attracted me. France became her home.

I mentioned the black-faced Suffolk sheep just now. In those late Lordship and early Egerton days I bred some stock that were never beaten at Peterborough shows, and one male lamb I sold to Lord Ellesmere for £100. He was such a good specimen that the Suffolk Society had him painted and reproduced in their stud book to indicate what a true Suffolk should be. They were premotor days of which I write, and in the brief intervals for breathing and looking round, hackney horses and ponies interested me. One mare, which I had picked up for an old song, I sold to Sir Walter Gilbey for £600. A pony, for which I gave £80, won me prizes at the hackney show in London,

and enabled me to pass it on to a London gunmaker for 500 guineas.

All this was happening while on the threshold of my momentous association with Egerton House. I arrived there fortified by the knowledge that I had been fortunate up to that point in my career as a trainer, and conscious, too, of having created a patronage of which any trainer would have been signally proud. When I made an entry into Egerton on the 28th of November, 1892, I took with me nine horses belonging to the Duke of Hamilton, twenty-one of the Duke of Devonshire's, six of Lord Hindlip's, nine of Mr. Noel Fenwick's, three of Mr. Brodrick Cloete's, one of Lord Marcus Beresford's, and five of my own. In a very few weeks, and most unexpectedly so far as I was concerned, I was to be appointed trainer to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales and to receive at Egerton House stables his eight horses. Up to that time they had been in the care of John Porter at Kingsclere. The circumstances under which they came into my care can well be explained in the chapter which follows.

## CHAPTER VIII

### FLORIZEL II AND OTHER HORSES

Lord Marcus Beresford—The Author becomes Trainer to the Prince of Wales—List of the Prince's Horses—The Famous Mare *La Flèche*—*Florizel II*.

I CANNOT convey in any sense adequately, either through the printed or spoken word, all that is in my heart to say of the late Lord Marcus Beresford. It was to him in the autumn of 1892 I owed the honour of being appointed to train the horses of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. It is possible, of course, the Prince expressed a desire that I should receive his horses at Egerton House, but it was obvious to me at the time, as it has been ever since, that Lord Marcus must have had much to do in the making of the appointment. We had known much of each other for some years prior to that distinction being accorded to me. We had been deeply engaged in steeplechasing, though not in association, and afterwards in flat racing. If he had come to respect me and entertain any admiration for my abilities as a trainer they were as nothing compared with my respect and admiration for this perfect gentleman and splendid sportsman. A man more delightful, more staunch and loyal and more devoted to their Majesties, whom he loved to serve, never came into my life. He was ever a shining example, which I tried at all times to keep before me and emulate. He brought sunshine into the lives of all



he cared to be interested in, for God had given him a rare and ready wit such as is vouchsafed to few men. For over thirty years during which he managed the royal horses at Sandringham and Egerton House he gave me his trust and unfailing confidence. There was never anything but the most perfect harmony, and when in those great years of 1896, 1900 and 1909 strong lights were directed on our training establishment and the heroes of the moment—*Persimmon*, *Diamond Jubilee* and *Minoru*—he was excessively generous in lavishing on me more than my share of praise and credit. I testify here most gratefully to all the help he extended to me, to the sympathy which he never failed to offer in so many different ways in the lean years, and to the cheery encouragement, which never by any chance was missing.

Lord Marcus knew his business. There was no finer judge of a horse and of racing. He understood the breed of the thoroughbred, and, above all, he had gained his knowledge partly from that which was instinct in him and also from having been educated in a keen school. Hence the invariable breadth of view, his judgment of men which was seldom wrong, and his enthusiasms. It gave me the deepest possible pleasure to please and satisfy him, for he was so appreciative and unselfish with his praise. He showed himself a fine sportsman with an understanding of the racehorse by reason of his patience during the months, and even years, when Fortune was frowning on us. But when Fortune smiled it made up for all to note the effect on one whose death, after so many years together, was one of the heaviest blows of my life.



**A HAPPY PORTRAIT OF LORD MARCUS BERESFORD**



It may well be that no more appropriate stage in this book will occur for me to quote a letter which Lord Marcus wrote to me very soon after the death of King Edward at Buckingham Palace. To me it showed like a clear ray the deep sentiment that was in him and the devotion to His Majesty which was almost a passion. I also reflect with some gratitude that at such a moment he should think of me. This is what he wrote and which is now made known for the first time :

DEAR MR. MARSH,

I have just seen our gracious King and Master for the last time, and anything more calm and beautiful I never saw. He looks twenty years younger than when I last saw him, and as if he had just heard that *Witch of the Air* had won her race. We have lost the best master that ever lived.

It will be an enormous consolation to you to feel that you were associated with all the record-breaking triumphs which adorned the life of his late Majesty on the Turf, and the crowning success of the Derby of 1909 will stand out in Turf history as the greatest training feat that ever was accomplished. His last words were expressions of delight at hearing of *Witch of the Air's* victory, so you have the extra satisfaction of having been the means of giving him a pleasant thought to finish up his great life. Nothing ever pleased him so much as winning a race, and receiving the congratulations of his people afterwards.

I must take this opportunity of thanking you for your unswerving devotion, which you always extended to me during eighteen years of difficulty, and which, owing to your skill, were crowned with success—which may be equalled but never surpassed. No more loyal

servants ever served their Sovereign than yourself and Walker.\*

And so ends the pleasantest chapter of your life—and mine.

Believe me,

Yours gratefully,

MARCUS BERESFORD.

To turn from grave to gay, I need hardly say that Lord Marcus was the hero of many a delightful story, and it was wonderful how he could vary his story or produce one according to the company he happened to be in. He could be daring and saucy, subtle and scathing. His wit could be caustic or purely mirth provoking. When in the humour, which was always the case when he was well, he was great fun on making a tour of the stables with any distinguished visitors. Especially would his remarks amuse King Edward and His Majesty's guests. His sense of humour and of expressing humour were most acute. He never kept you waiting. He would hit off the situation with delicious irony or sparkling wit. One of the best jokes I heard about him was when his brother, Admiral Lord Charles Beresford, was putting up for Parliament at York. His opponent was Sir Christopher Furness, afterwards the first Lord Furness, a red-haired man. Lord Marcus and his two brothers, Lord William and Lord Charles, were attending a Conservative meeting, when they—all three—went on the platform together. A voice from the crowd shouted, "Steady, guv'nor, one at a time!" Lord Marcus quickly replied, "No, we're Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and we've come to put out the fiery Furness." Anyhow, Lord Charles was returned by a small majority.

\* Mr. Walker has been stud-groom at Sandringham for many years.

Or, again, his quick wit when the late Lord Carnarvon told him that he had found a capital name for a horse of his. "I'm going to call him *False Tooth*," he explained.

"That sort of name is no good to you," dryly said Lord Marcus.

"And why not?"

"Because you can't stop it. You must think of something else."

Fortunately the late Lord Carnarvon was not without a sense of humour himself, which prevented him taking Lord Marcus's suggestion too seriously that he made a habit of "stopping" horses.

It was a letter from Lord Marcus that began the turn of events which brought the horses of the Prince of Wales from Kingsclere to Egerton House. He asked me to go to London and meet him at Challis's Hotel as he wished to discuss a subject of importance with me. It will be understood that he had for some time then been managing the Prince's horses. The appointment was kept, and then I learned that I would have the chance of training for His Royal Highness. Apparently the Prince wished his horses to be at Newmarket so that he might oftener see them on the occasions of his visits, whereas he had few opportunities of going to Kingsclere. Stupidly, I suppose, I told Lord Marcus I had better consult the Duke of Hamilton before accepting as he had been my master for many years past. "In the old days," said Lord Marcus, "you would have had your head cut off for hesitating about such a thing," and he gave that infectious chuckling laugh of his.

It happened that I was going the same night to see the Duke of Hamilton, with whom I had also

arranged to stay. He began by asking me how I was going on for horses, and then I told him of the offer but that I had delayed giving an answer until I had consulted him. "For goodness' sake," he said, "wire off at once your grateful acceptance. You ought not to have said what you did."

On a later occasion King Edward mentioned the incident to me.

"I heard," observed His Majesty, "that you had to seek the Duke of Hamilton's permission before you accepted my horses."

I confess I really did not know what to say for a moment, and then had to admit that it was so, the Duke having been such a good friend to me for so many years. "You were quite right, Marsh," said the King, "in doing what you did. I am glad you had that respect for a good master."

With Lord Marcus I went to Overton, which was the entraining station for horses from Kingsclere, and saw the horses boxed in a special train for Newmarket. They were eight in number as follows:—

*Versailles*, b. c. by *Hampton*—*Fanchetti*, 4 yrs.

*Turiddu*, br. c. by *Hampton*—*Welfare*, 3 yrs.

*Downey*, ch. f. by *Hagioscope*—*Lenity*, 2 yrs.

*The Vigil*, b. or br. f. by *Ben Battle*—*Vesper*, 3 yrs.

*Florizel II*, b. c. by *St. Simon*—*Perdita II*, 2 yrs.

*St. Valerie*, b. c. *Hampton*—*Welfare*, 2 yrs.

*Laissez Aller*, b. c. by *Merry Hampton*—*Anathema*, 2 yrs.

*Barracouta*, b. f. by *Barcaldine*—*Perdita II*, 4 yrs.

Never can it be said that we at once proceeded to win renown in the royal colours. They were a dismal little party with only *Florizel II* raising my hopes, and he never won a race as a two-year-old. Indeed,

the only winners in that list were *Versailles* and *The Vigil*. They won one each, worth, collectively, the weighty total of £372. Up to that point the Prince's venture into ownership on the Turf had not been associated with much luck. Happily it was to come.

His Majesty's horses entered their boxes at Egerton on the first day of the year 1893. Four days later there also followed from Kingsclere the following horses belonging to Baron Hirsch:—*Vasistas*, *Massacre*, *La Flèche*, *Windgall*, *Watercress*, *Royal Scot*, *Rest Cure*, *Gamboge*, *Gateshead*, *Poppæa*, *Govern-ment*, *Pasquinade*, *Greased Lightning*, *Foularde*, *Marin Parbleu*, *Ninepin*, *Court Gallant*, *Workgirl*, *Guimauve*, and *Carabineer*. In advising me of the dispatch of the Baron's horses, my old friend, John Porter, wrote:—"I am glad, as they are leaving me, you get them. They will help fill up and pay the expenses of the new establishment. You and I are not foolish enough to fall out with each other over other people's quarrels."

What quarrels he had in mind I do not know—there may have been friction with Lord Marcus—but when he sent me *La Flèche* he sent me the best mare I ever trained. She was, of course, a four-year-old when she came to me at the beginning of 1893. As a three-year-old in the previous season she had been beaten quite unexpectedly for the Derby by *Sir Hugo*. It was the year when *Orme* was supposed to have been poisoned. She was herself beyond all doubt when she ran for and won the St. Leger, *Sir Hugo* this time being beaten by two lengths, while *Watercress*, a big horse that could certainly go, was five lengths away third. The latter, like *La*



*Flèche*, belonged to Baron Hirsch. *La Flèche* did not stand more than 15-3 hands, and was a pronounced specimen of the varminty, greyhound, and wiry type. She had a beautiful head and shoulders, the best possible legs and feet, and yet she strongly belied her looks. When she looked what you would call well she was not at her best as a racing machine ; when she was ragged and thin she could be relied upon to give of her very best form.

I remember on the day she won the Liverpool Cup in great style under 9-6 I was quite ashamed of her appearance, and delayed taking her sheet off in the paddock until the last minute. I did hear that when she won the Cambridgeshire under 8-10 as a three-year-old she looked so ragged and carried so much winter coat even in October that John Porter wanted to clip her. She was, as I have said, all " use," with her wide hips, wiry physique, splendid action, and her love of racing.

In the spring of the year she came to me she was mated with *Morion*, but I am sure she lost the Eclipse Stakes to *Orme* because she was, sexually, dead amiss at the time, showing the mating had proved barren. It was such a disappointment as I had been so looking forward to her meeting with *Orme*. It was her first race as a four-year-old, and though she was not herself and could not possibly have been in the circumstances, they betted even money about her chance of beating the Duke of Westminster's very good colt. I know that the blacksmith could not plate her, and really she should not have run. *Orme*, giving her 3 lb., beat her by half a length.

On the whole there is convincing evidence that

*La Flèche* was better than *Orme*. It was shown in the St. Leger. There is no doubt she ought to have beaten *Sir Hugo* for the Derby, and John Porter has told us how in his opinion the reason of her defeat was the very bad tactics adopted by her jockey Barrett. She was anything up to ten lengths behind the leaders making Tattenham Corner. Well, Derbys are not won in that fashion. A horse to win a Derby must be well up at Tattenham Corner so as not to have too much to do in the comparatively short straight, if good enough in other respects. In recent years we have seen the Derby practically won by the horse that has been either first or second coming round the corner into the straight. There are the instances of *Manna*, *Sansovino*, *Papyrus*, *Captain Cuttle*, *Humorist*, *Spion Kop*, and many others for years back. It was there that *Minoru* practically settled his field, and was just good enough to get home in the memorable year of 1909.

I used to think that *La Flèche* was unlucky when I had her, but it is quite clear that she should have won for John Porter still another Derby. I have explained why there was sound excuse for her failing to beat *Orme*, when I had her as a four-year-old, for the Eclipse Stakes. Before she ran for the Eclipse Stakes—I mean a matter of a week or so before the race—I tried her to beat the big horse *Watercress*, who, in addition to the beating, was presented with no less than 21 lb. Now *Watercress* was a pretty good horse, for when at Kingsclere Porter tried him (through the same trial horse) to be just about as good as *La Flèche* and *Orme*. *La Flèche* was not herself again when at Goodwood *Orme* beat

her, giving her this time 7 lb. On the book it is debatable whether she was the better. In my own mind, and knowing the circumstances, I have no doubt she was.

I could scarcely fancy her for the Cambridge-shire won by *Molly Morgan* when she had to carry 9-7, but I thought she was sure to win the Liverpool Cup under 9-6. That was the day when she was looking so bad, though I knew I could not make her any better, that, in fact, she was the real *La Flèche*. She was an exceptionally good mare in the autumn, even though she failed to win the Manchester November Handicap with 9-11 on her back. I suppose that was asking something unfair of her. It was as a five-year-old that she won the Ascot Gold Cup with odds of 5 to 2 betted on her. She may not have had much to beat, but she was a rare stayer and it would have taken a regular "cracker jack" to have beaten her that day. She also ran at the meeting for the Hardwicke Stakes, where, however, *Ravensbury* for once in a way found the luck with him, for he beat our mare, probably because she had not got over her long gallop for the Cup.

In all, this very exceptional mare won £34,703 in stakes, chiefly as the result of her exploits as a three-year-old, and then, after Baron Hirsch's death, she was sold by auction to Sir Tatton Sykes, of the Sledmere Stud, for 12,600 guineas. Naturally there was a rush after her first produce sired by that other Ascot Gold Cup winner, *Morion*. The produce was a filly named *La Veine* which brought 3,100 guineas, a very high figure for a yearling in those days, though as a yearling *La Flèche* had herself cost 5,500 guineas,

which, as it turned out, was one of the best yearling purchases of a filly there has ever been. I believe her progeny brought in 21,000 guineas when sold as yearlings. The highest priced one was *Baroness La Flèche* for 5,200 guineas. Towards the end of her stud days she would not breed though she lived to a considerable age.

I have mentioned that during the first year I had the honour of training for King Edward I could only win two small races, which is a reminder to me to this day that the greatest care, patience, and all the skill a human can command cannot avail if horses be really bad and devoid of racing merit. Where there are sometimes high-class horses there are always bad ones. The presence of the bad ones can at all times be reckoned on, and though they are made the objects of just as much care and attention right from the outset they remain, as they always were—hopelessly bad. Only when you see the spark of promise are you encouraged to persevere. Now in the case of *Florizel II* he showed me little or nothing for months during his first season in training as a two-year-old. Then in the fall of the year one was able to hope where he was concerned that he might yet make a racehorse as a three-year-old. For he was coarsish and plain, and showed all the characteristics of being backward. That being so I had just to wait on him until such time as he should mature and begin to move upward. As a two-year-old, too, he had not the best of forelegs, but they did not get worse. In temperament he was the quietest and the most sober of all the three brothers by *St. Simon* from *Perdita II*; in fact one would be quite justified in describing

him as nice tempered. I am glad to think he developed into quite a good horse without, of course, touching classic form.

His first race as a two-year-old was not until the autumn when he competed for the Breeders' Foal Stakes at Manchester, to make no show at all except at the tail end as the winner was going past the judge. Still I was prepared for the showing, but he did better when one of a small field for the Boscawen Stakes. His prospects can better be understood when I say that he started at 20 to 1 in this small field of five, and though he did not win he ran second. This was ever so much better than I had hoped for, and I made up my mind he would make a racehorse yet. He ran in two Nurseries without gaining any distinction and so went through his two-year-old season without winning a race.

It is a pleasanter story that has to be told of *Florizel II* in the following season when he was a three-year-old. He won five races worth in all £3,499, beginning with the St. James's Palace Stakes at Ascot. Thank goodness for *Florizel II*, I thought, since he was the only one of the half-dozen in training which proved capable of winning a race that season. The others that failed were *Hamiltrude*, a filly by *Hampton*; *Soveral*, a colt by *St. Simon*; *Ronalda*, a filly by *Crackenthorpe*; *Coup de Vent*, a filly by *Ayrshire*; and *Pegaway*, a filly by *Galliard*.

It was in the following year, 1895, when *Persimmon* came to perform as a two-year-old, that the luck of the Prince of Wales began to assume a decided change for the better. It may be interesting, therefore, if I give some indication of the horses belonging

to His Royal Highness which I had that season. They were :—

*Florizel II* by *St. Simon*—*Perdita II*, 4 yrs.

*Thais*, br. f. by *St. Serf*—*Poetry*, 2 yrs.

*Gigolette*, b. f. by *Merry Hampton*—*Fanchetti*, 2 yrs.

*Fair Slave*, b. f. by *St. Serf*—*Welfare*, 2 yrs.

*Courtier*, b. c. by *Hampton*—*Marguerite*, 2 yrs.

*Persimmon*, b. c. by *St. Simon*—*Perdita II*, 2 yrs.

*Safety Pin*, b. g. by *Surefoot*—*Pin Basket*, 2 yrs.

*Chinkara*, b. f. by *Galopin*—*Raker*, 2 yrs.

*Eclipse*, b. c. by *Althorp*—*Young Jessie*, 3 yrs.

That season five of those enumerated above won £8,281, among them the chief contributors being *Florizel II* and *Persimmon*. The elder of the brothers won six good races, including the Manchester Cup, Goodwood Cup, Jockey Club Cup, and the Gold Vase at Ascot. It will be seen that by securing those trophies he soared distinctly above what we regard as handicap form. In addition to having some speed he was a thoroughly good stayer. It was altogether astonishing that he should have so transformed himself compared with the rather poor creature he was as a yearling and two-year-old.

The Prince, I am sure, rejoiced in the successes of his horse, and never lost an opportunity of coming round the stables with his friends on the occasions of his visits to the race meetings at Newmarket. Or His Royal Highness would ride on to the Heath in the early mornings and watch his horses at their exercise, asking questions and showing the liveliest interest in their progress and general welfare. It was immediately following on *Florizel's* win of the Manchester Cup that I received from the Prince a

pin as a souvenir of the victory together with the following letter from that most charming of courtiers the late Sir Dighton Probyn :—

“ The Prince has always known that *Florizel* was a good horse, but His Royal Highness desires me to say he is equally well aware that no man could have done more than you have to bring out the horse's good qualities, and His Royal Highness heartily congratulates you on having trained the horse so very successfully for the big race yesterday. Please let Calder know that the Prince of Wales was much pleased to hear from so many people how well he rode the race.”

*Florizel II* was in training as a five-year-old, but he did not win again. He could not be properly trained through developing suspensory ligament trouble. Subsequently he went to the royal stud at Sandringham, where he was quite an average success as a sire, though at all times over-shadowed by his far greater brother, *Persimmon*, who had by this time well established his brilliant reputation.

## CHAPTER IX

### H.M. KING EDWARD VII AS AN OWNER

King Edward VII—H.M.'s Kindness—Baron Hirsch does not Recognize his own Most Famous Horse—Lord Chaplin Loses a Bet—The Stud at Sandringham—*Perdita II*—Her Record.

**I**T would not be correct to describe King Edward as a highly competent judge of a horse. Such judges in my experience are the exception rather than the rule, and especially among the wealthy and prominent owners of the periods which have come under my personal survey. The fact, however, in no way dulls their keenness and love of the thoroughbred. This, I am sure, and I naturally say it with the greatest respect and as a mere statement of fact, was true of His Gracious Majesty King Edward, whom it was my proud privilege and honour to serve in the humble capacity of trainer for close on a score of years. His Majesty genuinely loved his horses, and especially is this true of the many interesting inhabitants of the stud at Sandringham that first saw the light of day there, and later passed into retirement there to carry on the operations of a high-class breeding stud.

King Edward looked forward to making constant visits to the sires and mares and the young stock during the weeks the royal household would be in residence at Sandringham. Usually such visits would be made after divine service on a Sunday or after luncheon. At Egerton House we did, of course, see much of him, greatly to our satisfaction and joy.



For beyond all question it stimulated us all to know that His Majesty when King, and before that as Prince of Wales, was meditating a visit. As a rule, of course, such visits were made during his sojourn for the race meetings at Newmarket. Accompanied by Lord Marcus Beresford, his equerries, and any friends who were honoured by an invitation to make up the party, he would come to Egerton House for tea on the conclusion of racing, and then make a tour of the stables.

In no sense was this a hasty business, for in the years before the death of Queen Victoria we had a large number of horses in training at Egerton. At one time there were as many as eighty-one. The Duke of Devonshire, Lord Hindlip, Lord Wolverton, Mr. Arthur James, and Mr. Larnach were among others for whom I trained, and it would happen, if the Prince had sufficient leisure, that he would make a complete tour of the stables. The unfailing gaiety of Lord Marcus Beresford kept King Edward and his party in the greatest good humour, though an occasion would never go by without my royal master asking serious questions about the horses or passing most pertinent observations on their merits or demerits. It follows that the periods of his Derby winners made these visits at evening stables ever so much more interesting to him than at ordinary times.

The owner of *Persimmon* and *Diamond Jubilee* was proud of them in every sense, for His Royal Highness was also their breeder, and it is incalculable what very definite pleasure and satisfaction that fact gave him. He was grateful, too, I am perfectly certain, to *Minoru*, who won the Derby of 1909 in the royal colours, grateful for the most marvellous

enthusiasm which the victory gave rise to, and the memory, which is ineffaceable, of the affection of his people and their heartfelt rejoicing in the horse's most gallant win. But *Minoru*, unlike *Persimmon* and *Diamond Jubilee*, was merely leased from the then Colonel Hall Walker, who afterwards became Lord Wavertree.

If any spur were needed to my devoted service to King Edward it was the knowledge that he was genuinely fond of his horses. There was no more welcome sight than to see the Prince in the nineties, mounted on a pony on the Heath in the early mornings and showing the liveliest interest in the work of the horses. And he was ever kindness itself and thoughtful for others. I remember once we had a charming little horse named *Rosemarket*, which had won a race or two. One day, going into his box with the boy standing at his head, I stooped to feel his forelegs. Evidently the horse did not know I was there, for he flew at me hitting my face with his teeth and banging me against the side of the box. I was in fact nearly knocked out. It was entirely my own fault, and what I had to show for it was a big cut on the nose with four stitches in it.

Some days later I received a letter from the King's equerry in attendance on His Majesty at Marienbad in Bohemia. "The King," I was informed, "was much concerned to read of the attack made on you by his horse *Rosemarket*. His Majesty desires me to say he hopes you will have no ill-effects from the horse's bite, and that no permanent marks may be made on your face. I suppose he went at you so suddenly that you were unable to defend your face, though had you been able to put up your

arm he might have got more of that into his mouth and perhaps made a worse wound. The King is looking forward to the result of *Rosemarket's* running at Phoenix Park. . . . His Majesty is wonderfully well, and deriving much benefit from his 'cure' here."

On another occasion that erratic customer *Diamond Jubilee* bit a boy's thumb clean off. The horse was having his bridle put on just before running for the Princess of Wales's Stakes at Newmarket, and, being in one of his devilish moods, the unfortunate boy was made to part with his thumb. His Majesty, immediately on being acquainted with the incident, caused sympathetic inquiries to be made as to the boy's welfare.

In the middle of the imposing square of grassland—not the least of the adornments of the architecture of the Egerton estate—which separates the Cambridge main road from the stables is a now flourishing chestnut tree, which was planted by the then Prince of Wales on March 30th, 1893, to commemorate a visit. I begged His Royal Highness to honour me by planting the tree, and in doing so he used a silver shovel which I still treasure and which bears the inscription :—

*This shovel was used by  
H.R.H. the Prince of Wales  
when he planted  
The Chestnut Tree*

*opposite the entrance to the stables at Egerton House,  
March 30th, 1893.*

Some time later we had a tremendous storm at night, and the next morning I hardly dared look in the direction of the chestnut tree lest it should have

suffered the fate of many others on the estate. On a later occasion Lord Marcus Beresford much amused the Prince by remarking : " You know, Sir, Marsh was so worried about that tree during the storm that he sat up all night beside it, and never took his eyes off it in case it should be blown down." He clearly wished the Prince to understand that my supposed watching of it had the effect of causing the tempest round about it to abate.

Lord Marcus was, I think, the wittiest man I have ever known. It came from him like lightning, and before anything had dawned on other poor dull mortals. He never let an opening pass and could at times be as saucy and daring as at others he could be innocent in his mirth. With King Edward he was as a delightful cicerone at stables and on the Heath, but no one was more sensitive of the moods of his royal master. Likewise few could have the same tonic effect on him on these occasions. He and the Duchess of Devonshire once perpetrated a joke on Baron Hirsch when the Prince of Wales and the owner of *La Flèche* were going round evening stables.

On the wall of each box is the name of the occupant, and the Duchess suggested that I should be allowed to take down the name of *La Flèche* in order to see if the Baron would recognize his famous mare when the party reached her box. His Royal Highness acquiesced, and the name was taken down for the time being. " Now, Baron," observed the Duchess, " you must know this one. Give it a name." I did not think it possible he could fail to recognize one that he had seen so often and which had won such renown on the racecourse. Moreover, she had very

distinctive features, as I have explained in an earlier chapter.

The Baron paused and considered, but no, he could not give *La Flèche* her name. He did not recognize her, though I must say he did not say she was any other horse or mare. Of course the joke had to be exploded on him before moving to the next box.

A visitor who was always particularly welcome to look over the horses at Egerton was the late Lord Chaplin. I am speaking especially of the days before he was raised to the peerage, when "The Squire" was taking an active interest in racing and in horses generally. He was a very fine judge of a horse, and it may not be inappropriate if at this juncture I recall an occasion when I got the better of him over a point which I have no doubt will appeal to all lovers of horses.

Lord Chaplin was one of a party accompanying King Edward round the stables, and he happened to remark that there was no such thing in existence as a horse absolutely faultless in the matter of conformation.

I demurred. Then, turning to him, I said: "There is a horse in the stable now which cannot be faulted."

"Oh, nonsense," came the reply from him; "there's no such thing as a horse that cannot be faulted."

"Well, Squire," was my comment, "I will bet you a fiver you cannot fault this horse."

"Done with you, Marsh. I'll bet you a fiver. But who is to be the judge between us?"

"You can be your own judge," I said.

In due course we arrived at *Diamond Jubilee's* box. Of all the horses I have ever known, in all their classes and of all degrees, he stands out as touching perfection in the sense that I could never turn to one part of him and say, “He is weak here, or he is deficient there.” *Diamond Jubilee* was the most perfect horse in all my experience, and, be it added, I write only of his conformation and not of his temperament. That is another story which will keep.

“There is your perfect horse,” I remarked to Mr. Chaplin, at the same time pointing to the horse that was winning all the classic races for colts.

“The Squire” stood gazing at him, running him over and over again with his eyes until the King and his party moved on to other boxes. We had looked at quite a number of other horses before Mr. Chaplin overtook us. He had in his hand a five-pound note. Without saying a word he simply handed it to me, much to the amusement of the King and other members of the party.

I had the greatest respect for Lord Chaplin, and yet another incident occurred in which we were both concerned. It was many years before his death, and he was a guest of King Edward at Sandringham. I had some occasion to be visiting the stud at Sandringham. I think the yearlings were being inspected in the presence of the King prior to being sent into training. Turning to me King Edward said, “What do you think of this one, Marsh?”

After a glance at the animal referred to I had to say that it hadn't, so to say, got a leg to stand on. It was obvious that it had poor limbs and would not stand training.

I immediately noticed rather an awkward pause

and some amusement. His Majesty in particular was amused.

"That's awkward," broke in Mr. Chaplin, and then everyone did laugh. Naturally I wondered what the laugh could be about, only to learn that this particular youngster had been sold to the King by Mr. Chaplin as a foal !

During the thirty-two years I had the honour of training for King Edward and King George I made many visits to Sandringham, usually staying at the house of my old friend Mr. Frank Beck, who was killed on active service. I was honoured by invitations to stay a few days each January when Their Majesties would be participating with their guests in the splendid shooting afforded by the wonderful game preserves on this truly magnificent estate. The privileges thus accorded me, the consideration, and the many acts of kindness on the part of Their Majesties and members of the royal family, of which I was the grateful recipient, will surely brighten my days to the end of my life as they have done in the years that are past.

Chiefly, however, my visits had to do with the young stock. Naturally I had the keenest possible interest in the progress and welfare of the stud which King Edward established, while Lord Marcus Beresford did so much to assist in bringing it to world fame. Think of what those visits meant to the trainer. There was the time for looking over the first season's crop of foals, the time to take stock of the yearlings which were shortly due to come under my charge at Egerton, and always the pleasure of renewing acquaintance with old friends among sires and mares that had passed their racing careers under my eyes.

Surely it will be agreed that the Stud had been

incredibly fortunate for one of its size and comparatively recent institution. There were bred and reared there two great horses, one of them very great, in *Persimmon* and *Diamond Jubilee*. They had garnered in the most coveted of classic honours and for our most beloved King. Many other winners, too, had come from there ; and when *Persimmon* and later *Diamond Jubilee* took up their duties as sires, both bringing in substantial revenues, there were visiting the place in season some of the choicest thoroughbred mares in existence. Sandringham had become world-famous, a stud of which every lover of the thoroughbred was proud, knowing, too, it was possessed by the sovereign and in later years by his beloved son, King George.

It was on Sandringham that Egerton, especially in later years, depended for its recruits for the racecourse. In the nineties others in addition to King Edward were patrons at Egerton, but the time came when the lease of the place and the financial burden of maintenance were taken over on behalf of His late Majesty, and then I could only look to Sandringham for more *Persimmons* and *Diamond Jubilees*. It is why one in my position was ever longing for good news from Mr. Walker, the most respected stud groom, of the rising generation of thoroughbreds at the royal stud, and why, too, the privilege of personal inspection of the young stock was most eagerly accepted. How often do we see foals and yearlings that please and give the pleasant idea that they are surely classic winners in embryo. It has happened on some of these visits. No need is there to dwell on how the most pleasing may prove utterly worthless for the racecourse when the time comes for applying



the test. Sandringham has never been singular in that respect.

We do know that the foundation mare of the stud's fame was *Perdita II*. Credit for her purchase on behalf of the then Prince of Wales belongs to the late John Porter. He has told us that when invited by her owner (Mr. David Falconer) to buy her for £1,000 for the stud which the Prince had decided to create at Sandringham, he found her on inspection to be an angular sort of mare but with good points and likely to make a nice brood mare. He bought her for £900, which was the limit of the Prince's commission. It was certainly amusing to me to read many years later a statement, attributed by my old friend John Porter to Sir Dighton, that when the latter was paying over the cheque for the purchase he observed : " You will ruin the Prince if you go on buying these thoroughbreds ! "

I have no reason, of course, to doubt that this remark was actually uttered, though all my experiences of that most courtly, most gallant, and kindest of gentlemen pointed to the immense joy in the success of any horses that carried the royal colours. What gave pleasure and satisfaction to King Edward, and later to King George, gave him as well infinite joy and very real satisfaction. Whatever his feelings may have been at the time of the purchase of *Perdita II*, nothing is more certain than that he came to take immense pride in her achievements as a matron and the everlasting fame she achieved in the history of the British thoroughbred.

Seeing what a big part the famous mare's progeny was destined to play in my life, it may not be out of place if I give in detail the full facts of her stud



H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES'S FLORIZEL II. (J. WATTS RIDING), ONE OF THE  
FAMOUS BROTHERHOOD

*(From a Painting)*



career at Sandringham. It was the cross with *St. Simon* which worked such wonders, though not in absolutely every instance. There were two conspicuous failures, but yet the Duke of Portland's great horse was the mate in the case of the distinguished "Trinity," *Florizel II*, *Persimmon*, and *Diamond Jubilee*, to mention them in the order of their coming. The mare was by *Hampton* out of *Hermione*, and there is no doubt there was something of the spiteful cat in her which has at times come out in her descendants.

Who should, in fact, know that better than the author? To my mind it has always been one of the most astonishing things in breeding that this mare, who in her racing days showed such temper and peevishness that it was with much difficulty they could get her on to the Limekilns at all to do her work, should have become the dam of the great *Persimmon*, *Diamond Jubilee*, and others. She did beyond question taint some of her offspring as I have suggested with her temper and her waywardness. Where else did *Diamond Jubilee* get those traits that possibly came nearer than we realize to destroying his very high class as a racehorse? It was not only the keenness and unusual excitability of the *Galopin* strain of blood through the magnificent *St. Simon*. That may have been contributory and a characteristic of the paternal side. The root cause can be attributed to the dam. But with these things in mind we must ever be grateful to her memory for the bigness of her achievements as the dam of King Edward's greatest racehorses, including as they did in *Persimmon* the best horse that I ever had the honour and great good fortune to train. In some things I look upon

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*Persimmon* as the greatest horse of all time, greater even than *Ormonde* and *St. Simon*, but we shall come to that presently.

For the moment I may be permitted to set out the whole of the stud record attributed to *Perdita II*. Here it is :—

		RACES WON		RACES LOST		VALUE
1888	B. or br. c. <i>Derelect</i> , by <i>Barcaldine</i>	I	..	II	..	£100
1889	B. f. <i>Barracouta</i> , by <i>Barcaldine</i>	..	I	..	3	£1,064
1890	Barren.					
1891	Br. c. <i>Florizel II</i> . by <i>St. Simon</i>	..	II	..	II	£7,858
1892	Barren.					
1893	B. c. <i>Persimmon</i> , by <i>St. Simon</i>	..	7	..	2	£34,706
1894	B. c. <i>Farrant</i> , by <i>Donovan</i>	..	0	..	0	..
1895	B. f. <i>Azeeza</i> , by <i>Surefoot</i>	..	0	..	I	..
1896	Br. c. <i>Sandringham</i> , by <i>St. Simon</i>	..	0	..	0	..
1897	B. c. <i>Diamond Jubilee</i> , by <i>St. Simon</i>	..	6	..	10	£29,185
1898	Slipped foal.					
1899	B. f. <i>Nadejda</i> , by <i>St. Simon</i>	..	0	..	0	..
Total		..	26	..	38	£72,913

What with those winnings of the mare's sons—it will be noticed that her few fillies were no good at all—the splendid earnings of *Persimmon* and *Diamond Jubilee* at the stud, and then the money realized on the sale of the latter to the Argentine, it will be understood that Sir Dighton Probyn's fear that the Prince would be ruined by the purchase of “these thorough-

breeds" happily proved to be based on no more than the common fear of what participation in breeding and racing may involve one in without that good fortune which does much to preserve the balance. We may be sure that for some years at least the earnings of *Persimmon* and *Diamond Jubilee* on the racecourse and at the stud made the racing stable and the stud more than self-supporting. What a big part they played in the shaping of Turf history in England towards the end of the century and at the beginning of this century! And how deeply grateful we must ever be that they lived and gave such enormous pleasure to King Edward.

In concluding this chapter I cannot do better than recall an incident which shows how Lord Marcus Beresford enjoyed the personal friendship of King Edward in addition to the honour he had of serving his royal master.

Lord Marcus was at Windsor Castle for Ascot races and King Edward missed him—but at last found him playing cards—and His Majesty said: "Oh, there you are, Marcus, I didn't think you played cards, in fact I thought you didn't know one card from another." Lord Marcus quickly replied: "But I know a King when I see one, Sir!"

## CHAPTER X

### PERSIMMON

First Visit to Sandringham—*Persimmon* as a Foal—*Persimmon*  
Wins the Coventry Stakes—His Career as a Two-year-old.

ODDLY enough, my first visit to Sandringham was in the summer of 1893, when *Persimmon* was a foal. The Prince of Wales's horses, as already related, had come to me from Kingsclere on the first day of that year. It was a year, too, which marked the wedding of the Duke of York and the Princess Mary of Teck, who in later years were to become our gracious King and Queen. My mind goes back to the afternoon of the Eclipse Stakes at Sandown Park. I was not feeling at all happy because of the defeat by *Orme* of *La Flèche*, who as a four- and five-year-old I trained for Baron Hirsch. The mare at the time of which I am writing was a four-year-old, and in a previous chapter I have told how she went wrong just before the race. Until that happened I had felt certain that she would beat *Orme*, and in the circumstances she ran a wonderfully good race against the Duke of Westminster's crack colt. While still commiserating with myself I received a telegraphic message that the Prince of Wales desired me to appear at Sandringham on the Sunday. It was, as I have said, my first introduction to the famous place.

On my arrival I was given lunch and then sent for by the Prince. I was told His Royal Highness

was on the lawn, but I was scarcely prepared for the embarrassing ordeal awaiting me. There were gathered about him many of the distinguished guests who were representing the other nations at the royal wedding, including the aged King of Denmark. Between the door of the house from which I emerged and the group on the lawn, of which the Prince of Wales was the centre, was a distance of thirty or forty yards. Whether it was actually so or not, I do know that I felt all eyes were riveted on me as, awkwardly, I imagine, I covered that intervening space. I daresay no one was in the slightest bit interested, but that was not my self-conscious feeling at the time. Certainly I never felt more nervous and embarrassed in my life. But the Prince, as he had a way of doing with all who had the honour of being presented to him, soon put me at my ease. Turning first to the King of Denmark he introduced me with the words: "This is my trainer, Mr. Marsh. He has been successful for me, but he did not train the winner of the Eclipse Stakes last week."

Other introductions followed, and the Prince then led the way through the magnificent gardens to the stud, where the horses, young and old, were inspected. It was my first assurance, which hardened with the passing of the years, that the late King was really and truly devoted to the horses bred and reared at the stud which he personally established at Sandringham. On another occasion, when *Persimmon* had made such sparkling history, I was invited to meet the Prince at Sandringham and look round the horses. The stud, I may explain, is in two portions, and it was to that part of it which is at Wolferton that I made haste on my arrival at Wolferton station. To



my great surprise I found the Prince already waiting for me. That was destined to be one of the happiest and proudest days of my life.

Avoiding all hurry and pausing before each of the horses as we arrived at them, the Prince took the greatest enjoyment in pointing them out to me and himself recounted their breeding. At the end of the morning his dog-cart was awaiting him to take him to Sandringham to lunch. He drove and requested me to take my place by his side, all the while chatting about the horses which we had seen and those we were to see at the Sandringham stud proper after lunch. The latter lies much nearer the house, and when after lunch I again met His Royal Highness it required only a short walk to bring us to the stud buildings. Altogether it was one of the most delightful days in my record of visits to Sandringham.

I make no pretence of saying that I specially remember all the horses that came to me to train from Sandringham in their foalhood days. Yet it is most certainly true that I had vivid memories of *Per-simmon*, if only for the fact that he at all times had a most arresting personality. He simply could not help impressing you at every age and in every phase of his distinguished career. Speaking generally I hope I shall not be misunderstood when I say he was just as good and just as splendid as a foal as he was when gaining classic honours. I first set eyes on him that Sunday afternoon when the Prince was entertaining his guests for the Duke of York's wedding. Even had the colt not been as very good-looking as actually was the case, I should have wished with much curiosity to look at the foal which was a full brother to *Florizel II*. For the elder brother by

this time had commenced to do things on the race-course, though the best part of his career was still to be set up.

*Persimmon*, then, was a most beautiful foal, and when the Prince inquired what my opinion of the youngster might be I replied that if he grew and developed the right way, and, knowing what *Florizel II*, his own brother, was, he might well become a classic horse. At any rate, one would be justified in entertaining the highest hopes of him. The Prince was naturally most gratified, and from that time never ceased to take the greatest interest in his welfare. Happily all was to turn out for the best, which we will agree is the exception rather than the rule with the best-looking foals. Yet if you have a good foal you are obviously making a good beginning in creating the racehorse of merit.

I had heard from the stud groom at Welbeck, where *Persimmon* was foaled, that he was one out of the ordinary. It was clear they thought highly of him there, and they had some reason about that time to know a good horse. I must say I had never set eyes on a more beautiful foal. His lines were so true and his contour so correct for one of only a few months old. If ever you saw a high-class horse in the foal then here was one. He stood well, and he was so well proportioned all through. What struck me on that first view of him was the absolute straightness of his hocks. I was so delighted to see it. Perhaps he was just a tiny bit on the leg, but it is a characteristic I never much object to in the young thoroughbred.

Two or three times I saw him in his foalhood days and each time was pleasantly impressed by the

activity and perfect movement he showed in the paddock. Then some time elapsed, and I did not set eyes on him again until the occasion of my annual visit to Sandringham in January when the shooting parties were busy. I realized then he had gone on the right way. It was easy to note how impressed the Prince was with the colt. He was obviously beginning to build on his future as a racehorse.

It was about the second week of August in 1894 that *Persimmon* came into training at Egerton. He was then, of course, a yearling, and had to go through all the processes of breaking and general introduction to the life of the racing stable. I would not claim for him that he was a good-coloured bay for the reason that he was inclined to be rather "mousy" about the muzzle and around the eyes. I used to notice the same thing about his splendid daughter, *Sceptre*, some years later. She had that "mousy" colour about the muzzle, and, indeed, one could often recognize from that feature some of the sons and daughters of *Persimmon*.

Yet he had good black points about his legs and feet. It is what you like to see in the good hard bay horse. Behind the saddle he was indeed wonderful in the remarkable length from hip to hock, and from hip to the round bone. I should be correct in saying that he was just a trifle slack in his back ribs, but he girthed rare and well. His shoulders were what may be called strong. I mean that I have seen more perfectly sloped ones. He had a nice clean neck, while his countenance was bold and good. Slightly derogatory to his appearance was a tendency to lop ears, a characteristic undoubtedly derived from the *Melbourne* blood that was in his pedigree.

There were times in his life as a racehorse when he developed certain mannerisms—as, for instance, on a famous occasion when he nearly frightened me to death through sheer stubbornness about entering the horse box which was to convey him to Epsom for the Derby. Yet on the whole he was a perfect-tempered horse and gave not the slightest trouble in breaking. I have said that the most favourable reports had reached us from Welbeck where he was foaled. The stud groom there had sent word that *Perdita II* had produced the best foal they had ever seen. The Prince was very anxious to inspect the colt during a visit he paid to one of the October meetings at Newmarket in 1894. His Royal Highness and Lord Marcus Beresford could not help being satisfied, though it was clear even then that he would take his own time in maturing.

The colt continued to do well through the winter, though always retaining that slight leggy appearance which I had first noted in him as a foal. All the time he had been growing fast into a big horse, and in the early spring he really was beginning to mature to his big and ample frame. I was more than ever convinced now there was a bright future before him, all going well. He continued to give no trouble of any kind. Every morning at exercise one was bound to admire the beauty and resolution of his action.

There was no intention of producing him in public before Ascot, and so his training proceeded by easy stages until the time came when it was arranged that Lord Marcus Beresford should see him galloped. Now it is always a most anxious and jumpy time when for the first time you come to test one of whom you have been entertaining high hopes. Will he fulfil

your fond expectations? Or will he fail you? The reader may perhaps imagine my own feelings. The colt of which we had come to think so much—it may be unjustifiably so—was bred and owned by the most popular Prince of Wales. Who that had the honour of serving him would not have given anything to bring him some measure of pleasure and satisfaction?

We badly wanted a high-class horse to carry the royal colours. We felt it would do so much good all round and especially for racing. It would deepen his Royal Highness's interest in racing. But what we wanted most of all was a smashing good horse for the immense joy and satisfaction such a treasure can bring to all associated with him. One felt that the odds might be on a disappointment since they are so abundant in racing. We had persuaded ourselves, perhaps more than the circumstances permitted, that *Persimmon* might be one right out of the ordinary, before we could possibly know for a fact. This first trial gallop, though by no means a serious affair, was bound to tell us something definite. Hence our anxiety as to the outcome.

Lord Marcus came down about the second week in May, and one bright morning we went forth to learn the best or the worst. Deep in my own mind I had no doubt as to the outcome. I felt sure he was an uncommonly good colt. At that time we had a little four-year-old mare named *Rags* in the stable. I had been using her for trial purposes with some of the two-year-olds, and in sending her with *Persimmon* I put a light boy on her back, while Jack Watts, who had got to know the colt well, was up on *Persimmon*. I knew what a lot he thought of him.

Actually *Persimmon* not only dispensed with the weight for age allowance, but he gave the four-year-old about 2 st. in addition !

I told Watts he was to let his horse stride along the whole way, but whatever happened he was not to touch him with his heels or interfere with him in the slightest way. To our deep satisfaction we saw *Persimmon* show the better speed, and, without being asked to do anything, he won the gallop in a canter. The old one was completely outclassed, and if ever there was an example of the wide gulf which divides horses of class and all others here was one. Weight will scarcely bring them together. It was the first tangible evidence we had received of the quality of *Persimmon*.

Lord Marcus, of course, was delighted with what he had seen, but then he always was when finding that one of His Royal Highness's horses had racing merit. "Well," he remarked, "this is the first time, and it may be the only time, we shall ever have a chance of having a Derby horse. All I can say is that he must be a high-class horse to have done what he has this morning." His words were to prove most prophetic.

It had been my intention to try *Persimmon* again before Ascot, but the ground got very hard and I was dreadfully afraid of getting him jarred, for he was, as you know, a big horse even at that time. So he went for his engagement in the Coventry Stakes. It was something to know that he was very well. Certainly he looked a picture as he paraded in the Ascot paddock and the public set eyes on him for the first time. I may confess here that I was proud of him, of his appearance, and of the promise he held out.

The Prince, accompanied by Lord Marcus and several friends, came into the paddock to see him after he had been saddled, and one could see that H.R.H. was gratified by the colt's appearance. So much in fact he graciously communicated to me. Jack Watts was the jockey, and he could not have wished for a nicer ride. The colt was always going like an easy winner, and finally won as a high-class one should do. It was music, indeed, to listen to the tremendous ovation on the part of the public. Writers and critics generally began at last to see visions of a royal Derby in the following year.

Looking back now on this first exploit of our great horse I see that he started favourite at 2 to 1 against. Newmarket Heath never was a storehouse of secrets. It has ever been an open book. Moreover, having for so many years been associated with a non-betting stable, I mean in a really betting sense, I had never lost sleep at nights through any excess of zeal or clever perception on the part of the touts. In justifying their existence they would never fail to make easy observation of the horses trained at Egerton House—that is, when their work was carried out on the Heath and not, as sometimes happened, on the private gallops which I had made on the Egerton estate.

The fact that a discovery had been made in the case of *Persimmon* was clearly known far and wide before the colt left for Ascot to take part in his first race. It was reflected in the marked interest which his appearance in the paddock created. Men and women waited to see him before passing on to the enclosures. The very fact of the Prince making a special visit to the paddock told of unusual interest

in the debutant. There could be only one inference : *Persimmon* must have been highly tried and was not expected to be beaten. Eloquently, therefore, the betting spoke and reflected this definite line of reasoning. The public won their money, and indeed *Persimmon* must have been a splendid friend to them, for of the nine races which constituted his racing career—no one can say he was over-raced—he won seven, inclusive of the Derby, St. Leger and Ascot Gold Cup.

I cannot recall that he beat much in the race for the Coventry Stakes, but we were not so certain about that at the time. It was thought a chestnut filly named *Meli Melo*, owned by Sir F. Johnstone, held a big chance, and she was backed down to 3 to 1. As it happened the two were first and second, but our colt won in a canter by three lengths. I knew now he was a top sawyer. On reflection it does seem as if winners of the Coventry Stakes, both before and after this time, had fairly straightforward tasks. Why this should have been so I do not know, but my belief does not alter the fact that some high-class horses have won the race in its time. For instance, *Ladas*, *Rock Sand*, *St. Amant* and *Cicero* all turned out Derby winners, and though in later years the standard seemed to drop it is unquestionable that the status of the race was very high in the 'nineties and during the first decade of the century.

*Persimmon's* next race was to be the Richmond Stakes at Goodwood. The ground got better and the horse did really well. I knew, of course, he had certainly not gone back. On the other hand, he had made marked progress. It was, however, decided to try him again before the Goodwood meeting, and



I must say we were to see a wonderful gallop. There was in the stable at the time a three-year-old named *Ugly*, belonging to Lord Wolverton. He was about the best sprinter of his age up to five furlongs, and believing in *Persimmon* we put the two together at level weights. It was admittedly asking a big, almost an unfair, question, but I felt he would come through all right. Watts was on the two-year-old and was content to hold the older horse for speed all the way and win cleverly by a neck.

No wonder all was as it should be at Goodwood. The colt won his race by a length from four others. This time instead of 2 to 1 against it was exactly those odds on. The Prince was staying at Goodwood House, and was, therefore, able to witness this second victory. I could not help noticing, however, and what I saw filled me with just a little concern, that the colt seemed anxious as I saddled him. He broke out sweating, though after all the incident should not have occasioned worry, as his sire, *St. Simon*, and grandsire, *Galopin*, were both free sweaters. However, I knew that we should have to be careful with him, and that one of his excessively high courage and nervous energy would require watching.

His next race was the Middle Park Plate, about which my story cannot possibly be as cheerful. He ran for it much against my wish, as he had been coughing for fully a fortnight before the race, and I knew that in consequence he could not possibly be at his best. Lord Marcus, however, was very anxious that he should run, but before making up his mind he arranged to see the colt worked, not with *Ugly* this time, but with three or four second-class horses

which happened to be available. This rough gallop took place three or four days before the Middle Park Plate, and Lord Marcus thought *Persimmon* went in his old form. Hence it was decided that he should run. My own view was that he did not show his usual fire and dash, and I still did not believe he could be at his best, and, therefore, fit to run. As it happened it was the outcome of this race which created the tremendous rivalry of the following year between *Persimmon* and *St. Frusquin*, as the latter very high-class colt owned by Mr. Leopold de Rothschild beat him easily. *Persimmon*, in fact, was not even second.

The event was of such importance that I venture to give the details as follows :

The Middle Park Plate of £2,035, for two-year-olds. Bretby Stakes course, six furlongs.

Mr. Leopold de Rothschild's <i>St. Frusquin</i> , 9 st. 3 lb.	
	F. Pratt 1
The Duke of Westminster's <i>Omladina</i> , 9 st.	
	M. Cannon 2
H.R.H. the Prince of Wales's <i>Persimmon</i> , 9 st. 3 lb.	
	J. Watts 3
Col. H. B. McCalmont's <i>Knight of the Thistle</i> , 8 st. 10 lb.	
	T. Loates 4
Mr. H. E. Beddington's <i>Earwig</i> , 9 st.	Finlay 0
Mr. C. J. Blake's <i>Claros</i> , 8 st. 10 lb.	Calder 0
Mr. Leonard Brassey's <i>Bay Ronald</i> , 8 st. 10 lb.	
	Bradford 0
Duke of Devonshire's <i>Balsamo</i> , 8 st. 10 lb.	Fagan 0
Mr. Wallace Johnstone's <i>Mimic</i> , 9 st.	Allsopp 0
Duke of Portland's <i>Eisteddfod</i> , 8 st. 11 lb.	Madden 0
Mr. Theobald's <i>Bucephalus</i> , 8 st. 10 lb.	Rickaby 0
Sir John Kelk's <i>Father Thames</i> , 8 st. 10 lb.	
	G. Chaloner 0

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Betting—2 to 1 against *Persimmon* ; 5 to 2 against *Omladina* ; 4 to 1 against *St. Frusquin* ; 10 to 1 against *Earwig* ; 100 to 9 against *Claros* ; 20 to 1 against others. Won by half a length ; five lengths between second and third. Time, 1 min. 16 $\frac{3}{4}$  secs.

At this distance of time from the race I can still own to being very much upset over his defeat, even though I had in a measure been prepared for it for reasons already given. Knowing what I did, reflection brought much consolation. I realized, too, that Watts had ridden him very gently. When he realized the colt was going to be beaten he immediately eased him, and consequently the race did him no harm, even though he should never have taken part in it. It does a horse as a rule such a deal of harm—at least, the risk is a very live one—to be raced when not in a fit condition to do his best. Many a good horse has been ruined in that way. The tender and humane methods of Watts, born of the discretion that was in him no matter how exciting and absorbing the circumstances, saved *Persimmon* from any harm that day of his defeat for the Middle Park Plate. He never ran again as a two-year-old. He had won at Ascot and at Goodwood, and had failed at Newmarket.

## CHAPTER XI

### *PERSIMMON* (Continued)

*Florizel II's* Victories—*Persimmon's* Improvement—Reasons for Scratching him for the Two Thousand Guineas—Test Gallops—An Encouraging Trial.

THE coming of *Persimmon* when as a two-year-old he achieved such distinction in 1895 naturally reacted in the pleasantest possible way on the Turf fortunes of the Prince of Wales. That year was the best His Royal Highness had ever experienced. Hitherto any successes had been of only minor importance. *Persimmon* was to change all that ; in fact by his doings as a two-year-old he had, we hoped, firmly laid the foundation of a classic career. His year-older brother, *Florizel II*, had at the same time given immense satisfaction to all of us and to the public generally. As we came to know *Persimmon* better it is quite certain that *Florizel II* was not within measurable distance of him. Yet the older horse in that same season of 1895 won the Prince of Wales's Plate at Epsom, the Prince's Handicap at Gatwick (odd that the names of those races should have been what they were !), the Gold Vase at Ascot, the Goodwood Cup, the Manchester Cup and the Jockey Club Cup at Newmarket.

Many a time in later years I longed for another one even as good as *Florizel II* to have carried the colours of His Majesty King George. Winning three Cups, a Gold Vase at Ascot, and two other races

aggregating in value £4,359 was a right worthy record to embellish the doings of *Persimmon*. *Florizel II* had won that Ascot Gold Vase half an hour after our crack colt had won the Coventry Stakes on his first appearance on a racecourse. The four-year-old son of *St. Simon* and *Perdita II* may not have had much to do in that Ascot race, or when he beat a solitary opponent at Goodwood for the Cup and had odds of 100 to 9 betted on him. Then in the autumn he had only Lord Ellesmere's *None the Wiser* to beat for the Jockey Club Cup, and the odds on were as much as 7 to 2. I do, however, think he shone as a very good class handicapper when he won the Manchester Cup under 8-1, which was inclusive of a 10 lb. penalty for his win of a thousand pounds handicap at Gatwick. And, again, he had 9 st. on his back when he finished quite a good fourth for the Cesarewitch of that year. There was nothing to speak of between him and *Count Schomberg*, who was third. The latter was receiving from our horse as much as 33 lb., and the records tell what a very smart handicapper and hurdler *Count Schomberg* was to become.

It was when *Florizel II* ran and won his last race as a four-year-old—the Jockey Club Cup—that Jack Watts, who was fighting hard against increasing weight, could not go to scale at less than 8-13. On that occasion he had to put up 8 lb. over-weight in order to ride *Florizel II*. I began to have some doubts about whether he would be able to ride *Persimmon* in his three-year-old engagements. Naturally it was a detail of very great importance. One's thoughts were constantly on the future. How, indeed, could it be otherwise?

I think I have mentioned in a previous chapter that *Florizel II* could not be properly trained as a five-year-old through suspensory ligament trouble. Considering that fact it is remarkable how extraordinarily well he did run for the Gold Cup at Ascot, for he could only have been half trained. He was, as I have said, a coarsish horse with never the best of forelegs, and, like *Morion*, *Ossian* and *Jeddah*, of little good as a two-year-old. Yet there was that in him, apart from general backwardness, which made me call for patience. He paid handsomely for the policy and careful training. There is no doubt he was the most sober tempered of the three brothers. One could not help having something of an affection for him if only because he was really the first horse to cause the racing fortunes of the Prince of Wales to soar.

I notice that one of the Prince's winners in 1895 was *Safety Pin*. He brought in £200 as a Match winner. The first I heard of it was in a letter from Captain G. L. Holford, an equerry-in-waiting to the Prince. Here is his communication :—

MARLBOROUGH HOUSE,  
Pall Mall, S.W.

October 28, '95.

DEAR SIR,

His Royal Highness has made the following match with Sir Maurice Fitzgerald. I don't think the Prince has much the best of it.

Yours truly,

G. L. HOLFORD

(*Equerry-in-Waiting*).

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200 sovs. 50 forfeit, 5 furlongs, to be run at Derby November meeting, 1895, Saturday, November 16th.

H.R.H. the Prince of Wales's

*Safety Pin*, 8 st. 7 lb.

Sir Maurice Fitzgerald's

*Princess Patsy*, 8 st. 7 lb.

Signed at Newmarket this 28th day of October, 1895.

They were two-year-olds, and knowing how very moderate our youngster was—he was a gelding—I was afraid Captain Holford might be correct in his belief that His Royal Highness had got the worst of the match. But nothing of the sort. The records tell what happened. H.R.H. the Prince of Wales's *Safety Pin*, by *Surefoot* (M. Cannon), beat Sir M. Fitzgerald's *Princess Patsy* (Allsopp), both two years old, 8 st. 7 lb. each, five furlongs, 200, 50 ft.—13 to 8 on *Princess Patsy*. Won by five lengths.

To return now to *Persimmon*. I knew he was wintering well and entirely as he should do, though a stranger to him might have been deceived by the extraordinarily long winter coat he had. In this respect he was very like his dam, *Perdita II*. She, too, used to grow a dense winter coat. It is curious how these characteristics are handed down from one generation to another. The *Melbourne* lop ears are distinct enough in his line of descent, though several generations have passed. *Persimmon* during the ensuing winter had a coat on him more resembling a sheep than a racehorse, and not only so but he was unusually late in shedding it. The fact, of course, was bound to make him rather more backward than the normal. When eventually it left him he seemed

to have scarcely any hair, so fine of texture was his summer coat.

What exactly do we mean when we say a horse has done well from two to three years of age? It is common enough to hear and read of such favourable reports about high-class two-year-olds which are expected to play prominent parts in connexion with the classic races. I have even read of them in January and February, when, surely, not even the trainer can know with any certainty. He knows, of course, whether his horse has grown and made at least the normal development. He knows that the horse has been free from sickness and has thrived on his food and healthy work, but not until that work comes to be really speeded up can it be said with any certainty that the horse, though remaining constitutionally strong and robust, retains all his vitality and willingness to use all his physical and mental faculties as a racing machine. Consequently in *Persimmon's* early days as a three-year-old, I just felt instinctively that all had gone well with him. I could not and would not allow myself to be positive.

I was, however, able to report well on the progress of both *Persimmon* and *Florizel II*, and shortly before the New Year I received a communication from Sir Dighton Probyn, in the course of which he wrote :—

I am glad to hear such good accounts of *Florizel* and *Persimmon*. That the latter has a better chance of winning the Derby next year than any horse in England I have no doubt in my mind. Bar accident, surely there is *nothing* that can touch him.

His half-sister, the foal we have here, by *Surefoot*, is a beautiful filly, with the exception of one leg, which is



quite as twisted as *Florizel's*, but she can gallop. There is also a very neat *St. Simon* filly here out of *Fanchetti*. I hope the yearlings are doing well. I have bought *Harpenden* for the half-bred stud. He ought to be a useful horse to get hunters and harness horses.

Wishing you a merry Xmas and good luck next year.

It will be noted that Sir Dighton was even now beginning to revise his opinion that the purchase of thoroughbreds for the Prince would ruin His Royal Highness.

At the beginning of the season of 1896 I had the honour of training the following horses at Egerton for the Prince :—

- Florizel II*, b. h. by *St. Simon*—*Perdita II*, 5 yrs.
- Eclipse*, b. c. by *Althorp*—*Young Jessie*, 4 yrs.
- Persimmon*, b. c. by *St. Simon*—*Perdita II*, 3 yrs.
- Courtier*, b. c. by *Hampton*—*Marguerite*, 3 yrs.
- Safety Pin*, b. g. by *Surefoot*—*Pin Basket*, 3 yrs.
- Thais*, b. f. by *Merry Hampton*—*Welfare*, 3 yrs.
- Chinkara*, b. f. by *Galopin*—*Raker*, 3 yrs.
- St. Leonards*, b. c. by *St. Simon*—*Welfare*, 2 yrs.
- Oakdene*, b. c. by *Donovan*—*Poetry*, 2 yrs.
- Farrant*, b. c. by *Donovan*—*Perdita II*, 2 yrs.
- St. Nicholas*, b. c. by *St. Serf*—*Fortuna*, 2 yrs.
- Siebel*, b. c. by *Ayrshire*—*Marguerite*, 2 yrs.
- Hugh Capet*, ch. c. by *Satiety*—*Marie Antoinette*, 2 yrs.

In all my experience of high-class horses I do not think I ever had a horse to come to hand so sluggishly and slowly as did *Persimmon*. The fact of that long winter coat to which I have referred was a warning that we might be on the look out for something of the sort, and, sure enough, I began to have very serious doubts as to whether he could be got ready

in time for the Two Thousand Guineas. Certainly he was far from being as I wanted him when the Prince and Lord Marcus Beresford came down for the Craven Meeting at Newmarket. It was suggested then that we should give him a rough gallop of about six furlongs to find out what sort of form he might be in. Accordingly I arranged that he should go with two moderate horses in *Courtier* and *Chinkara*. What there was between the real *Persimmon* and those two, goodness only knows. Even allowing for his being backward I expected him to settle them. What happened, however, was such as to create dismay, and at the very outset, too, of a season to which all had been looking forward with the highest expectations.

Watts rode him, and we had to accept the plain truth, however unpalatable, that the big colt was very far from being himself. I was disappointed, and yet far from being downhearted and despairing. For one thing I found afterwards that he must have been in pain about this time from one of his teeth. An abscess was discovered, and, altogether, we were faced with only one course, which was to strike him out, forthwith, of the Two Thousand Guineas. This decision was arrived at after a consultation with the Prince. All we could hope for was that he might come to hand in sufficient time for the Derby.

May I say now that it has always been my firm opinion that he would never have won the Derby had that decision not been taken. To have run him for the Two Thousand Guineas in an unfit condition would have broken his heart and ruined him. There may have been some temptation to persist in going for the first of the classic races, but if ever it seriously presented itself to any of us it was speedily

banished. Never did His Royal Highness show his pride and consideration for his horses more than at this crisis. The welfare of *Persimmon* was his first thought, and one was bound to feel honoured that the Prince should have so readily accepted the advice which was proffered to him by Lord Marcus and myself.

Forgoing the Two Thousand Guineas permitted me to give the colt a little "easy" which I considered essential after his indifferent gallop. For that consideration, which would have been impossible had I been ordered to go on with him, he was destined to reward us magnificently. He reminded me again of what I have never lost sight of during my long career, that the higher class your horse belongs to the more care does he require. It is vitality which makes a racehorse, and the more he has the more precautions are necessary to conserve it. At the stage of which I am writing it was of vital importance that everything possible should be done for *Persimmon*. He wanted the greatest possible help, coaxing and encouragement.

And so I had the gratification of seeing him suddenly make a big upward move. It was what we had been waiting for. I could see the improvement every day, and I was so delighted with the way he went in a really good mile-and-a-half gallop that I communicated the good news to Lord Marcus Beresford. That might have been about three weeks before the Derby. I suggested to him that *Persimmon* was quite a different horse from the one he had seen at the Craven Meeting, and that I hoped he would come down in the following week and see him galloped again. By this time the "atmosphere" at Egerton had become ideally genial. *Thais* had

won the One Thousand Guineas for the Prince. She was a rather delicate and highly-strung filly, but, apart from that, quite genuine. She was going on all right with a view to the Oaks. And, as I have said, *Persimmon* was at last coming on by leaps and bounds.

Lord Marcus was only too glad to come and see the gallop I was arranging, and after what I had told him he would unquestionably be expecting the horse to put up a big show. This time the big colt really did play a trick on me. I don't think I ever felt so foolish in my life and quite so depressed as after that gallop. He went with the same horses with the addition of the moderate *Safety Pin*. I have never favoured putting a good horse to lead a gallop of this kind.

Lord Marcus and myself on our hacks took up a position in the vicinity of the Rowley Mile finishing post. The horses had to come round the tail of the Ditch and finish at the spot I have indicated. At the Bushes I expected to see Watts on *Persimmon* come right away, instead of which, to my horror, we saw his horse labouring four lengths behind *Safety Pin*. His tongue was lolling out and apparently he was quite incapable of doing any better. It was unbelievable, but there it was. To say that I felt ashamed is hardly to express my feelings, after the glowing letter I had sent, with all reserve, as I imagined, in the previous week to the manager of the Prince's horses.

Lord Marcus looked hard at me as the horse went past us, and tersely observed: “A nice Derby horse!” He moved away. I went to look over the horses when they had pulled up, and on rejoining

Lord Marcus he said: "How do you account for it?"

"I haven't the slightest idea," I replied. Then I went on: "I can't give any excuse for him. He has never left an oat, and I thought him just as well or probably better than when I galloped him the week before."

Watts could give no convincing explanation. He only knew that the colt had gone with no dash. That, of course, we saw for ourselves. All I can think of is that it was just one of those occasions when, for no known reason, a horse will go badly—too badly, indeed, for the form to be true. It is the only consolation you can get out of what is a mystery. I am afraid it was an unusually dejected Lord Marcus that went back to London that afternoon, and I must say that the winning of the Derby seemed to have receded rather far into the background.

The wretched gallop I have described took place on a Tuesday. On the following Saturday *Persimmon* had to do another strong gallop over the course, for he was a big fellow that wanted a strong preparation. Moreover, he was doing himself well in the stable, so that there was never any question of being lenient with him. Every day now was precious as the Derby was looming very near. On the Saturday, therefore, the colt was galloped, and to my intense relief he put up a show which was as very good as the other had been very bad. The odd thing is that he went exactly the same course and with precisely the same horses. There was a change in the form of stones.

The first thing I did on returning to Egerton from the Heath was to wire to Lord Marcus begging

him not to worry, that the horse was himself again, and that I suggested a trial in the following week at which the Prince might care to be present. My intention was to try him with *Balsamo*, a horse belonging to the Duke of Devonshire, which was something more than "useful," as he showed in the following year, when he won the City and Suburban Handicap at Epsom.

Just before the Two Thousand Guineas, which *St. Frusquin* won in the style of a really good colt by three lengths, Lord Marcus Beresford had written to me: "It strikes me they are training *St. Frusquin* to make a certainty of the Two Thousand Guineas—if possible—but I do hope you will be able to get a *feel* at him with *Balsamo*. Can you make a certainty of getting Morny? Win or lose, I never saw a horse so beautifully trained as *Persimmon*."

Perhaps what I had in mind was not quite a serious trial, since I proposed having the gallop on the fine moss litter track I had laid down around the Egerton estate. The limit of the gallop was a mile and a quarter, and it was here that I arranged for *Persimmon* to give 21 lb. to *Balsamo*, and, of course, a good deal more weight to such as *Safety Pin* and *Courtier*, who were merely put in to ensure that the pace should be all right. Jack Watts was on *Persimmon*. Having received a notification that the Prince was to be accompanied by the Princess and a distinguished party, I had erected a special stand from which they could view the gallop from end to end. I have explained in an earlier chapter how at that time the newly planted belts of trees were so little advanced that they did not in any way interfere with the view of what happened from one end to the other of the mile and

a quarter. How very different from nearly thirty years later, when the time came for me to say farewell to my old home !

The date was May 26th, and that morning the Prince and Princess arrived by special train from Sandringham. They were accompanied by the Duke and Duchess of York, Princess Victoria, Princess Maud, Prince Charles of Denmark, Miss Blanche Forbes, Sir Dighton Probyn, Lord Marcus Beresford, and Sir Derek Keppel. Conveyances met them at Newmarket station, and brought them on that fine morning to Egerton House, where the horses which were to gallop were walking about. I had Madden up on *Balsamo*, and right well did he do his share. The light weights set a rare good gallop, and when they were done with, with five furlongs still to go, *Balsamo* and *Persimmon* came along together, but throughout *Persimmon* was always toying with the other, and finally he won very easily indeed by two or three lengths.

Imagine my feelings. I think the first thought in the flush of pleasure, relief and satisfaction was that we had the Derby winner at Egerton. Only *St. Frusquin* was to be feared. Another thought was of gratitude that on the occasion of this special visit Their Royal Highnesses had seen what had been hoped for and dreamed about for many months past. How different it would have been if they had witnessed the defeat of the colt ! To me on that memorable morning the sun shone with added brilliance and the song of the birds was the most glorious music.

The Prince and Lord Marcus looked their thoughts.

"Well, Marsh," said His Royal Highness, "that

May 26/86

Alfred

John

Victoria Mary

George

isabel

King Charles of Denmark

Blanche Forbes

Mr. Fisher

Marcus Worsfold -

Arch Kilgus

1

May 26 '96





should please you very much. Very satisfactory, most satisfactory."

"I am delighted, your Royal Highness," was my reply. "I think we shall win the Derby."

Sir Dighton Probyn was possibly as much excited as anyone. He and Lord Marcus came up to me to discuss what we had seen, and shortly afterwards the Princess (our beloved Queen Alexandra) drew me on one side and asked me whether I really thought *Persimmon* would win the Derby.

I dared not be too positive, because so much can happen to frustrate your best-laid plans, and then, too, there is the question of health and soundness and of luck. So I replied: "I think, your Royal Highness, we must have a tremendous chance now if the horse keeps well. The only one I am afraid of is *St. Frusquin*, because I think he must be a really good horse. Possibly, though, he will not come down the hill at Epsom as well as *Persimmon*. I know our horse can act down-hill."

My royal visitors did, indeed, go back to Sandringham in a happy and hopeful frame of mind.

I think the Prince's last words to me were: "I'm very delighted, Marsh. Everybody wants to win the Derby, and with a horse of one's own breeding too. I am looking forward to it very much."

## CHAPTER XII

### PERSIMMON'S DERBY

*Persimmon's Journey to Epsom—An Eye on the Jockey—  
Persimmon's Rivals in the Derby—All that the Author saw of the  
Race—After the Victory.*

THAT was a memorable day when *Persimmon* was tried before the Derby on the Egerton gallop in the presence of the Prince and Princess of Wales and their party from Sandringham. The happy result of the gallop and all that it promised I have written about. What, however, was known to no one but myself was the dilemma in which I was placed two or three days before the trial through my cook, whom I had regarded as the best in Newmarket, falling from grace and having to be discharged. Of course, I thought it would be easy enough to replace her, in view of the luncheon which would have to be prepared for my royal visitors but though I scoured the town I was still left cookless, with only two days intervening. It was then that I sent out distress signals to the manager of the Savoy Hotel in London. I knew him well, and he promised to come to the rescue. This, however, was only after making a hurried visit to London and personally pouring my trouble into his ears.

Until they actually arrived on the scene I was surely the most worried man in the world, but finally they arrived—a chef, with waiters, and lots of flowers for the tables. All I had been enjoined to do was

to keep a good fire going. Happily everything passed off without a hitch, and after lunch the Prince, with his most benevolent smile, said I had given him not a lunch but a banquet. Before the meal was taken the party had seen the horses in their boxes, and in the afternoon they visited the Stud and took pleasure in inspecting the sires, mares, and some newly-arrived foals. Yes, that was undoubtedly a red-letter day in the history of Egerton House, and if I seem to have lingered on it unduly it is because it was of such big import, as the immediate future was to show.

I had arranged for *Persimmon* to be boxed from Dullingham station on the day before the Derby, and, in addition to superintending the boxing process, I travelled in the box to Epsom. But what a going-on was there to get him in the box ! Never shall I forget it. The devil seemed to be lurking within him that morning. It must have been the spirit of his dam *Perdita II* which made him so obstinate and ridiculously foolish that I nearly had a fit. After all, it was no laughing matter at the time. He positively refused under any sort of pressure to go into his box. Two horse specials from Newmarket had passed through Dullingham, and the last one was due to depart in about a quarter of an hour. That was after long, vain striving to bring him to a reasonable frame of mind. And to think that our labours and hopes were going to end in this absurd way !

Very often you can get an obstinate horse into a box by joining hands with another man on the other side of his hind-quarters, and I tried this on with *Persimmon*. But he was not an ordinary horse. Every time I tried to join hands he would lash out, and,

being a big, strong horse, we looked like coming off decidedly second best. Gradually a large crowd of onlookers gathered, which did not ensure the horse coming to his senses. But as time was getting desperately short, I turned to the crowd and said : "Now this horse has to go to Epsom and he has to go into this box. To every man that helps me to get him in I will give a sovereign." It is just as well I had not to carry out my offer, as I should have given away about half the Derby stake before getting to Epsom.

Finally, and about the time I must have been approaching an apoplectic state, I got about a dozen volunteers, and, with half a dozen of us on either side, we practically lifted him in. No sooner was he in than the arch-villain, to show how he was laughing at us, at once quietly began to attack his feed of corn. He was certainly the least concerned among us. It took me a long time to forgive him the fright he gave me. All the same, he must have worried and sweated on the journey, for when he was unboxed I thought in my own mind that he was looking a perfect wretch. The sweat which had broken out on him during the "boxing" altercation had dried on him. However, all was well when we got him put to rights in his stable. He settled down comfortably, and that he had plenty of common sense was shown by the fact that during the whole time he was at Epsom he never left an oat or a drop of water.

On going up to the racecourse on the eve of the Derby I found a strong rumour going round that *Persimmon* had met with an accident and had not arrived at Epsom. The Prince and Lord Marcus



A DISCUSSION AFTER *PERSIMMON'S* TRIAL FOR THE DERBY.  
SIR DIGHTON PROBYN, LORD MARCUS BERESFORD, AND THE  
AUTHOR 1896



Beresford had heard of it, and they came to me in much alarm. Happily I was able to reassure them, and report that the colt was perfectly well. His Royal Highness, I need scarcely say, was much relieved.

Almost as great an anxiety as the horse was our jockey, Jack Watts. The reader may recall that in the winter I had to bring to bear on him all the pressure I could command to induce him to carry on. He wanted to give it up. Brilliant jockey that he was, most loyal of servants, devoted, I am sure, he was to me, while proud of the distinction and privilege of wearing the royal colours, he was, nevertheless, subject to much depression, which he no doubt sought to relieve by indulging in an occasional stimulant. It may be that this became more marked as time went on. Who could blame him? Many years before I had known how insidious is that depression which follows hard in the wake of severe wasting. It is, indeed, devastating, and I can imagine that Watts, in his later career, may sometimes have thought that it was not worth while. I am perfectly sure that only the coming of *Persimmon* postponed his definite retirement from racing. He felt he owed it to his royal master, and in some degree possibly to myself, to carry on. At the same time, I am convinced that he was immensely keen on riding his fourth Derby winner, and for the Prince of Wales, too.

Apart from that, as he told me when I was persuading him to continue riding—that was during the previous winter—he felt he had conquered all the fields there were to conquer for a jockey. Nine years before on *Merry Hampton* he had ridden his first



Derby winner, beating the odds-on chance *The Baron*. Three years later he steered *Sainfoin* to victory for Sir J. Miller, and four years after that he was on the back of that brilliant-actioned horse *Ladas*, who won for Lord Rosebery his third Derby. So, as I have said, there were really no further conquests awaiting him except the very bright one of being associated, if it were possible, with a Derby triumph for the Prince of Wales. In all the circumstances I hope it will not be misunderstood how important it was from my point of view to get jockey, as well as horse, to the post in the best possible condition. I realized it was not going to be helpful to the horse to have on his back a man who was depressed and unhappy.

I am sure Watts had been bitterly disappointed the horse had not come to hand in time to have a cut at the Two Thousand Guineas. All the time his weight was bothering him. On the Monday of the Derby week I weighed him and found him to be 2 lb. overweight. That worried me a lot, for it meant that he could not do less than 9-2. I asked him where he was proposing to stay at Epsom, and he replied that he did not quite know, whereupon I suggested that he should stay with me at Holt's place, where I had engaged stabling for *Persimmon* and for *Thais* (who was due to run for the Oaks later in the week).

On the morning of the Derby he rode the horse a canter on the course, and afterwards I accompanied him in a strong walk round Ashted Park. He had sweaters on, and, believe me, I had no occasion to lose any weight at that time, but I went through with it, chiefly to keep him company and his mind occupied. When we got back and had "tubbed," I found to

my relief that he would be able to do the weight all right.

On the way to the course we paused at The Durdans, and were shown Lord Rosebery's mares and some of the young stock. The sight of them may have interested Watts, but I had not the slightest idea what I had been looking at. My mind was on other things. However, the time slipped along, and while one of the early races was proceeding I got Watts weighed out and the two of us proceeded to Sherwood's place, where I had arranged to saddle *Persimmon*. It is situated on the crest of the opposite Down, in full view of all on the stands and not far from the mile-and-a-quarter post. A most hospitable house it is, too, and so long as we were there I did not consider my duty had been done until finally I was able to throw Watts up on the horse, and I saw them move off towards the starting post. There was no parade in front of the stands then.

It is necessary that I should break off at this point in order to give the reader some idea of what *Persimmon's* task amounted to on this day, especially in regard to his great rival *St. Frusquin*. That horse, as I have explained, had won the Two Thousand Guineas, and he had gone on well and thrived on his work during the critical interval. I always understood there had been some little fear that his legs might not stand the severe preparation which a Derby training imposes on a high-class horse, and, possibly, it was the reason why they did not run him for the Newmarket Stakes. Instead they called on a pretty good horse named *Galeazzo* to deputize, and, what is more, he did so successfully. It was in that race *Balsamo* from my stable had run second, and when Lord

Marcus Beresford had written to me hoping that I might get a line at *St. Frusquin* through *Balsamo* he had clearly been under the impression that *St. Frusquin* and not *Galeazzo* would run.

We did not, as it turned out, get a direct line to *St. Frusquin*, but the form did tell us something, as, I am sure, it did Mr. Leopold de Rothschild and his trainer. Now it will be understood why I galloped *Persimmon* with *Balsamo* at 21 lb., and why what happened in the presence of the Prince and Princess of Wales so elated all of us. It says much for the belief in *St. Frusquin* that he started favourite for this Derby, but the public had much solid reason on their side. They were showing belief in what they had seen. There had been his easy Two Thousand Guineas victory. As a rule it takes some audacity to oppose a horse for the Derby which has won the first of the classic races by three lengths, and especially a horse which, as a two-year-old, had won the Middle Park Plate, beating the Prince's colt which had forgone the Two Thousand Guineas. Then it was well known that *Persimmon* had put up one or two indifferent gallops, and one can understand why so many took sides with *St. Frusquin*. Still it is a fact indisputable that betting considerations for once in a way were destined to be entirely submerged by what happened.

Because it was the anniversary of his father's death Mr. Leopold de Rothschild would not come to see the race. Yet I knew how all his thoughts were upon it, and how he feared only *Persimmon* just as we genuinely enough had some fear of his horse. He had paid me a visit at Egerton on the previous Saturday in company with his brother, Lord

Rothschild, and I had shown them *Persimmon* in his box. In a letter to a friend, written some years later, Mr. Leopold wrote: "Marsh told us that he (*Persimmon*) had been an extremely difficult horse to train. . . . I saw *Persimmon* canter at Epsom the morning of the race, and was much struck by the improvement in his appearance since the previous Saturday. Marsh agreed, when I remarked this to him."

The Prince and Princess of Wales made the journey to Epsom from London by special train, the distinguished party being made up of the Princesses Victoria and Maud of Wales, Prince Charles of Denmark, the Duke and Duchess of York, the Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, the Duchess of Teck, the Duke of Cambridge, Prince Christian, Prince Edward of Saxe-Weimar, and a large suite. What can I say of that perfect day that has not been said by more skilled pens than mine?—I, who through circumstances which I shall relate saw little or nothing of the race.

I know that I must have stayed too long in the vicinity of the starting post, for when I headed my hack back to the stands they were just about ready for off. With much difficulty did I thread my way through the dense crowd, only to emerge at the public-house which is quite a landmark near to the paddock entrance. No one knew me, and I knew no one to whom I could hand over my hack for the time being. It was no use making a fuss. The police had cleared the course, and they would not let me on to it to make the best of my way to the little weighing-in enclosure. Moreover, the race had started. The best I could do was to mount the fourth or fifth step of the friendly public-house, and from there I got a more or less

blurred view of the field until they reached Tattenham Corner. Then they passed outside my arc of vision. And that was all I saw of *Persimmon's* Derby !

Along with the perfect swarm of tens of thousands I soon found myself on the course, heading, I hoped, for the stands. Everyone was excited, and I did not even know for a few seconds what had won. Actually the first horse and rider I met was Colonel Harry McCalmont's *Knight of the Thistle* with Morny Cannon on his back. He must have spotted me, for he exclaimed : " You've won ! "

What wonderful words ! I suppose I felt like a dog let loose after being tied up for a month !

My next object in life was to find Watts and the horse, but by this time they were being mobbed, and no Rugby forward pushed harder than I did during the next minute or two to get to *Persimmon*. Upon my word Watts was looking so glum that for a moment I thought he must have been beaten half a length. Nothing seemed to excite him. It is probably the reason above all others why he rode such a beautiful race, probably the race of his life. You simply could not fluster him.

" Well done, Jack ! " I exclaimed, as I came up to him.

Still he didn't even smile, and I slapped him on the thigh and almost roared at him : "*Do you know you've just won the Derby for the Prince of Wales ?* "

Then at last a faint smile broke over his face, though I am sure that inwardly he was just as pleased as I was.

Gradually the police forced a lane of sorts down which I led the horse until meeting the Prince, who had come on to the course and, with the Duke of

York and Lord Marcus Beresford, was waiting outside the weighing-in enclosure gate. His Royal Highness was tremendously pleased and excited, and for the moment I do not think he quite realized "who was who," so to say. You must remember that all this time tremendous cheering was going on, and if any scene in the life of King Edward was calculated to work up the emotions it was this unforgettable one on Epsom Downs. As I handed him the leading rein, he said: "Well done, Marsh!" at the same time nodding gratefully to Watts, who by this time was beginning to understand that he had won the Derby for the Prince.

Listening afterwards to the story of the jockey and certain competent onlookers I gathered that, contrary to my calculations, *St. Frusquin* came down the hill and round Tattenham Corner as if loving nothing better than receding slopes. He led *Persimmon* into the straight, and at that time onlookers, knowing what a good horse he was, thought he would certainly stay where he was. Soon afterwards *Persimmon* was seen to be steadily picking up leeway, and at the right place Watts had got him to *St. Frusquin's* quarters. His horse was beautifully balanced and there was more in him.

It was at that moment Tommy Loates asked his horse for a last supreme effort, and *St. Frusquin* gave of his best. But *Persimmon* was not done with. Watts was going to win at the only place that mattered. He was measuring the run with magnificent accuracy, and a few strides from the winning post *Persimmon* had his head and then his neck in front. It was enough. The good colt might even have pulled out a bit more. It was, as I have said, enough.

I cannot resist at this point quoting from one of the accounts. It may be slightly coloured, according to my prosaic ideas, but nevertheless conveyed to me some ideas of the race's great import. Said the writer :

"The most popular Derby of modern times ! No doubt whatever can be entertained of the fact by those who saw the sight on the Downs, or those for whose benefit the great news was flashed to London, England, and the world. . . . For although another Prince has won besides the Prince of Wales, and other Prime Ministers, too, besides Lord Rosebery, we are growing to be more and more of a democracy every year, and yesterday was a great people's holiday, in which a popular idol received his overwhelming meed of praise. . . .

"It was something to have been a witness of at least once in a lifetime, a memory which will not easily fade away from those who saw the classic race of 1896. There was no class distinction in this great demonstration. The aristocratic patrons of the club enclosure were no differently constituted to the common clay. They cheered and cheered again, while the greater outside company waxed positively wild in raptures of enthusiasm. . . .

"Horse and rider were besieged . . . and John Watts, with all his force of self-command, could not restrain smiles of delight at finding himself a popular idol. Immediately the royal owner, as quickly as his friends would permit him to do so, hurried down from the spot where he had seen the race, hat in hand, and went out to meet the winner—'my horse'—at the gate. It was not an easy matter to lead the horse in. Two constables rode in front of *Persimmon*, and another guarded him behind. Marsh, the trainer,

whose face was as the rising sun, walked at the head of the winner and made no attempt to conceal his feelings.

“No description could give an adequate impression of the uproarious demonstration proceeding during the whole of this time, and when the trainer gave the rein to the Prince of Wales and His Royal Highness led the victor into the enclosure, there was an outburst almost hysterical in its intensity. What handshaking there was, what congratulations and compliments for Watts from his royal master, and what a congenial beaming of comfort and delight on the countenance of every individual soul. . . . Henry V revelled in the memory of Crispin’s Day, and who will say that an equal meed of glory will not attach to the day of St. Simon’s gallant descendant?”

It may not be inappropriate, as I draw near the end of this chapter, to append the official record of *Persimmon’s* Derby. It is as follows:—

The One Hundred and Seventeenth Renewal of the Derby Stakes of 6,000 sov., by subscriptions of 50 sov. each, h. ft., or 5 sov. if declared, with 165 sov. added, for 3 yrs. old, colts 9 st. and fillies 8–9; the nominator of the winner received 500 sov., the owner of the second 300 sov., and the owner of the third 200 sov. out of the stakes; about one mile and a half (276 subs., 67 of whom paid 5 sov. each—£5,450).

H.R.H. the Prince of Wales’s b. c. <i>Persimmon</i> , by	
<i>St. Simon</i>	J. Watts 1
Mr. Leopold de Rothschild’s br. c. <i>St. Frusquin</i>	
	T. Loates 2
Mr. H. E. Beddington’s br. c. <i>Earwig</i>	Allsopp 3



## 164 A TRAINER TO TWO KINGS

Mr. B. S. Strauss's br. c. <i>Teufel</i>	F. Pratt	4
Mr. Leopold de Rothschild's b. c. <i>Gulistan</i>	Calder	o
Mr. L. Brassey's b. c. <i>Bay Ronald</i>	Bradford	o
Mr. L. Brassey's b. c. <i>Tamarind</i>	Grimshaw	o
Mr. A. Calvert's br. c. <i>Bradwardine</i>	Rickaby	o
Mr. J. Wallace's b. c. <i>Spook</i>	Colling	o
Mr. E. Cassel's b. c. <i>Toussaint</i>	Woodburn	o
Col. H. McCalmont's b. c. <i>Knight of the Thistle</i>	M. Cannon	o

Mr. Rothschild declared to win with *St. Frusquin*.

Betting—13 to 8 on *St. Frusquin*, 5 to 1 against *Persimmon*, 100 to 9 against *Teufel*, 25 to 1 each against *Bay Ronald* and *Knight of the Thistle*, 33 to 1 each against *Gulistan* and *Earwig*, 40 to 1 against *Bradwardine*, 100 to 1 each against *Spook* and *Toussaint*, 1,000 to 1 against *Tamarind*. Won by a neck, four lengths between second and third. Time, 2 min. 42 secs.

Just one more incident, and I have done with *Persimmon's* Derby. I am not, I believe, unduly superstitious, but when, on the morning of the race, I was solemnly informed by a member of the domestic side of the Prince's household that *Persimmon must* win because they had got the horse's picture reproduced on the menus for the dinner that same night, I thought we might possibly be trying the gods too high. "Good gracious me!" I said, "This has done it. I've never seen this sort of thing come off; and if the horse is beaten," I added, "I shall know who to blame." Happily, however, it proved to be just one of those examples of an intelligent anticipation of facts.

## CHAPTER XIII

### PERSIMMON WINS THE GOLD CUP

Failure of *Thais* in the Oaks—Other Disappointments at Epsom with Royal Horses—*Persimmon* and *St. Frusquin* Compared—*Persimmon's* Other Wins—Captain Machell Loses a Bet—*Persimmon's* Gold Cup Triumph.

THE rose which, so to say, *Persimmon* handed out to us in that Derby week of 1896 was not without its thorn. I have in mind the defeat of the Prince's filly *Thais* for the Oaks. If I had left Newmarket on the Tuesday with considerable belief in the ability of *Persimmon* to win the Derby I had something approaching confidence where *Thais* was concerned for the Oaks. She had never looked back after winning the One Thousand Guineas, and I must say I had rarely seen a three-year-old filly, before or since, look as well as she did on the day I left home for Epsom. She was a brown daughter of *St. Serf* and *Poetry*, of fairly ample proportions, but naturally a nervous sort. Her journey to Epsom was her first experience of being away from home as a three-year-old. Still, in view of what was to happen to her she really ought to have known better, as when a two-year-old she had gone as far afield as Gatwick and had won a £1,000 race. Knowing her temperament, however, I had arranged that she should not travel to Epsom until Thursday, the day before the Oaks.

I had the good fortune at that time to have as head man Felix Leach, and while at Epsom I received

a wire from him asking if he could come and see the race for the Oaks. I was only too pleased to acquiesce, and only mention the incident now to show the state of *extremis* to which the filly got. From the time she left Newmarket she never ate a thing of any kind nor touched a drop of water. She simply stood at the end of her box with her ears back and shivering. Clearly she was in an awful state of funk. But why? She had been most kindly treated, not only at home but in her races. These things are difficult to understand, if only because they take you so unawares. I suppose she must have been constitutionally soft.

When Leach arrived on the morning of the race the boys were at "stables" with the horses that were going to run on that day. After looking round *all* the horses he said: "But where is *Thais*?" He had not recognized her, so changed had she become in a few hours. "Well," he said in utter astonishment, "I should never have recognized her. I shouldn't have known her for the same mare." All we could get into her was some stout and tonics. I had to tell His Royal Highness and Lord Marcus Beresford how badly she had done, and that in consequence I was afraid she had no chance. Yet she ran remarkably well, and at one point, not so far from home, she looked like winning until, as I feared, she then collapsed from utter exhaustion and Lord Derby's *Canterbury Pilgrim* beat her by two lengths. *Thais* beat all the rest.

*Canterbury Pilgrim* is the mare that was destined to become one of the founders of Lord Derby's magnificent stud, for in later years she produced, among other notable horses, that splendid racehorse

and sire *Swynford*. When *Thais* and *Canterbury Pilgrim* met a little later at Ascot for the Coronation Stakes our filly turned the tables, so affording convincing evidence of what would most probably have happened in the Oaks had she been anything like herself. The odd thing is that at Ascot *Thais* was perfectly all right. How amazingly trying some horses can be, especially, of course, fillies and mares, and at that time of the year too !

An odd thing, it being something of a coincidence, is that on another occasion I took two horses to Epsom with quite considerable hopes of winning both the Derby and the Oaks. They were *Minoru* and *Princesse de Galles*. The one, as history tells, won, but on arrival at Epsom the filly relapsed into a common complaint, and was so badly amiss that any chance I thought she might have had was at once dissipated. She failed because the disability had sapped her stamina. Alas, I have had much experience of horses which, no doubt through their breeding, were so highly strung and nervous that they could not give their true running in public. Some which could be named have come from Sandringham, especially in later years. It is invariably a sign that a stud requires reinfusing with more vigorous and more robust strains of blood.

The Prince was most generous in his gracious acknowledgment of the services of those who had contributed to his pleasures on the Turf, and the following short note from an Equerry-in-Waiting was just one example of many such kindly and deeply appreciated acts on the part of His Royal Highness :—

DEAR MR. MARSH,

The Prince of Wales desires me to forward you the accompanying pin, which His Royal Highness presents to you in memory of the Derby, 1896.

The Prince would be glad to hear how the horses got back to Newmarket, and hopes they are none the worse for their races at Ascot.

Believe me,

Yours very truly,

S. DE A. C. CLARKE.

The story of my career about this time is really the story of *Persimmon*, and, believing as I always ~~shall~~ do that he was one of the greatest horses of all time, I ask the reader to bear with me until such time as I shall have bid farewell to him as a history-maker on the racecourse. From the time that he passed the post as the winner of the Derby I really had no more trouble with him that year, and yet in his very next race he was to be beaten. It occurred in the Princess of Wales's Stakes at Newmarket, worth at that time £9,005 to the winner. Now, in the Derby *Persimmon* had beaten *St. Frusquin* by a neck, which could be reckoned at about 3 lb. In this next meeting at Newmarket *Persimmon* had to concede 3 lb., and the fact was sure to bring them very close together. The odd thing is that neither of the pair was favourite, though once more *St. Frusquin* was the shorter-priced one as between the two. Actual first favourite was the Duke of Westminster's *Regret*, who was receiving 12 lb. from *Persimmon* and 9 lb. from *St. Frusquin*. He had evidently shown John Porter a most flattering gallop, but I imagine he must have been something of a flat-catcher.

All the same *Regret* did not disgrace himself, but first and second were *St. Frusquin* and *Persimmon* respectively, with half a length between them. In that way we saw the Derby placings reversed, and at this time of their lives it is fairly plain there can have been little or nothing between these two uncommonly fine horses, both of whom were, in my humble opinion, much above the average of classic winners. Most unfortunately for Mr. Leopold de Rothschild—it may be fortunately for us—*St. Frusquin* did not stand much further training, and he therefore could not meet us again in the St. Leger. But he managed to add the Eclipse Stakes, in which his task was simple in the extreme, to his other successes as a three-year-old. The Princess of Wales's Stakes and the Eclipse Stakes alone were worth no less than £18,310.

Some will hold that *St. Frusquin* was the better horse, but it is not my view. It may be said that I am prejudiced. That may be, and we may admit there was little or nothing between them about this time when they were three-year-olds. But *Persimmon* was nothing like at his best as a three-year-old, while *St. Frusquin* may have been. A grander horse than *Persimmon* was as a four-year-old, especially on that day when he won the Gold Cup at Ascot, I never beheld. I could not tell you how good he was. I would not have feared *St. Frusquin* then or the greatest horse that ever walked the turf.

Only two more races did *Persimmon* run in as a three-year-old, and he won them both—first the St. Leger, and then the Jockey Club Stakes. Six opposed him at Doncaster, a rather different total from many we have known in more recent times a

quarter of a century later. The last of the classics was virtually a walk-over for him, as the odds on of 11 to 2 suggested. Only *Labrador* at 6 to 1 was backed against him in a half-hearted sort of way. Apart from those two it was a case of 66 to 1 bar two. Did anyone ever know a parallel instance of such extraordinary St. Leger betting? The Prince's horse, ridden again by Jack Watts, won by a length and a half from *Labrador*. There was a "bad third," which is more suggestive of a selling steeplechase than a classic race.

In the Jockey Club Stakes of £8,990 *Persimmon* encountered the Derby winner of the previous year in *Sir Visto*, who, being a year older, was trying to give our champion 9 lb. Of course, he had no chance even though Lord Rosebery's horse beat all the rest. With odds of 11 to 8 betted on him, *Persimmon*, who was by this time a grand stayer, won easily by two lengths; and with that fine stake to his credit, as also the only two classic races for which he had competed, he retired into winter quarters.

Not for the first time that season did His Royal Highness, through Lord Marcus Beresford, show his kindness and appreciation towards me in a most tangible form, and in doing so after the horse's fine win of the Jockey Club Stakes Lord Marcus wrote:—

The Prince desires me to express his delight at owning such a horse, and H.R.H. wishes to congratulate you also on the splendid way you have developed the horse's racing powers by the aid of your skill as a trainer.

I come now to 1897, when *Persimmon* had developed in an ideal way into a truly magnificent four-year-old. His first race was to be the Gold

Cup at Ascot, and so I had plenty of time to bring him to his best. Always he was getting better and better, to my mind, and always he was splendid to look upon. He had grown into a magnificent creature. He was always set in a big mould, as it were, but as a three-year-old he was far from being furnished as his big frame needed to be. Age did this for him, and I doubt whether good judges of a thoroughbred have ever looked on a finer sight than he presented when his clothes were removed in the paddock prior to going out to put up one of the most electrifying performances I have ever seen on the part of a Gold Cup winner.

Shortly before Ascot came along Lord Marcus wrote to me and said that if I thought *Persimmon* was *sure* to win the Gold Cup he thought Queen Victoria might come to see the race. He may possibly have been desirous in that way to draw me beyond what I am usually prepared to go. Sure to win? I have never looked upon anything as certain to win in racing, but if ever such a thing existed then it was *Persimmon* for that Gold Cup—after he had emerged from a wonderful gallop about a week before the race.

I tried him over the full distance of two and a half miles, starting the party of five in the region of the Cesarewitch starting post and arranging for them to finish at the farthest post on the July course. The horse we had at that time for the purpose of leading *Persimmon* was one named *Glentilt*. Earlier in the season he had run a good second for the Great Metropolitan Stakes, giving 3 lb. to *Soliman*, the winner, who afterwards proved to be a pretty smart horse. I arranged that *Persimmon* should carry 9-12, and *Glentilt*, a six-year-old, 6-3. Three



other horses made up what I determined should be a proper sort of gallop from end to end.

I knew they had to pass over two roads, which, however, had been well covered with tan, but all the same I was awfully anxious that the big horse should not jar himself in the gallop. I saw them set off, and on my hack I dashed across to take up a position on the Ditch. I could always see *Persimmon* with the leaders, and so good was the pace that when they came on to the course about the Bunbury Mile starting post two had dropped out altogether, leaving only *Persimmon*, *Glentilt*, and *Safety Pin* in the gallop. With but a furlong or two to go, Watts saw me, and I waved my hand to him as a signal to go right out. I thought I would know the best or the worst. Immediately *Persimmon* flew, and when he was passing the winning post at the top *Glentilt* was only just arriving at the winning post at the foot of the Hill. Those who are familiar with the July course at Newmarket will, I am sure, follow my description of what was the finest Cup gallop I ever saw.

I at once wrote to Lord Marcus telling him that he might safely invite Queen Victoria to see the race and *Persimmon* win it !

*Persimmon* arrived at Ascot all right, and well do I remember the fun I enjoyed the evening prior to the race. After racing was over on the Wednesday the horses, which were stabled at the hotel, were usually walked round for some time before being "done up" for the night. It was the custom in those days for well-known owners and their friends to gather where the horses were walking round and take notes, perhaps, even, wager among themselves. I had heard that *Winkfield's Pride* was going to be a



H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES'S *PERSIMMON* (J. WATTS RIDING), WINNER OF THE DERBY,  
ST. LEGER AND ASCOT GOLD CUP AMONG OTHER TRIUMPHS



danger to *Persimmon* in the Cup race, and might even beat him. I say I had heard, but it does not follow that I believed the stories in circulation. *Winkfield's Pride* had that year won the Lincolnshire Handicap; the previous autumn he had landed a big coup when he won the Cambridgeshire. But, after all, he was just a good handicapper. I was a staunch believer in classic form. I always had been, and to this day my ideas on the point have not moved one iota.

While *Persimmon* was that evening walking round to stretch his legs, I noticed Captain Machell there with four or five friends. "Come," he said, "I will show you *Winkfield's Pride*. Tell me what you think of him."

I had already noted that he was a beautiful *little* horse and looked extraordinarily well.

"Now," said the Captain, "what do you think of your opponent for to-morrow?"

"A very nice horse, I'm sure, he is—in his place!"

They were furious with me. "Well," retorted Captain Machell, "let me tell you this, he'll be in *first* place to-morrow!"

"That," I replied, "may be, only I don't think so."

"But," went on the Captain, "you don't know what this horse can do. He can give a lot of weight to . . ." mentioning some horse that had just won a good handicap. "He's a smasher," he added. The stalwart champion of *Winkfield's Pride* went on to inform me that the horse would jump off on the morrow and never be headed!

I thought the best thing to do in the circumstances

was to offer to bet them £100 that *Persimmon* at any rate beat their horse. One of the party said he would make it £200, but on reflecting a moment said that he would be able to get better odds to his money on the course. "Anyhow," said Captain Machell, "I will have £100 with you, Marsh."

"Done," I said quietly, feeling that no easier money had ever come my way before. And, to wind up the argument, I remarked: "The faster your horse goes the further *Persimmon* will beat him."

*Persimmon* won by eight lengths!

As it happened, Queen Victoria did not witness the race. I believe that same day she was only arriving at Buckingham Palace from Balmoral for the Jubilee celebrations, which were commencing about this time. I remember it was a delightful day and all the splendours of Ascot were apparent in this historical year. In the words of the Laureate:—

A light wind blew from the gates of the Sun,  
And waves of shadow went over the wheat.

Never have I known the course to be as hard as it was this year. It was, in fact, like nothing so much as a macadamised road, for in those days I am sure it was not given half the attention that was bestowed on it in later years. On the Wednesday morning it had been my intention to let *Persimmon* go the full course steadily, but though he was absolutely sound I was scared to death of jarring him because of the appalling state of the ground. He therefore only went a mile. The Prince and his friends came to the paddock to see the horse after he had been saddled, and if ever I felt proud of a horse it was of *Persimmon* that afternoon. He was a magnificent picture of the

commanding thoroughbred trained to the maximum of his powers, though afterwards, and remembering the ease of his win, I had occasion to revise that estimate. Really, I never knew how good he was as a four-year-old. I can only, and not unfairly, describe him as great.

It was a wonderful show he gave in the race. The moment that he was allowed his liberty he shot out, as one writer asserted, "like a newly sped arrow." For the last quarter of a mile he came on literally by himself to pass the post eight lengths in front of *Winkfield's Pride*. The way in which Watts showed off the horse's powers was a rare treat to witness, and long before he had reached his goal the cheering had broken out.

Soon after the race Captain Machell came to me and held out his hand by way of congratulation. Said he: "I don't know what sort of horse yours is. I did not think it possible for you to beat me, but you beat *Winkfield's Pride* as if he had been a common hack."

His Royal Highness and other members of the royal family who were present were naturally vastly delighted and were eye-witnesses of the gallant horse's return to the paddock and of the unsaddling. He received a magnificent reception, which I need hardly say was shared by the most popular and beloved Prince. The incident lives most vividly in the memory, and I am proud, indeed, that I was privileged to be associated with a triumph so splendid and in such a brilliant setting.

Here is the official return of the race:—

The Gold Cup, value 1,000 sov., with 3,000 sov. in specie (of which the second recd. 700 sov. and the

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third 300 sov.) added to a sweepstakes of 20 sov. each, h.ft., three yrs. old 7-7, four 9 st., five, six and aged 9-4; m. and g. allowed 3 lb.; starting at the Cup post, and going once round, about two miles and a half (36 subs.—£3,380).

H.R.H. the Prince of Wales's b. c. <i>Persimmon</i> , by <i>St. Simon</i> , 4 yrs.	J. Watts	1
Mr. J. C. Sullivan's ch. c. <i>Winkfield's Pride</i> , 4 yrs.	M. Cannon	2
Mr. Hamar Bass's ch. c. <i>Love Wisely</i> , 4 yrs.	S. Loates	3
Lord Hindlip's ch. f. <i>Limasol</i> , 3 yrs.	Allsopp	0

Betting—85 to 40 on *Persimmon*, 4 to 1 against *Winkfield's Pride*, 8 to 1 against *Limasol*, and 100 to 6 against *Love Wisely*. Won by eight lengths, four lengths between second and third.

From the Ascot Gold Cup to the Eclipse Stakes in the following month was not a long stride, and with no *St. Frusquin* in the path it might be thought we had no qualms about *Persimmon's* success. Yet it is a matter of considerable importance and not a little anxiety, to train a horse to win over a mile and a quarter soon after he has been trained for, and has run for, a two mile and half race. Moreover, the ground continued that year to be extraordinarily hard, and it so happened that I had no moss litter gallop on which to train him. I had no alternative, therefore, but to work him on the tan, and in order to try and get his brilliant speed back I restricted him to five and six furlong work of a sharp character.

On the day of the race at Sandown Park the weather was very hot and most trying for us as well as for horses. Being now a great celebrity he was much mobbed by the public, and what with this

experience and the heat he sweated a great deal and got rather excited. I know it took a good deal to pacify him and keep him from getting thoroughly upset.

Just as I had got him settled down and was on the point of leading him out I received a message to say that the Princess of Wales was anxious to have the horse photographed on the lawn. I begged Lord Marcus Beresford to make an excuse as I feared for the result on the horse. However, the picture was duly taken. I could see from what happened in the early part of the race that he had lost some of his brilliant speed for he seemed to be doing all he could to keep in about third place. No doubt I was over-anxious and not reckoning sufficiently on his equally fine stamina. A different story had to be told immediately the turn for home was made. Half-way up the hill Watts gave him his head as usual, and away he came to beat *Velasquez* in Lord Rosebery's colours by two lengths.

Here are the brief details set out :—

Tenth Renewal of the Eclipse Stakes of £9,285.  
Eclipse Stakes course ( $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles).

H.R.H. the Prince of Wales's <i>Persimmon</i> , 4 yrs., 10 st. 2 lb.	J. Watts	1
Lord Rosebery's <i>Velasquez</i> , 3 yrs., 9 st. 4 lb.	C. Wood	2
Mr. Leonard Brassey's <i>Bay Ronald</i> , 4 yrs., 9 st. 13 lb.	Bradford	3
Mr. J. H. Platt's <i>Bradwardine</i> , 4 yrs., 9 st. 6 lb.	T. Loates	4
Mr. A. Menier's <i>Beato</i> , 4 yrs., 9 st. 10 lb.	T. Lane	5

Betting.—100 to 12 on *Persimmon*,  $12\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 against *Velasquez*, 25 to 1 against *Bay Ronald*, 33 to 1 against



*Bradwardine*, 40 to 1 against *Beato*. Won by two lengths, four lengths between second and third. Time, 2 min. 9 $\frac{3}{4}$  secs.

Lord Marcus Beresford had intended that *Persimmon* should have one more race—for the Champion Stakes at Newmarket in the autumn. But the hard ground at Sandown Park brought about that mischief which I had feared both at Ascot and Sandown. He threw out two jack spavins, one in each hock, and that was how the racing career of this great horse came to an end. We might have repaired the mischief, but there would always have been some doubt as he was a horse that required a strong preparation to bring him to his best. It would never have done to have produced him on some future occasion with the slightest doubt about his fitness, for there was his splendid reputation to consider. His Royal Highness was, therefore, advised to retire the horse to the stud at Sandringham. And so in due course I came to have to say *au revoir* to the best horse it was ever my good fortune to train, and, for anything that can be proved to the contrary, perhaps the best horse as a four-year-old that has lived in my time. Splendid *Persimmon*! His name gives rise to a thousand grateful memories.

## CHAPTER XIV

### JEDDAH

*Jeddah* the Unpromising—His Failure as a Two-year-old—  
*Jeddah* compared with the Other Horses of his Year—Letters  
from his Owner to the Author—His Final Breakdown.

IT was in *Persimmon's* Gold Cup year—1897—that I had in the stables my second Derby winner, though, of course, I had little idea at the time that such an angel was being entertained. I refer of course to *Jeddah*, then a two-year-old. I do not suppose there ever was a horse at two years of age that looked less like a Derby winner than this chestnut son of *Janissary* and *Pilgrimage*. Lots of owners and trainers have thought no end of horses as youngsters and have cast quite serious thoughts on Epsom a year or two ahead. I know I have. Many are the handsome well-bred two-year-olds I have had, good-actioned, and heavily engaged, which have raised the highest hopes—until the test of serious training and of the racecourse itself has come to be applied! How many promise so much and fulfil so little! Yet we are apt to forget that there is only one Derby and that only one horse can win it.

You have to secure so many aids to ultimate success. First of all you look for the horse of size, power, action, and character, with the capacity to produce splendid speed and show stamina out of the ordinary. He must be well and carefully trained and given the greatest consideration and care, both in the

stable and out of it. He must be well ridden so that he shall acquire a full knowledge of what is expected of him, and especially is it of importance that his courage shall be conserved by avoiding all those things that are apt to sap the horse's confidence. And you must have all the luck possible on your side in avoiding the hundred-and-one troubles that are constantly causing you anxiety, and in the race itself.

The first things you look for in the high-class youngster were missing from *Jeddah*. As a yearling and an early two-year-old he had none of those attributes that you search for immediately you receive the yearling for training. Yet the colt was not without certain essentials which made me believe he would make a racehorse some day. To begin with, he was a very big colt and immature. He was bound to be backward in coming to hand. It is no use forcing horses. If ever they are to bloom and blossom into racehorses they will certainly do so, but only in their own time. They call for care and watchfulness, each in his, or her, different way.

Now I think I have remarked in a previous chapter that I had four really high-class horses which in their early careers promised little or nothing on first acquaintance, and yet each one in some detail or other told me that patience might some day be rewarded. They were *Florizel II*, *Ossian*, *Morion*, and *Jeddah*. *Morion*, for instance, was such a bad goer as a foal and yearling in the paddock that Lord Westmorland, who managed the Duke of Devonshire's horses at the time, never put him in any of the classic races, or, indeed, in any of the important weight-for-age events. I really think if some people had had the four horses

I have mentioned when they were young they would have added them to the list of geldings and turned them out for another year or two. Never were perseverance and patience better rewarded than in each of the four instances.

When he had finished growing *Jeddah* stood 16-3 hands, but he was always inclined to be "leggy." Yet one could fairly describe him as being nice-actioned, while he had a perfect temper. A glance at his picture will at once show his legginess, though possibly the artist has over-emphasized the characteristic by drawing the jockey, Otto Madden, rather too small. You will also note the rather straight pasterns, which had much to do with ending his racing career sooner than we should have wished. He was, of course, a most beautifully bred horse being by *Janissary* from that very fine mare *Pilgrimage*, who in 1878 won the One Thousand Guineas for the Lord Lonsdale of the period. *Jeddah*, therefore, was quite well-enough bred to win a Derby.

Mr. Larnach gave only 160 guineas for *Pilgrimage* at the Duchess of Montrose's sale. I reckon she would be about eighteen years of age when he bought her, and the fact that a classic winner made only 160 guineas—the dam, too, of *Canterbury Pilgrim*, the Oaks winner of 1896—must have been due to a belief that she would not breed again. She was even thought to be barren at the time of the sale, but as a matter of fact she was carrying *Jeddah*. Mr. Larnach was, of course, taking a chance which others were not prepared to take, and though the sequel was great good luck for him he was nevertheless deserving of the big prize handed out to him by Fortune. It was at the same sale, by the way, that

Lord Stanley bought *Canterbury Pilgrim*, then a yearling, for 1,800 guineas.

I could not possibly attempt to train *Jeddah* in the first half of his two-year-old career. There was nothing radically wrong with him. It was merely constitutional; he wanted time in which to mature. For at that time he had outgrown his strength. His legs were "fleshy" and his joints rounded. If ever there was a great, big unfurnished baby among racehorses he was an outstanding example. Yet I remember that Mr. Larnach was most anxious to run his colt at Ascot, and so convinced was I that to do so would be to ruin him that we had words about it. The attitude I took up so annoyed him that he very nearly took his horses away from Egerton. I am glad to think he came to have good reason to appreciate the wisdom of the advice, though at the time he had accepted it so very reluctantly.

The weeks and months of that season slipped along, and all the while *Jeddah* kept improving in every way and justifying the policy of patience. He was never introduced to a racecourse until the 12th of October when he ran for the Clearwell Stakes. I did not think a colt still so backward could possibly win, but the time had arrived now when some experience of racing would have a stimulating effect. He would know something about racing when he came to enter on his three-year-old career, though I cannot think I was even then thinking in any way seriously of the next year's Derby. For this first race of his *Jeddah*, ridden by Madden, started at 10 to 1 and finished second. The winner was an odds-on chance named *Orzil*, belonging to Mr. Leonard Brassey.

The point is that the colt did better than I expected and as the eye-opener did him a deal of good, bringing him on to an extraordinary extent in the course of a fortnight, I thought he would win his only other race as a two-year-old. It was the Free Handicap in which he was given 8 st. Top weight of 9 st. was carried by Mr. A. Belmont's *Bridegroom II*, but a hot favourite was Sir Blundell Maple's *Nun Nicer*, weighted at 8-12. As I have said, I thought our colt would win this time, and with Mr. Larnach telling his friends to bet, though he was a non-betting man himself, *Jeddah* started second favourite at 4 to 1. Unfortunately for us this was an occasion when Sloan displayed that genius which made him such a marvellous jockey. I do not pretend to know how he did it, but somehow he got up to beat us a head on a filly named *Meta II*, belonging to Lord William Beresford. She had won two races before, but I do not think she ever won again. I expect she remembered what happened in the desperate effort which gave her a head win over *Jeddah*. The two were out on their own. Judging the form, of course, through *Meta II* it did not appear to be singularly bright. She was only receiving 1 lb., but the point is the others were well trounced, and the way I looked at it was that Sloan, rather than his mount, had beaten the colt. I now most decidedly began to have some hopes of *Jeddah* because it was an absolute certainty, while he kept sound and I could train him, that he would make more than the normal improvement from two to three years of age. There was such a tremendous lot of improvement in him in a physical sense, and I remembered with some degree of comfort those other horses of his type—*Ossian*, *Florizel II*, and *Morion*.

Happily the hard race did *Jeddah* much good rather than harm. I saw him improve every week throughout the winter following. His legs began to fine down, and I found him coming to hand just as early as he could be wanted as a three-year-old. He was in the Craven Stakes, claiming, of course, the maiden allowance, and with a view to it I tried him with some other smart horses I had at the time, including *Dieudonné* and *Nunsuch*, the latter being a four-year-old mare which was eventually bought for the Prince of Wales, and later in the year should most certainly have won the Cambridgeshire but for a tragedy for which her jockey, Sloan, was responsible. However, that is an incident which at the moment does not concern my narrative of the career of *Jeddah*. The big colt won that trial, and generously confirmed it by winning the Craven Stakes by a length. A horse of the Duke of Westminster's named *Calveley*, that afterwards became a most valuable trial horse for *Flying Fox* at Kingsclere, was backed to win this race, as also was *Galashiels*, belonging to Sir J. Miller, but *Jeddah* was a clear favourite. Forthwith he began to be talked about in connexion with the classics.

The Prince of Wales about this time was at Biarritz, and, as *Jeddah* was doing so well, His Royal Highness was written to by Lord Marcus Beresford and informed that we believed the colt would win the Two Thousand Guineas. For the first of the classic races he was a 6 to 1 chance though there were two shorter-priced ones in the actual first favourite *Ninus*, belonging to Prince Soltykoff, and the Duke of Westminster's *Batt*, a horse which was destined to rub up rather roughly against his adversary *Jeddah*.

in at least two other races. As a matter of fact neither *Jeddah* nor *Batt* was placed in the race, which was won for Mr. Wallace Johnstone by *Disraeli*, while the Duke of Portland's *Wantage* was second and *Ninus* third. *Jeddah*, I fancy, came in fourth, and when Watts, who rode Mr. Larnach's colt, dismounted he said he thought the horse had not liked his bridle.

I cannot discover that John Porter thought such a deal of *Batt*. In a trial at Kingsclere before the Two Thousand Guineas *Calveley*, who as I have related was behind *Jeddah* in the race for the Craven Stakes, had been tried to beat *Batt* by three-parts of a length, *Batt* failing by that margin to give 14 lb. I should have thought it made out *Batt* to be pretty smart without being in any sense a wonder. The odd thing is that *Jeddah* and *Batt* should have been born in adjoining boxes at the Eaton Stud, and it may be also recalled that two other Derby winners in *Sainfoin* and *Flying Fox* were foaled in *Jeddah's* box. John Porter has told a story of the foaling of *Jeddah* and *Batt*, which is well worth re-telling since it bears so interestingly on my second Derby winner.

After the Duke of Westminster had inspected *Jeddah* he turned to his stud groom Chapman, and said: "You will never rear that foal, Chapman." Three years later, when *Jeddah* had won the Derby and *Batt* had been beaten into second place, the Duke jokingly remarked to Chapman: "It would have been as well if you had let *Jeddah* 'go.' You struggled night and day to rear him, and he has rewarded you by beating our horse in the Derby."



*Jeddah's* next race was the Newmarket Stakes, and I tried him in the bridle to which he was accustomed at exercise. I cannot say after his failure in the Two Thousand Guineas that I was anything like confident. Rather would it be more correct to say that I was hopeful. You see I was not satisfied that he had shown his form in the Two Thousand, and this I knew was also Watts's opinion. As it happened a particularly good horse won the "Stakes" that year in *Cyllene*, who would probably have won the Derby had he been in the race. Fortunately for us, as it was to turn out, he was not. *Cyllene* won by four lengths though there was a better favourite in *Wantage*, who had filled second place to *Disraeli* (a non-runner on this latter occasion). *Wantage* ran badly and *Jeddah* only fairly. This was not the showing of a colt that could have any substantial chance for the Derby.

Between that race and the Derby we subjected him to a serious trial, and this time *Dieudonné* beat him. It was natural, I suppose, that as the outcome of the trial *Dieudonné*, whom I trained for the Duke of Devonshire, should now be given a decided preference for the Derby. Apparently *Jeddah* had suffered some strange loss of form, and I could not be satisfied that any convincing reason existed for it. On the other hand, *Dieudonné* had certain credentials as a two-year-old that now brought him into the picture, seeing that the form of the top class three-year-olds seemed to be somewhat mixed up. *Dieudonné* had won the Imperial Produce Stakes at Kempton Park by three-parts of a length from *Cyllene*, who, however, was trying to give 10 lb. I suppose the result of that race made *Cyllene* about

a 7 lb. better horse, and we had just seen him win the Newmarket Stakes in great style. No wonder, therefore, attention turned from *Jeddah* to the Duke of Devonshire's colt, and that Mr. Larnach began to despair of winning the Derby. I know I had backed *Jeddah* at 33's and any chance of getting out of my money had vanished. Many years later, when *Grand Parade* won the Derby of 1919, there was a somewhat similar state of affairs. They believed *Dominion* in the same ownership would win on the day, and *Grand Parade*, who had been at a comparatively short price, drifted out to 33 to 1. *Jeddah* did worse than that. He was so utterly neglected that his price at starting was 100 to 1. Needless to say I did not back him at those odds.

*Dieudonné*, too, had won the Middle Park Plate very easily, beating *Disraeli*, *Wildfowler*, and others. When therefore he trounced *Jeddah* in the trial I have referred to there was just cause for believing that he might be the probable Derby winner after all. Now that it is long since over we see that *Jeddah* was ever so much the better stayer, which explains why he, and not *Dieudonné*, prevailed over the mile and a half at Epsom. When Mr. Larnach was in some doubt after the trial as to whether he should let his colt go to the post for the Derby I pressed him to do so, urging as the chief reason that I was satisfied he was a good horse and that he had not yet shown his right form in public. Of course his showing in the trial did not quite bear out that estimate. On the other hand, there is sometimes something at the back of your mind which is hard to define, but which impels you to a certain course of action or to certain conclusions. It will explain why I had not altogether

lost faith in *Jeddah*, though I admit I was afraid he would not now win the Derby.

With Watts taking the mount on *Dieudonné*, Madden rode *Jeddah*. The latter had done well since his trial, but, of course, there was no chance of finding out anything more definite than that he was exceptionally fit and well when he went to Epsom. There was no trouble in boxing him as with *Persimmon*. I suppose it was that, while we left nothing to chance, we were not in a sense so anxious. It is often, I have thought, wonderful how some horses can read your thoughts. I am positive *Persimmon* must have done so on that day when he nearly sent me mad by his antics before he would enter the railway horse-box which was to convey him from Dullingham to Epsom.

There is little to write of the actual race which has not often been recalled in print. It may suffice if I say that *Dieudonné* revealed himself as a non-stayer, and, to the amazement of onlookers, *Jeddah*, the despised, won like a good horse by three-parts of a length from *Batt*, with another 100 to 1 chance in *Dunlop* third. To say that I was as astonished as everyone would not be correct, for reasons I have tried to explain. Yet I had trained my second Derby winner, with a horse in whom I had refused wholly to lose faith. I had seen the trial form reversed, and I had won money which I certainly should not have won had I been given an opportunity of hedging and so getting out of my liability. No wonder Lord Rosebery assumed a most whimsical expression as he uttered those words with which I started the book: "Congratulations, Marsh! But . . . I suppose you are laughing on one side of your



MR. J. W. LARNACH'S *JEDDAH* (O. MADDEN RIDING), WINNER OF THE DERBY, 1898



face and crying on the other!" *Dieudonné*, on whom the public had wagered rather than on *Jeddah*, had been beaten into fourth place. Perhaps Lord Rosebery thought that fact robbed me of some satisfaction in winning the Derby. I can say most truthfully that it did not. I was thankful enough to have trained the winner in any circumstances and for such an admirable sportsman as Mr. Larnach proved himself throughout his association with the Turf. He was, of course, overjoyed, and a few days later sent me the following letter:—

DEAR SIR,

Though I have already thanked you, I must write to do so again, for I feel that I cannot say in words how much I feel all the trouble and care you have taken of my horse. You have always stood up for him, and have always declared that he was a good horse.

I know that you were placed in a peculiar position, having two Derby horses in your stable belonging to different owners, but nothing could have been more impartial than your management of them, or more flattering than the perfect condition you brought them both out in.

It is entirely owing to your advice last year to me, not to run *Jeddah* too soon, that he has grown into such a good horse and won the Derby for me—the height of my ambition ever since I was a little boy at Eton.

Believe me,

Very truly yours,

I, *Carlton Gardens, S.W.*

J. W. LARNACH.

Years later he expressed some of his gratitude for any part I had played in a letter which practically announced his severance with racing and breeding.

I cannot do better than quote from it now. It was written eleven years after *Jeddah* had made him such a happy man, and in the course of it he said :—

DEAR MARSH,

I am quite sure that you will take an interest always in my horses, and hope that you will. I hate changes always, and feel that the end of a twelve years' association is a very sad thing for us all, but I find that, now I have my daughter out, it is quite impossible for me to look after or take any interest in so many things, and am obliged to curtail my troubles, which I am sure you will understand.

To me the long association has had some very happy times, but also some very sad ones ; one of the greatest pleasures of my life came to me when we won the Derby with *Jeddah*, but I also have had the greatest sorrow of my life in the loss of my dear wife, and life has lost most of its interest for me ever since.

You also, I know, have passed through varying times in the twelve years, and no one, I can assure you, will be more pleased when you win, or watch your horses winning with greater pleasure than I shall, and no one can wish you good luck more sincerely than I do. You have the kindest-hearted and the best of employers in His Majesty, and I know you will do your very best for him.

It is very kind of you to say what you do of myself. I can only say that all through my life I have tried to "run straight" and to do to others as I would they should do to me, which is, I think, the only right way. So few in these days really care for their horses or for the racing itself. You and I know many who race for all sorts of reasons, racing itself the least of them; alas, what would those fine old sportsmen like the late Lord Falmouth, Admiral

Rous, etc., think of present-day racing? They would be horrified.

I shall come and have a look at your string sometimes, and see if we cannot pick out a Derby winner.

It may not be inappropriate if I here give the official details of the Derby of 1898. They are set out as follows :—

The One Hundred and Nineteenth renewal of the Derby Stakes of 6,000 sovereigns, etc. (276 subs., 78 of whom paid 5 sovereigns each—£5,450).

Mr. J. W. Larnach's ch. c. <i>Jeddah</i> , by <i>Janissary</i>	O. Madden	1
Duke of Westminster's br. c. <i>Batt</i>	M. Cannon	2
Mr. W. Ward's b. c. <i>Dunlop</i>	F. C. Pratt	3
Duke of Devonshire's ch. c. <i>Dieudonné</i>	J. Watts	4
Duke of Portland's b. c. <i>Wantage</i>	F. B. Black	o
Mr. J. S. Curtis's b. c. <i>Archduke II</i>	K. Cannon	o
Duke of Westminster's b. c. <i>Calveley</i>	Moreton	o
Mr. Wallace Johnstone's b. c. <i>Disraeli</i>	S. Loates	o
Mr. P. Lorrillard's b. c. <i>Elfin</i>	C. Wood	o
Mr. Horatio Bottomley's ch. c. <i>Hawfinch</i>	F. Finlay	o
Sir M. Fitzgerald's ch. c. <i>Heir Male</i>	N. Robinson	o
Mr. T. R. Dewar's br. c. <i>Perthshire</i>	Bradford	o
Lord Ellesmere's b. c. <i>Pheon</i>	R. Colling	o
Lord Stanley's b. c. <i>Schomberg</i>	Rickaby	o
Mr. J. B. Leigh's b. c. <i>The Wyvern</i>	C. Loates	o
Mr. H. T. Barclay's b. c. <i>Cheery Heart</i>	Fagan	o
Mr. Russel's br. c. <i>The Virginian</i>	Allsopp	o
Mr. A. Belmont's ch. c. <i>Bridegroom II</i>	T. Loates	o

Betting—2 to 1 against *Disraeli*, 7 to 2 against *donné*, 9 to 1 against *Archduke II*, 10 to 1 against *Batt*, 20 to 1 against *Perthshire*, 1,000 to 45 against *The Virginian*, 33 to 1 each against *Heir Male* and *Wantage*,



40 to 1 each against *The Wyvern* and *Hawfinch*, 50 to 1 each against *Elfin* and *Bridegroom II*, 100 to 1 each against *Pheon*, *Jeddah*, *Schomberg*, *Cheery Heart* and *Dunlop*, and 300 to 1 against *Calveley*. Won by three-quarters of a length, a length and a half between second and third.

Of course there were no end of people and many writers to suggest that the result was a mighty fluke. With some people the success of a long-priced horse is invariably a fluke, and cannot be accepted at its face value. I have not the slightest doubt that *Jeddah* was the best horse of his age, excepting, it may be, *Cyllene*. I am not claiming for him the exalted level to which *Persimmon* attained of my Derby winners, but it is something to be satisfied that, though his price was 100 to 1, he was unquestionably the best horse in the Derby that year. That there was no excuse for *Batt* was shown a little later when the pair met for the Prince of Wales's Stakes at Ascot. This time our horse had to concede *Batt*, 6 lb., and they betted slight odds of 11 to 10 on *Batt*, but *Jeddah* beat him this time by no less than five lengths.

At Ascot both *Batt* and *Jeddah* were in more than one race, and I took the trouble to write to John Porter and ask him which race he would run *Batt* for, as I would then run *Jeddah* for the other one. "Whichever race you decide on," I said, most benevolently as I thought, "I will not start *Jeddah* for." Rather to my surprise he replied saying that he would run *Batt* for both his races. I have shown how *Jeddah* trounced him on the first day. On the second day they ran the Duke of Westminster's colt for the Ascot Derby, and this time

he started a very hot favourite at 11 to 10 against and was not even placed. I expect he was a queer-tempered sort, which he may have inherited from his dam, even though she was also the dam of that very high-class Derby winner, *Flying Fox*. I refer to the mare *Vampire*.

*Jeddah* never ran again until the St. Leger. For some time before the St. Leger the ground got very hard, and in one of his winding-up gallops just before the race he slightly jarred a suspensory ligament. Still I got him to Doncaster all right and hoped he might win, though I was very afraid of a breakdown on the hard ground. Actually this was what happened. He was going extremely well until reaching the distance, where he had to cross a path from which the grass had been worn. Here he felt the mischief and faltered, so that *Wildfowler*, in the colours of Captain Greer, was able to beat him in the run home by four lengths. It had been 6 to 5 on our horse, which shows that the secret of the leg trouble had been uncommonly well kept. *Wildfowler* was second favourite at 10 to 1.

*Jeddah* ran only once as a four-year-old, when unplaced behind *Flying Fox* for the Jockey Club Stakes, but he was only a patched-up horse and half-trained at that. Hence his starting price on that occasion of 50 to 1. He went to the stud in due course, and did fairly well. I could wish that I had been able to train him properly as a four-year-old, as I am sure he was a Derby winner up to the average at least. The extraordinary thing I could never understand is why he should not have shown us his right form until the Derby. It was a mystery, one of those

things which remain unintelligible to the closest observer and the most experienced in training matters. If I could have accounted for it at the time I should certainly have backed him at 100 to 1. Indeed, it is most improbable in such a case he would have started at 100 to 1 ! But for that lapse during a critical portion of his preparation for the Derby his chance would have been far more correctly assessed, in a betting sense, at 20 to 1—certainly not more than that.

## CHAPTER XV

### DIAMOND JUBILEE

The Early History of *Diamond Jubilee*—A High-spirited Horse—Drastic Measures Recommended and Discarded—Herbert Jones as a Jockey—A Tribute to the Jockey's Horsemanship.

UNQUESTIONABLY the nineties of the last century were the most brilliant years of my racing life. Before then I had been able to contribute some quite remarkable pages to history by reason of my long and memorable association with the Duke of Hamilton. For him I had won two classic races and many other important races. But it was in the early nineties that I first had the honour of training for King Edward. *Persimmon's* brilliant star shone out in that period. *Jeddah* came and went, as it were. *La Flèche*, one of the great mares of the time, was for part of her career at Egerton. Important handicaps were won for the Duke of Devonshire and others, and Goodwood Cups for Mr. Arthur James. It was also in the nineties that *Diamond Jubilee* came to Egerton to get great fame as a classic winner. It was, indeed, a magnificent period in my training life.

Throughout the whole time I had the honour of training for King Edward I was continually being reminded of his extraordinary thoughtfulness and consideration for others. At various points of this book I have tried to emphasize this, though, maybe, inadequately so. As an instance I may recall that

it was late in the year of *Jeddah's* Derby triumph that on the initiative of His Royal Highness the patrons of Egerton House stables—the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Wolverton, Mr. Larnach, and Mr. Arthur James—combined to pay me a salary in addition to the weekly charges for the maintenance of the horses. In conveying the intimation to me General Sir Dighton Probyn wrote :—"The Prince of Wales desires me to say he hopes that this extra fixed allowance will cover the heavy rent you are now forced to pay for Egerton House and its splendid stabling. With my hearty congratulation on what I feel sure is a well-earned recognition of your labour, skill, and success as a trainer, and with every good wish for the future."

It was a welcome enough recognition of any pleasure and profit I may have been able to bring to others by my humble training ability—welcome in the sense that the expenses of maintaining Egerton House and its stables amounted to such a tremendous item as to be positively alarming. It may be that my conception of the sort of establishment which should be associated with the royal racehorses was too high. Such, however, was not my view and never will be. I thought that nothing could be too good for the horses owned by my gracious master King Edward. The main burden, however, was in respect of the rent, rating, and taxation. Bearing in mind the many horses I trained in those days for the five owners named and the salaries paid to others by their wealthy patrons, I cannot think that the annual payment was excessive. Rather was it, as I have said, welcome, and as such was made entirely owing

to the ever kindly thoughtfulness of the Prince of Wales.

As *Diamond Jubilee's* year of conquest in the whole of the classic races for colts was 1900, it was in 1898, in the month of August, that the colt came to me as an unbroken yearling. For the following season of 1899 the Prince of Wales had the following horses in training :—

*Sandringham*, b. c. by *St. Simon*—*Perdita II*, 3 yrs.  
*Lucknow*, ch. c. by *St. Angelo*—*Luck*, 4 yrs.  
*Hedge Warbler*, b. g. by *Windgall*—*Marguerite*, 4 yrs.  
*Eventail*, ch. f. by *Ayrshire*—*Fanchette*, 3 yrs.  
*Oakdene*, b. h. by *Donovan*—*Poetry*, 5 yrs.  
*Lady Daisy*, br. f. by *Orme*—*Marguerite*, 2 yrs.  
*Frontignan*, b. c. by *St. Simon*—*Sweet Muscat*, 2 yrs.  
*Muscovado*, b. c. by *Prince Hampton*—*Unrefined*, 2 yrs.  
*Der Freischütz*, b. c. by *Carbine*—*Operetta*, 2 yrs.  
*Fitzsimmons*, br. c. by *St. Simon*—*Merry Lassie*, 2 yrs.  
*Diamond Jubilee*, b. c. by *St. Simon*—*Perdita II*, 2 yrs.  
*Donizetti*, b. c. by *Donovan*—*Fanchette*, 2 yrs.  
*Kalsipi*, b. f. by *Ayrshire*—*Chinkara*, 2 yrs.  
*Safety Pin*, b. g. by *Surefoot*—*Pin Basket*, 6 yrs.  
And one with the pretty name of *Love Lies Bleeding*.

Perhaps I need hardly say that the arrival of *Diamond Jubilee* as a yearling was not my first introduction to him. The very fact of his being an own brother to *Persimmon* had created the greatest interest in him as a foal, just as I remember it did in the case of *Persimmon* at that age because he happened to be own brother to *Florizel II*, the best horse owned by the Prince of Wales up to that time. It will be noticed from the above list that another own brother to the trio in *Sandringham* had been sandwiched

between *Persimmon* and *Diamond Jubilee* among the progeny of the famous sire and dam. Apart from the fact that he bore such a splendid name, it was a matter of regret that *Sandringham* could never be properly trained. It may be that he had not the strong constitution of his brothers and his limbs were at all times inadequate to the strain of racing. Nevertheless, the blood being so valuable, he made a pretty good price when sold to America for stud purposes.

Possibly because of his relationship to *Persimmon*, *Diamond Jubilee* as a foal and then as a yearling was made too much of. Some horses will take no notice of a deal of fussing and petting. Others, again, will take advantage of it. They do not necessarily develop vice, but they are apt to become rebellious and peevish if they cannot have things entirely their own way through the rest of their lives. They have not a nice way of making their objections known. They must make a tremendous fuss, and, if fussing fails, they will quite likely resort to cunning. Yet, at the back of all *Diamond's* idiosyncrasies and his waywardness, was much that was honest and good. Fortunately we were able so far to suppress the bad as to permit the good to assert itself. For it follows that a horse which was not honest would certainly not have won the Triple Crown—the Two Thousand Guineas, Derby, and St. Leger. Not only so, but he also won the Newmarket Stakes ; in fact he was invincible among horses of his own age as a three-year-old.

Well, it was as a rather spoilt young gentleman that the colt came into training. He had cultivated a taste for succulent carrots and other tit-bits, sure evidence of that consideration and kindness which



**I.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES'S *DIAMOND JUBILEE* (H. JONES RIDING), WINNER OF THE TWO THOUSAND GUINEAS, DERBY, AND ST. LEGER, 1900**





in his case had been accepted in the wrong spirit. That he was a gentleman admits of no possible doubt, and I say quite deliberately that of the thousands of horses which passed through my hands he stands out as the only example of an absolutely perfect horse that could not be faulted. I have told the story of how the late Lord Chaplin, when going round the stables with the Prince of Wales, declared that there was no such thing as a horse that could not be faulted in some way, and how, later, he lost a "fiver" to me through confessing, on seeing *Diamond Jubilee* and subjecting him to the closest scrutiny and the most critical inspection, that he was what I claimed for him.

I believe it is a fact that in his early days at the stud, when the young thoroughbreds are given so much freedom, he would walk straight at you, and over you if you did not give way. Nothing appeared to frighten him. When he first came into training he stood 15-3½ hands, which is well above the average for a yearling. Certainly he was a beautiful young horse and immensely pleasing to the eye, for he was a bright bay with dark legs and a dark line down the middle of his back to the root of the tail. He had a most intelligent head and a perfect back and loins. What more can I say of a faultless horse? I looked for faults and could not find one. In that respect he was a new discovery in my life.

Naturally he was something of a "handful" to break. Again, let me say that during the period of breaking in particular there was no harm in him, but he seemed to know quite enough, in fact too much for a racehorse. All went most satisfactorily with him. He gave every possible satisfaction that winter, and had grown into a lovely two-year-old,

when soon after the Derby meeting at Epsom I decided to try him. With *Simonswood* belonging to Mr. Larnach I had run second for the Woodcote Stakes. The form was pretty good, and *Diamond Jubilee* was asked to give this colt 7 lb. He won the trial all right, and pleased me so much that I thought he would certainly follow in the footsteps of his great brother and win the Coventry Stakes at Ascot on the occasion of his debut.

So far the "old Adam" in him had been dormant, but we were soon to discover that it was in him. Feeling rather proud of him, and especially of his immaculate behaviour on the occasion of being in public for the first time, I remarked on the fact to Sir Dighton Probyn, who came into the paddock to see him saddled. I even went so far as to say what a delightful thing it was to have another good horse and such a nice-tempered one too! Really, I sometimes think he must have understood what I said, for no sooner were the words out of my mouth than he lashed out and kicked a man near by on his hand. The unlucky fellow happened to have his hands in his pockets. Sir Dighton looked at me and fled back to the royal box. He often reminded me of that incident of when I spoke too soon.

For myself, I was not unduly disturbed at the time, nothing like so much, I imagine, as the man who was kicked, though fortunately not seriously. I put it down to the strangeness of his surroundings and being rather mobbed. A little later I was to discover with a shock that I had been judging him far too leniently. Our colt was a hot favourite at 6 to 5 against, and instead of seeing him win in stylish fashion by two or three lengths I beheld him giving a per-

fectly awful display at the starting post. He just seemed to go mad, rearing up, walking about on his hind legs, and generally behaving disgracefully. Watts said afterwards that the colt tried to get his (the jockey's) foot in his mouth. It was plain to see the jockey had not been enjoying himself, and that his private opinion of the debutant—well, would scarcely be printable here.

Of course he did not win. This was one of the successes of *Democrat* as a two-year-old. Ridden by Sloan he won by half a length from Sir Waldie Griffiths's *Vain Duchess*. *Diamond Jubilee* was a distinctly moderate fourth. When the starter, Mr. Arthur Coventry, returned to the paddock he told me that never had he seen even an old horse, much less a two-year-old, behave so badly at the post. It was terribly disappointing, and depressed us all at the time.

I am not claiming for *Diamond Jubilee* that he was a high-class two-year-old. Such a claim would not be substantiated by the records, which show that he ran six times and only won once. Of course he was running in the top class, but even so it did not seem at the time that his early promise was going to be fulfilled. It now became a most delicate matter of so controlling and subduing his excessively high courage and proneness to temper as to permit of his true racing qualities being disclosed in public. It was to be a ticklish business, and that we finally succeeded was, I think, one of the most satisfactory incidents in my life. Human endeavour did, after all, triumph over this singularly intelligent and hot-headed horse.

The outbreak at Ascot had been so unexpected

as to take me absolutely by surprise. I tried on reflection to think it was due to greenness, inexperience of the racecourse, calfishness—something of that sort, which seems to make some horses more ridiculous rather than actually bad-tempered. After coming home from Ascot he behaved really quite well and prospered in his work so that I had renewed hope that there would be no recurrence of the fiasco. We decided to give him his next race on the July course at Newmarket, necessitating only a short walk from his stable to the course. The race was the July Stakes, and it says much for the public's belief in *Persimmon's* brother that he was again favourite, this time at even money. I hoped and believed he would win, especially as there did not seem much to beat.

Imagine our disgust when he was just as bad as ever with Watts at the start. This time he fairly unseated the jockey, and came on riderless up the course to be caught by one of our lads from Egerton. He took him back to the start, and Watts remounted, but the colt was having nothing to do with racing. When the start took place he ran all over the course, and finally finished an inglorious last. This was a second blow and possibly heavier than the first, as there was always the chance now that it was leading to the horse becoming incorrigible.

After racing was over that day His Royal Highness came to tea at Egerton House with Lord Marcus Beresford, and one could see that he was much disappointed over the tragedy of the beautiful colt. Apparently a score or so of remedies had been suggested by the Prince's friends as sure to effect a reformation, and these were discussed.

"If," I ventured to say, "we take their advice I have no doubt we shall drive the colt completely mad. I beg your Royal Highness to allow me a further chance to see what I can do with him. I have not lost hope in him by any means."

"Very well, Marsh," said the Prince at the close of the conversation, "you shall go on trying what you like and think best. But I'm afraid he is a bad case. I very much hope not, but it looks like it. Try your best."

Of course it may be that the colt had an intense dislike to Watts, though I daresay it was nothing compared with the jockey's dislike of the horse. We were to discover later how the colt most certainly would not give of his best, and in fact would not be consoled, until early in his three-year-old career Herbert Jones displaced Morny Cannon. It is quite possible, therefore, looking back after this long distance of time, that *Diamond Jubilee's* awful behaviour at Ascot and then at Newmarket was due to savage resentment against that perfect horseman, Jack Watts. I only advance the notion as a theory and not as the explanation. That is really beyond me to give; I can only conjecture.

It was Cannon who had the mount on the colt when we next came to run him for the Prince of Wales's Stakes at Goodwood; and the change of jockey certainly seemed to do good, for he ran a better race, a truer race, and was better behaved in every way. It is odd to think he should have been favourite again, and I suppose the public must have been getting rather sick of him when on this occasion he was beaten half a length by Lord Rosebery's *Epsom Lad*, who did become a very fine winner as

we discovered more than once with *Diamond Jubilee*. This was only the first time we ran up against him to come off second best.

I am glad to think the Prince never had occasion to regret his decision to give me another chance with the colt, as he lost much of his waywardness and the improvement we had noted with such satisfaction extended to the autumn when he won his first race. This was the Boscawen Stakes, worth £1,200. Cannon again rode him and just managed to squeeze him home a head from a moderate one called *Paige* in Mr. Wallace Johnstone's colours. He was ridden in a chifney, which may have curbed any notions he had of "playing up" again. I could not help thinking there would have been no question of a head win had it been *Persimmon*. Rather would it have been a question of how far he would have won by.

With Cannon claimed to ride *Goblet* for the Duke of Westminster, Watts renewed his acquaintance with *Diamond Jubilee* when I produced him to run for the Middle Park Plate. He was up against *Democrat*, giving him the gelding allowance of 3 lb. *Simon Dale*, of the Duke of Portland's, was second favourite, and our colt, though there were only six runners, was at 100 to 7. This time he had apparently lost his hostility to Watts, if such ever existed, for he put up the best race of his career as a two-year-old. He made *Democrat* pull out his best to win by half a length. Yet *Democrat* must have been a remarkable horse, as a fortnight later for the Dewhurst Plate when conceding our colt 1 lb. he won by three-parts of a length. This same animal was no good at all after his two-year-old days. I found him a sharp

thorn in my side in the sense that he three times won races in which *Diamond Jubilee* ran, and it is certainly odd that later he came into my possession and enabled me to present him as a charger to Lord Kitchener, at that time Commander-in-Chief of the Forces in India. That is an incident which I can with much satisfaction refer to later.

That race for the Dewhurst Plate ended the "*Diamond's*" career as a two-year-old. It was not one which held out particularly bright hopes that he might be good enough in the following season to win the Prince of Wales another Derby. There were so many flaws in it, not the least being the way he had disgraced himself at Ascot and Newmarket on the July course. His achievements were modest, judging them by the highest standard. What was encouraging was the fact that one could see him all the time in the autumn making steady improvement. There was his breeding and the fact that he had splendid size and action suggesting the stayer as well as the horse of speed. Finally, one could take encouragement from the fact that both his brothers, *Florizel II* and *Persimmon*, made more than the normal improvement as they grew older. If only *Diamond Jubilee* should have the same trait . . .!

The chief concern of a trainer with a horse of which he has hopes for the classic races is to assist it to the best of his ability to get over the winter. It is the period of a very striking transition in the life of a thoroughbred from two to three years of age. The Prince's colt had so very much in his favour at the outset. To begin with, I had no anxiety on the score of his growth. I knew he would have more than ample size if good enough in other ways to win



a Derby. It was necessary that he should be kept tractable, and that feeding and steady exercise should in the smallest detail be suited to him. He was more often than not ridden about by Herbert Jones, who by a lucky chance was destined to be associated with all this horse's brilliant victories in the royal colours. It was as if the colt conspired with the jockey to bring the unexpected to pass.

I certainly owe it to *Diamond Jubilee* that Jones through riding him began an association as jockey for two Kings which lasted for over a score of years. A better servant no man ever had, and a straighter and more honest jockey never got on a horse. He was a wonderfully fine horseman, and could do wonders with some horses that would do nothing for others. Many a horse he had persuaded to better ways that would have been useless had he not had the persuasion and skill Jones could bring to bear. He may not have been artistic in the sense that Jack Watts was, to name only one of the great jockeys of the time, but though we tried other jockeys with some horses they never did better and sometimes not so well as did Jones. What he had to do with the making of *Diamond Jubilee* into a classic winner of renown cannot be too generously acknowledged. He had an almost mesmeric influence over him, due in a large measure to the fact that the horse knew him and trusted him, and again to the way Jones would be firm while at the same time "kidding" to him.

I must leave to another chapter the very interesting story of *Diamond Jubilee's* three-year-old career. May I, however, venture to intrude here a purely personal note, which had much to do with the shaping of my life from that time onwards? My first wife,

who was a sister of Mr. Dan Thirlwell and had been so much to me during my Lordship days and early Egerton days, died during the brilliant *Persimmon* era. It was late in 1899 that I became engaged to be married to Miss Grace Darling, daughter of my old friend Sam Darling, of Beckhampton.

I would not have introduced this semi-private note into these memories except that it was an incident of much importance and should not be missing from an autobiography. Certainly I owe to my present dear wife all the inestimable happiness of these later years. No man has ever had a brighter and more cheerful mate than she has been to me, always keen on my horses and my work, rejoicing intensely in any successes, and ever encouraging in the inevitable times of depression when Fortune has withdrawn her smiles.

It was in acknowledging an intimation of my engagement that Sir Dighton Probyn addressed to me this kindly note :—

I am desired by His Royal Highness to write and convey to you his hearty congratulations on your engagement to Miss Darling. I am to tell you that the Prince feels sure you have done the wisest and best thing and that he wishes you all success and happiness. The Prince is only sorry you did not tell him of your engagement when he was at Newmarket that he might have congratulated you personally then and there.

Please let me take this opportunity of conveying to you my own most sincere and hearty congratulations on this happy event. I have often thought and said you wanted a wife at Egerton House, and nothing else. My best wishes to you.

So glad you are hopeful about the Derby of 1900.

The year 1900 was not the least memorable of the seventy odd years of my life. *Diamond Jubilee* won the Two Thousand Guineas, Derby, and St. Leger ; I had the immense satisfaction of seeing *Ambush II* win the Grand National for the Prince ; and it was the year of my marriage. The latter took place early in the year, and to my great satisfaction on returning from my honeymoon to Newmarket I found that *Diamond Jubilee* had made magnificent improvement in a physical sense, far more, indeed, than I could possibly have hoped for. It was evidence of how well he had been cared for in my absence, and I take every possible pleasure in recording the fact now. My brother-in-law, Sam Darling, was with me at the time. The horse had grown and matured and done well in every possible way. He was still hot-headed and ready to get upset on the smallest provocation, but beneath all that fuss and excitability I knew exceptional merit lay. He became more of a "handful," shall I say, as he got fitter, but as to that and all that befell him in what was quite a dramatic career I must tell in the chapter which follows.

## CHAPTER XVI

### DIAMOND JUBILEE'S DERBY

Jones becomes *Diamond Jubilee's* Jockey—Wins the Two Thousand Guineas on him—*Diamond Jubilee's* Sense of Humour—Wins the Derby—The Prince's Gift to the Author—Wins the St. Leger.

HERBERT JONES, who had the honour of riding for King Edward and King George for over a score of years, was for a jockey about the pluckiest and best rough horseman I have ever seen. His courage was never missing, and with it all he was the cheeriest soul imaginable, always light-hearted and capable of making Lord Marcus Beresford laugh at moments when any other would have been indiscreet to have tried. For there were times when that great wit could be out of humour, though never for long. The natural ready wit of Jones and his gaiety, together with the absolute trust in him, appealed immensely at all times to Lord Marcus as it did to all of us.

The public had never heard of Jones before he was introduced to them by *Diamond Jubilee*. He was all the time giving me faithful service, and proving of much value in trial gallops and in the daily work in general. Still it is very doubtful if he would have been given a fair chance, such were the circumstances, but for the intervention of the hot-headed horse. You see, up to about this time Jack Watts had been the jockey for the stable, and when a jockey

is paid a retainer and has a reputation second to none you cannot persuade patrons to give a chance to one who is practically unknown, as was the case with Jones. Moreover our light-weights were being ridden by Otto Madden. With the retirement of Watts a second claim was secured on that very fine jockey, Morny Cannon. His first master was the late Duke of Westminster.

I have shown how Cannon rode *Diamond Jubilee* in certain of his races as a two-year-old, and we had not failed to note how the colt behaved ever so much better for him at Goodwood than he had for Jack Watts at Ascot and Newmarket. However, we were to discover that horse and jockey were far from being *en rapport* when they came to renew their acquaintance in the early spring of 1900. I ought to point out here that Jones had been riding the "*Diamond*," as the horse was called in stables, in his work, and, apparently, he could do anything with him. Or perhaps it was the colt would do anything for him. They appeared to be the best of friends, and it may be that we accepted too readily, because we were aching to do so, the signs that the Prince's horse had settled down into a kind and tractable creature. We were to learn that any kindness was meant for the individual and not for the rest of the world. *Diamond Jubilee* had made an exception of Jones. Each had won the other's confidence.

The first time the colt showed a return to his old "monkey tricks" was just before the Prince of Wales was due to come to Newmarket and see him gallop. It would be some time before the Two Thousand Guineas, but when the colt had got into

good strong work. His Royal Highness was to come on the Thursday. I arranged with Morny Cannon that he should come down and ride the horse in his work on the Tuesday morning. This he did round the private gallop at Egerton. And then something most disconcerting happened. After pulling up Cannon jumped off his back and led him by the bridle rein. Instantly the horse seized him and rolled him over. Happily, he was rescued immediately, for help was at hand. The famous jockey was little the worse, though given a bit of a shock for the time being.

It will be understood that the incident gave rise to some misgivings. Again I was confronted with the possibility that his unquestioned racing merit was going to be lost because of a temper which might become a danger and ungovernable. I was so very conscious, too, at the time of the splendid progress he had made from two to three years of age. I do not suppose Cannon cared very much about him from that moment, and I am certainly not blaming him. Indeed he brought matters to a crisis not long before the Two Thousand Guineas. Again he had come down to ride the colt in a gallop, and I thought I had never seen him go so well. Morny, however, had other ideas. When he dismounted, this time with rather more caution and watchfulness, he suggested to me that the horse had not gone well and clearly would not go for him. Would I, therefore, see about getting another jockey for him?

Well, we could I suppose have exercised our claim on him, but what good would there have been in putting up a jockey, however distinguished, who distrusted his horse and had no confidence in him.

You begin with your race half lost before you start, so to say. The request placed us in a serious dilemma. Other leading jockeys were engaged, and we were very near to the Two Thousand Guineas. The colt could not be better, and I honestly felt that he had a big chance. For the next day or two I was struck with the quiet way the colt went with Herbert Jones on his back. Why not recommend Lord Marcus and His Royal Highness to put him up? I knew he was a first-class rider, who only needed the chance to prove it in public. But the reader will understand that, much as I believed in him, it required some courage, not only on my part but where the Prince and Lord Marcus were concerned, to begin his education in public in a classic race and on a horse which we thought much of as likely to gain Derby honours.

It was a moment for a bold decision, and I rejoice to-day, even more than I did then, that the decision to put up Jones was made. For I honestly believe it won us the classic races by keeping in check the colt's ever-present tendency to lapse from the paths of virtue and rectitude. The first move I made was to write to Lord Marcus strongly urging in the circumstances that Jones should be given the mount, and would he make the recommendation to the Prince? I pointed out how the horse would do more for him than for anyone else, and, although he was not such a good jockey as others through never having had the chance, yet the fact of knowing the horse, and the horse knowing him, would more than compensate.

The acceptance of my suggestion came at once in the following letter :—

DEAR MR. MARSH,

The Prince quite agrees for Bertie Jones to ride *Diamond*, and I think as the field is moderate we had better run *Fitzsimmons* also, with Morny up—but this we can talk over.

There are some nice foals here, especially *Laodamia's*. but it is a bore so many of her foals are mealy chestnuts.

Yours truly,

MARCUS BERESFORD.

Our reward came with the win of the Two Thousand Guineas in a field of ten. Horse and jockey made no mistake about it either, as they won by four lengths from Sir Ernest Cassel's *Bonarosa* and the rest. Cannon did not ride *Fitzsimmons*, as Lord Marcus had hinted that he might do. He had the mount on Mr. W. Low's *Elopement*, who actually started favourite at 15 to 8 agst. and finished fourth. Lord Rosebery's *Sailor Lad* was second favourite at 9 to 4, and *Diamond Jubilee* was at 11 to 4 agst. I have no doubt his price would have been very much shorter had Morny ridden. I suppose the professional backers distrusted Jones rather than the horses.

It was, of course, a delightful result, especially as the ease of the win suggested the brightest possibilities at Epsom. To me in particular it was highly satisfactory that Jones should have played his part so well, and I believe that good sportsman Morny was about the first to congratulate him. Do not imagine that the colt's new jockey effected a transformation in him. There were times before the Derby came to be run when he insisted on standing still or varying it by rearing. He was great on that and seemed to



specialize in it. These antics he would display sometimes when we wanted him to go down to the end of the gallop. I can only imagine he guessed what was in the wind, and thought it necessary to give us as much trouble as possible. Then, just as suddenly as he had stopped, he would take it into his head to move on.

It would not have been a bit of good losing patience with him. Some critics declared that he wanted a jolly good hiding. Well, that was their idea of training *Diamond Jubilee*. It was not mine. I might have given him a good hiding, but, if he had got one to-day, he would have wanted one to-morrow, and still another the day after! He might have done as you wished in the end, but the thrashings would have knocked the courage out of him and he would have been made useless for racing. Some horses may be no worse for such corrective medicine, but you must never hide the high-class horse of great courage. It is courage which makes him high-class. Break that and you destroy the whole fabric of the splendid racehorse. Happily, I had acquired that knowledge long before *Diamond Jubilee* came on the scene.

He was so intelligent that I sometimes used to think he plotted mischief for the satisfaction it gave him of knowing how annoyed and alarmed he could make us. An incident which illustrates this occurs to my mind as I write. It was not long before the St. Leger and they were betting odds on him. He was exceptionally well, and all was going as it should do until one particularly wild and wet morning when I hurried the horses in their cantering work. I wanted to get them home and dried. One has to

be on strict guard against chills at such times. The *Diamond* thought it a most excellent opportunity for him to remind us of his existence. He followed the other horses into the yard, and you naturally expected him to step into his box like any other horse of common sense on such an awful morning.

Did he do so? Not he. There he took up his stand, and neither cajolery nor threats could bring him to any other frame of mind. All the while the rain was teeming down. Water was running out of his clothing, and we were all getting soaked to the skin. I thought of the St. Leger and of the odds on, and how he would certainly get a chill and start coughing. He would not be able to run and . . .

I stayed until I could not stay any longer, so frantic does this sort of thing make one. Turning to the head man I said: "See what you can do," and I proceeded to walk out of the yard. But, of course, I had to turn back. When neither the horse nor ourselves could possibly be made any wetter he quietly walked into the box and began eating his hay! What a devilish fellow he was to be sure when he was so minded! There never was a horse so provoking. Had he been a human, I suppose, he would have been credited with a sense of humour, a sort of mordant wit. He seemed to say to himself: "You seem to fancy yourself. I'll see what I can do." On such occasions he would be master because it was simply no use losing your temper and patience. What a son he was of his mother, *Perdita II*!

But to return to the Derby. After the Two Thousand Guineas his work was, of course, extended, and to our relief I found out that he could certainly stay a mile and a half. No horse could have done

better than he did, and both Jones and myself were very confident when we went to Epsom in due course. I should have mentioned that in the interval he had won the valuable Newmarket Stakes at 2 to 1 on, though only by a short head from Mr. J. Musker's *Chevening*, ridden by the redoubtable Sloan.

While saddling the colt in the paddock for the Derby I received a message from the Prince, saying that the Princess of Wales would like to see *Diamond Jubilee* in the parade. As, however, I had so far managed the colt so successfully I was to use my discretion as to whether it would be wise to impose the parade on him. Parades at that time were not compulsory as they afterwards became. I should have preferred sending the colt straight to the post for the good reason that I was suspicious of him, especially in such a vast crowd. Epsom on Derby day is a tremendous ordeal for a highly strung horse. However, I discussed the point with Jones, and it was arranged that *Diamond Jubilee* should parade in front of the stands, but on the first indication of excitement Jones was to turn round and make his way to the starting post.

Jones secured an excellent place in the race, but there was nearly some very serious trouble rounding Tattenham Corner whereabouts Sloan, who was riding the American horse *Disguise II*, was the cause of alarming jostling, which interfered with *Forfarshire* and caused *Diamond Jubilee* to become unbalanced at this most critical part of a Derby. Fortunately Jones gave him an opportunity of collecting himself and went on in pursuit of *Disguise II*, on whom Sloan had gone into the lead. *Forfarshire*, who was supposed to be our most serious danger, had suffered

from the interference I have mentioned, and it was *Simon Dale*, in the Duke of Portland's colours, that became the danger to the Prince's horse after *Disguise II* had been overhauled and beaten. Morny Cannon, I am sure, gave of his best to beat his old friend the *Diamond*, but our colt never flinched, running right through to win by half a length. In that way did King Edward, as he was soon to become, win his second Derby and with a horse of his own breeding, as in the case of *Persimmon*.

Need it be said that another wonderful scene was enacted on the old and historic Downs. The masses cheered the Prince, and especially were they delighted with the big part played by Jones. They were proud moments, too, for me, and nothing could have been more gracious than His Royal Highness's kind words of thanks for my own part in the triumph. It was so good to mark the pleasure of Lord Marcus. After all he had taken a risk in recommending the Prince to put up Jones instead of Morny Cannon. He rejoiced, to be sure, in his justifiable feeling of self-satisfaction.

Here let me give the brief details of my third Derby winner:—

The One Hundred and Twenty-first Renewal of the Derby Stakes (301 subscriptions, 103 of whom paid 5 sovereigns each—£5,450).

H.R.H. the Prince of Wales's b. c. <i>Diamond Jubilee</i> , by <i>St. Simon</i>	H. Jones	1
Duke of Portland's b. or br. c. <i>Simon Dale</i>	M. Cannon	2
Mr. J. R. Keene's b. c. <i>Disguise II</i>	Sloan	3
Sir E. Cassel's ch. c. <i>Bonarosa</i>	L. Reiff	4
H.R.H. the Prince of Wales's br. g. <i>Frontignan</i>	R. Jones	0

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Mr. J. Musker's ch. c. <i>Chevening</i>	O. Madden	o
Mr. A. Stedall's b. c. <i>Most Excellent</i>	K. Cannon	o
Mr. A. Stedall's b. c. <i>First Principal</i>	F. Rickaby	o
Mr. T. R. Dewar's ch. c. <i>Forfarshire</i>	S. Loates	o
Lord Rosebery's b. or br. c. <i>Sailor Lad</i>	C. Wood	o
Lord Cadogan's br. c. <i>Sidus</i>	T. Loates	o
M. E. Blanc's b. c. <i>Governor II</i>	French	o
Lord W. Beresford's ch. g. <i>Democrat</i>	T. Weldon	o
Mr. W. T. Jones's ch. c. <i>Dewi Sant</i>	E. Jones	o

Betting—6 to 4 against *Diamond Jubilee*, 100 to 30 against *Forfarshire*, 8 to 1 against *Disguise II*, 10 to 1 each against *Chevening* and *Bonarosa*, 100 to 6 against *Simon Dale*, 25 to 1 against *Sailor Lad*, 33 to 1 against *Governor II*, 40 to 1 against *Democrat*, 50 to 1 against *Most Excellent*, 66 to 1 each against *First Principal* and *Sidus*, 100 to 1 against *Frontignan*, and 200 to 1 against *Dewi Sant*. Won by half a length; a length between second and third.

The Stewards, having observed the confusion that occurred near Tattenham Corner, subsequently made inquiries of the jockeys riding, and severely reprimanded Sloan for his breach of Rule 140 forbidding crossing.

It was of course most gratifying to receive the following letter from Lord Marcus Beresford, conveying as it did the very material thanks of the Prince of Wales :—

DEAR MR. MARSH,

It is such a pleasure to me to enclose you a cheque of £1,000 as a present from His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales for the splendid way you have trained *Diamond Jubilee* for the Derby and his other races. I hope that you will keep on breaking all the records, and win the

Derby very often again for Sandringham and its little stud.

That was indeed a fortunate evening when I telegraphed you to meet me in Challis's Hotel in December, 1892.

I have got £1,000 for Bertie Jones, which is a big sum, but H.R.H. gives it to him on the condition that he receives the interest of it only for a certain number of years. The £1,000 is placed in my hands to invest, and to make such arrangements for the future as I consider best. In the interest of H. Jones I shall consult with the best financiers in the City and get the best interest I can for the money. Will you kindly tell Bertie Jones this.

You can think over the St. James's Palace Stakes for *Diamond Jubilee*, but my own opinion is to keep him for the £10,000 race in the July week, but you can let me know your opinion. There are three weeks between the races, but if *Disguise II* runs in Paris, *Simon Dale* at Ascot, and *Forfarshire* has to get sound (if ever lame, which I doubt), our horse would be the freshest if we kept him for the £10,000.

The lads and head lads will not be forgotten.

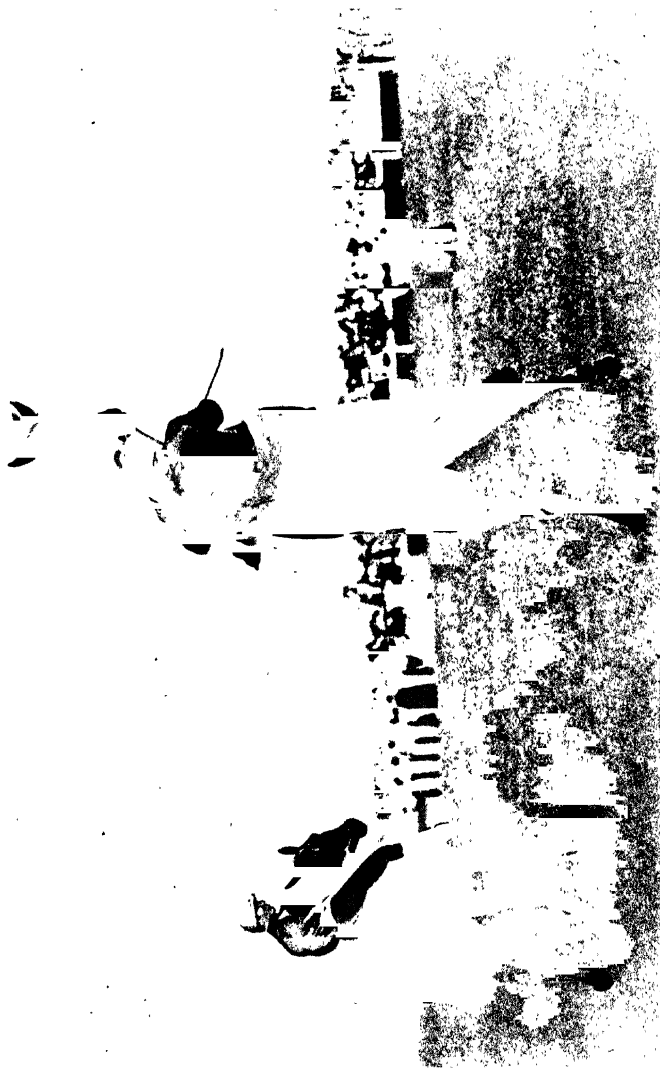
Such was the charming generosity of the Prince. He loved all to share in the pleasures racing brought him. Never did a kinder man live.

*Diamond Jubilee's* programme was as mapped out by Lord Marcus. The colt missed Ascot to be kept fresh for the Princess of Wales's Stakes on the July course at Newmarket. He was, of course, fully penalized, and because he was very well we thought he would pull through. There was, however, the significance with which Colonel Hall Walker's filly *Merry Gal* was backed to beat him at a difference

in her favour of 19 lb. She won easily by four lengths, but the winning thread was picked up all right again when we came to the rich Eclipse Stakes, worth that year £9,285 to His Royal Highness. In the spring *Chevening* had run *Diamond Jubilee* to a head for the Newmarket Stakes. In the race for the Eclipse Stakes the Prince's horse gave *Chevening*, who was second, 10 lb. and a half-length beating. *Simon Dale*, second to him in the Derby, now received 3 lb. and was a bad fourth. It will be seen how the Derby winner was steadily improving.

Never shall I forget the way the colt made me sweat with positive anxiety just before going out to win the St. Leger, which was his next race. He was in one of his really devilish moods, and intended giving everyone a fright with the greatest impartiality. Really, I never thought I should get the saddle on him. He seemed determined that I should not do so, and a rare old battle we had in a corner of the paddock which I generally used for saddling my horses at Doncaster. Every time I went near him with the saddle he would shoot straight up in the air, and stand on his hind legs. This went on to such an extent that time was getting short. He broke out in a heavy sweat, and I know I did.

It took me a quarter of an hour before we slipped the saddle into position and got the girths adjusted. Then a further performance was in store when Jones came to get up. The old friendship did not matter now. The colt was thoroughly roused, and would have nothing to do with being mounted until Jones took him unawares and sprang on to his shoulders.



*Photo: C. Niggeridge*  
**DIAMOND JUBILEE (H. JONES RIDING) CONSTANTLY STOOD AND WALKED ON HIS HIND  
LEGS BEFORE THE START OF THE ST I EGRR 1900**





In an instant he had got into the saddle, but if he had not been an acrobat as well as a horseman he would certainly have been shot off. Up went the colt, and when he came down Jones found his irons and all was well. There was no question of his being dislodged then. The picture of the horse approaching the starting post on his hind legs shows what a dramatic business it was.

Odds of 7 to 2 were betted on him, and he won by a length from the second favourite *Elopement*, ridden by Morny Cannon. But then it was a case of 100 to 7 bar one. I somehow felt that he could have won more easily had he cared, but, of course, the length more than sufficed. He had now qualified to rank in that select gallery of celebrities known as Triple Crown winners. He had in addition won the Newmarket Stakes when feeling in a particularly ill humour, and I have shown how the Eclipse Stakes was annexed. It is true he did not win the Jockey Club Stakes on the occasion of his last outing as a three-year-old. But he had by his winnings placed the Prince of Wales at the head of the winning owners for the year with a total of £29,585 10s.

Writing to me late in the year Lord Marcus Beresford remarked: "I am sure I only hope you may repeat the operation of heading the list several times more in my lifetime. . . . I saw the Prince last night and told him I thought it would ruin *Diamond* to train and run him in the Ascot Cup as the Princess of Wales's Stakes was two weeks after, and he has only *Caiman* to beat, and I asked him to consult you when he saw you at Sandringham, so back me up, if you agree. Let me know

your opinion of mares and foals after you have seen them."

As a matter of fact *Diamond Jubilee* was never destined to win another race, but it was not for that reason alone I considered him to be at least a 14 lb. inferior horse to *Persimmon*. Rather was it the outstanding and conspicuous merit of our 1896 Derby winner that enabled me to place the "*Diamond*" in his right category.

## CHAPTER XVII

### OTHER ROYAL HORSES

*Diamond Jubilee* Disappoints as a Four-year-old—Death of Queen Victoria—The Duke of Devonshire—Lord Kitchener and *Democrat*—Lean Years.

THE four-year-old career of *Diamond Jubilee* was frankly disappointing. It may be, of course, that I should have been well satisfied with his distinguished record as a three-year-old. After all, he had won us the Two Thousand Guineas, Derby, and St. Leger, in addition to the Eclipse Stakes. Perhaps, considering the erratic individual he was, always so liable, as it were, to go off "the deep end," we should have been grateful for those contributions. By the exercise of extraordinary ingenuity and patience, together with all the art at one's command, his temper had been kept in check, thus permitting his better self to assert itself. I think it was the Marquis of Crewe in a speech at a Gimcrack Club dinner who was good enough to say that the management and training of such an individual as *Diamond Jubilee* had been the most remarkable thing he had ever known.

I have always felt that it was just a question of touch and go with him. The slightest unbalancing of what I may call his mental scales would, I feel sure, have had the most disastrous results. It was a mercy that I had sufficient control over myself, though never so highly tried and provoked by a

horse in my life, to resist taking the *fortiter in re* measures. I have related how certain friends of the Prince of Wales advised drastic punishment for him after that dismal exhibition on the July course when the colt was a two-year-old. Thank goodness, I did not plead for him in vain, and that His Royal Highness, with all his humanity and love of horses and his trust in my judgment, supported me in giving the wayward colt every chance to prove what his excessive endowment of vitality and nervous energy would do for him.

I think of that time just before the St. Leger when he insisted on standing outside his box in heavy rain until, satisfied that we were all soaked to the skin and his clothing was drenched, he consented to enter his box. He tried his best to put years on my life. I know I instantly gave him a tonic drink on that occasion, though for two or three days afterwards I dreaded to hear him start coughing. But nothing happened, and he duly went to Doncaster to win after playing the very devil during saddling and again when Jones was on him at the starting post.

I often think, too, of a time when he showed the utmost stupidity and temper about such a trivial matter as going on the private moss litter gallop at Egerton. He was agreeable enough the first time, but when he was asked to repeat the dose he soon showed that he was going to have something to say about it. He simply would not pass through the gate which admitted to the gallop. Nothing would induce him to do so, and he so far got his own way that I sent a man to take down some rails higher up the gallop and see if he would enter that way. Rather to my surprise this simple little trick worked,

and, as he went through, he turned his head towards me in a most deliberate way, and I do not think I ever saw a funnier expression on a horse, for it was as much as to say : " Damn you, you've done me."

It is beyond question that as a four-year-old his temper gradually began to get the better of him, and the fact, as I have suggested, was bound to interfere with his racing capacity. I know Lord Marcus Beresford used to think that he only once in his career gave of his best, and that was when he won the Two Thousand Guineas so easily. Herbert Jones stuck to him every day in the riding of him and looked upon him as his special charge. I think I have tried to emphasize what a lot the victories owed to the man who took such infinite pains with him, who suffered no end of discomforts in the riding of him, but never holloaed as some jockeys, I know, would have done. That the ordeal, extending over so many months, got on the jockey's nerves was undoubted, and there came a time when he could not sleep properly at nights. He would dream of the horse and his antics, and I could see that Jones was really nervy and run down by the time the season was drawing to a close, so that he was sent to Brighton for a thorough rest.

It was in 1901 when *Diamond Jubilee* was a four-year-old that Queen Victoria died, and my beloved master became King Edward the Seventh. On account of Court mourning His Majesty's horses ran in the name of the Duke of Devonshire, to whom for the time being they were formally leased. It was in the Duke's name, therefore, that the *Diamond* ran for the Princess of Wales's Stakes on the July course at Newmarket. It was his first race of that

year as it was unquestionably his best. Though he could not win he was second, beaten only half a length by *Sailor Lad*, to whom our horse was trying to concede 8 lb. The Eclipse Stakes followed, and here again *Sailor Lad* won, though as we were only giving 3 lb. this time I thought we should turn the tables. However, *Diamond Jubilee*, on whom slight odds were laid, finished a very fair fourth, with heads only separating *Sailor Lad* from the other placed horses, *Ian* and *Disguise II*.

It was immediately after the disappointment in the Princess of Wales's Stakes that Sir Dighton Probyn sent me the following note :—

I have just received the enclosed memo from the King. It explains itself. I have hurt my right wrist and cannot hold a pen.

The memo, which was in the handwriting of his Majesty, read :—

Please write to Marsh, and tell him how much I sympathize with him at his great disappointment at *Diamond Jubilee* not winning his race, as I know the time and care he took to get him fit and well—but I hope he will make up for it by winning the Eclipse Stakes.—E. R.

Then, again, after defeat had come in the Eclipse Stakes, which I have just referred to, Sir Dighton Probyn addressed the following kindly communication to me :—

His Majesty has commanded me to say you are not to worry yourself on account of *Diamond Jubilee's* failure at Sandown as the King knows very well that you not only did all you could for the horse, but as much as, if not more than, any other trainer could have done.

Of course it was disappointing for the King, but His Majesty always takes these disappointments most philosophically, and puts them down to the "glorious uncertainty of the Turf."

I am getting on capitally, but am not able to use my right hand yet.

The end of *Diamond Jubilee's* racing career came with the Jockey Club Stakes in the early autumn, and in this race, carrying 10 st. 3 lb. and giving a lot of weight to the winner, he was third to *Pietermaritzburg* and *Epsom Lad*. All the year he had been getting more and more difficult to deal with. In July he bit off a lad's finger as he was having his bridle put on prior to competing for the Princess of Wales's Stakes. Every time I went near him in the stable he would begin to scream and holloa. I did not take too much notice of that—until towards the end—because I knew him so well. I had never touched him in any way, but I suppose he had some idea I was the one who for all this time had been ordering him his work. Then there came a time when it was not safe for me to go near him in his box owing to the risk of being savaged, and after that race for the Jockey Club Stakes it was decided to retire him to the stud at Sandringham. Obviously the stud and not the racing stable was the place for a horse that tried to tell you as plainly as possible that he was "through" with racing.

The boy who used to "do" him at Egerton went with him and remained with him at Sandringham, where he settled down fairly well and began to get winners. Considering his winnings on the Turf, his earnings as a sire, and the £30,000 for which he was sold to the Argentine, he may be said to have



made a splendid contribution towards the expenses of His Majesty's breeding and racing establishments. It was a contribution which would help in meeting the lean years that come to the most successful owners, and were in fact to come during the next few years for King Edward.

Writing from Balmoral Castle, on the 5th October, 1901, Sir Dighton Probyn in a letter to me said :—

The King has commanded me to write and let you know how sorry he was, not only for H.M.'s own sake, but for your sake also, that *Diamond Jubilee* has made such a bad finish to his racing career. The King had quite hoped being so fit and well, that he would have retired from the Turf with all honour and glory. His Majesty feels convinced, however, that it was not your fault the horse ran so badly at the last.

I hope we have some "more reliable ones" coming on to take the *Diamond's* place. I am so sorry for you ; the *Diamond* must have been a puzzler to deal with.

It was during the era of *Diamond Jubilee* at Egerton that King Edward did me signal honour by an act which I think gave me more pleasure than anything in my life. The letters from which I have quoted in this and other chapters will tell of his most kindly and thoughtful consideration when, perhaps, His Majesty understood the recipient must have been troubled. It was why he was so beloved by all who had the honour of serving him, no matter in what humble capacity it was—why, too, his subjects loved him.

One day, on the occasion of a visit to Egerton House and the stables, the King turned to me and inquired :—

"I should like to speak to you privately, Marsh. Have you a room where I can do so?"

I asked His Majesty if he would mind coming to my private room, and, not having the slightest idea of what was to follow, I was wondering what was the matter. With the door closed on us the King turned to me and said: "I want to present this Coronation medal to you because now I consider you are one of the Household. There is a miniature of it and you should wear it with your evening clothes."

I was delighted beyond words and tried to stammer out my grateful thanks. I think His Majesty was gratified that he had so obviously given pleasure, for afterwards he told Lord Marcus Beresford that he thought I was very pleased with the medal.

I have stated that during the lengthy period of mourning for Queen Victoria, King Edward's horses ran in the name and colours of the Duke of Devonshire, who for many years had been among my chief patrons, first at Lordship and then at Egerton. He was a delightful man to train for, notwithstanding that he was so quiet, almost to the point of sullenness. Looking back I cannot recall that he ever made a joke or that he ever seemed thoroughly to enjoy one. He smiled, but it was the rarest thing in the world for him to laugh. I liked and admired him so much because he was so very fond of his horses, and especially in the breeding of them. So fond was he that he hated selling them privately, and still more had he a dislike of getting rid of the bad ones through the medium of selling plates.

His big handicap winners, *Morion* and *Marvel*, stood first at the Lordship Stud farm and later at Egerton Stud, while I had much to do with the mating

of his mares. *Morion* was a failure at the stud, and I many times wished the Duke had obliged Count Lehndorff when he badly wanted to buy the horse and came to us with an open cheque. As a matter of fact the offer was one of £15,000, which was a very big price in those times, and especially, too, for a horse that had not gained classic distinction.

Just one occasion there was when the Duke permitted himself to indulge in a smile. It was when I recounted to him a story in which his father, his butler, and the bookmaker Peech were concerned. The bookmaker used to stay at the hotel in Chatsworth Park, and, knowing the butler at the Hall, he was accustomed to walk over in the evening for a chat—and possibly a little “something.” On one such occasion Peech sipped at his glass of port, and remarked on its excellence.

“In fact,” he said, “I really think it’s the best I’ve ever tasted.”

“Ah,” commented the butler, “what would the old Duke give for a glass of this?”

They are all dead now and had been, when I told the story to the Duke I trained for. Smiling faintly he remarked: “Well, I suppose the same thing goes on now!”

I ceased to train for him at the end of 1901, his horses passing out of Egerton soon after receipt of the following letter, with the contents of which I had no possible complaint to make:—

SIR,

DEVONSHIRE HOUSE, PICCADILLY, W.

I have for some time been thinking of making a change in my training arrangements. My chief reason for wishing for a change is that I should like to have my horses

at Beaufort House, where I can easily see them. It takes a long time after the races to go to Egerton House and round the stables, and as I have not now the time to do this often, I lose much of the pleasure of owning race-horses by not seeing them constantly. I also wish to have a private trainer, who will only have my horses to look after. For these and other reasons I have decided to have my horses at Beaufort House, and Goodwin, who now runs the stables there, will probably train for me.

Of course, I am sorry to put an end to our long connexion as owner and trainer, and you will no doubt think that this decision on my part is in consequence of the bad luck I have lately had with my horses, but this is not the case. I think you have probably more horses now than any man can fully attend to, but I know that no one can train a horse better than you can, and also that no trainer can make sure of success.

I remain,

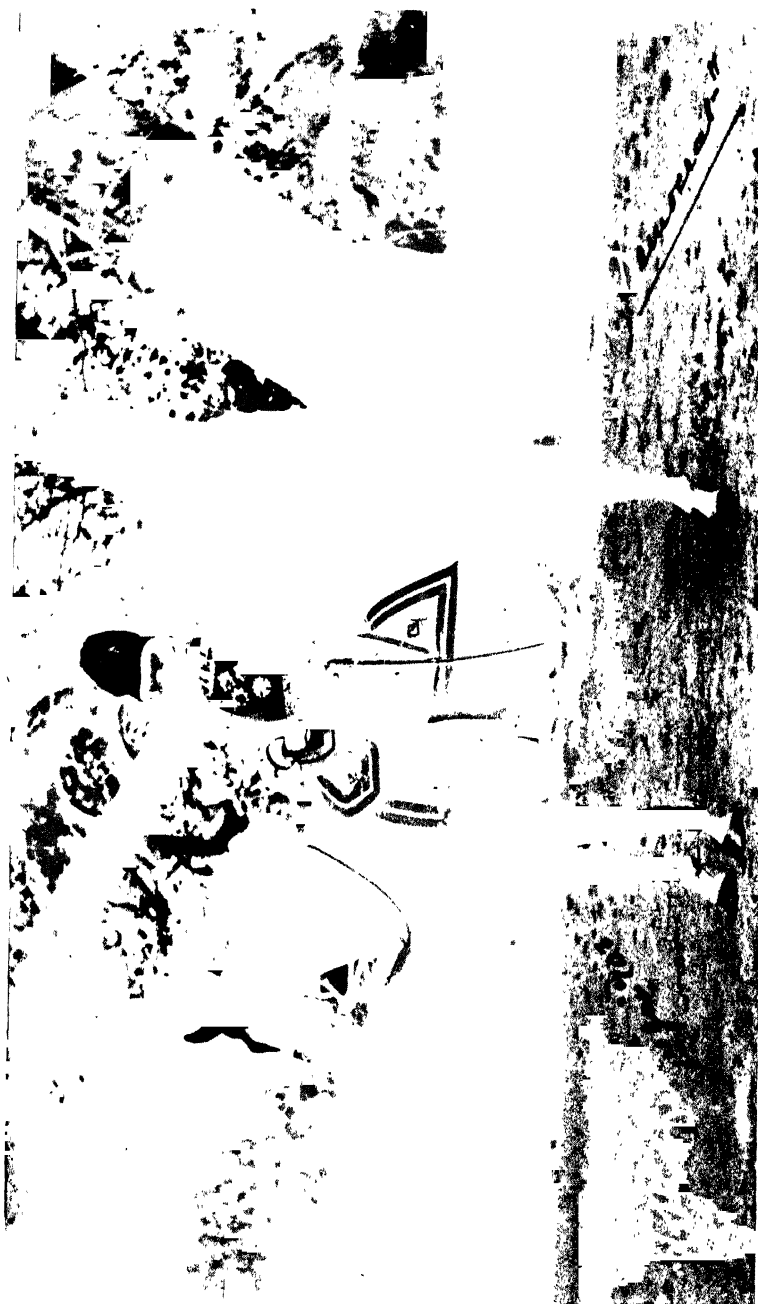
Yours sincerely,

DEVONSHIRE.

In my narrative of the career of *Diamond Jubilee* mention was made of the fact that in his first race at Ascot the winner was a chestnut gelding, remarkably good-looking, named *Democrat*, belonging to Lord William Beresford. I little thought it at the time, but that horse was destined to interest me a great deal in one way or another. First of all there was the vexatious way he would come along to win events which I had hoped to capture with *Diamond Jubilee* the Middle Park Plate, for instance, in which he beat the Prince's colt by half a length. It is true we took a heavy revenge next season when *Democrat* appeared to lose all the brilliance he had shown.

When Lord William died, and his many horses came to be disposed of, *Democrat* was bought by Mr. J. B. Joel for 910 guineas. He was then a four-year-old. Apparently that owner and his trainer soon tired of him, as later in the year the horse again came into the sale ring. I must have felt there was surely some good in one that had been so very smart as a two-year-old, and in any case the price of 290 guineas which I paid to put me in possession of the notorious horse was not alarming. Doubtless I had in mind getting a race or two out of him in the belief that he simply could not have gone so hopelessly to the dogs. But when I came to put him to the test I found him to be hopeless for racing purposes. He simply refused to race. Yet at home he was a delightful creature and my daughter regularly used him as a hack. A quieter and better-mannered creature you could not have wished for.

Soon after the South African war I had occasion to be at Welbeck Abbey, and Lord Kitchener was staying with the Duke of Portland. An agricultural show was taking place, and after I had been introduced to Lord Kitchener he asked me if I would buy him a thoroughbred likely to make a good charger. He was shortly going out to India as Commander-in-Chief. I told him that I had got the very horse for him, and that if he would honour me by accepting him as a present I would give him *Democrat*. He hesitated until assured by the Duke that his acceptance would give me genuine pleasure. That was how *Democrat* came to go to India to make the most perfect and the handsomest charger that ever a Commander-in-Chief rode in that country. He was mounted on the horse when the State entry was



HIGH CLASS RACEHORSE ANT



made into Delhi on the occasion of the great Durbar of 1903.

Acknowledging the arrival of the horse in London when I first presented it to him, Lord Kitchener wrote : —

*Democrat* arrived all right and is a charming horse. My A.D.C. rode him in the Park this morning and he went very well indeed. I think he will suit me admirably, and I am infinitely obliged to you for such a magnificent present.

I am sure he will make the Indian Rajahs think their new C.-in-C. is at least well mounted. I shall, I hope, ride him at the great Durbar at Delhi.

From his Military Secretary, Colonel Maxwell, I received the following note :—

*Democrat* is top hole, and will suit my chief as charger most splendidly. He is a handsome horse, and it is a great deal too good of you to make Lord K. so handsome a present. I'll have them photographed together the first parade they do in India, and will send you a copy. . . . *Democrat* will be in good hands till he gets his ticket for India, as the Duke of Portland is keeping him at Welbeck.

Then from Fort William, his official residence in Calcutta, " K " wrote me :—

MY DEAR MR. MARSH,

I send you herewith a photo of myself on *Democrat* as a slight token of the great pleasure you have given me in providing me with such a splendid horse. You will be glad to hear he has been doing very well, and is not affected by the climate.

Yours sincerely,

KITCHENER.



So ended in the most honourable way the career of a horse which as a two-year-old on the Turf caused us a deal of comment, for he was just about the best of his year. It is a big thing to say of any horse and can, indeed, only be said of very few. For the six years of Lord Kitchener's command in India *Democrat* was his charger, and when the period was drawing to a close Lord Kitchener wrote: "I cannot say how much obliged I have been to you for such a splendid mount during the last six years." I imagine the horse was probably handed over to the Commander-in-Chief's successor.

I think it will be agreed that up to the time of the coming and going of *Diamond Jubilee* King Edward had enjoyed remarkable good fortune with his horses at Egerton during the period extending over something like ten years. It is true that it had been mainly contributed to by that remarkable brotherhood—*Florizel II*, *Persimmon*, and *Diamond Jubilee*. Their dam, *Perdita II*, of course, could not go on for ever, and I have shown how some of her produce were worthless for racing purposes, even although they, too, were sired by *St. Simon*. Still, to my mind, it is extraordinary luck to have got three such horses from the same mare. There was bound to come a lean time. I could see it looming ahead with the rapidly increasing age of the famous mare, and the slender chances of other notable horses to come from her. No others of the Sandringham mares had made big names for themselves; in fact they were no more, and probably less, than ordinary. Under the supervision of Lord Marcus Beresford they were being judiciously mated, and gradually the stud was extending, though I at all times noted the tendency

to dip rather too deeply, as it were, into the *Galopin* strains of blood. It is a reason why in later years the stud was possibly surfeited with it. I can think of no other reason why the class of horse bred there seemed to deteriorate as time went on. After all, the racing stable and then the racecourse itself must be the test of these things.

It will not interest the reader, and it is certainly no pleasure to the author, to dwell on these lean years. The only consolation, and it was a big one, was that we had been vouchsafed wonderful times in the past. There must be a levelling I suppose. We revel in the brilliant times, and the more we do so the harder is it to contend with the years of misfortune when they come. What possibly made it easier to bear in my own case—for I cannot tell you how deeply worrying it was not to be able to continue winning many races in the royal colours—was the patience, the perfect sportsmanship, and the sympathy for others of King Edward, and later, in particular, of King George.

*Diamond Jubilee*, chiefly, won the Prince of Wales in 1900 a total of £29,685-10 in stakes. There was a world of difference between that total and £1,514 in 1902, £1,903 in 1904, and as little as £970 in 1905. In all those years, however, horses trained at Egerton won well into five figures, which helped to keep up the prestige of the establishment. Yet in each of three years only two races were won for the King. It is eloquent of the incapacity of many of the horses sent into training from Sandringham. Certainly it is not in mortals to command success, and the fact that these were owned by the King did not put a yard on their speed. I have no doubt

many people cherished a notion that horses owned by King Edward and later by King George must win races. I could wish that it had been so during the lean times of which I am writing. They must take their chances along with those owned by His Majesty's most humble subject. The "humble subject" has, to my sorrow, been too much for us on many an occasion when I would have given much for his discomfiture. Never did His Majesty complain, but always was King Edward, as also was King George, most forbearing and sympathetic, realizing that all who had the honour of serving them, including Lord Marcus, loved nothing better than a success in the royal colours.

It was in 1901 and 1902 that I received the first of *Persimmon's* progeny to train. Naturally we had big hopes of them, but I cannot say that these first crops held out any of the promise of their distinguished sire when he first came to me. Yet some other owners had started to do well with young stock sired by the horse. *Mead*, a son of *Persimmon* and *Meadow Chat*, was his first winner. He was, indeed, our only winner in the royal colours in 1902 and the following season. He was a pretty good horse, too, though fully 10 lb., and possibly a bit more, behind the classic form of his year.

A horse I should not omit to make passing mention of, by reason of his lineage, was *Sandringham*, also a son of *St. Simon* and *Perdita II*. He was a beautiful-looking horse of immense power except when you came to deal with his limbs. A horse without the limbs to carry his body, so to say, is useless for racing. *Sandringham* turned his toes in badly, and altogether had very ill-shaped forelegs.

It was probably the reason why he had no action, while he also lacked any idea of speed. Likewise he lacked the vitality of the other brothers, and in fact was a bad horse. He used to, shall I say, "back-water" when he galloped rather than be propelled in the ordinary way. He never raced, and was sold for what I think was quite a fair sum to go to the United States as a sire.

*Nadejda* was an own sister to the brothers. She was a very big mare, but delicate, standing, I should say, seventeen hands. Though the greatest care was taken of her she was not good enough to win a race of any sort and died foaling. Curious are the riddles of breeding! Why, for instance, from the same sire and dam should horses as dissimilar as *Persimmon* and *Sandringham* and *Nadejda* come?

## CHAPTER XVIII

### MINORU

Disappointing Horses—*Minoru*—His Rapid Improvement—He Wins the Derby for the King—Great Scenes at Epsom.

THE flow of young *Persimmons* from Sandringham to Egerton became steady and uninterrupted in the early years of the new century. Lord Marcus Beresford, with a very natural belief that *Persimmon* would make as great a sire as he had been a racehorse, made full use of him in the mating of the King's mares. We had big expectations. That they were not realized is a fact which scarcely needs emphasizing at this time of day. The only consolation, if it were a consolation, was that the horse was siring many winners for other people. The shining example of that was *Sceptre*, who was certainly one of the great mares of my time, and, considering the experiences she went through, such as being trained for the Lincolnshire Handicap and being given a hard race, she must have been something of a wonder with a quite extraordinary constitution.

It was impossible to despair of the horse, so far as we were concerned, and yet it did seem strange that we, who should have been most entitled to the winners, were being denied them. Suspicion, of course, fell on the Sandringham mares. Certain winners there were, but they were few. *Chatsworth* in 1904 won three small races as a three-year-old.

*Victoria* and *Osella*, our two chief winners out of only four in the season of 1905, were not by *Persimmon*; while of twenty-seven horses in training at the start of the 1907 season only four winners were found, and only one of them—a two-year-old filly named *Pearl of the Loch*—could claim *Persimmon* for sire. This was looking on the other side of the medal with a vengeance, and yet in these most disappointing years for the King no one could have been kinder and more sympathetic than His Majesty. On one of the King's visits to the stables, and realizing the hopelessness of some of his horses, he was all for weeding them out of the stable.

It was in 1907 that we thought we saw the promise so long sought for in a colt named *Perrier*, by *Persimmon* from *Amphora*. As a youngster he was a big lumbering sort, almost too big, and without much quality. Still I thought he might make a horse some day, though not before his three-year-old days. Rather to my surprise, therefore, he ran far better than I thought he would for the Dewhurst Plate in the late autumn as a two-year-old. *Perrier* was beaten two lengths by a smart filly named *Rhodora*. Now he certainly was not a trained horse then, and through the winter I hoped I might not be proved wrong in my ideas about him. I suppose we were so keen to discover a high-class horse for the King that, unconsciously, we may have allowed ourselves to think too highly of this one.

The Spring came, and with it *Perrier's* win of the Biennial Stakes at Newmarket. He won by two lengths, and though I had a strong suspicion of the weakness of the opposition I was nevertheless pleased. Then came disillusionment. He never won

another race, though he by no means disgraced himself when he ran second in the summer for the St. James's Palace Stakes at Ascot. He had never quite filled my notion of what a good plucked one should be, and, unfortunately, the time soon came when I made the unpleasant discovery that he had no pretensions to classic form. Still it was otherwise in the early spring, and this must certainly have been the case in April when Her Majesty Queen Alexandra honoured Egerton with a visit and inspected *Perrier*.

A day or two later General Sir Dighton Probyn, writing from Buckingham Palace, said :—

I spent a very charming two hours at Egerton Lodge on Saturday. It did me good to see *Perrier*. He looked so full of *promise*, that the idea of what I hope and believe he will do must have had a sort of soothing effect on my mind, and checked any desire on my part to commit manslaughter when the Queen's chauffeur was rushing wildly over the country at 35 miles an hour for one hour and five minutes trying to find the way to Fordham. The man had declared to me before we left Egerton Lodge that he knew the way perfectly. He was *absolutely sober*, but most certainly has not the bump of locality.

*Perrier* saved him. Good luck to the horse, and to you.

If only *Perrier* had been as good as he was good-looking ! Alas, that is a common shortcoming with thoroughbreds. It is true that *Perrier* grew into an exceptionally good-looking horse, and some Frenchmen came to Egerton to buy him. They were received by Lord Marcus Beresford. "There, monsieur," he observed to the head of the Commission, "is a horse after your own heart. He is

of good colour, he is sound, and he has splendid bone. And he certainly should have won the Derby." All this time the horse was being walked and trotted about. When he said that the horse should have won the Derby I pricked up my ears, and wondered what might be coming next.

"Why didn't he win the Derby?" they inquired.

"Well," replied Lord Marcus, who throughout his life I never knew to be at a loss for words, "at a most critical point of the race six or seven others passed him and he lost!"

He said it in such a serious way that the Frenchmen bought the horse.

As a four-year-old they brought him over for the Cambridgeshire, which I really believe they thought he was sure to win. When I saw him in the paddock before the race I had not much doubt about what his fate would be. I never saw a horse look so bad, and I scarcely recognized him. Our jockey Herbert Jones, who knew him just as well as I did, said that if he were to get loose he would immediately set off for Egerton House stables to make sure of a good feed! He ran nowhere in the race.

It was due very largely to the two-year-old *Princesse de Galles*, a daughter of *Gallinule* and *Ecila*, that things looked up in 1908, for she won five quite good races, including the Chesterfield Stakes at Newmarket, the Ham Stakes at Goodwood, and the Boscawen Stakes in the autumn at Newmarket. The trouble with her was that she was so prone to go sexually amiss when on the point of racing. This, in particular, was her trouble as a three-year-old, but for which I really believe she would have won the



Oaks. In 1896 I had felt fairly confident of winning both the Derby and the Oaks. *Persimmon* won and *Thais* was second after being very seriously wrong. Again, in 1909, I believed I should win both the Derby and the Oaks for King Edward. *Minoru* won, but *Princesse de Galles* failed me at the last, and, like *Thais*, was second, beaten two lengths by *Perola*. These were two most conspicuous cases of fillies going amiss at the last minute. What a world of difference they would have made to my royal master, and, indeed, to all of us ! What magnificent double events they came so near to registering !

That year of 1908 marked the coming to Egerton of *Minoru*, who was destined to be the third horse to win the Derby in the royal colours. In the previous autumn the Sandringham yearlings had come to us, but with, I think, one exception they had all been fillies. Lord Marcus Beresford then arranged the lease from Colonel Hall Walker, afterwards Lord Wavertree, of half a dozen colts from the Tully Stud, outside Kildare in Ireland. It was the stud which was to achieve even more fame as the National Stud on passing from the possession of Colonel Hall Walker to the British Government. However, it was some time before that when the six yearlings leased to King Edward arrived at Egerton. They were :—

*La La*, br. c. by *Ladas*—*La Carolina*, 2 yrs.

*Moorcock*, ch. c. by *Gallinule*—*Fair Jean*, 2 yrs.

*Calderstone*, b. c. by *Persimmon*—*Shewbread*, 2 yrs.

*Oakmere*, b. or br. c. by *Wildfowler*—*Lady Lightfoot*, 2 yrs.

*Prince Pippin*, b. c. by *Diamond Jubilee*—*Goody Two-Shoes*.

*Minoru*, b. c. by *Cyllene*—*Mother Seigel*.

They arrived from Tully about the end of August, and all apparently were regarded as being promising. Yet to my eyes only one took my fancy from the first moment they walked into the yard. It was *Minoru*, the active and charming son of *Cyllene* and *Mother Seigel*, a mare by *Friar's Balsam*. He stood out from the rest then as he was destined to do throughout his racing life. There was never any doubt about it. He was always the gentleman of that little party from Ireland, for he was so racing-like even as a yearling. Really *Minoru* was no less than a racing machine, for he had delightful action. He was a good-coloured bay with black points, perhaps on the leg, a trifle light about his middle-piece, but with a beautiful head well set on. His limbs were rather light, but they were ideally shaped with the best of ligaments and tendons. Then, too, his shoulders were perfect with a fine length of rein.

I must say that with his light frame and corky demeanour he attracted me from the very outset. At once he gave the impression that he had the makings of a racehorse but that he would not require much training. I was just the slightest bit afraid that he might not be robust enough to stand training, but any fears I might have had in this respect were to prove groundless. He thrived from the outset, perhaps, too, because he was an exceptionally sweet-tempered horse with the most delightful disposition. Anyone could handle him, and my very small daughter regularly went to him in his box and gave him his evening carrots. He became, indeed, the pet of the stable.

It cannot be said that he was much of a two-year-old. Perhaps he was nothing like so good as I had

believed he would be, if full confession must be made. No one, least of all myself, would have thought that he was likely to win the Derby, for in that year of 1908 we had seen an exceptionally high-class two-year-old in *Bayardo*, who had gone through his first season unbeaten and the winner of some of the best races. *Minoru's* only win as a two-year-old was when he won the Great Surrey Foal Stakes at Epsom. Later he was second for the Coventry Stakes at Ascot, beaten three-parts of a length by *Louviers*. As a matter of fact the form as between these two was destined to work out exceptionally well, as the sequel will show. For the July Stakes at Newmarket he was beaten a neck by *Battle Axe*, and after running third to *Glasgerion* for the Hopeful Stakes he filled a similar position, carrying 9-0, for the New Nursery at headquarters. It was very fair form, but not that of a prospective Derby winner. In fact I never even gave a thought at that time to the possibility of winning the Derby with him.

Looking up his engagements during the winter I noticed he was in the Greenham Stakes at Newbury, and as the colt was doing remarkably well I thought this would be just the sort of race for him. He looked like coming early to hand, and I hoped at that time he might prove good enough to win an engagement of this description. Still no thought, it will be understood, of the Derby of 1909. Then, some time before Flat racing was due to open at Lincoln, I gave him a gallop with quite a useful horse, and though I hoped he might give the weight and win I was not quite prepared for the clean and effective way he came through with his task. I

think, looking back, my first distant and hazy view of the Derby was gained on the morning of that gallop. I realized for the first time that *Minoru* was probably better than I could have imagined possible. At least I felt that he would probably win us the Greenham Stakes at Newbury, though Lord Carnarvon was understood to have an unbeatable horse in *Valens*.

By the time I had got *Minoru* to Newbury I fancied him quite a lot—far more, at all events, than did Lord Marcus. When I took him to the stables before racing commenced, to show him the colt, I told him I thought he would note a great deal of improvement in him. "Well," he remarked, dryly enough, after carefully looking him over, "he's certainly improved, but 7 st. 4 lb. in the Stewards' Cup looks to be more like his class." As a matter of fact, as the time for the race drew near, we were almost not running him, so very bad was the weather and the going, while he had the big weight of 9 st. 10 lb., which is not exactly a reasonable one in any circumstances.

The horse won in capital style by a length and a half from the odds-on favourite *Valens* in the colours of Lord Carnarvon. Lord Marcus was frankly astonished, but nevertheless immensely delighted. We had been so long out of luck that I suppose he could not realize we should ever have a good horse again for the King. Now for the first time did he begin to look with longing eyes towards the classic races, certainly to the Two Thousand Guineas. But what of *Bayardo*? It seemed absurd, I suppose, that we could think of beating this really high-class two-year-old. He was, too, in the very best of hands,

and I knew, if it were humanly possible to have him fit, Alec Taylor would certainly do so.

Various conflicting reports were in circulation about him. Some said he had not grown and done well, others that trouble had been experienced with his rather shelly feet. Later, when we came to the Two Thousand Guineas, I told my friends that His Majesty's horse could not possibly be better, but that if *Bayardo* were at his best then we should never be able to beat him. His trainer confirmed having had some trouble with him and that he had not thrived as he would have liked in what had been a cold and dry time for the few weeks prior to the first of the classic races. Still they must have felt *Bayardo* capable of winning, as he started at 13 to 8 on. I have always noticed that a favourite for a classic race is never so firm in the market as was *Bayardo* on this occasion if there be the slightest suspicion of him. These things become known under the great glare of modern publicity in racing matters, while the professional backers, who appear to make the prices by their operations, seem to be singularly well-informed. In all the circumstances, therefore, we could only conclude that *Bayardo* was regarded as sure to win in face of the set-backs his trainer had unquestionably experienced with him.

Much faith I undoubtedly had in *Minoru*, if only because I knew he had done extraordinarily well since that early outing at Newbury, while on this important day at Newmarket he could not possibly have been better. He was "on his toes" before the race, and though I was afraid of the Manton colt it did not surprise me when I saw Jones in a fine place at the Bushes and then come on to win by two lengths.

To my mind it was a very convincing performance, and I could see no excuse for *Bayardo*, who was beaten out of the first three, though they came to the conclusion afterwards that he could not possibly have shown his right form. I have no doubt they were right, too, and, perhaps fortunately for us, this brilliant colt did not come to his real self until after the Derby, when he went on from success to success and was only once again beaten—when he just failed to overhaul and beat the three-year *Magic* for the Goodwood Cup in the following year.

One recalls at this point how Mr. William Allison in his paper was most emphatic in saying that no man breathing could keep *Minoru* fit for the Derby after having won the Greenham Stakes with him early in the year. The dark prophecy did not exactly chill me. I knew the colt well, and the knowledge told me that, having got him fit, it would only be necessary to keep him so, and on no account to overdo him for the Derby. He had not been overdone for the Two Thousand Guineas, and the last thing he wanted was a severe or even orthodox preparation for the Derby. Accordingly he had quite a light time of it, and yet went to the post at Epsom as well as ever he was in his life. Except for requiring the utmost watchfulness that nothing should happen to tax his strength and resources unduly he was quite an easy horse to train. I mean particularly in this way: a gallop would do him just the amount of good you wanted of it. He was a horse that quickly jumped into his bridle, being a delightfully free goer, and he would come right through with his gallop, every furlong of it doing him an equal amount of good.

The King was now taking the greatest interest in *Minoru's* welfare. It was His Majesty's wish to be kept informed every day of the colt's progress, and always it was a satisfactory report I was able to make. I became very hopeful indeed as Epsom drew near, and not even reports of much improvement in *Bayardo* could quite dismay me. Then, too, as the time came nearer, another formidable competitor loomed up in *Sir Martin*, an American-bred colt for whom Mr. Louis Winans had paid the big sum of £15,000. All sorts of tall stories concerning him found their way to Egerton. He had won a small race not long before, and I have no doubt my friend Joseph Cannon, who trained him, considered him to be a very good horse indeed. Still, if confession must be made, I felt that *Bayardo* was the one we had to beat. And especially did I think this must be so on reflecting that in the Free Handicap of the previous autumn *Minoru* had been set to receive 21 lb. from him. However, at that time I never dreamed that our colt would come to win the Two Thousand Guineas and then fill the position of favourite for the Derby. Here, I thought, was being demonstrated the glorious uncertainty with a vengeance.

I had not seen *Bayardo* between the day of the Two Thousand Guineas and his appearance at Epsom, and I must say I was impressed with the very marked improvement in him. He looked a different horse and the sight of him really set my anxieties alight again. Nevertheless I had the honour of informing the King that I thought *Minoru* would win. His Majesty and the Queen, with the Prince and Princess of Wales, were present, and again, as in 1896 and 1900, I looked on a vast crowd that I pictured having



ROUNDING TATTENHAM CORNER IN THE DERBY OF 1909. HIS MAJESTY'S *MINORU* IS SEEN





occasion to acclaim the King over a royal victory. No one can understand what tense moments these are for the trainer. It has been my good fortune to live through them several times, three times where King Edward was concerned, and it is possible that I felt the strain more when *Minoru* won than on any of the previous occasions, glorious though they were.

And now for the race. *Minoru* was drawn on the inside, which was not exactly where I could have wished him to be, as a horse so drawn must necessarily show quick beginning speed or be closed out and unable to take his proper place at the critical time. That first burst may also take too much out of a horse as the half-mile at the start is on "the collar." Jones, however, was smartly away, and rode the horse in the first three or four furlongs most judiciously. At the mile post he had got his mount fairly on his legs, and had taken a good position a length or more behind the one or two forcing the pace. He travelled beautifully down the hill and round the famous Corner, where a most tragic thing happened to *Sir Martin*. Either through being struck into or himself going into the heels of another horse he was brought down. I remember thinking at the time, and have often done so since, what a shock it must have been to Mr. Winans. I know if it had happened to us I should have received the shock of my life.

As they made the turn *Bayardo* was on the outside, and it was said that the fall of *Sir Martin* had interfered with him, but when I noted him he appeared to be travelling smoothly. I could not have had *Minoru* in a better place if it had been in my power to put him there. The colt was next to the rails,

with *Louviers* next to him, and *William the Fourth* on the latter's outside. I felt sure his long striding action would show us something up the straight. And so indeed it did. Keeping him perfectly balanced Jones brought him sweeping along. *Bayardo* was not drawing up to challenge as I half expected he would do, but *Louviers* was going to take a deal of shaking off. I could see that. The two came to tackle the last furlong with grim determination. I felt *Minoru* would not flinch, but it was going to be a desperately near thing with *William the Fourth* not far away. So they came on, almost locked together to the winning post in the midst of a great roar, partly sent up because the people thought the King's horse had got the race won, and partly, I imagine, out of sheer excitement.

I had witnessed the race from the trainers' stand, and Willie Waugh, who had stood next to me, slapped me on the back, exclaiming: "You've won it!" In my heart I felt *Minoru* had just won, but I could not be sure. His number had yet to be shot into the frame. There was that awful pause and then I knew. King Edward had won his third Derby. It all seemed so marvellous and wonderful. Oh! the relief and the unspeakable joy when that number appeared. It surged within me, but it had to be kept under absolute control. Immensely exciting moments were to follow. Cheering, such as I do not think I had ever heard before, had broken out. It may have been as wonderful when *Persimmon* won or when *Diamond Jubilee* triumphed, only somehow this scene seemed to surpass all that had gone before.

When Jones had pulled up and was proceeding to walk his horse back to the weighing-in enclosure

the crowd so surged round them that they were swept towards the winning post on the other side of the course. When you bear in mind that the space between that and the weighing-in enclosure was just a dense mass of excited and cheering people it will be understood how anxious the situation was for some minutes. The King, with the Prince of Wales, had come from his box to the gate of the little enclosure and awaited the moment when he could be handed the rein and lead in his third Derby winner.

In vain did I try to force my way through to the horse, until at last I shouted to the crowd to let me through. Only then did I get to *Minoru's* head and some progress could be made for the spot where His Majesty was standing.

The King looked enormously pleased, though I recall now how the excitement seemed to be almost too much for him. Certainly during those minutes he must have undergone a most severe mental strain from what I might describe as the shock of victory. When he took the leading rein in his hand the roars of cheering broke out afresh. What a scene it was and totally defying my poor pen to describe vividly, though it lives in the memory! As the "All right" was called a man, who I was told was well known on the music halls, started singing "God save the King." It was taken up in all the enclosures and away up the hill so that it swelled to a mighty chorus in which tens of thousands were expressing their gratitude and love of the King.

Need it be said that His Majesty had some kind words to say to me for my humble share in the triumph, and to Jones, who had so distinguished

himself in the saddle. A few days later Lord Knollys kindly sent me this note :—

I am anxious to write you a line to offer you my best congratulations on *Minoru's* great victory, and to say how very glad I was to see him come in first. I am not a judge of these things myself, but I am told the horse could not have been in better condition.

My old friend the late John Porter wrote to me from Harrogate :—

DEAR DICK,

I was sorry not to get to Epsom to witness your success. I have had a touch of rheumatism lately, so am here for three weeks going through the water cure, and beastly stuff it is.

I heartily congratulate you on winning the Derby again for the King. It will repay you for the trouble and anxiety you have passed through this last two or three years with a lot of bad horses. I have passed through it myself, so know what the feeling is ; it is not so much the bad horses that trouble you, but the ingratitude of some of your employers, who make a great fuss of you during your success but quit you like rats from a sinking ship when you are out of luck.

I cannot do better in concluding this chapter than give the official details of that Derby. It is the fourth time I have had the pleasure of giving such details in this narrative. Here they are :—

DERBY STAKES of £6,450 ; about a mile and a half.

His Majesty's <i>Minoru</i> , b. c. by <i>Cyllene</i>	H. Jones	1
Mr. Walter Raphael's <i>Louviers</i>	G. Stern	2
Lord Michelham's <i>William the Fourth</i>	Higgs	3
Lord Carnarvon's <i>Valens</i>	F. Wootton	0

Mr. Fairie's <i>Bayardo</i>	Maher	o
Mr. A. H. Ledlie's <i>Electric Boy</i>	W. Bray	o
Mr. J. Barrow's <i>Strickland</i>	W. Griggs	o
Mr. J. B. Joel's <i>The Story</i>	Wal. Griggs	o
Mr. C. S. Newton's <i>Sandbath</i>	R. Keeble	o
Mr. J. Buchanan's <i>Diamond Stud</i>	W. Halsey	o
Mr. H. G. Fenwick's <i>St. Ninian</i>	Trigg	o
Duke of Portland's <i>Phaleron</i>	W. Earl	o
Mr. R. Mills's <i>Prester Jack</i>	Saxby	o
Mr. W. Raphael's <i>Brooklands</i>	Blackburn	o
Mr. L. Winans's <i>Sir Martin</i> (fell)	J. H. Martin	o

Betting—3 to 1 against *Sir Martin*, 7 to 2 against *Minoru*, 9 to 2 against *Bayardo*, 8 to 1 against *Valens*, 9 to 1 against *Louviers*, 20 to 1 against *Phaleron* and *William the Fourth*, 40 to 1 against *The Story*, 50 to 1 against *Diamond Stud* and *Strickland*, 66 to 1 against *Electric Boy*, *Sandbath*, *St. Ninian*, and *Prester Jack*, 200 to 1 against *Brooklands*.

Places—5 to 4 on *Minoru*, evens *Sir Martin*, 6 to 4 against *Louviers*, 2 to 1 against *Bayardo* and *Valens*. Won by a short head, half a length between second and third. Time, 2 min. 42 $\frac{2}{5}$  sec.

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE LAST YEARS OF A GREAT KING

*Minoru's* Failure in the St. Leger—Posing for Photograph—A Crisis at Egerton House—Death of King Edward—Record of his Turf Victories.

**M**INORU won three more races after his Derby triumph as a three-year-old. One of the three was not the St. Leger, which shows that he was not the great horse that *Persimmon* was. It may also show that he did not have the luck to come across a moderate opposition in the last of the season's classic races as was the case with *Diamond Jubilee*. For, long before that time, *Bayardo* had at last come to himself, and the St. Leger was one of his many prizes. With odds of 3 to 1 betted on him *Minoru* had no sort of difficulty in winning the St. James's Palace Stakes at Ascot. *Bayardo* had gone for the Prince of Wales's Stakes and *Louviers* for the Triennial Stakes. The rivals had, therefore, carefully avoided a clash, and each got away with a substantial prize. The next race for our colt was at Goodwood, and again he won because his task was simple in the extreme. As a rule I am opposed to a horse competing at Goodwood which is to be seriously trained and which is supposed to have a big chance for the St. Leger. It is a question in some measure to be determined by your horse. One with a fine constitution and the best of limbs and feet can perhaps be risked. As a matter of fact *Bayardo* did not run

there that year. I do not think it did *Minoru* any good, for he had rather light and shelly feet, and from that time onwards they gave me some trouble, especially as the ground became very hard for some time before the St. Leger.

On the morning of the St. Leger I did not think his action was quite what it should have been. The ground was particularly hard, and I could only attribute it to his feet being troublesome. All the same I expected him to take a deal of beating, but, looking at the brilliant way *Bayardo* won, I do not think in any case *Minoru* would have prevailed, but at least he would have been second had he not been interfered with. He was a long-striding individual, and only showed of his best when balanced and really racing. Just as Jones, when they had turned into the straight, was coming up on the rails, Trigg, on a horse called *Carrousel*, swung in and shut him out. *Minoru* had to be snatched up, but even so he struck into *Carrousel*, and, worse than that, he was put out of the race so that he finished no nearer than fourth, with *Valens* second and *Mirador* third.

*Minoru* won the Free Handicap, his only other race that year, by a neck, but really he should have won much easier than that. Jones had come by a bad fall and could not ride that day. The mount, therefore, was given to Maher, who, through not knowing the horse, tried to arrive on the winning post with one of his artistic rushes. Now *Minoru*, being so long-striding, could not quicken in a few strides, as many horses can do. He needed to come a strong gallop right through. Maher dallied with him and when *Electra* challenged him close home it was all he could do to squeeze *Minoru* home by a neck.



There is little I have to add in reference to this very game and genuine Derby winner. Early in his career as a four-year-old a cataract formed in one of his eyes, and it clearly gave him a lot of pain. He did not show the same consistent good form in his gallops. The year before he could always be relied on. Now he would go well one day and not the next. When I galloped him for the City and Suburban Handicap, for which I thought he had an undeniable chance, he was beaten, so that we had not much hope of him. He could finish no nearer than seventh, and so on that very subdued note ended the racing career of the 1909 Derby winner. There is no doubt that he was one of those horses that bloomed and were at their best as three-year-olds. Few horses are equally good at two, three, and four years old. Every horse, I consider, reaches the zenith of his powers at some time. Some develop early and are notable two-year-olds. Others, as three-year-olds and even older, leave all their previous form behind them, as did *Morion*, *Ossian*, *Jeddah*, *Florizel II* and dozens of others I could mention. Some, again, go on improving from year to year, as with *Per-simmon*. I certainly never knew how good he was as a four-year-old. It stands to reason that a horse in the top class cannot be at his best always and all the time.

I remember once Mr. Tenbroek claimed a horse, named, I think, *Hard Times*, out of a selling race. I do not know why he should have done so, as the animal could not even win a selling race at Lichfield. He had "bungy" legs, and for some time after I got him I hacked him about. Then one day I tried him at weight-for-age with a two-year-old

named *Sleeping Beauty* that had been winning some nice races. To my astonishment the despised one beat the two-year-old. Now, Mr. Tenbroek was a gambler when he fancied anything particularly, and we put *Hard Times* in a selling race on the July Course at Newmarket. The owner bet on him, though even so the horse started at a long price and won. People thought it was a fluke and would not bid at the auction, so that we got him back for 120 guineas.

I put him in the Stewards' Cup and he was given 6-7. He was backed to win quite a big sum at prices averaging about 33 to 1. He had won everywhere except in the last few strides when the boy was outridden by two of the crack riders of the day, one on either side of him. Very shortly afterwards the horse won the Egham Cup, and, indeed, he kept up his form for about a month, then going back and becoming just as bad as ever. There is nothing to govern this sort of thing ; in fact it defies understanding. But one thing we do know : that practically every horse, if of any good at all, has some period in his life when he is better than at any other time.

One often hears of the saying “ horses for courses.” It is true enough, but it must not be thought that a horse runs better at one course than any other merely because he appreciates the surroundings and the scenery. After all this is merely a question of action. Some horses act better on downhill slopes, such as terrify others, and consequently will show their best form at places like Epsom and Brighton. I once had a horse called *Chevronel* that was a wonder at Epsom. On one occasion he won two

races in the same week, carrying prodigious weights. He was not a shadow of himself elsewhere, and the explanation was that he had no fear of galloping downhill.

My mind goes back to *Minoru* again. In his early days at Egerton he seemed afraid of the lad that "did" him. The horse always seemed to be on the alert, and as if scenting trouble. Now, no horse can be happy if he should appear worried and discontented in this way, and though I did not like taking his lad away I found an opportunity of doing so and substituted a much quieter individual. The new lad used to lead him about when at work on the Heath, and generally made a fuss of him. The change in the horse was quite magical. He became altogether different and settled down into a most amiable creature. I am sure, if I may say so, this had quite a lot to do with the way the colt prospered and improved. He was happy and contented, and it reminded me again of what a difference it makes to a high-couraged horse to have looking after him a quiet individual rather than one that shouts and blusters.

*Minoru* was returned to his breeder, and some time later was sold to Russia for something like £30,000. Often I wondered what had become of him when that unhappy country boiled up and red revolution prevailed. To the end of my days I shall naturally have a kind and soft spot in my heart for the horse. He was of such a charming disposition, and, after all, he did do things.

Just one morning he was rather naughty. It was when he showed the utmost dislike of having his photograph taken, for also included in the picture

were His Majesty, Lord Marcus Beresford, Jones (in the saddle in colours) and myself.

I do not know exactly how long the operation took, but it seemed ages. The horse would not pose and the King was much irritated. His mood must have reacted on all of us, as in my own agitation I evidently did not button up my jacket to the holes opposite which were intended to receive the buttons in their proper order. Probably I put the top button into the second button hole, and the fact was noted by His Majesty when the proof was submitted to him, for I received a note from an Equerry informing me that the writer had been commanded to warn me not to fasten my jacket to my trousers on any future occasion when I might have the honour of being photographed with the King! A slight exaggeration, perhaps, but an indication of how King Edward could see humour in most situations. The photographer earned my personal thanks by so faking the picture that the slight error in dressing was duly corrected in the finished picture.

It was that same morning on which the photograph was taken that an end came to a crisis which had been occasioning the greatest worry to Lord Marcus Beresford and myself. It arose out of a resolve on the part of the King to take away his horses from Egerton House on the ground that the establishment was far too costly to maintain. Certain of His Majesty's personal friends, including, I had reason to believe, the late Mr. Arthur James, had been putting forward this point of view so persistently that the position quite suddenly became serious. It had apparently developed between *Minoru's* Derby and the Ascot meeting a fortnight later. Several

places were being mentioned as suitable for His Majesty to take, one in particular being Lagrange, in the town of Newmarket.

After *Minoru* had won his race at Ascot, Lord Marcus sought me out and accompanied me into the presence of the King, who congratulated me on winning again with the horse. It was then that Lord Marcus said: "Well, sir, I hope now after what *Minoru* has done that you will reconsider your resolve to leave Egerton," and the King spoke in such a way as to leave me far from convinced that a definite decision had been arrived at.

Later in the meeting Lord Durham met me and asked: "How about Egerton House, Marsh?"

I replied by asking Lord Durham to be kind enough to explain his question, whereupon he surprised me by saying: "The King intends leaving Egerton House, and if you don't agree to it, much as he would regret it, he would have to find another trainer."

My reply was that I would train for His Majesty anywhere, but I would be unwilling to leave Egerton House unless permitted to train for him privately. I may explain that at the time there were two other patrons in the stable.

Lord Durham's message showed clearly enough that the matter was about as acute as it could be. One felt that certain people behind the scenes were pressing His Majesty to take the course of leaving, and, rather than depart from my old home except as private trainer to the King, I came face to face with the possibility of staying on and trusting to luck in getting the boxes refilled. The matter was even discussed with Lord Marcus Beresford. All the same

the prospect of Egerton without its royal patron was intensely alarming and most depressing.

I was still hoping for the best until one morning Lord Marcus came to me in the sale paddocks at Newmarket, and remarked: "We're done. I'm sure now we shall have to leave Egerton. What are you going to do?"

"I shall leave that entirely in your lordship's hands," was my reply.

If only, I thought, His Majesty could have the case for Egerton put to him fairly I had not much fear that he would still proceed with the plan to leave. The question was to find the person who might be in a position to discuss the matter with the King. At the moment His Majesty was staying at Newmarket. Then I thought of Mrs. Langtry, that accomplished and charming lady who at all times appeared capable of interesting the King with her sparkling conversation and attractive personality. I almost at once encountered her out at the sale paddocks at Newmarket and asked her, should an opportunity present itself, whether she would put before His Majesty the case of Lord Marcus and myself for staying on at Egerton. She did not hold out much hope, except that on the morrow an opportunity might serve of doing as we wished.

Mrs. Langtry in her memoirs has let it be known that she broached the subject to the King the same afternoon on the racecourse without, however, receiving the slightest encouragement to proceed further with her well-intentioned intercession. The next morning during a visit to Mrs. Langtry's beautiful gardens at her home His Majesty obviously listened to her arguments in which she emphasized

the beauties and privacy of Egerton and that the cost of training elsewhere would not be appreciably less, except that such lovely gardens would not have to be maintained.

When the King left to come to Egerton to be photographed with *Minoru* my friend in need rang through on the telephone, and merely said : " It is all right. You will stay at Egerton ! "

I have explained that the mulishness of *Minoru* that morning put the King into a bad temper. When it was all over His Majesty turned to me, merely saying : " I suppose we shall have to stay at Egerton, but—there will be sheep on the lawns and only ten horses in training ! "

The King could not fail to notice the relief on the faces of Lord Marcus and myself. I thanked him as best I could, and that was the end of a matter which created a very big stir behind the scenes at the time.

\* \* \*

I come now to the saddest pages of my book—the passing of my beloved master King Edward. Not for long was he destined to be concerned with Egerton. It will ever be a matter of some gratitude where I am concerned that his last complete year—1909—should have brought His Majesty so much profit from the exploits of *Minoru*. The total of winnings might so easily have been ever so much higher if only *Princesse de Galles* had improved on her seconds for those richly endowed stakes, the One Thousand Guineas and the Oaks. *Electra* barred the way in the one, and *Perola* in the other race. I have explained how she enormously jeopardized her chances by going amiss almost every time

just before her races. It was a weakness which undoubtedly cost us many thousands of pounds. She was more like her real self at Ascot, and there she turned the tables on *Electra* at an advantage in her favour of 7 lb., winning the Coronation Stakes, which was worth over £3,000.

When the 1910 season opened I had at Egerton twenty-two horses belonging to King Edward. They included *Minoru*, whose one and only race I have mentioned. But for the King's death he would have run once more, namely for the Jubilee Handicap, which would have been decided the day after His Majesty died. That was a Saturday. On the Friday I purposed running a filly in a minor race at Kempton Park. Her name was *Witch of the Air*. She was a sweet little daughter of *Robert le Diable* and *Vane*, and I thought she had a chance for the Spring Two-Year-Old Plate. It was on the day that she was dispatched to the meeting, namely the Thursday, that news came to Egerton that His Majesty was ill. I do not think anyone realized at the moment that the illness was so soon to prove fatal. Only the next morning did the papers seem to take a rather grave view. On my way through London to Kempton Park I called at Buckingham Palace to make personal inquiry regarding the King's condition, and at the same time ascertain what the wishes were about *Witch of the Air* keeping her engagement to run.

I saw Sir Francis Knollys, afterwards Lord Knollys, and asked him if it was true that the King was so seriously ill as was reported. "Yes," he replied, "I am sorry to say he is very ill indeed, but he is up in his room, though he should be in bed."



I suggested that it might be unwise to run *Witch of the Air* in the circumstances, but Sir Francis at once assured me that the King had ordered her to run.

She won her race at a time when her royal owner must have been gravely ill. The crowd on the race-course, realizing something of the gravity of His Majesty's illness, did not know whether to cheer, as they were accustomed to do on the occasion of a royal win, or be silent. It was a strange and moving scene, and, full of deep misgivings, I could only hurry away from it at the earliest possible moment. It was later when I heard that his present Majesty had actually informed his father of the success of *Witch of the Air*, and how the news did undoubtedly appear to give him pleasure. Then, later, I was to receive that consoling letter from Lord Marcus Beresford, which has been quoted in an earlier chapter. "His last words," wrote Lord Marcus, "were expressions of delight at hearing of *Witch of the Air's* victory, so you have the extra satisfaction of having been the means of giving him a pleasant thought to finish up his great life."

Consoling words they were and indescribably comforting.

None, surely, mourned the passing of the King more than all of us associated with the Egerton House establishment. His late Majesty had been known to all on the place, and if I say we felt we had lost a friend as well as a kind, considerate, and always forbearing master I trust my meaning will not be misunderstood. To our message of sympathy respectfully and loyally addressed to Queen Alexandra, General Sir Dighton Probyn sent us these most sincere words :—

*WITCH OF THE AIR, THE LAST RACEHORSE TO WIN FOR KING EDWARD*



I am commanded by Queen Alexandra to thank you, Mrs. Marsh, and all your employees, for your kind expressions of sympathy with Her Majesty in her heavy bereavement. Her Majesty knows that you all, at Egerton House, feel truly for her in her great sorrow.

I thank you for your kind reference to my own loss of a master, and I feel I may say a *Friend* I have served closely, and I hope faithfully, for nearly forty years. But the whole civilized world has lost a friend.

Lord Marcus Beresford once assured me that when King Edward started racing an account was opened at Weatherby's of £1,000, and that at one time £60,000 stood to His Majesty's credit. I merely mention this to show that notwithstanding the lean years the racing stable and the stud at Sandringham must have more than paid their way through the winnings of the racehorses and the earnings at the stud of the sires, apart from what was realized on many sales, including, of course, that of *Diamond Jubilee* for £30,000. I have thought it well, therefore, at this most appropriate point to tabulate a list of the winnings on the Turf of King Edward's horses from the time they came to Egerton House in 1893 to the year of his death. The list is taken from a panel in letters of gold which I had made and erected inside the archway admitting to the main stable yard at Egerton. Here it is:—

YEAR	NO. OF RACES WON					AMOUNT
1893	..	..	2	..	..	£372
1894	..	..	5	..	..	3,499
1895	..	..	11	..	..	8,281
1896	..	..	12	..	..	26,819
1897	..	..	9	..	..	15,570
1898	..	..	6	..	..	6,561
1899	..	..	5	..	..	2,188

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YEAR	NO. OF RACES WON				AMOUNT
1900	..	..	10	..	£29,685 10s.
1901	..	..	2	..	2,637
1902	..	..	2	..	1,514
1903	..	..	3	..	3,105
1904	..	..	5	..	1,903
1905	..	..	2	..	970
1906	..	..	4	..	2,788
1907	..	..	5	..	2,944
1908	..	..	9	..	5,490 10s.
1909	..	..	13	..	20,144
1910	..	..	1	..	216
				<u>106</u>	<u>£134,687</u>

And here, taken from another panel, is the record of Egerton House winners during exactly the same period. I may, perhaps, be pardoned if I view it now with a feeling of considerable satisfaction.

YEAR	NO. OF RACES WON				AMOUNT
1893	..	..	37	..	£13,958 15s.
1894	..	..	29	..	13,297
1895	..	..	45	..	15,584
1896	..	..	52	..	38,650 10s.
1897	..	..	39	..	33,545 10s.
1898	..	..	61	..	34,552 10s.
1899	..	..	30	..	21,344
1900	..	..	31	..	43,543
1901	..	..	17	..	14,362
1902	..	..	22	..	21,997 10s.
1903	..	..	22	..	15,084
1904	..	..	20	..	6,838
1905	..	..	19	..	10,313
1906	..	..	18	..	20,083
1907	..	..	19	..	6,644
1908	..	..	19	..	10,318
1909	..	..	16	..	20,757
1910	..	..	8	..	2,342
				<u>514</u>	<u>£343,213 15s.</u>

It will not, I hope, be uninteresting to the reader if I summarize as briefly as possible the important races won for King Edward by horses trained for him at Egerton. They have, of course, been discussed in earlier pages. Here they are set out in what I hope may prove to be a permanent record :

1894	St. James's Palace Stakes,	WON BY	
	Ascot .. ..	<i>Florizel II</i>	
	Royal Stakes, Newmarket	"	
1895	Princes' Handicap, Gatwick	"	
	Manchester Cup .. ..	"	
	Ascot Gold Vase .. ..	"	
	Goodwood Cup .. ..	"	
	Jockey Club Cup .. ..	"	
	Coventry Stakes, Ascot ..	<i>Persimmon</i>	
	Richmond Stakes, Good-		
	wood .. ..	"	
1896	One Thousand Guineas ..	<i>Thais</i>	
	The Derby .. ..	<i>Persimmon</i>	
	The St. Leger .. ..	"	
	Jockey Club Stakes .. ..	"	
	Criterion Stakes, New-		
	market .. ..	<i>Oakdene</i>	
1897	Ascot Gold Cup .. ..	<i>Persimmon</i>	
	The Eclipse Stakes .. ..	"	
	July Stakes, Newmarket ..	<i>Mousme</i>	
1898	Royal Plate, Kempton Park	<i>Eventail</i>	
	Prince of Wales's Stakes,		
	Goodwood .. ..	"	
	Old Cambridgeshire .. ..	<i>Nunsuch</i>	
1899	Boscawen Stakes, New-		
	market .. ..	<i>Diamond Jubilee</i>	
1900	The Derby .. ..	"	"
	Two Thousand Guineas ..	"	"
	Newmarket Stakes .. ..	"	"
	The Eclipse Stakes .. ..	"	"
	The St. Leger .. ..	"	"

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1901	St. James's Palace Stakes, Ascot .. .. .	WON BY <i>Lauzun</i>
1902	Richmond Stakes, Good- wood .. .. .	<i>Mead</i>
1903	Payne Stakes, Newmarket Prince of Wales's Stakes, Ascot .. .. .	„ „
	Jockey Club Cup .. .. .	„
1904	Newmarket St. Leger .. .. .	<i>Chatsworth</i>
	Lowther Stakes, New- market .. .. .	„
1905	Dullingham Plate, New- market .. .. .	<i>Mead</i>
1906	Great Surrey Foal Stakes, Epsom .. . . .	<i>Victoria</i>
	Hurst Park Foal Plate .. .. .	<i>Osella</i>
1907	Sandringham Stakes, San- down Park .. .. .	<i>Slim Lad</i>
	July Stakes, Newmarket .. .. .	<i>Pearl of the Loch</i>
	Soltykoff Stakes, New- market .. .. .	<i>Simpatica</i>
1908	49th Biennial Stakes, New- market .. .. .	<i>Perrier</i>
	Great Surrey Foal Stakes, Epsom .. .. .	<i>Minoru</i>
	Chesterfield Stakes, New- market .. .. .	<i>Princesse de Galles</i>
	Ham Stakes, Goodwood .. .. .	„ „
	Boscawen Stakes .. .. .	„ „
	Bretby Stakes, Newmarket .. .. .	„ „
	Wellington Cup, Sandown Park .. .. .	<i>Slim Lad</i>
	Kegworth Plate, Leicester .. .. .	„ „
	Corporation Plate, Brighton .. .. .	<i>Marie Legraye</i>
1909	Greenham Stakes, Newbury .. .. .	<i>Minoru</i>
	Two Thousand Guineas .. .. .	„
	The Derby .. .. .	„
	St. James's Palace Stakes, Ascot .. .. .	„

	WON BY
1909 Sussex Stakes, Goodwood..	<i>Minoru</i>
Free Handicap, Newmarket	„
Coronation Stakes, Ascot..	<i>Princesse de Galles</i>
Molyneux Stakes, Liverpool	<i>Vain Air</i>
Sudbury Plate, Derby ..	„
Berkshire Handicap, New- bury .. .. .	<i>Oakmere</i>
Nork Park Plate, Epsom..	<i>Saints Mead</i>

During his association with the Turf King Edward won £146,128 in stakes ; the stallions, including *Persimmon*, *Diamond Jubilee*, and *Florizel II*, earned £269,495 in fees ; and sales of His Majesty's horses realized £77,000, making a grand total of £492,623. *Persimmon* sired the classic winners *Sceptre* (winner of the One Thousand Guineas, Two Thousand Guineas, Oaks, and St. Leger), *Keystone* and *Perola* (Oaks winners), and *Your Majesty* (St. Leger). *Florizel II* sired *Volodyovski* (winner of the Derby), *Doricles* (winner of the St. Leger), and *Vedas* (winner of the Two Thousand Guineas).



## CHAPTER XX

### OWNERS AND TRAINERS

A Disastrous Match—Lord Dudley as an Owner—His Generosity—Reminiscences of Contemporary Trainers.

**B**EFORE continuing my story from the time when, immediately following on the death of King Edward, I had the honour of continuing to train the horses which were bequeathed to King George, it may not be without interest to touch on some incidents in the racing career of Lord Dudley. There was also another matter to which I might be expected to make some reference. That was the most regrettable match at Sandown Park between *Piari*, owned and ridden by Lord Gerard, for whom I trained a few horses at the time at Egerton, and *Pitched Battle*, owned and ridden by Mr. W. F. de Wend Fenton. A more wretched business never happened where I was concerned in the whole course of my career, and I cannot convey how deeply upset I was by the sequel to the match-making.

It must have been towards the end of September or early in October of 1905 that Lord Gerard, who, I believe, was a godson of King Edward, which may possibly have accounted for his having received permission to have his horses trained at Egerton House stables, wrote and inquired at what weights he should make a match with this horse *Pitched Battle*, owned by Mr. de Wend Fenton. Lord Gerard's animal was a very moderate mare, four

years old, named *Piari*, and jady at that. Having only a poor opinion of her I replied by suggesting that he should get as much weight as possible, which, I suggest, was not an unnatural thing to say in the circumstances. Finally, *Piari*, 4 years, appears to have been matched at 10 st. 8 lb. against *Pitched Battle*, 5 years, 11 st. 4 lb., over a mile and a quarter, for the 25th of October at Sandown Park.

Lord Gerard came down to Newmarket two or three times and rode his mare in gallops. I thought he shaped all right, and even became rather interested in the affair if only because, so far as I could judge, it had a sporting ring about it. When it came to weighing him out on the day he inquired of me : "What shall I have on the mare?"

"Why have anything at all on?" was my way of discouraging him from having a bet. "She's a jady mare and I don't think you should have a bet, at any rate not much. It's a sporting thing to have made the match at all, and it will be great fun winning it," I added.

Finally, it was settled that he should have £50 on, and he asked me to see about it for him. I thought I might as well have £25 on, and I asked Mr. Charles Mills if he would see about putting the money on. Meanwhile I suggested to Lord Gerard that he should come a really good gallop and make the best of his way home.

Just as the two horses were passing on to the course, I met Mr. Mills, who, to my amazement, told me that *Piari* was an 8-to-1-on chance. I thought for a moment he must be joking until he asked whether he should put on the £75. It was too late then to communicate with Lord Gerard, and I told Mr.

Mills I supposed he had better put the £50 on, but most certainly he was not to put on my £25. "Why," I said, "I would not lay 8 to 1 on her to beat *anything*."

I well recollect thinking to myself as I went into the enclosure that if it was 8 to 1 on such an animal as *Piari* then the other one must be poisoned. Even so I was absolutely unprepared for the shock I was about to receive. When the start took place Lord Gerard did not come at a racing pace as I had suggested he should do. He was content with a nice easy gallop. *Pitched Battle* strode along in her heels all the while, giving the idea that he was pulling over her and could smother her just as soon as her rider was so willed. Once along the back stretch *Pitched Battle* was allowed to come right up to *Piari*, and was then pulled behind again. The same thing happened after they had turned and were coming up the straight, and I remarked to the man by my side—he was well known to me—that if De Wend Fenton did not win he would never ride again !

At the half-distance he again came up to the mare, looked like beating her very easily, and then deliberately pulled his horse back and suffered him to be beaten by a length. It was the most palpable thing I ever saw on a racecourse, and I went to meet *Piari* sick at heart and disgusted. At the same time there was an ugly rush to the back of the stands, and much hissing and booing. The whole thing was disgraceful, and I felt thoroughly ashamed.

As Lord Gerard met me he exclaimed : "This doesn't seem a very popular win, Marsh."

"Well, it is not you they are hissing, but the man behind," was all I said in reply.

At the inquiry, which was promptly instituted by the Stewards, I could only say what I believe to be true to this day, that Lord Gerard was innocent of any complicity in the "ramp" unless he were the greatest actor in the world. There followed the warning-off of the owner and rider of *Pitched Battle*, and it meant the end of Lord Gerard's racing career, at any rate so far as Egerton was concerned. King Edward was furious about it, and discussed the whole case with me when he was at Newmarket very soon afterwards. Lord Gerard was requested to take his horses away from Egerton. In writing to me soon after this unhappy event he said: "I need hardly tell you how terribly sorry and worried I feel over this sad business. I shall not really be very sorry to part with my horses, as I think I would get very little pleasure out of racing now. I will sell my horses as soon as possible. . . . I only hope that all this has not, by any chance, done you any harm, and I would never forgive myself if it had."

It is many years ago that I trained some horses for Lord Dudley, whom I found the kindest and most liberal of men. A marked characteristic of him was that when he had made up his mind to a certain course of action he was very difficult to oppose. It was beyond me to keep him in hand on such occasions. Once he asked me to recommend some yearlings for him to buy, and accordingly I picked out three as suitable. I suggested that he should go to 500 guineas for each of two of them and possibly up to 1,000 guineas for the other one. With those suggestions in his mind he went to the ring-side.

He bought the two for less than 500 guineas

each. When the third came into the ring there was a bid of 500 guineas, whereupon Lord Dudley immediately jumped to 1,000 guineas. The other person made it 1,200, which had an extraordinary effect on Lord Dudley. "Three thousand," he said. "Perhaps, my lord, you mean 2,000," quietly suggested Mr. Tattersall. "No," came the quick retort, "I mean what I said—3,000."

Of course he got it.

The two cheap ones won, and the expensive one did so far justify herself as to pay her way. Still another instance occurs to my mind of his strength of purpose when once he had made up his mind to a certain course of action. I had bought for him a beautiful chestnut yearling, and by the time he was three years old he was quite a nice horse. At the time, however, I had nothing suitable to try him with. Knowing how Lord Dudley loved to have a big bet, it was important that we should find out what we could of the horse we had in mind. What we did was to borrow from John Porter a horse which had won the Grand Prize at Epsom. I fancy we brought off a four-in-the-morning trial at Kempton Park, and our horse won. My idea was to run him on the July course at Newmarket, and after the trial I felt Lord Dudley might have one of his pet big bets.

But no ; he preferred to run the horse at Sandown Park, at which place he was also engaged. I pointed out that the straight course at Newmarket would suit him ever so much better, as he was ill-adapted to going round turns. I objected most strenuously to taking the horse to Sandown Park, but, of course, he had his way, and on the day he was present with his friends, as also were his butler, his

chef, and his valet. What he had on I do not exactly know, but I was assured the sum was in the region of £6,000. George Barrett rode, and, as I expected, the horse swung very wide round the turn into the straight and lost so much ground that he failed by a neck to make it up and in that way was beaten. I am quite certain the horse could not have lost the race I had in mind for him at Newmarket.

Just to show Lord Dudley's kindness of heart I recall an incident at Brighton by which he parted with £300 under the impression that he was assisting a daughter of mine out of a difficulty, and at my request, too! A woman, neatly dressed, came up to him on the racecourse at Brighton, saying she was my daughter and married to a Chaloner. She showed him some of my notepaper with the Lordship address on it. When this was told to me I remembered receiving a letter from an address at Clapham Junction to which I could not well refuse an answer. It must have been the notepaper shown by the woman. Without asking a question he gave her £300.

When he came to see me at Lordship, where I was living at the time, on the following Sunday he happened to mention, quite casually, that he had done as I had asked and given my "daughter" the £300. When I confessed that I did not know what he was talking about he asked: "Didn't you send your daughter to me at Brighton for a loan of £300?" I could only assure him that I would not have dreamed of taking such a liberty, besides which the only daughter I had at the time was only twelve years old and at school. All he said was that he had been done.

The upshot was that the police were put on the fraud, and in due time we appeared at the court to find a shabbily dressed woman with a shawl round her head. I nudged him and suggested that he had not exactly flattered my family, to which he replied that he should scarcely have known the woman again as she came to him with fine clothes and wearing jewellery. Lord Dudley went straight from the court after the woman had got her deserts, took a special train to Wye, and rode his own horse in a Hunters Flat race there.

All owners who bet heavily must be a tremendous anxiety to trainers. My experience has not been acute in that way, especially in the last thirty years of my career. Lord Dudley, however, was a tremendous dasher when so minded. There was an occasion when he had anything up to £9,000 on a two-year-old of his called *Daisy Wreath* at Newmarket. It was in a selling race at Newmarket, and intense was my relief when it won. I don't think his dismay would have been any greater than mine, if, indeed, as much, had it lost.

*Humewood* will be recollected as bringing off a big coup when the horse won the Cesarewitch for Captain Machell. The horse was trained by James Jewitt, and one day I received a note from Lord Dudley telling me that he had bought *Humewood* and would I send to Jewitt's for the horse. I sent two boys for him, one to ride him and the other to lead him to Lordship. As a matter of fact I met them coming across the Heath, and as soon as he had been put in his box I went to look him over. The first thing I did was to take off his bandages and "boots." I noticed he had a cloth on his near fore

leg, and then it was I discovered he had a slightly bowed tendon. I felt sure he could never be trained again. I wired to Lord Dudley to inquire whether he had bought the horse for racing purposes or for the stud—if for the former I was sure he would never stand further training. Meantime I sent a note to Jewitt to say that the horse had arrived with a “leg.” I called in a “vet,” and he confirmed what I thought. They tried to make out that the horse was all right when he left his old stable; but that was ridiculous, and in the end they took the horse back.

Some time later Jewitt asked me what I purposed running at Ascot, and he told me how his party would be constituted, mentioning that *Humewood* was to run for the Cup. I had already bet him £25 that the horse would never run again, and now I made the bet into £50 that he would never run. They took the horse to Ascot, but he never ran.

I find I have strayed back through the years, and before finally bidding a last adieu to the period I may, perhaps, be permitted in this chapter to touch lightly on some notable contemporary trainers, such, for example, as Matthew Dawson, John Porter, Tom Jennings senr., James Ryan, Alec Taylor, and James Jewitt. I do not think the methods of those very successful men were substantially different from those in vogue to-day. Where I do think there has been a big advance is in the very important matter of stable management. It is much superior to what it was in the time of the men whose names I have mentioned. Accommodation for horses is ever so much better, and far more attention is now given to such vitally



important details as ventilation and hygiene generally. I am sure feeding methods have not appreciably altered. Everything that a racehorse wants now he had in the past. No doubt the thoroughbred himself has changed in constitution and temperament, but that is a point which can be touched on later.

So much has been written of the virtues as a trainer of Matt Dawson that it is not for me to enter into a lengthy commentary on his wonderfully successful career. The simple fact stands out, and always will do, that he was a great trainer, and equally good with all classes of horses. When his classic horses appeared on a racecourse you could always be certain of seeing them bright and full of muscle. He was in his prime when I was a young man. I make full acknowledgment here that he taught me many valuable things during evenings I would spend with him. Some things you must discover for yourself, for experience in training, as in every walk of life, is unquestionably the best teacher. And then there is that indefinable thing we call "instinct," which must assist in the making of a trainer who gets to the top of his profession.

One thing Matt Dawson told me was that a two-year-old could give away more weight than a horse of any other age, and, whatever one did, it would always be a mistake to let a good horse lead a good horse in his work. For long work, he added, always have a horse, however bad, that could get two miles. It would ensure the accuracy of gallops from end to end. Another point on which he was quite definite was that, with few exceptions, a horse was better as a three-year-old in October than at any

other time. I agree with this opinion, though *Persimmon* was a conspicuous exception. He made much more than the normal improvement a horse is supposed to make from three to four years of age.

I used to notice that his horses walked a lot before doing their work on the Heath. Never did I see them trot, but just long bouts of walking before their cantering and galloping work. I was always struck by the fact that they never wore cloths on their legs, and I think now, as I thought then, that the omission must have caused mischief which might have been avoided had they been worn. Cloths, I have always maintained and practised, brace the tendons and protect them while also keeping them in their places. My liking for them, no doubt, is because I know how they helped in keeping several of my best horses going in their younger days, as, for instance, *Persimmon* and *Florizel II*. Of course they must have careful attention. They must be kept scrupulously clean and be changed every three weeks.

One incident showing something of the proud character of the old Scotsman stands out in my memory where Matt Dawson was concerned. On one occasion the Duke of St. Albans came to him about his bill for seven or eight hundred pounds. The Duke, it appears, questioned several of the items. "Have you got the account, your Grace?" asked Matt. "Here it is," promptly replied the Duke, and thereupon the trainer took it and thrust it on the fire, saying, "That will settle all disputes, your Grace!"

Old-timers will have memories of Tom Jennings

senr., an extraordinarily kind and genial man who had a number of wonderfully good French horses through his hands, including *Gladiateur*, *Mortemer*, *Boiard*, *Rayon d'Or*, and two others I seem to remember were *Ecossier* and *Blenheim*. It was always said that when *Gladiateur* came to Newmarket they thought he must be a four-year-old, so big and matured was he. Jennings's long-distance horses used to be subjected to a tremendous amount of work, and those that could stand it were very good horses. Certainly horses could stand then far more than they can now. Old Tom never used to tell—and he never used to ask ! He liked a glass of whisky, and once I saw him take up his empty glass, look at it, and murmur : “ Damme, the glass must have a hole in it.” It most certainly had—at the end the old man had been using !

James Ryan was a Scotsman, and one of my greatest friends. We used to hunt a lot together when the opportunities served, and right well did he go to hounds. We used to have a Drag Hunt at Newmarket in those days and he was the Master. Fred Archer and Fred Webb were very keen on it as the Newmarket and Thurlow Foxhounds were not as good then as they are now. Moreover, there was too much game preserving in the district to permit of there being many foxes in the country. Once we entertained the Windsor Drag and took good care to have a regular steeplechase. I think the Newmarket lot held their own that day. I was riding a wonderful horse named *Maesderwin*. He was a marvel. One of the things he did that day was to jump a five-barred gate on the top bar of which a tree had been lashed. One who saw my horse

jump it said he saw me hesitate as I came to it and never dreamed that I would put the horse at it. He just cleared it. It is wonderful what you will do when you are young and your blood is up. Ryan, I may add, was extremely well liked at Newmarket. He must have been a pretty good trainer, too, as he did splendidly with that very fine horse *Springfield*, owned by Mr. Houldsworth.

John Porter occupied a high position, none, indeed, higher in his day. He was successful for many years on end, and was the first trainer for the late King Edward. To John Porter, as I have already mentioned, is due the credit of having bought for His Royal Highness *Perdita II*, who was destined to lay the foundations of the great triumphs which I have had the privilege of narrating. His horses at all times looked fit and hard, and somehow he had acquired the precious knack of always getting hold of high-class horses. Then, having got them, he was able to make the best of them. I had an idea he did not get on well with Lord Marcus Beresford, and it was probably the reason why the Prince's horses came to Egerton under my charge early in 1893. Porter must have been an excellent organizer, as he showed by his clever management of Newbury racecourse until he died full of years and honours.

Located as he was for most of his life at Manton, I did not come much in contact with Alec Taylor, father of the trainer who has brought Manton into such splendid eminence during the years of this century. Yet history tells how able he was, and what an engineer he was of many remarkable coups. He

was secretive and did not expect to be told more than he was prepared to tell. A queer but attractive individual he must have been. Often have I wondered how he would have got on in these later years when everything is so changed, even the horses themselves, while the shafts of publicity would surely have penetrated to that fascinating establishment on the Wiltshire Downs which for so many years has been the home of the Taylors, and which has never ceased to make wonderful Turf history.

James Jewitt was a good-looking man and invariably smartly dressed. He turned his horses out in the same smart and finished way. I dare say most people found him particularly short-tempered, and so, indeed, he was, though we were always very special friends. His policy, especially when he was working in such close association with Captain Machell, was to go more in for handicaps than the big weight-for-age races. With such clever brains acting in unison it is no wonder they brought off some quite sensational coups. In his earlier days he was quite a first-class jockey over a country, and at all times a most excellent judge of a horse. I can assure you it was a pretty hot stable when among its patrons were men like the Lord Lonsdale of the period, Mr. De La Rue, Lord Calthorpe, and then Colonel Harry McCalmont. They would always pull out the money to buy high-class horses. I suppose the best horse he ever trained was *Isinglass*, who, though he was inordinately lazy, must have been one of the best of Derby winners. Jewitt with his quick temper would frequently blaze up in arguments with Captain Machell, who, too, was a

man who valued his own opinions on horses and racing. Yet they remained good working friends. He was great fun to go out with, for he had much humour; he would set us alight when he went with hounds, and when he died I lost a good friend.

I must include my old friend and father-in-law, Sam Darling. As everyone will acknowledge, he was a past master of his profession; his horses were always beautifully trained and turned out; and he was very difficult to beat when he produced one he really fancied. His sons look like following in the footsteps of their father. Fred has won two Derbys already.

## CHAPTER XXI

### TRAINING FOR KING GEORGE

King George as an Owner—Bad Luck with *Knight of the Garter*—His Majesty's Best Horse *Friar Marcus*—Remarks on Racing Studs—Record of King George's Winners.

**F**OLLOWING on the death of King Edward came the active entry into racing of His Gracious Majesty King George. The bloodstock at Sandringham and the racehorses in training at Egerton had been bequeathed to the new King, but any lingering fears and doubts that His Majesty might not continue the participation in racing were removed when General Sir Dighton Probyn sent me a communication from Buckingham Palace in which he wrote :—

I heartily congratulate you, and our young King also, that he purposes carrying on King Edward's racing establishments at Newmarket and Sandringham, in the same way as his great father did. I am delighted that you and Lord Marcus are "as you were," and poor old Walker too. Good luck to all of you.

Over a year later that most kindly man wrote :—

I trust that King George may long go on racing with you as his trainer, and that Sandringham may produce some of the same type of animals it did during our late dear King's time. I know you will give me a tip of any good ones when you think you have them, as, although I have nothing to do with the stud now, I take, and for ever shall take, the greatest interest in it.

During the period of Court mourning, indeed right through the rest of that season of 1910, the King's horses were raced under lease to the Earl of Derby. I am afraid the horses were moderate, and in addition we were unlucky. Somehow when the horses are not good we always imagine that bad luck is playing an inordinate part. There never was a better loser on the Turf than Lord Derby, and at the end of that season he wrote me the following sympathetic letter from Knowsley :—

DEAR MARSH,

Thank you for your letter in which you tell me that we have no more horses to run this year. I think, therefore, it will be best to return them all as from last Saturday. I must again repeat to you how glad I am to have been associated with you during the last six months. We cannot be said to have been very lucky, as the number of seconds shows, but it has been a real pleasure to me to own (even temporarily) horses trained by you. I only hope that next year, for His Majesty, you will be in every way successful. I am quite certain that if care and attention brings success you are most certainly entitled to receive it, and nobody will congratulate you more than I shall do—even if you beat me.

Yours sincerely,

DERBY.

If I may be permitted to say so with the greatest respect, I at all times found King George a most human and kindly man. I knew he was very fond of all animals, and of horses in particular, but I did not realize when he was Prince of Wales that he was so keen, as he afterwards proved to be, or that his interest was so deep-rooted. It may be, of course, that



it was considered for the time being amply sufficient for only one member of the Royal Family to own racehorses. Whenever His Majesty chanced to be in residence at Sandringham an opportunity was never missed of going round the stud after lunch on a Sunday. The King would go from box to box with a basket of carrots with which he would feed the mares and the young stock.

King George is a better judge of a horse than was his father, and, also, he has a far more intimate knowledge of the breed of the thoroughbred horse. One could not fail to notice this time after time during visits to the horses in their boxes at Egerton, and also when any mention cropped up of the prominent horses of the day in other ownerships. I make acknowledgment with the deepest gratitude of His Majesty's kindness, consideration, and sympathy shown towards me. As an example of his consideration for his horses, and, if I may say so, his confidence in me as his trainer, I may recall an occasion when I remarked to the King: "I am afraid your Majesty will think I am a long time in bringing out the two-year-olds," and I added that I could not hurry a horse, as I had found from long experience that it did them much harm to be hurried. His Majesty observed in reply: "Never hurry a horse for me, Marsh. When you tell me it is ready to run I shall be quite satisfied. I would much sooner have a nice three-year-old than a two-year-old."

His Majesty was most grateful and delighted when he won, and never failed to express his pleasure and satisfaction. He would be just as sympathetic when the disappointments came, as they most inevitably did. There are some things I shall never forget

while life lasts. My mind goes back to an occasion when the King and Queen visited Ireland, and my instructions were to enter one or two horses, and, if possible, win with them. Unfortunately our horses at the time were not good, but the two that seemed most likely to win were sent over and thought to have good chances. To my intense disappointment each of them was second, though I am sure the Irish people would have given their Majesties a great ovation had either or both of them won. I think the people were almost as disappointed as I was. For myself I could have wished for no better consolation than a message graciously sent to me by the King that, though success would naturally have been very pleasant, I was not to worry over the defeats.

Then another instance occurred in connexion with the Derby of 1924. Throughout the previous winter we had been quietly hoping for the best in connexion with *Knight of the Garter*, to whom I shall presently refer again. I have never had a horse improve so much as he did between the Two Thousand Guineas and the Derby, and, therefore, it came as a most cruel blow that practically on the eve of the Derby he fell a victim to that plague commonly known as "heel-bug," because some poison, probably picked up from a flower or weed in the turf, infects the heel with germs that set up eruptions and quickly infect the tissues of the leg with poisonous matter. To our intense grief the horse had to be kept at home. I had fancied him quite a lot, though, as it turned out, I do not think he would have won. That His Majesty thought of others who were troubled will be gathered from the last sentence in the telegram I quote. It was received in reply to one from Egerton

and the employees respectfully proffering our birthday congratulations. The telegram read :—

3rd June, 1924, BUCKINGHAM PALACE.

Marsh—Egerton House—Newmarket.

I sincerely thank you, Mrs. Marsh, and all at Egerton House for your good wishes on my birthday, which I much appreciate. I am so sorry for you that *Knight of the Garter* cannot run on Wednesday.

GEORGE R.I.

As in King Edward's time, so during the years his present Majesty has been on the throne I have been honoured by an invitation each January to spend a few days at Sandringham watching the shooting parties at work and availing myself of the opportunity of seeing the sires and mares, though the days were too early for foals to be on the scene. The brilliance of the King's shooting was ever a joy to watch, and then there were the bright luncheon parties, invariably attended by the Queen and ladies of the Household. During those visits I stayed with the Agent, Mr. Frank Beck, who was killed while on active service in the Dardanelles, and afterwards with his brother, Mr. Arthur Beck.

Unquestionably the best horse King George owned during the years I had the honour of training for him at Egerton was *Friar Marcus*, a mottled brown by *Cicero* from a mare named *Prim Nun*. He was bred at Sandringham, and at all times was very much of a favourite. Perhaps it was due to the fact that he was so very kind and good-tempered. I am sure His Majesty liked him very much and took pleasure in showing him to any friends who were invited to come round the stables.



RICHARD MARSH ON HIS HACK, WATCHING THE ROYAL STRING AT EXERCISE ALONGSIDE THE  
DITCH AT NEWMARKET



*Friar Marcus* was a perfect model of what a sprinter should be, that is to say, he was short-coupled and very strong in the back, quarters, and arms. He had a beautiful head and neck, the best of shoulders, while his hocks were all that they should be. The colt was very well tried as a two-year-old, and when he came to make a first appearance on a course, which happened at Newmarket, we thought he would be any price as his name had not been discussed and not a single newspaper on the morning of the race so much as mentioned him. However, someone in the stable must have talked, for to our astonishment the colt opened favourite at 2 to 1 in a big field of twenty-four, and, making all the running, won by a length and a half. He never was beaten as a two-year-old. He ran in five races and won them all. He could not run at Ascot through starting coughing just before the meeting. As a matter of fact he was very ill, with quite an alarming temperature, but, having a robust constitution, he pulled round. Still I found he was not quite so good as he was when I galloped him again before Goodwood, and as the distance of the valuable Prince of Wales's Stakes is six furlongs I was a little bit dubious as to the outcome. He just lasted home to win by a neck to our great relief.

In the autumn the *Friar* won the Middle Park Plate, and it is not unnatural to indulge in hope for the best about any young horse that has the Middle Park Plate to his credit. Yet one was bound to have grave doubts about his stamina for the following year. Horses of his herculean and tremendously muscular and compact type do not as a rule win races over a distance. Besides, he was not a tall horse, and altogether was distinctly lacking in scope. Coming

events, I thought, cast their shadows before them when we found he did not grow appreciably during the winter. As a matter of fact he only grew a quarter of an inch, and was distinctly under sixteen hands when fully grown. What always favoured him was his nice temper and his beautiful action.

It was easy to get him ready for the Two Thousand Guineas. I cannot say that we really fancied him, as the unpleasant discovery had been made in due course that he could not quite get the mile. What he did in the race was to run fast for six and a half furlongs after making most of the running.

Like all horses you try to train out of their course they get worse, if only because they are being asked to do something beyond their powers. Thus do they lose their speed. Realizing this, it was decided not to persevere in the colt's preparation for the Derby, and he was therefore not started for it. It was a wise proceeding, if I may say so. He would have been one of the first beaten, whereas the policy adopted resulted in the horse showing tremendous form over sprint courses. His Majesty was not specially disappointed, having prepared himself for the probability that the horse would not stay as a three-year-old. This we knew for certain when three-parts through with his preparation for the Two Thousand Guineas. The discovery did not in any way lessen the King's liking for him. In due course he went to the stud at Sandringham, and in the intervening years has produced many winners, though like himself they do not seem to have been capable of staying. But his stock were most decidedly good-looking and have fetched excellent prices in the sale ring.

Mention of *Knight of the Garter* was made earlier in this chapter, and it may not be out of place now to give the reader some additional particulars of a colt on which we built rather highly. With Lord Marcus Beresford and myself he was a great favourite. Lord Marcus had bought him as a foal for 700 guineas, attracted by the possibilities he suggested as well as, of course, by the breeding, for he was by *Son-in-Law*, a sire that was making a big mark at the stud. Lord Marcus died in December while the colt was still a yearling, and so he was not spared to see what would have so much rejoiced him—his favourite's winning debut.

He was a wonderfully matured two-year-old, and when he was tried with a four-year-old named *Sonora*, we were satisfied we had a good horse. I thought he must be a pretty good colt then, and so that he might have the benefit of some public experience before sending him to Ascot for the Coventry Stakes he was wisely exploited for a race at York, which he won as I fully expected him to do. He won the "Coventry" all right when the time came, but was beaten, as I think unluckily, at Goodwood by *Halcyon* in Lord Derby's colours. He also won at Nottingham, which incidentally marked Jones's last mount in the royal colours. No horse could have done better than he did from two to three years of age. He grew well, and had all the attributes of an extremely handsome and well-mannered horse. Then there came a time when just a suspicion arose that he too might prove to be a non-stayer. Accordingly when he competed for the Two Thousand Guineas his jockey was instructed to wait until close home before sending him to the front or endeavouring to



do so. Instead he raced across the Flat with such speedy horses as *Diophon* and *Tom Pinch* and was done with at the Bushes.

Between the race and the Derby he improved out of all recognition ; so much so as positively to astonish me, and I had to revise my earlier ideas that he was going to turn out a non-stayer. I say that because of the way he went in mile-and-half gallops with horses like *London Cry* and *Bowwood*. They could certainly get the distance. In the week before the Derby *Knight of the Garter* was doing more with those horses than at any other time, showing conclusively that he was thriving.

Then came the tragic discovery of trouble, ending in an utter overthrow of our hopes. One evening, on going round "stables," I found one of his joints was a bit flushed. Outside the joint were one or two pimples. I could not believe that this really was the dreaded heel-bug, but on the Thursday in the week before the Derby there was no doubt about it. The leg had flushed up almost to the knee. Incessant attention caused the trouble apparently to yield so that on the Monday morning of Derby week it was ever so much better and I felt justified in allowing the colt to canter twice. After all he had to be worked, especially as he had missed having a last winding-up gallop on the Saturday. In those two canters I thought he went wonderfully well.

Going to him early the next morning for the purpose of putting on his bandages—the motor horse-box had actually arrived for transporting him to Epsom—I found to my dismay that the leg was as bad as ever again. To send him to Epsom in the circumstances was altogether out of the question, and

the most regrettable news had to be communicated at once to His Majesty. *Knight of the Garter* was an uncommonly clean-legged horse, and perhaps the last in the world you would imagine to become the victim of such an obstinate case of heel-bug, I have never known or heard of such a stubborn case, though the colt had skilled veterinary attention and everything possible that could be done for him. Yet he was not able to run again that year.

I have noticed that this heel-bug is prevalent about the end of April and the beginning of May, and the conclusion I have come to is that it is probably due to some small weedy flowers that have a growth of something like an inch and a half. When they are dying off they throw out tiny prickles, which contain the poison that sets up the mischief. Some horses as they tread are obviously more susceptible to it than others. I cannot account for the plague in any other way as all through my long training life I have at all times been most particular about horses' heels being cleaned and dried on coming in from exercise. I had two other horses with the trouble at the same time—*L'Aiglon* and *Resinato*—and they quickly got over it. *Knight of the Garter* was a very gross horse, and it obviously affected him more than others. The annoying thing is that the poison does not necessarily attack the horse which is unhealthy and low in condition. No horse could have been healthier and fitter than *Knight of the Garter* was.

One of the earliest horses to win in the royal colours for King George was *Dorando*, so named after the wonderful little Italian Marathon runner. "Please tell Marsh," wired His Majesty to Lord Marcus Beresford, "how pleased I was at *Dorando's*

victory and that I wish I could have been there. I trust now that the going has become good that he will be able to run several horses and that some may be successful. I know the difficulties he has had to contend with owing to the hard ground."

It would have been an enormous pleasure to me to have had the privilege of training a classic winner for the King during my remaining years at Egerton. The hope of doing so never died ; rather did it live very much during the two-year-old career of *Friar Marcus* and then of *Knight of the Garter*. Yet the produce of the Sandringham Stud never vouchsafed us another one as good as either of the sons of *St. Simon* and *Perdita II*, as in the time of King Edward. I am sure, and always shall be, that King George's pleasure in racing was chiefly built up on racing the horses of his own breeding at Sandringham. Even had circumstances permitted it would not have given His Majesty anything like the same satisfaction to have won races, pleasant though that is at all times, with "ready-made" horses purchased by private treaty or expensive yearlings acquired at public auction. An exception, of course, was *Knight of the Garter*, but he was bought as a foal, and Lord Marcus was attracted by the breeding as well as by the individual, and possibly hoped that the time would come when the horse would have justified a place being made for him in one of those boxes at Sandringham formerly occupied by *Persimmon* and *Diamond Jubilee*.

If the stud, being the chief source of supply for a racing stable, does not turn out the right sort of raw material the finished article most assuredly cannot be fashioned out of it. It may be that the lean period

which must be endured by most private studs—the history of thoroughbred horse-breeding in this country is full of such instances—synchronized with my years as trainer to His Majesty. It is my earnest hope that I may be spared to see King George rewarded for his most invaluable patronage of breeding and racing and for his own personal love of horses by owning the most notable racehorse of his day.

One satisfactory afternoon, though a terribly wet one, I recall at Newbury when their Majesties the King and Queen motored from Windsor to Newbury and saw his colours carried to victory twice. *Weathervane* won the Greenham Stakes, though not as *Minoru* had done under top weight, and *John Green* won the chief sprint handicap. *Weathervane* took his place in the records as a winner of the Royal Hunt Cup at Ascot, and it was a near thing about him winning it a second time. He was far from being a good horse and unreliable at that, but he somehow always seemed to bloom about Ascot-time. Perhaps, too, he had some liking for the course and his surroundings as he never ran so well as there. *London Cry* was a very fine stayer that was growing better with age like good wine. He won the Prince Edward Handicap, and greatly rejoiced us by winning the Goodwood Stakes in the presence of their Majesties in my last year of training. I know the King took the keenest pleasure in the Ascot success of *Weathervane* and the Goodwood triumph of *London Cry*. The Queen at all times displayed a most charming interest in the horses, and if ever I could win a race at places like Ascot, Epsom, and Goodwood, where their Majesties were most likely

to be present, I knew that I should be giving a deal of genuine pleasure.

I look back with pride and gratitude to the years during which I had the honour of training for the King, following on the splendid period between 1893 and 1910. It may be that any want of success on the part of the horses owned by his present Majesty was due to my own shortcomings. Perhaps I had slipped into that groove which exists for the old-fashioned. History must be left to decide that. But nothing can deprive me of the feeling, deep down within me, that I at all times gave of my best endeavours, mentally and physically, and called upon that knowledge and understanding of the horse in training which long years of experience should have taught me. Had I been a miracle-worker I could not have longed more ardently for those splendid victories which eluded us.

Saying farewell to Egerton, my old home of thirty-odd years, during which the most wonderful events of my life had happened, was a wrench which I do not expect the reader to understand. It was known only in its acuteness and real meaning to the author. Time is rigorous and inexorable in its demands. They must be satisfied since it is unchallengeable, and therefore must be obeyed. Egerton had been created and reared up for me in the first instance. It had been something more than home to me, and though it was inevitable that the time would come when I must make way for another, it, nevertheless, did not destroy the illusion that the closing door meant nothing less than the passing of the last important milestone in my life.

At the end of this chapter, dealing with the racing

period of King George, I cannot do better than give the tabulated figures of the number of races won and the amount in stakes credited to His Majesty, asking the reader to note that in the war years, and especially in 1917, the opportunities were severely restricted. Here they are :—

## WINNERS OWNED BY H.M. KING GEORGE V

YEAR	NO. OF RACES				AMOUNT
1911	..	..	6	..	£1,649
1912	..	..	13	..	.. 4,008
1913	..	..	5	..	.. 4,480
1914	..	..	11	..	.. 13,371
1915	..	..	2	..	.. 975
1916	..	..	3	..	.. 985
1917	..	..	—	..	.. —
1918	..	..	6	..	.. 1,874 10s.
1919	..	..	8	..	.. 4,171 10s.
1920	..	..	4	..	.. 1,659
1921	..	..	4	..	.. 2,146
1922	..	..	10	..	.. 5,289
1923	..	..	19	..	.. 12,095
1924	..	..	3	..	.. 3,095

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE RACEHORSE AND HIS MANAGEMENT

Reflections on Training—Vitality Makes the Racehorse—Horses of To-day and Yesterday: A Comparison On—The Question of Temperament—Two Famous Trainers, Hon. George Lambton and Alec Taylor—Reminiscences of Famous Horses.

**V**ITALITY makes the racehorse. Vitality is the true foundation of his excellence. It always was, and it always must be. Stable management to-day compared with my early days, say, of fifty years ago may have changed in minor details—it most certainly has changed for the better in the important matters of sanitation, hygiene, and ventilation—but in the essentials of feeding and in preserving and developing that vitality there has not been much change. The natural food of the horse remains the same, and I cannot think that the trainers of to-day can possibly take more scrupulous care of feeding and general stable management than was taken by what I may call the old school.

In training the racehorse I place stable management as of absolutely first importance. The training outside the stable is just common sense and instinct to do the right thing at the right time. Let me stress again as plainly as lies in my power that the successful racehorse is the one of supreme nervous energy and vitality, which must be nurtured and never be sapped. Better to send your horse to the post short of a gallop than with one too many in him.

Feeding wins more races than actual training on the gallops. I think I may say, now that my long day's work is over, that I was passionately fond of the stable work, for obviously if you have no idea how your horses are doing in the stable you have no guide as to how they should be worked. It must be the only guide.

I made it a rule when at home never to miss "stables" morning and evening, and so find out for myself how the horses had done and were doing. The greatest help a trainer can have is a good and truthful head man, one who is absolutely particular about the feeding of the horses, especially those of delicate constitutions. The racehorse is very much like a human being. His temperature is the same and so is his temperament, if I may put it so. The higher the horse's breeding the more must he be studied. If a man who has been born and reared in the best possible circumstances be suddenly confronted with hardship and worry, he will be less able to offer fight than the man born in humbler circumstances, with whom any change in that way does not come as such a shock. It is the same with the high-class racehorse. He feels neglect and misunderstanding of his temperament. He wilts, and his vitality droops.

The racehorse in his stable must have cleanliness by dressing over morning and night ; he must have a comfortable bed and clean manger out of which to eat his food just as a man likes a clean plate. These things are of particular importance with a horse in severe work. If he has these things, if he eats the food you give him, and if he rests as he should do, then you know you are doing the right thing by him. One present-day method practised here and there is to



have half-open doors day and night, certainly during the day-time. Horses within such boxes spend their days staring out, listening for sounds and watching every movement in the yard. Admittedly horses can be familiarized with extreme conditions, but I maintain that they cannot be resting in those circumstances, and rest is so very essential to the racehorse in work and in good health. Apart from that consideration our climate is opposed to such principles of super-ventilation. Horses need to be warm and comfortable and given all the rest and quiet possible. I should expect the horse that is staring out of his box all day to become listless and cease to take any interest in life, and, if I am correct, then it follows that the best in them goes undeveloped.

It is a platitude to say there are exceptions to every rule, and I have one in mind which would appear to discount my ideas. Just before the Derby of 1907 I was taken to have a look at *Orby* in his box on the morning of the race. He had done his exercise work at Epsom and was quietly eating his feed. The top half of the door was open and all the windows. A bitter wind was blowing in, and there was *Orby*, with no clothes on, and looking as if he had never even been dressed over. I could see he was a horse with a magnificent frame, but lacking most conspicuously in muscular development. He was being much talked about as likely to win that afternoon, but as I considered he was not a fit horse I dismissed him. I was wrong.

At the course I met Sam Darling and told him what I had seen. He had a hot favourite for the Derby that year in *Slieve Gallion*. "I have seen a beautiful horse this morning," I said, "but I never

saw one look much worse to run in the Derby." To my utter astonishment *Orby* won, beating *Woolwinder*, *Slieve Gallion*, and others. It may be said that he destroyed my theories, but I maintain that he would have been a far better horse in those other circumstances. *Orby* must have been an exceptionally good horse. I admit that it is possible that the rougher methods were the right ones to use and that *Orby's* temperament did not object to them. I never have discussed other people's methods, and do not propose commencing to do so now. But this case of *Orby* impressed me very much at the time, and the impression remains with me to this day.

Very few horses require identically the same amount of work. It is the same in the stable as between the delicate feeder and the gross feeder. The former is usually a highly-strung individual, perhaps in-bred, whose balance must be preserved by the exercise of the utmost study and patience ; the latter is far more phlegmatic in temperament. It takes much to upset him, he eats all he is given up to eighteen pounds or so of corn a day, and requires, and will stand, a correspondingly large amount of work. I believed admirable diet for all horses, speaking generally and in addition to the usual hay and corn, was beans or peas in spring and autumn during those periods when horses are changing their coats, carrots, chaff, and then linseed mashes once a week.

Now I am quite positive that the modern horse is not so robust as the horse of thirty or more years ago. It can only be due to excessive in-breeding to the *Galopin* and *Stockwell* lines. The modern horse simply cannot stand the same amount of work. In the old days one would see horses galloping two and

three times a week from the Ditch in, a matter of two miles and a quarter. If a trainer asked that of a horse in these days he would be said to be murdering it. Being more delicate of constitution the modern horse requires an infinitely lighter preparation. Any horses in recent times which have been trained in the severe way have rarely kept their form. On the other hand they have gradually deteriorated.

It is the question of temperament that governs the amount of work which any particular horse should be set. And I suggest that a study of a horse's breeding will often give you a starting clue as to the right methods to adopt. Temperament is largely hereditary, and that brings in the question of pedigree consideration. The horses that stand the strong work are those which come of stout lines and take only a minimum out of themselves in their work. You must have a horse to lead them in order to get a good gallop out of them. Such horses were *Ossian*, *Florizel II*, *Persimmon*, *Diamond Jubilee*, *Morion*, *Rabelais*, *Fortunatus*, *Perseus*, and *Red Robe*. With horses of the delicate temperament the art was to hide from them the fact that they had done a gallop or were about to have one. Examples of horses in that category to come under my personal direction were *Minoru*, *Marvel*, *Miss Jummy*, *Dieudonné*, *Thais*, *Princesse de Galles*, and *Ugly*. Of horses outside my own stable that required a vast amount of work I cannot do better than quote the instance of *Isinglass*. He was naturally a lazy horse, and I always used to think he would have done even better for a long-legged jockey like Jack Watts than was the case with Tom Loates with his much shorter legs. For, in addition to being lazy, *Isinglass* was a particularly

wide horse. *Petrarch* and *Ladas* were examples of highly-strung horses. Both were individuals of beautiful quality. *Petrarch* had substance and a perfect temper, while I never saw a more brilliant mover go to the post than *Ladas*.

I think I have remarked before that if King Edward had ordered me to take severe measures with *Diamond Jubilee* after his disgraceful behaviour on the July course at Newmarket as a two-year-old I should most certainly have broken that horse's heart. His courage would have been broken, and that vitality which I maintain makes the racehorse the wonderful creature he is would have been lost to him. He would have been useless as a racehorse. We studied his breeding and character, and in the end got the best out of him. *Diamond Jubilee* is the most remarkable instance within my knowledge of the importance of knowing your horse and the way he should be treated. Time after time he tried my patience almost beyond endurance, but our reward was splendid. After being apparently a hopeless proposition as a two-year-old he was the outstanding three-year-old, winning the Newmarket Stakes in addition to the Triple Crown and the Eclipse Stakes. His vitality remained with him at the stud, both at Sandringham and later when he was exported to South America.

No trainer can tell another how to train a horse. It is only through having the horse under his personal observation in the stable and out of it that he knows. He should be guided, as I have said, by the inferences to be drawn from breeding, constitution, and temperament. I am quite sure that most of the trainers of the present day only need the horses—

that is, the right sort of raw material—to prove their skill. It is not improbable that training in modern times is more trying and difficult than of old. Because of the greater number of substantial stakes now offered owners are more tempted to over-race their horses, and especially to bring out their two-year-olds too early. In the old days one scarcely ever saw a good young horse out before Ascot or even the Middle Park Plate in the autumn. They had a better chance then of maturing and settling down to the serious life and work of a racehorse. It is against Nature and quite impossible to keep a horse at the same uniform pitch of excellence from one year's end to another. Yet that is what is expected of the horse and the trainer, who is responsible for producing him for race after race.

It is not my intention before setting aside the pen to comment on the positions and methods of trainers who were contemporary with me prior to my retirement. That would be an impertinence on my part, even though I could only have pleasant words to write of such proved masters of their craft as are operating with success in the year 1925. Two of them have had most striking successes extending over a number of years—the Hon. George Lambton and Alec Taylor—and for both I have at all times entertained the greatest admiration. I consider it has been a fortunate thing for the trainers of Newmarket that for so many years they should have had among them a gentleman like Mr. Lambton, who could always be relied on in times of crisis or trouble to stand by them with his advice and example. For him and his brother, Lord Durham, I have always had deep respect and especially for their straightforward-

ness. If they believed themselves to be in the right they cared for no man. It has been a Lambton trait. In my time Mr. Lambton has had no superior as a trainer. I always admired the way his horses were turned out so hard and well trained for the objective which had been in view. You would generally see his trained horse lasting and fighting it out at the finish. He has had specially good fortune with fillies as, for instance, *Keystone II*, *Keysoe*, *Diadem*, and *Tranquil*. His association with Lord Derby has been remarkably successful in the past, and so splendid is the latter's resources in bloodstock that the future cannot fail to be splendid too.

The deeds of Alec Taylor speak for themselves in far more eloquent language than is at my command. He has got that wonderful instinct that tells a man which horses are likely to improve with time and patience. He waits for those horses to "come," and he will then get the best possible out of them. He is unquestionably a master of the art of training. I have known him all his life and have always had the greatest admiration for him as a trainer and the most kindly feelings for him as an honourable man. I have at all times been struck with his simplicity, both in his way of living and in his way of accepting his brilliant successes. His temperament, to be sure, is not quite like my own, which shows perhaps that there are more ways than one of getting there !

I was once asked which I considered the most impressive sight I had ever seen on a racecourse. It is not easy to single one out from a long memory of stirring incidents, and say such and such a scene was the most impressive. Of course *Persimmon's*

Derby and what followed is the sort of memory that is unfading, especially for the intimate part played by myself. I think, too, of *Minoru's* Derby and the extraordinary scenes enacted on that occasion in King Edward's lifetime. Then I shall never forget the magnificent way *The Lamb* won the Grand National for the second time.

Perhaps the most marvellous thing I ever saw was the Derby being won very easily by what at first glance I thought was the lamest horse I ever saw go to the post. I am thinking of *Captain Cuttle* in 1922. When the King asked for my humble opinion as to what would win the Derby that year I suggested—*Captain Cuttle* each way. When, a little later, I saw him lame going to the post I would not have taken a thousand to one about his chance. I was obviously wrong as really he must have been all right or his trainer would not otherwise have sent him to the post.

I have, of course, seen all the best horses of the last fifty years, and I suppose I would be justified in saying that *Ormonde* was the best of all. I say that simply because he was the best horse in an exceptionally brilliant year for three-year-olds. Otherwise it is very hard to draw comparisons and say with any degree of certainty this or that horse was the best of all time. I must say *Ormonde* looked a great horse. He had an enormous back and girth and tremendous power from hip to tail and hip to hock. He was a fine-actioned horse, with noticeably strong shoulders, which I do not object to in racehorses if they can use them. Beyond question he was a very beautiful, powerful, and altogether exceptional horse.

Yet I would not have been afraid of *Ormonde* on that day *Persimmon* won the Ascot Gold Cup. For I never knew at that time how good our great horse was.

*St. Simon's* merits could never be properly gauged simply because he was never tested in the classic races. There was his trial with *Tristan*, but I had horses that had beaten *Tristan*, and though *St. Simon* was never beaten and was undoubtedly one of the most notable horses of all time, it remains a fact that he was never tried out in the way I have suggested.

We have seen many wonderful sprinters, but one in particular is in my mind. I refer to *Prince Charlie*, a most beautiful son of *Blair Athol*. He had surpassing quality and power, and no doubt if he had not turned a roarer he would have been one of the greatest horses of all time. Then when we come to contemplate the notable stayers of the past forty years or so I must own that I never knew of a better than *Persimmon*. Certainly I never saw a horse go better at the end of two and a half miles than he did. *Isonomy* was an impressive stayer, but then he lacked what I might describe as the classic touch.

I do not find it easy to name the best filly or mare in my long career. It may have been *Pretty Polly*, to whom I rather incline, or again it may have been *Sceptre*, who I do not think had quite a fair chance through being trained and raced for the Lincolnshire Handicap as a three-year-old. *La Flèche* was certainly the best mare I ever had to do with, and I did not have her at her best, which was as a three-year-old. *Achievement* was a lovely mare and *Wheel of Fortune*



had especial excellence. She was of the low and lengthy type, very game, with a most charming disposition. That diminutive and really quite remarkable filly *Love in Idleness* I shall always remember for the beautiful way she was invariably ridden by Joe Childs. Courage is everything in the racehorse, and one saw what it could do for a pony like *Love in Idleness* with her big heart and absolute genuineness.

*Signorinetta*, of course, made memorable history in that year of 1908 when she won both the Derby and the Oaks. It took our world of racing, and Newmarket in particular, a long time to get over the shock of those marvellous victories. She was a mousy brown in colour, and undoubtedly good to look upon, for there was really nothing with which you could find fault. She had the right length, scope, and liberty of action, but, trained as she was by her owner, Chevalier Ginistrelli, I suppose the observers at Newmarket did not deign to give her any serious notice. Yet I had much respect for the old Italian sportsman, who bred and owned the filly. That he loved her as he would a child of his own goes without saying. After all he did a very wonderful thing in training.

*Signorinetta* was the only swan in his stable at the time; the rest were but geese. On one occasion when I had a horse with which I won the Derby he came to me and offered to lend me anything in his stable for trial purposes. He meant well all the same, and I fully appreciated the kind intention at the back of his mind. He was a quiet man and worried no one, but one day I was told a tale which made me laugh unrestrainedly. It seems he put some posts

about his property which Mr. Marriott, the very efficient Custodian of the Heath, regarded as being an infringement of Jockey Club rights. As he put them in Mr. Marriott had them taken out, and this was repeated. In great exasperation the Chevalier came to a friend of mine with the question, uttered in his quaint way: "Is Mr. Marriott Lord Durham, the Kaiser, and the Almighty all in one?" He was at some loss for an answer.

But to return to my impressions of the notable horses of what I may call my later years. I mentioned *Isonomy's* name just now. He was the most brilliant long-distance handicapper I have ever seen, a really nice horse, too, with clean hard legs and the best of bone. I do not suggest he was an impressive individual, because when he walked past you did not want to look again. Yet you appreciated his good points on seeing him stripped. I think the Goodwood Cup he won was about the fastest long race I have ever seen run. I did not think it possible for him to overhaul my horse, *The Bear*, after it had established a lead of nearly half a mile. *Barcaldine* was another brilliant handicapper, and was never beaten. He was a very good-looking brown horse, and rather strong in his shoulders.

*Bend Or* was a classic horse, if ever there was one, of truly exquisite quality, and we all know what a big mark he has made in the subsequent evolution of the thoroughbred. He must have been a pretty good horse on that day he won the Derby, even though it was by such a narrow margin, as Fréd Archer could not have been of much use to him. It was soon after the famous jockey had been savaged, and he could

only ride *Bend Or* with practically one arm. The horse had those mottled black spots on his lovely golden chestnut coat. He has transmitted them beyond the next generation in his progeny. I have an idea that he had a touch of sore shins on the day he won the Derby, as I know they put brandy on the shins in order to draw out the soreness.

*Robert the Devil's* jockey was blamed for the defeat of that horse by *Bend Or* in the Derby. There may have been something in that, but I prefer to believe that the real reasons why *Bend Or* had so little to spare were due to the partial incapacity of Archer and the shin soreness of the horse. *Robert the Devil* was a dark bay horse with a lightish neck and inclined to legginess. *Ayrshire*, on the other hand, was a rather short horse of beautiful quality. My impression is that he was not an easy horse to train, but the Duke of Portland was in great form at the time and all was well.

Another notable horse of the Duke of Portland's was *Donovan*, a dark bay horse standing 16-1 hands. He had that peculiarity of always galloping with his ears laid right back. The brilliant French horse, *Epinard*, also had it. One imagines that a horse is hating racing, but we know that this could not have been so. *Donovan* at any rate was a wonderful stake-winner, and as he started his career by winning the Brocklesby Stakes at Lincoln, the inference is that he was a very easy horse to train. This must be so with a horse which it is possible to get ready as a two-year-old in the very first week of the season. That *Cyllene* was the best three-year-old of 1898 there can be no question. Fortunately for us at

Egerton he did not happen to be entered in the Derby, otherwise I feel tolerably certain that my chapter on *Jeddah* would not have been a feature of this book. *Cyllene* was essentially of the *Bend Or* type, all quality, and he struck one as being so sensible and game. No horse could have looked better than he did on the day he won the Ascot Gold Cup. He was a striking success at the stud, and in siring *Minoru* he did at least give me one of my four winners of the Derby.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### RETROSPECT AND FAREWELL

Derby Winners—A Comparison of Types—Famous Jockeys—  
Ancient and Modern Styles of Horsemanship compared—Sloan's  
Success Due to Genius—Author's Farewell.

TAKING them as a whole the Derby winners of the nineties were a high-class lot. One or two exceptions there were of course, but *Isinglass*, *Ladas*, *Persimmon*, *Galtee More*, and *Flying Fox* were horses well out of the ordinary to see in the course of ten years. *Isinglass* was an unusually big horse, a lightish bay, and incorrigibly lazy. Such horses must be given a deal of work because they need it to keep them clean inside, and ordinary work takes so little out of them, or, shall I say, that it has so little of the desired effect on them. If they have the legs, the action, and the constitution to stand the work they are generally good horses, if only because they are game. Such was *Isinglass*, not an attractive goer in his slow paces by any means, but unquestionably a very good horse. *Ladas* belonged to an entirely different type. He was a most beautiful individual in the matter of quality, and I do not think I ever saw a more impressive mover when in action going to the post. Here was the ideal horse in the matter of physique, character, and action for the Epsom course.

Both of Sam Darling's Derby winners were big horses—*Galtee More* and *Ard Patrick*. My recollections of *Galtee More* are of a rather heavy and

somewhat coarse individual, but he stood right out as the best of his day. I do not think I ever saw a worse mover in his slow paces for a good horse than *Rock Sand*. Not knowing the horse you would certainly have regarded him as being dead lame. No doubt he was up to the average of Derby winners, though *Ard Patrick* and *Sceptre* put him in his right place, which did not happen to be in their class. *Cicero* was just such another, corky in his action and movements, rather short, but undoubtedly powerful for his size and always showing quality. There is no questioning the high class of *Spearmint*. He was a conspicuous instance of the racehorse that did not mature until he was three years of age. *Orby* thoroughly interested me if only for the reason that I found myself so utterly wrong after seeing him on the morning of his Derby triumph. He must have been an altogether exceptional horse, for when I saw him on the occasion referred to he gave me the idea that he was not a matured horse. He was a big-framed horse, standing, I should say, 16-1 hands, and showing enormous liberty in all his lines. He was simply tremendous from hip to hock, short in his cannon bones, with powerful shoulders and neck, in fact a most impressive horse.

When once Alec Taylor got *Bayardo* right as a three-year-old his excellence was undeniable. Fortunately for us that did not happen until after *Minoru* had won the Derby. I must confess that I got something of a shock on the morning of that Derby when I chanced to come across *Bayardo* at exercise. In my own mind I had wiped him out for the Derby after seeing him on Two Thousand Guineas day and noting how indifferently he ran, that is,

considering the big reputation he had built up for himself as a two-year-old. It will be understood, therefore, that I was not prepared to see such a vastly improved horse as he revealed himself to me that morning at Epsom. Here, I thought, was danger from an unexpected quarter. I imagine it to be correct that the colt was just coming to himself and that if the Derby had been a fortnight later history might have been written differently.

*Lemberg* was no doubt a Derby winner of good class, but it is quite certain that *Sunstar* was an exceptional horse. He was a hard brown in colour and showed the quality of a Derby horse. No doubt Charles Morton had experienced serious trouble with him after the colt had won the Newmarket Stakes, and to have won the Derby as he did practically on three legs and by three lengths stamps him for all time as a Derby winner of rare gameness and one right out of the average. He must have been endowed with a marvellous constitution as I have never known in my time of a more prolific sire at the stud. I suppose *Tracery* was of high class, but he never gave me the impression of being as good as he undoubtedly was.

*Craganour*, who came in first for the Derby of 1913 and then suffered the cruellest disqualification in history, was a lightish bay, rather undersized. Other people, of course, have their opinions of what happened between this horse and *Aboyeur*, and they are just as entitled to them as I am to mine. I shall always maintain, however, that it was a tragic decision, which was not merited. I shall never forget the way *Craganour's* trainer, W. T. Robinson, took it. He tried not to flinch and betray his feelings, but I have

no doubt in my own mind the disqualification took some years off his life.

Coming to more recent times we have the four New Derby winners in the years of the war—*Pommern*, *Fifinella*, *Gay Crusader*, and *Gainsborough*. *Pommern*, a bright bay horse, was somewhat heavy-topped, and I always thought he would have proved himself still better had they been able to train him as a four-year-old. *Gay Crusader* was the perfect racing machine. He was light-framed, stout-hearted, a fine stayer, and a racehorse to look at all over. It must have been a pleasure to train him, and I expect no one regretted more than Alec Taylor that he was unable to go on with him after his brilliant three-year-old career. For some reason I only saw *Gainsborough* once. He was rather of the *Pommern* type, without, perhaps, the quality of that horse. A short-coupled horse and not really impressive as an individual was *Grand Parade*, the first of the post-war Derby winners on resuming at Epsom. All that I recollect with any distinctness about *Spion Kop* was that he had four white legs, he showed much of the character of his sire, *Spearmint*, and he won the Derby quite easily. No doubt *Humorist* was a very delicate horse, which was tragically confirmed when within a month of his triumph he was found dead in his box at his training quarters. I can imagine no more bitter blow than this must have been for his owner-breeder and his trainer.

*Hurry On* must have been about the most powerfully built racehorse I have ever seen in modern times. He was never beaten, and when he was really racing he gave the idea of tremendous energy and resolution. We must admit that he was of exceptional class, and



the pity of it was that he came in a year when the three-year-olds were not of much account. I always thought his big son, *Captain Cuttle*, was a better looking horse. He was set closer to the ground and had better shaped limbs. He was big, but *Hurry On* was simply massive. Now for one cast in an altogether different mould—*Papyrus*, neatly turned, showing quality and kindness of disposition. This Derby winner, I am sure, was honest and good.

*Sansovino* must be ranked among the best, if only for the extraordinarily easy way he won the Derby of the closing year of my active career. He was a horse that could undoubtedly be faulted, for he was rather long in the back and it may be straightish in his forelegs. Yet he must have been in rare form on that day his trainer sent him out to win the Derby with so many lengths to spare. And then, as I am concluding this book, there has taken place at Epsom an even easier Derby triumph than that to the credit of *Sansovino*. I have never seen a Derby won with such absurd ease as was associated with *Manna's* win in 1925. He is a beautiful colt of exquisite quality and symmetry of outline, and I rejoice to think that my brother-in-law, Fred Darling, has had opportunities to demonstrate his skill as a trainer with such noted individuals as *Hurry On*, *Captain Cuttle*, and *Manna*.

No recollections of famous horses of the past twenty or thirty years would be complete without inclusion in any list of *The Tetrarch*. For many reasons he was probably the most remarkable of all. There were his unnatural colour and markings to begin with and remarkable growth for a two-year-old. I never saw

a two-year-old win race after race with such ease, though horses which appear to win so ludicrously easily may, nevertheless, be taking a great deal out of themselves. Altogether he was a phenomenal horse, and everyone must have regretted the fact that he could not be trained as a three-year-old. It seems to me we should have learned so very much more and had some most useful data to go upon.

In his later years at the stud he showed himself to be anything but a prolific sire, a fact which created much dismay among owners of mares who had contracted to pay the big fee demanded by the horse's owner. I feel tempted to tell a certain story which is true enough, but which it might not be politic to recount in its entirety. Suffice it to say that Lord Marcus Beresford, in his disappointment over a mare from Sandringham which had been returned barren, concluded some exchanges of correspondence by suggesting that the writer had selected the wrong motto and that the proper one to be displayed in the horse's box should be : "Ich dien—once only."

I have often been asked to name the best jockey on the Flat I have ever known. I certainly think that in the old days there were more really good ones than there are to-day. For Fred Archer I had the greatest admiration as well as respect. He had some uncanny means, I thought, of imparting extra vitality to his horses, and at times he rode absolutely with sheer desperation and achieved the seemingly impossible. Yet, on the whole, I am inclined to name George Fordham as the greatest all-round jockey I have ever known. He was a master in judging pace in a tight fit, and no one knew where the winning-post was

better than he did. He would win a race by a head, and then carry 7 lb. more on the same horse and still win. You never knew after years of careful observation what he had in hand. I know I was much amused one day when Fred Archer came back to the dressing-room after Fordham had just beaten him. Throwing his saddle down he said angrily : "I can't beat that kidding ——" It may be the word he used was "blighter," if, indeed, it existed in the racing man's vocabulary in those times !

Jack Watts was a very fine jockey. You never saw him in trouble. How different from modern times with the changed crouching seat and the grotesque knees-in-the-mouth business ! A braver jockey and a more honest man never got on a horse than Herbert Jones. His riding days were practically over, but he remained invaluable in private trials and morning work, when one morning in 1924 we had tried a two-year-old, of which we had some hopes, with a disappointing result. Everyone had a long face until Jones relieved the tension in his inimitable way by quietly remarking : "The only man happy this morning is Lord Marcus." The truest and staunchest friend Jones and myself ever had passed to the other side some six months before. It was the suggestion so naïvely put that Lord Marcus had been spared being made unhappy by the result of the trial that considerably wightened the situation for the moment, at any rate brere I was concerned.

It is possible that some readers might not think this book complete without an expression of opinion from the author on the subject of modern jockeyship. I am afraid what I have to say on the subject may give some offence ; unquestionably my views will be

considered old-fashioned. Yet I shall not venture to lay them down here without doing what I can to justify my arguments. I am not unconscious of the fact that I have been in a hopeless minority, and that I have no hopes of living to see any reversion to even a moderation of the old style, if only because apprentices to-day are taught to ride with short leathers and assume the ugly American crouch. They cannot ride in any other way. On one occasion I asked one of our very best jockeys why he did not try letting his leathers out a few holes, and he replied : " Well, I'm not sure what would happen if I did. I don't think I could stick on."

During all the years Jones rode for me I would never permit him to pull up his leathers, arguing that, if he did so, from his hips downwards he would be deprived of any command of his horse. On one occasion a number of years ago I ran a horse of Mr. Arthur James's at Doncaster, and, ridden by Jones, he dead-heated with one ridden by J. H. Martin, the American jockey. It was decided to run off the dead-heat, and when later I came to saddle my horse I found Jones's saddle with the leathers pulled up. I could not believe that it was the same saddle, and on questioning Jones, and being told that it was, I became very angry with him for proposing to experiment on a subject which was like a red rag to a bull to me. His explanation was that he thought he would like to try the short leathers and see how he got on. He begged of me to allow him to do so, but I said I would sooner see him beaten than that he should do so. I may have been stupid both then and later, but at least I had the satisfaction this time of seeing Jones win a desperate race by a head. Jones,

I may remind the reader, won two Derbys for me in the good old English style, which gives a man command of his horse and enables him to assist it when assistance is urgently required. I have never known a jockey with the American seat get 1 lb. more out of a horse than Jones could. He may not have been wonderfully artistic, but he was a fine horseman and a thoroughly good and sound jockey.

It was urged years ago in favour of the American seat that it enabled the weight to be thrown more forward. As to that I defy anyone to saddle a horse except in the place intended by Nature to receive the saddle. I was always taught to ride a comfortable length, neither too long nor too short. In that way you were given the power, which is so essential, and the sense to know every movement of your horse, whether tiring, wanting balancing, or merely running lazy. You could grip the lazy horse and make proper use of the spur. You could stick to your horse's head and help him to give of his best, instead of which the crouching short-leathered rider only knows that he is not winning if he does not happen to be in front, and then up go whips, horses roll about and cross each other, and accidents, which were comparatively rare in the old days, are constantly occurring now.

In quite recent times I fancy I have noted some slight letting down of leathers, and I rejoiced in it as making for safer racing and better horsemanship. After all it is not the seat that makes the jockey, otherwise I should not have been so vain or conceited as to suppose that I alone was right and all others wrong. Men stand out in all the professions because they are specially gifted in some way. They have made the best of their God-sent gifts and have

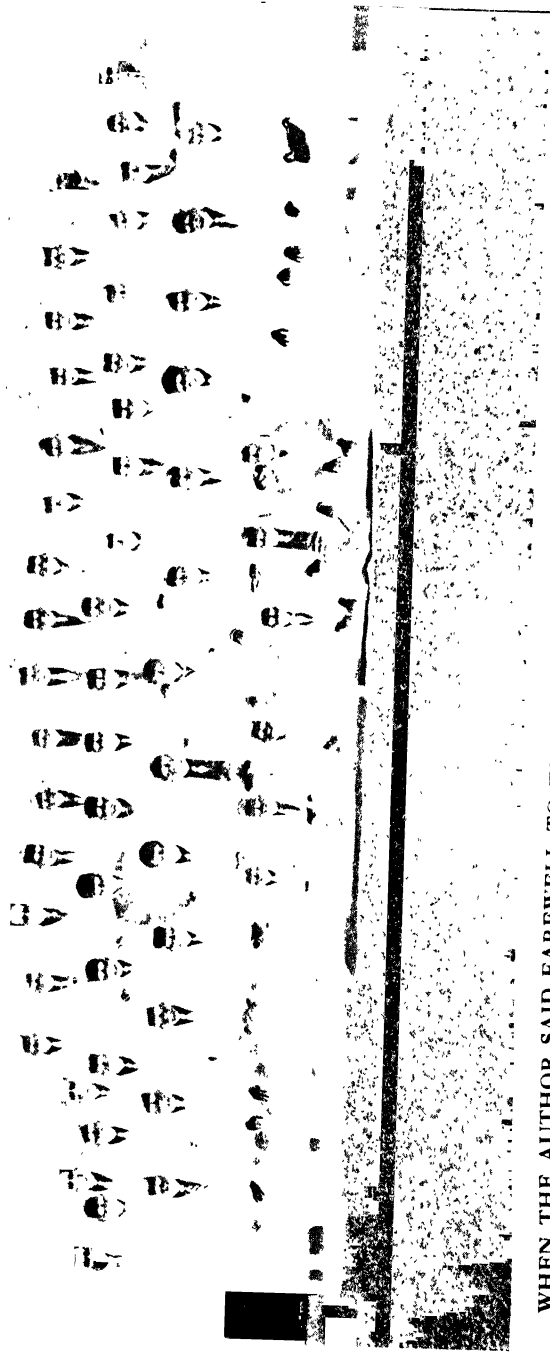
reached great distinction. It is the gift of brains which makes the jockey, and that is why, as exponents of the modern art of race-riding, men like Maher, Frank Wootton, Frank Bullock, Donoghue, Childs, and Carslake achieved very special renown. Jockeys are born and seldom made. They have been given the brains which enable them to do the right thing at the right time. They have no time in a race for hesitation. Their brains must act quickly. Fred Archer had an uncanny understanding of horses, and there were times when you thought his powers in that regard must be supernatural. Jockeys have come to us from America and Australia, where, because of their experience on circular tracks and the vast importance of running to times, both in training and in public, they have acquired a remarkable knowledge of pace. It is a knowledge which the home-bred jockey has never had a chance of acquiring, and it is why he is at a disadvantage in this vastly important matter of judging pace.

The genius of Sloan had nothing to do with his seat. He would have been just as great a genius, in my opinion, if he had been taught to ride in the English style. He was full of brains and a vitality which he shared with the horses he rode. His brains made him a wonderful judge of pace, while he had extraordinary "hands." He inspired his horses, and it was a thousand pities that off a horse he was devoid of those brains which would have permitted him to enjoy his popularity and ensure an extended career.

This change in jockeyship has been the most revolutionary thing on the Turf that I can point to during fifty-odd years of intimate association with

it. Training has changed very little. The fundamental principles of feeding and working a horse are the same, and may never radically alter except as may be dictated by the growing nervous strain on the horse himself, due either to the strain of racing, to the fashionable lines of breeding in vogue in these later years, or to both. One cannot doubt the supremacy of the British thoroughbred, and for ever may it remain so. Yet, if I do see a change not necessarily of actual decadence but in regard to certain physical and mental processes through which the racehorse of to-day is going, the cause is not far to seek. First there is the question of breeding along lines which must apparently be pursued because fashion dictates that it shall be so. And fashion is shaped by the test of the racecourse. But I do suggest that slavish adherence to the outstanding winning strains of the last quarter of a century is producing a horse more inclined to live and race on his nerves than on the constitution which, as well as nerves, is so essential for the present generation of thoroughbreds and generations to come.

Then, too, change in the style of jockeyship has had a demoralizing effect on horses. Lacking control and scurried from pillar to post they have shown some deterioration in their morale, which must be positively dangerous and alarming. For there is nothing quite so hereditary as this sort of thing. The horse of strong and robust constitution, the good doer in the stable, and the highly satisfactory horse on the gallops that perceptibly responds to what would be regarded as an orthodox preparation, has become the exception rather than the rule. Instead we have been confronted with too many delicate horses, shy



WHEN THE AUTHOR SAID FAREWELL TO THE RACING STAFF AT EGERTON HOUSE, DECEMBER, 1924





feeders, some quick to take a thorough distaste to racing and all that it imposes on temperaments and constitutions ill-adapted to stand the strain of frequent and strenuous racing. The views expressed on this subject may or may not be unfashionable. If to look at these things with, I hope, some imagination and a knowledge born of long experience is to be deemed unfashionable, then I have no more to say. It is because I have loved the thoroughbred horse and lived and worked with him for so many years that I plead for him and claim that any shortcomings are possibly due to misunderstanding and the demands of modern ideas of breeding, ownership, and jockeyship.

\* \* \* \* \*

The end of this book is in sight. As the last few sentences come to be written, autobiography having been the theme, can it be wondered that the author would desire a peep into the reader's mind? From a life spent with some of the most notable horses in history to the telling of a narrative of a long life's work is an abrupt switch-over. Yet I have endeavoured with simplicity and without adornment to mirror those events which passed in steady procession. Perhaps I have assumed too readily that the reader has been as interested as I was assured he or she would be when the notion of the writing of the book was first conceived. In that case an apology may be called for, but if I do not abide by old usage in this respect it is for the reason that I am conscious of having given of my best in summoning up the past, than which no one can do more.

In preparing now to lay aside the pen, just as I made way as His Majesty's trainer for another on

whom there was not the burden of years, I am filled with an overwhelming sense of gratitude. I look back through the years and experience a sensation which can be best described as pride and deep satisfaction that the long span was not one of vain endeavour. By great good fortune opportunities, such as might never have been presented to me if less fortunately circumstanced, came my way, and were, in fact, the *raison d'être* of this book. I am profoundly grateful, far beyond mere expression in words, that I was permitted to serve King Edward and his present most gracious Majesty. Those years were the most glorious of my life. The memory of them is a solace for the inexorable creeping on of the years. They accumulate and we scarcely notice it until active service has its inevitable ending. I have been spared to see an amazing development of racing in this country under the wise and sagacious supervision and government of the Jockey Club. The British thoroughbred, notwithstanding the changes, is as supreme to-day in a universal sense as when I first knew it. It will continue to defy complete understanding, but at least the treatment of it was never so enlightened, so humane, and so productive of honourable though intensely competitive racing. And may I add in conclusion, with feelings of genuine sincerity, how deeply I am sensible of the loyalty and devotion of all who served under my direction at Egerton during the thirty-odd years they and I had the honour of serving two gracious Kings, who were also most kind and considerate masters? May the Turf ever flourish, and a King of England continue to give it the dignity of patronage and splendid example!

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