

The University Of Connecticut Morgans

By Elenita Schweitzer-Muniz

History of the Breeding Program

The horse program at the University of Connecticut is as old as the University itself, but the change from draft breeds to light horses only began in the 1930's.

In 1931, Professor H. L. Garrigus leased three mares and the two-year-old stallion Abbott from the Government Morgan farm in Middlebury. Abbott (Monterey x Klyona) was trained at Connecticut Agricultural College (as U. Conn. was then known) and spent four years on the campus. During that time, he sired many colts, several to outside mares. In the 1936 *Block and Bridle Review*, published by the students, it was noted that Abbott had returned to Middlebury, and he was categorized as "a prepotent sire whose stamp is left on his colts in the way of improved style, symmetry, vigor, vitality and conformation — a true descendant of Justin Morgan."

Abbott was replaced on campus by the dark chestnut stallion Canfield (Bennington x Artemisia). Canfield remained at the University for six years. During his stay he was also shown by students in the annual horse show, held at the college, as well as other shows. He "never failed to collect more than his share of the blue ribbons. He makes his court here in Storrs for \$15." (*Review*, 1942)

Although the *Review* praised the stallion, it wasn't until 1942 that Canfield's photo replaced Abbott's on the cover. The University, at that time, was still concerned with its Percherons and Belgians over their Morgans. However Dean E. G. Woodward of the College of Agriculture did write in 1941 "it seems desirable to add instruction in the care and management of light horses at the University. A stable of light horses should in the future be added to the University livestock."

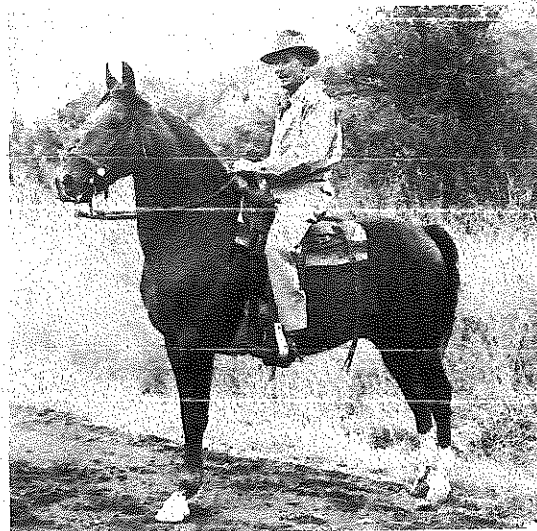
A scant two years later, the *Review* was able to report on the progress of the Morgans. "A Morgan horse breeding unit has been established . . . in

cooperation with the Federal Government." The band consisted of "ten good Morgans" which were used for breeding, as the riding string for women's physical education (men were allowed to ride on Sundays), as well as being a prime attraction for visitors. The band included Phillippa and Bumpus, relative oldtimers on campus, Joyous, Jonquil, and Goldette (from

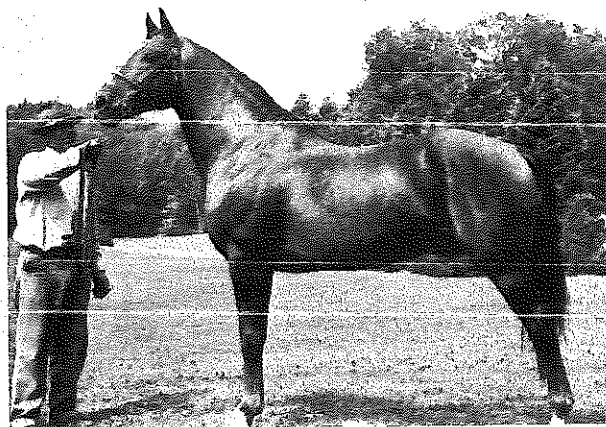
Middlebury), Upwey Woodland Rose, and Iphegenia. The young member was Canphil (Canfield x Phillippa) and the group was headed by Goldfield (Mansfield x Juno), a year-old stallion leased from Middlebury.

Goldfield sired two colts in 1943, one of Phillippa and Joyous, and three more were bred to him that year. Unfortunately,

This picture of the chestnut stallion Abbott 7704 (Monterey x Klyona) was taken September 1945, Marvin S. Jeppesen, up.

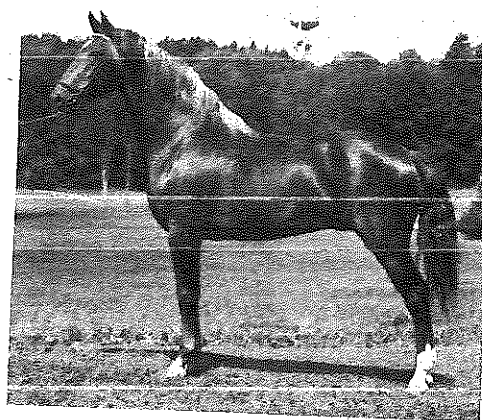


Canfield 7788, replaced Abbott as U. Conn. sire.





Quakerlady (Mentor x Willys) is shown winning Reserve Senior Champion Mare at the 1949 National Morgan Horse Show in Windsor, Vt., Bob Baker up.



Magellan. (Goldfield x Topaz) sired a number of foals during the 1940's at U. Conn.

nately, Goldfield's career was all too short, as he died of an embolism in July, 1944. His place was temporarily taken by Magellan (Goldfield x Topaz), and in 1946 Canfield returned to the University at age 14.

At the same time, three Goldfield offspring were added to the riding string: MacArthur (x Romance) and Macbeth (x Willys), both geldings, and the filly Meadowlark (x Damsel). Another Goldfield daughter, Louella (x Walla Walla) was added as a broodmare.

The 1948 *Review* contained a note indicating the slow change in emphasis from draft breeds to the Morgan. It read, simply, "Ten Percherons were sold." And the riding string kept growing. In 1949 there were 21 light horses in use: 8 ex-G.I. horses, 3 Morgan broodmares, a half-Morgan broodmare, a grade broodmare, 4 Morgan school horses, 3 Morgan fillies, and Canfield. Then, as now, the emphasis in the horse program at U. Conn. was on usability in classwork, and Canfield's gentlemanly behavior was greatly appreciated.

1950 marked the start of a new phase in U. Conn.'s breeding program. In December of that year, a new load of horses arrived from Middlebury. "Among them was a horse that is sometimes called the 'Last Hope of the Morgans' — Mentor . . . foaled in 1942 (Goldfield x Fairy Top) . . . is considered by most horsemen to have the best form towards the Morgan type in the world today." The *Review* went on to note that Mentor had been Grand Champion Stallion for three years at the National and had also won the Get-of-Sire class for two years. He was the sire of two outstanding mares then at Penn State: Riviera and Quaker Lady.

The University also added four new broodmares in 1950: Penny and Quotation (both bred to Mentor), Pennsy (bred to Distellor), and Sheba. Sheba was at the time three years old and was to become one of the great producing mares of the U. Conn. herd. The 1953 *Review* mentions a mare named Cannie for the first time. Cannie was to be another influential mare in U. Conn

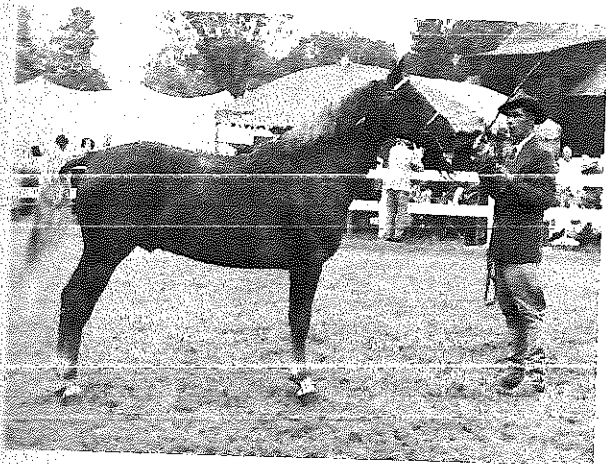
breeding.

1954 arrived and with it Panfield, a light chestnut stallion (Canfield x Karina), who was donated to the University by J. Cecil Ferguson, of Rhode Island. "It is believed that U. Conn. is the only Morgan breeding establishment that is using and standing at stud two stallions that have both been Grand Champion Model Stallion at the National . . . Mentor and Panfield. The get of these two should materially improve the quality of the light horses used in the breeding, equitation and class work programs in animal husbandry."

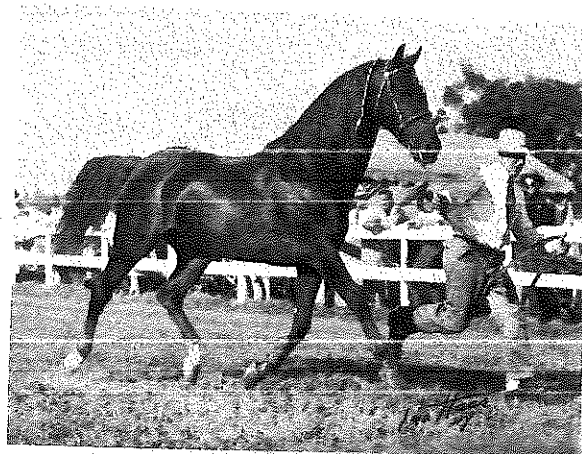
Mentor and Panfield were at U. Conn. together until 1962, and during that time, the U. Conn. herd brought home many ribbons from the National and the Eastern States Exposition. The *Review* reads like a prize list:

Mentor: 1954, 1955, 1956, 1957:
Grand Champion Stallion,
Eastern States Exposition.
1954: Sire of Grand Champion Mare, National

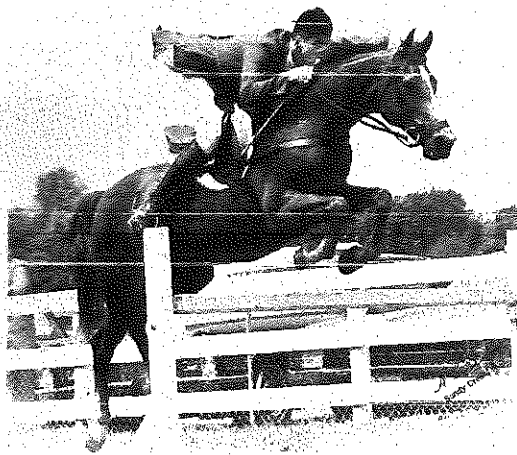
Panfield: 1954: sire of several 1st



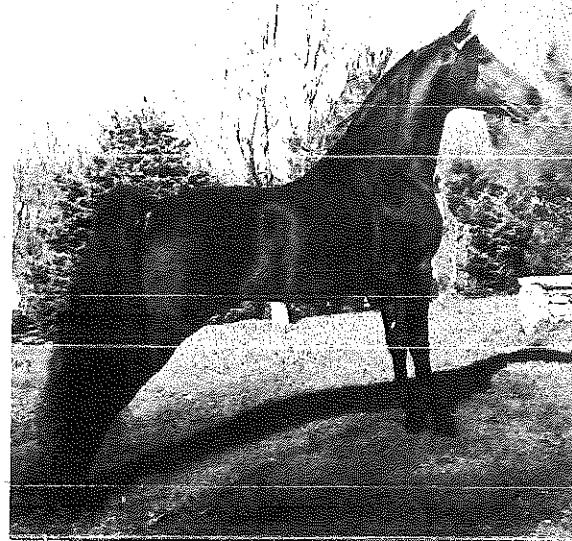
Panfield (Canfield x Karina) is pictured here winning the stallion class at the 1949 National.



Mentor in his show



U. C. Serenade (Panfield x Sheba) shown taking 1st in the open jumper class at Northampton in 1969.



U. C. Viscount (Windcrest Don Again x Mountain Meadow Eve)

place winners at the National
1955: sire of 1st place filly, National
1957: 1st in Get-of-Sire, Eastern States

The mares of the U. Conn. herd were also doing their share of the winning. Sheba, UC Estellita, UC Sentora, Cannie, UC Serenade and others brought home ribbons from blues to pinks in classes such as Broodmares with Foals, Mares 4 and over, Mares 3 and over, Harness classes, Produce of Dam, and Roadsters, both Saddle and Harness. Sheba was Reserve Champion Mare at the 1956 Eastern States, and Cannie was Grand Champion Mare at the 1958 Eastern States.

In 1962, Mentor was sold, and the following year the University purchased a weanling colt, Windcrest Don Again (Upwey Ben Don x Mademoiselle of Windcrest). Don Again became the herd sire after Panfield was sold in 1965, and remained until 1973, passing on many of the fine Ben Don qualities in his progeny. One of his offspring, UC Marquis, (x Cannie), is the current University herd sire. He will be used on the older mares, and has already demonstrated his ability to get fine Morgans. The 1974 crop of foals, by Orcland John Darling and UC Marquis, are in training and the 1975 crop by Marquis are coming along now.

UC Morgans in the ShowRing

The University has not been able to spend much time in showing their Morgans, but the many outside owners of U. Conn. Morgans have given their horses a chance to perform and there are currently several outstanding show Morgans bearing the UC prefix.

One is Mabel Owen's UC Dark Shadow. This excellent son of Windcrest

Don Again (x UC Rhapsody) has gained quite a following in New England. He has been Grand Champion Stallion at the Connecticut and Granite State shows and is a Grand Champion Park Morgan as well (New England and Massachusetts Horsemen's Councils).

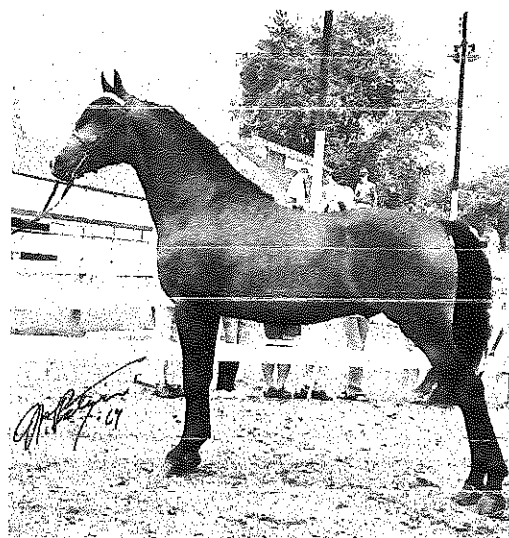
Another is UC Viscount (Windcrest Don Again x Mountain Meadow Eve). His owner, Ed Raymond, Jr., reports that Viscount has never been out of the ribbons in in-hand classes. He is a champion amateur park Morgan as well (at the Massachusetts and Connecticut Morgan shows). This year is his first at stud, and we look forward to his first crop of foals.

Out on the west coast, two young UC Morgans have been attracting a great deal of attention. UC Contessa (UC Marquis x UC Rhapsody) and UC Crackerjack (Windcrest Don Again x UC Taffy) have been shown extensively in hand by Roy and Janie Coats. Contessa, a three-year-old, was Grand Cham-

pion Mare at the Morgan Classic Rale, the California National Horse Tr and the California State Fair, as well Reserve Senior Champion Mare at Golden West Regional and the Sacramento Valley MHS. She finished season as Champion High Point M of the Northern California MHA and the Region 7 Reserve Champion H Point Mare.

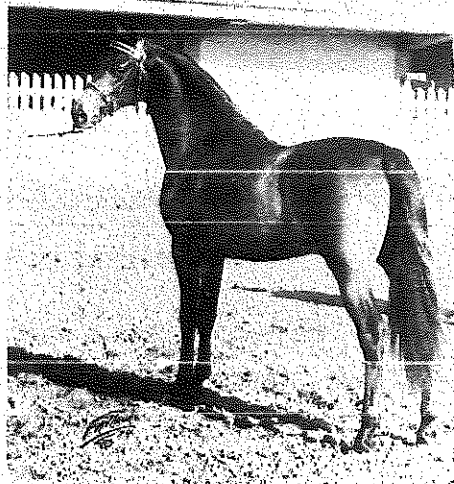
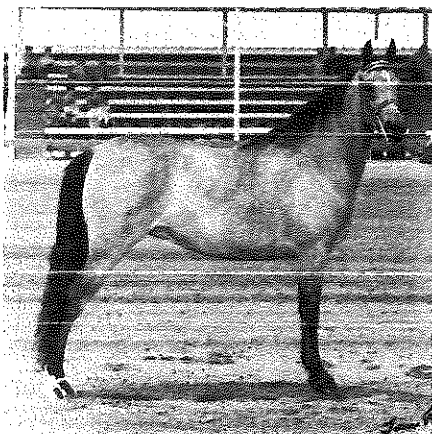
Crackerjack was Junior Champ Stallion at the Morgan Classic Roy and the Golden West Regional show Reserve Grand Champion Stallion the California State Fair, and Grand Champion Stallion at the Sacramento Valley MHS. He finished his two-year old show season as Region 7 Junior Champion High Point Stallion and Reserve Champion High Point Stallion the Northern California MHA. The Coats family is looking forward to even better 1975 record, as both Contessa and Crackerjack will be shown in harness as well as in hand.

Another UC Morgan who has ma



U. C. Marquis (Windcrest Don Again x Cannie) is a current sire at U. Conn.

U. C. Contessa, a daughter of U. C. Marquis, is a well known Champion.



U. C. Crackerjack is being shown in harness and in hand this season.

her mark on the west coast is UC Heather (Windcrest Don Again x Sheba), owned by Jim Wigle and Art Perry of Intrepid Farms. To quote Mr. Perry, "In the four years that we showed UC Heather she won twelve Grand Championships and two Reserve Championships. Out of these, she was named a National Grand Champion three times and Reserve once. No other Morgan mare has been so honored with that number of National awards."

U. Conn. Morgans keep on performing after they leave the showing too. Take, for instance, two of Sheba's offspring, UC Reverie and UC Symphony. These full sisters (by Panfield) were purchased by A. C. Drowne. Reverie's progeny include Mad River Sailor, (many times champion in harness and in-hand classes, now standing at Saddleback Farm), Mad River Riptide (who reaped six blues and four reds as a yearling), and Mad River Bell Buoy, a frequent winner of blues in park saddle classes.

Symphony, who was Grand Champion Mare at the New York State Horse Breeders Association Show, has produced her own share of winners. Mad River Windsong was Reserve Junior Champion Mare at the Gold Cup as a yearling, Junior Champion Mare at the Michigan All-Morgan show as a

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yearling, two- and three-year old, and *Reserve Champion High Score Futurity* winner in New York as a three-year-old. Mad River Serenade, another of Symphony's foals, has had wins in in-hand and pleasure classes, and Mad River Pirate did very well as a three-year-old in in-hand classes. UC Symphony is now in the Rapidan River Farm herd and UC Reverie is owned by Saddleback Farm. Both of these mares are still producing excellent Morgan foals, who do very well in the showing.

Current Use of U. Conn. Morgans

The showing has never been U. Conn.'s main goal in breeding Morgans. "The horses are here because the students are here," says Dr. Nathan Hale of the Animal Industries department. "Our decision on who to keep and who to sell is based mainly on their potential usefulness to our program."

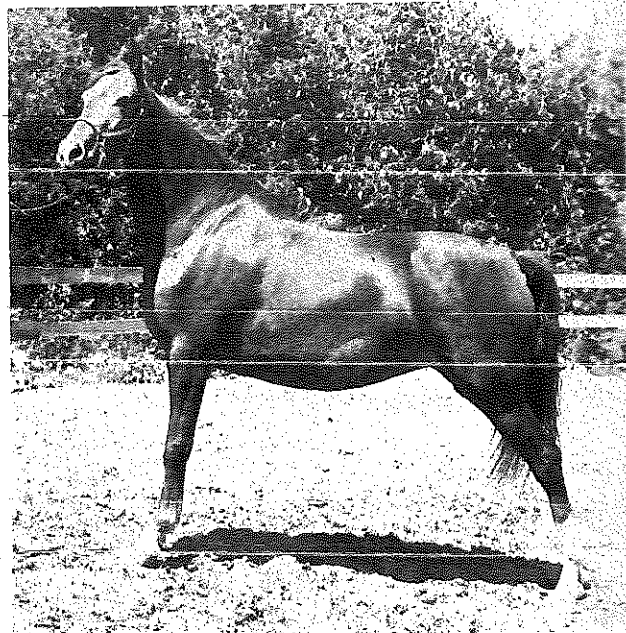
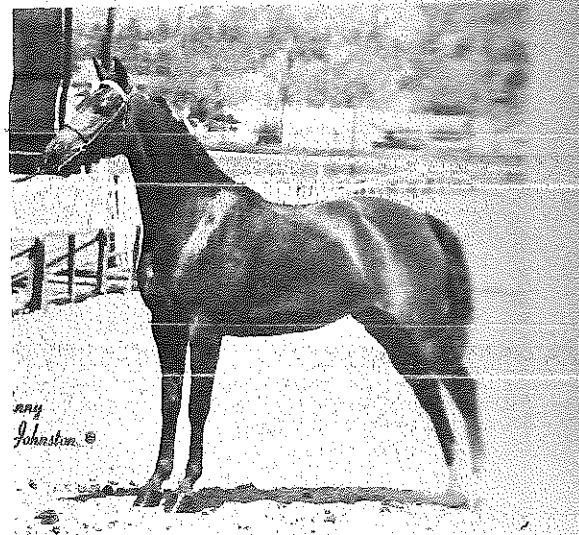
When John Kays joined the staff in 1957, he instituted what continues to be one of the most popular courses at U. Conn.: *Pleasure Horse Use and Appreciation*. Designed for students outside the College of Agriculture, the course originally covered "riding and driving, feeding and care of the horse, common horse ailments and treatments, horse breeding and control of parasites, stable conditions, and the care of harness, saddles, and bridles." Today the course is more involved with equitation and driving, as well as jumping. Each semester hundreds of students hopefully register for the 40 openings in the course.

Bruce Walters, head horseman, talked about the current use of the Morgans. "We have about 40 head altogether, 20 head in the riding string. They are used in the equitation courses and the horse practicum, from basic riding through jumping." The U. Conn. Morgans work primarily on the flat, but they have swept the open jumper class at the Northampton show for the past two years.

They are ridden hunt seat most of the time, but can also go Western and in a flat saddle. They get no park training at U. Conn. In addition to the equitation classes, the school horses are used in livestock judging classes, pathology and breeding classes, weekend demonstration clinics and the annual livestock and horse shows. Not only do they have a full schedule during the school year, but the riding string works five days a week in the summer. These horses currently range in age from six to twenty-six years of age.

The yearlings, two-year-olds and three-year-olds also put in working hours. Says Bruce, "They are used in the breaking and training classes. We

U. C. Heather, owned by Intrepid Farms has never been out of blue ribbons or championships.



U. C. Reverie (Pantfield x Sheba) still continues to produce champions for her owner.

try to give the students a taste of what's involved in the basics of longeing, long-lining, ground driving, and breaking to harness, as well as saddle work." Bruce does the finishing of young animals. U. Conn. also has several broodmares. "We raise our own replacements," notes Bruce. "We breed six to eight mares a year. Of course, some of these are also in the riding string and are used in classes right up to a month before they foal."

The UC Morgans are excellent examples of the breed's versatility and disposition. In addition to the different riding styles they learn, they are all taught to drive as two-year-olds and get acquainted with two- and four-wheel buggies, and pulling a sleigh, when the weather cooperates. Plans are under way now to drive two of the school horses, UC Sentora (age 21) and The Explorer

(age 17) in the local bicentennial celebrations, and a doctor's buggy is being restored.

As for the well-known Morgan disposition, it takes an extraordinary horse to tolerate being handled by 40 or 50 different people a week, not to mention as many as 200 school-age visitors at one time! And the only straight stallion that has a chain across it is the one occupied by 26-year-old Easter — not because he kicks, but because he slips out of his halter to go visiting as soon as he feels the chain is gone.

At the time of this writing, the Morgans at U. Conn. range in age from two weeks to 26 years, and every one of them is an excellent example of Morgan type, versatility, and disposition. They have been, and will continue to be, fine teachers and good friends to thousands of U. Conn. students.