

## HISTORY OF MILLENNIUM FARMS

Situated along Paris Pike, a corridor once known as the Wall Street of the Bluegrass, Millennium Farms shares in a rich history that shaped Kentucky as the racehorse capital of the world. Many of the Thoroughbred breed's most significant bloodlines have emerged from farms located on or near this highway north of Lexington.

The farm names comprise a list of some of the greatest participants in the business: Gainesway, Greentree Stud, Payson Stud, C. V. Whitney Farm, Spendthrift, Normandy, Clovelly, Domino Stud, Hagyard, Buckland, Walmac-Warnerton, Duntreath, Dixiana, Mt. Brilliant, Man o' War, and Faraway Farms. All these, including Millennium, developed from Elmendorf Farm that at one time comprised some 12,000 acres under ownership of a nineteenth-century mining king, James Ben Ali Haggin.

Millennium's current stallion roster contributes to a continuing modern-day story of the breed. But to fully appreciate the value of these 320 acres in producing quality horses, it is important to look back over the past 150 years, from Kentucky Derby winner Pleasant Colony's tenure here at stud in the 1980s, when the Millennium property was Thomas Mellon Evans's Buckland Farm, to Haggin's expanding Elmendorf into the largest Thoroughbred operation of its time.

Haggin purchased the nucleus of Elmendorf in 1897 for \$100 an acre from a New Jersey sportsman, Cornelius J. Enright. The farm came with a ready-made reputation for producing top horses. Enright had stood the European-raced Foxhall and Kentucky Derby winner Spokane on this property. Additionally, Enright had bred the stakes-winning Hamburg, whom the young John E. Madden acquired and then sold to the copper king, Marcus Daly, for at least \$40,000. This sum enabled Madden to purchase land he named Hamburg Place, on Winchester Pike. (Madden later reacquired Hamburg as a stallion for his major client, William Collins Whitney.)

Enright had acquired Elmendorf from Dan Swigert, a Kentuckian who had assisted Robert Aitcheson Alexander in developing Woodburn Farm's solid reputation for top quality bloodstock prior to the Civil War. Woodburn built its reputation largely on the young stallion, Lexington, who was to lead the nation's sire list for an unrivalled 16 years. Swigert left Woodburn following Alexander's death in 1867. He developed his own farm in Woodford County. He acquired Elmendorf in 1874, then known as Preakness Stud, when a New Jersey industrialist, Milton Sanford, retired from the sport.

Sanford had long supported Woodburn Farm's stallions, most notably Lexington, even before acquiring the property he named Preakness Stud, after his horse by the same name (and for whom the Triple Crown race is named). At Preakness Stud, Sanford raised a group of horses significant to their era, led by New Jersey-bred Vagrant who won the 1876 Kentucky Derby.

When Swigert took over the farm, he acquired Sanford's horses and added the stock from his farm in Woodford County, many of them sired by stallions including Lexington at Woodburn. Swigert proceeded to breed some of the greatest names in nineteenth-century racing: Salvator, Ben Ali, Firenze, Spendthrift, Hindoo, Tremont, Apollo, and Baden-Baden. Swigert bred four Kentucky Derby winners.

The Elmendorf property thus had proved its value as a Thoroughbred nursery by the time Haggin purchased the land in 1897. Haggin already was an established Thoroughbred breeder, with his Rancho del Paso in California the cornerstone of Haggin's racing and breeding empire. He operated the largest breeding and racing stable in the United States. He acquired Elmendorf as an addendum to this empire and then proceeded to consolidate his operations on this property.

Haggin was a major success story during an era of excess that culminated in the Gay Nineties. Born in Harrodsburg, Kentucky, in 1821, Haggin studied law and eventually moved to Sacramento soon after the Gold Rush of 1849. He did not go to California seeking gold. He began a law practice with Lloyd Tevis, representing mining companies.

Along with George Randolph Hearst, Haggin raised money to back Marcus Daly in developing a copper mine near Butte, Montana. The Anaconda mine hit big and Haggin wound up owning mines from Montana to South America. His ownership in copper mines was most fortuitous when America began switching to electricity late in the 1800s. Copper was needed for wiring.

In the mid-1880s Haggin got into horse racing in California. Soon he decided to send some horses to New York, where he won the Withers and Belmont Stakes with Tyrant. He stood significant stallions at Rancho del Paso, including Waterboy, \*Watercress, and Ben Ali.

Haggin's greatest success, however, was to come from Elmendorf Farm. In 1901 he had begun construction on the farm of a 40-room marble mansion that he called Green Hills. Lexington had never seen anything like it, and the Lexington *Morning Herald* compared the house to George Vanderbilt II's Biltmore estate in North Carolina. Meantime Haggin had been buying up farms all around the nucleus of Elmendorf, expanding the farm to some 12,000 acres by the time of his death in 1914.

Haggin's estate sold off Elmendorf in parcels. Madden purchased the nucleus of the farm and later sold it to Joseph E. Widener, a Philadelphia industrialist. Widener added neighboring tracts to his purchase. The farm continued its tradition as a significant breeding operation, leading the North American breeders' list in 1940. During the Widener era, Elmendorf Farm homebreds included Osmond, Stagehand, Shot Put, Bolingbroke, Polynesian, Oil Capitol and others. Widener imported \*Sickle to stand at stud, and he twice headed the North American sire list.

Despite his accomplishments as a breeder, Widener is also recalled, rather notoriously, for tearing down the Green Hills mansion. He ordered Haggin's white marble palace destroyed because he did not want to pay taxes on the building. All that remain are the columns. Upon his death in 1943, Widener left Elmendorf to his son, Peter A. B. Widener III.

Widener III sold Elmendorf in 1950 to Tinkham Veale II and Sam A. Costello. Included in the sale of property were Elmendorf-bred stallions Roman and Unbreakable. Roman was to sire Roman Line, a Kentucky Derby runnerup who became the foundation sire for T. Alie Grissom's Duntreath Farm, part of which is now Millennium Farms. In 1952, Maxwell Gluck acquired Elmendorf from Veale and Costello.

During Gluck's tenure at Elmendorf, more outstanding horses emerged: champions Protagonist and Talking Picture among them. Gluck raced significant horses including Verbatim, Big Spruce, Oil Royalty, Speak John, Manta, Prince John, Text, and Super Moment.

The legacy of the Haggin land was simultaneously playing out on other sections of the 12,000 acres, including the sections of Elmendorf land renamed Greentree, Gainesway, Greentree Stud, Payson Stud, C. V. Whitney Farm, Spendthrift, Normandy, Clovelly, Domino Stud, Hagyard, Buckland, Walmac-Warnerton, Duntreath, Dixiana, Mt. Brilliant, Man o' War, and Faraway Farms.

In 1961, Duntreath Farm's colt by Roman, named Roman Line, won the Breeders' Futurity. The following year, at age 3, he ran second in the Louisiana Derby, won the Derby Trial, and ran second to Decidedly in the Kentucky Derby. He ran third that year in the Blue Grass Stakes and the Preakness Stakes. Seven years later, in 1969, Grissom purchased Duntreath Farm from his brother, Perne Grissom, who had bought the property on the east side of Paris Pike, north of Elmendorf, in 1946.

When T. Alie Grissom added land to Duntreath from the west side of the highway in 1972, he acquired acreage that originally was part of Haggin's 12,000 Elmendorf acres, and sold by Haggin's estate in 1917 to Keeneland founder Hal Price Headley.

This property on the west side of Paris Pike is now known as Millennium Farms. Grissom used this land for mares, foals, and yearlings, according to his granddaughter, Susan Harkins. Grissom's racing stable was the most successful in the nation during the mid-1950s, when he led the owner's list in 1957. Grissom bred 20 stakes-winners in his own name and raced some 35 stakes-winners, several in partnerships. When Grissom dispersed his stable after 24 years in racing in 1971, he had owned some 5,000 horses and was in the top 15 percent of thoroughbred racing's earning stables in all but one of his 24 years. He also was chairman of the board of the Kentucky Jockey Club, which operated Latonia Race Course (now Turfway Park).

Lurline B. produced other good horses for Grissom, including the stakes-winning City Line. Another top broodmare belonging to Grissom was Caribbean Dancer, dam of Spotted Line (raced by Grissom but bred by his partner, Esteban Rodriguez Tizol). Other stakes-winners Grissom bred or raced included Miracle Hill, Rio Bravo, Gushing Wind, Sahn Pac, Lurullah and Money Broker.

Grissom sold the section of Duntreath on the west side of Paris Pike to Thomas Mellon Evans, who renamed the property Buckland Farm. Here, Kentucky Derby and Preakness winner Pleasant Colony stood at stud for a time during the 1980s. He proved to be a superior sire whose foals were known for stamina and soundness.

Pleasant Colony sired 77 stakes winners including Eclipse Award winners Pleasant Stage and Pleasant Tap, European champion St. Jovite, and Belmont Stakes winner Colonial Affair. He was also recognized as a broodmare sire of Grade I winners Cash Run and Forestry. Pleasant Colony was ranked 26<sup>th</sup> on the general sire list for 2002 with progeny earnings of \$4.1 million.

Pleasant Colony came to prominence in a year when John Henry dominated racing in North America. The son of His Majesty had won the Remsen Stakes as a 2-year-old, and then won the Wood Memorial Stakes at 3 in the runup to the Kentucky Derby. He went postward the 7-2 second choice in the Derby, emerging from mid-pack on the backstretch to outrun horses on the outside turning for home, taking the lead an eighth of a mile from the finish and holding off a late run from Woodchopper by three-quarters of a length.

Pleasant Colony's stamina prevailed once more in the Preakness Stakes, when he ran a similar race: coming from back in the pack to take command of the field 70 yards from the finish, defeating Bold Ego by a length in 1:54-3/5, only 3/5 off the Pimlico track record. The Triple Crown lay within his reach after the Derby and Preakness. However, he failed to win the crown in the Belmont Stakes when he finished third to Summing. Later in the year, Pleasant Colony won the Grade I Woodward Stakes. He won the Eclipse Award for champion 3-year-old male.

Most notable among his offspring, bred by his owner in Kentucky, was the filly Pleasant Stage, winner of the 1991 Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies and champion juvenile filly that year. (Pleasant Tap, champion older male in 1992 and the other notable homebred by Pleasant Colony for Evans, was foaled at his Buckland Farms in Virginia.)

Evans's practice was to keep about 75 percent of his foaling mares on the property that is now Millennium. The Kentucky division of Buckland was home to 40 to 50 foals during each spring. Upon weaning, the foals went to Virginia. Some returned to the Kentucky division following their racing careers.

Evans, Grissom, and currently Millennium Farms have all successfully maintained a long tradition of stakes-winners bred on Paris Pike going back to formative years in the Kentucky horse business when breeders including Swigert and Haggin helped secure the Bluegrass reputation as the racehorse capital of the world.