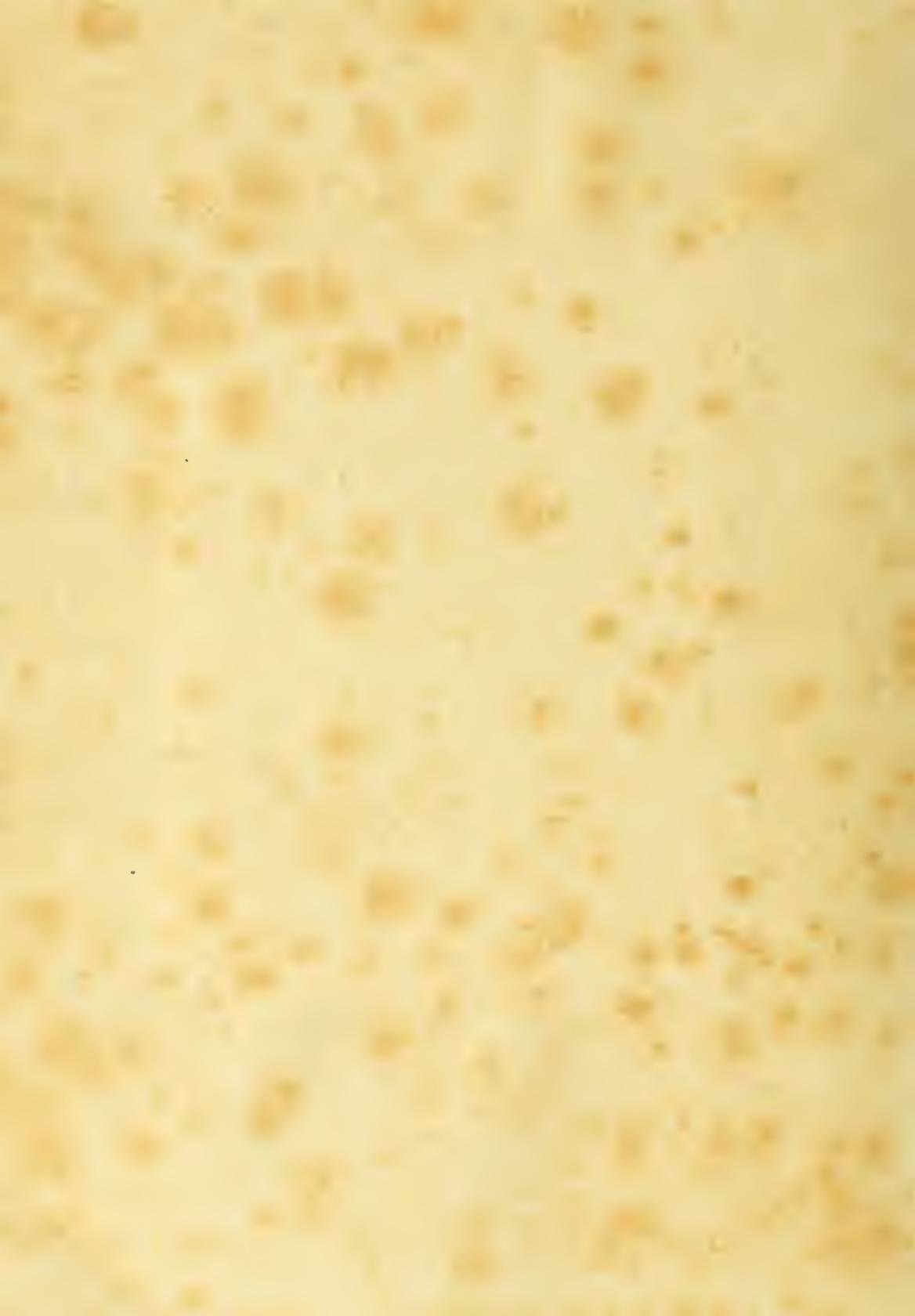








JOHN A. SEAVERN'S







PRETTY POLLY







*Pretty Polly*

**PRETTY POLLY**  
THE HISTORY OF HER  
CAREER ON THE TURF  
**BY JOSCELYNE LECHMERE**  
WITH A PHOTOGRAVURE FRONTISPIECE  
AND TWENTY-TWO OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS

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TO  
MAJOR EUSTACE LODER  
THE FORTUNATE BREEDER AND OWNER OF  
THE MARE OF ALL THE CENTURIES

THIS WORK IS  
(BY PERMISSION)  
DEDICATED BY  
THE AUTHOR



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# PRETTY POLLY

## CHAPTER I

### THE COMING OF POLLY

SANDOWN PARK was looking its very best on Saturday, June 27th, 1903, the concluding afternoon of the First Summer Meeting, a date to be ever memorable in the annals of the Turf, for this perfect summer's day was to witness the début of a filly whose name is now writ exceeding large in history, and whose equal as a racehorse the present generation has never seen and, it is safe to add, never will see.

The race chosen to be the first essay in public of the chestnut daughter of Gallinule and Admiration, known as Pretty Polly, was the British Dominion Two-Year-Old Race, and it is the only race in all her long career for which she has not started first favourite, that position being occupied by Sir John Thursby's colt, John o' Gaunt, who started at 2 to 1, Mr. Musker's Jack Hawthorn being second in demand at 7 to 2, the Duke

of Portland's Lanfine coming next at 4 to 1, while Pretty Polly was supported at sixes.

When the barrier ascended, Pretty Polly was quickest into her stride, and before half the journey had been accomplished was out with a ten lengths' lead, and won by that distance from Vergia ; John o' Gaunt, whom Mr. Thursby had eased up when pursuit was hopeless, being third, a neck behind the second.

Onlookers were astounded at this display by the winner, and it was at first the general opinion when they saw her out in front of her field with such a tremendous lead that the start must have been a false one.

This, however, was by no means the case, as the start was really a good one, and what had really happened was that the further they went the further did the winner gallop away from her horses.

To Trigg belongs the privilege of having steered her in this the initial race of her glorious career.

Any lingering doubts which might have remained in the minds of spectators as to the genuine character of her first victory were finally dispelled by the manner in which she disposed of Bobrinski, Marsden, and eight others at the July Meeting at Sandown, when she started at 2 to 1 and won in hollow style by two lengths.

Pretty Polly is a dark chestnut with a white star, and now stands slightly over 15'3.



PRETTY POLLY'S FIRST RACE  
(THE FINISH)  
*Photo. C. Muggenridge*



As a two-year-old she showed tremendous quality of build for that early age.

The one thing which impresses any one looking at her more than anything else is her wonderful quarters, which give her that extraordinary leverage power which caused spectators to imagine that she was merely cantering when her opponents were galloping their very hardest.

The daughter of *Admiration* was bred by her owner, Major Eustace Loder, at his stud farm in Ireland, Eyrefield Lodge.

Her dam was singularly unsuccessful as a racehorse, a fact, by the way, which is not seldom the case with dams of great horses, and it certainly does not follow as a matter of course that a mare of great racing reputation achieves a success on going to the stud.

Gallinule, her sire, had previously got stock who shone rather as sprinters than stayers, although *Rock Dove*, a *Cesarewitch* winner, was a notable exception; but the victories of *Hammerkop* and of the subject of these pages over a distance of ground have effectually disposed of the fallacy that Gallinules cannot stay.

Pretty Polly was trained at *Clarehaven Lodge*, *Newmarket*, by Mr. Peter Purcell Gilpin, who has achieved such wonderful successes with the mares under his care.

In addition to *Pretty Polly*, other mares that have

achieved distinction under his control during the past two or three years, are Adula, winner of the Park Hill Stakes, Doncaster ; Hammerkop, winner of the Cesarewitch, 1905 ; and Flair, winner of the One Thousand Guineas, 1906.

Following on her success at the Second Summer Meeting at Sandown Park, Pretty Polly annexed the Mersey Stakes at Liverpool, her solitary opponent on this occasion being the Navaretta colt.

The next time that she carried the yellow, dark blue sleeves, and black cap of her owner was in the rich Champagne Stakes, run on the opening afternoon of the Doncaster September Meeting.

Her chief opponent on this occasion was reckoned to be Mr. Leopold de Rothschild's bay colt St. Amant, by St. Frusquin out of Lady Loverule, who was considered to be the best two-year-old of his year among the colts, having up to then run twice and earned winning brackets on each occasion.

There was not much between them in the betting, Pretty Polly being in fractionally greater request at 11 to 10, whilst 6 to 4 was laid against St. Amant.

W. Lane for the first time rode the flying filly, Halsey having had the mount on the last two days she was out, and the winning connection between these two continued until poor Lane's accident in the autumn of the following year rendered a separation inevitable.



GALLINULE  
*Photo. Clarence Husley*



The field for the Champagne Stakes numbered five, and the favourite gave them no quarter, for she won in a canter, by a length and a half from Lancashire, St. Amant being third, two lengths away.

Excuses for St. Amant's ignominious defeat were made on the ground that the colt had been pricked in shoeing, and it was confidently predicted that when the pair next met he would make a better show.

In the meantime Pretty Polly travelled to Manchester and beat Don Paez in the Autumn Breeders' Foal Plate, starting at 25 to 1 on.

She then afforded St. Amant an opportunity of taking his revenge in the Middle Park Plate, run at the Second October Meeting at head-quarters.

This race is sometimes called the Two-Year-Old Derby, because it generally is expected to reveal the possessor of the best claim to future classic honours.

There were seven runners, including the three horses placed in the Champagne Stakes.

It is curious to remark that for some unexplained reason the bookmakers were inclined to field strongly against the eventual winner.

At first 3 to 1 was asked for, but at one time it was possible to get on by laying as little as 7 to 4; 2 to 1 on being the price demanded at the start.

In the actual race Pretty Polly, who was drawn in the centre, was, as usual, quickest away.

In the Dip St. Amant took second place, but was signally unable to make any kind of impression on the favourite, who made the whole of the running and won in a canter by three lengths, a length separating St. Amant from Hands Down.

Pretty Polly therefore decisively confirmed the Champagne running, and proved beyond all doubt her claim to rank as far and away the best two-year-old of the year. She brought up her winning sequence to nine races by winning both the Criterion Stakes and the Moulton Stakes at the Houghton Meeting.

In the former she defeated Hands Down, and in the latter Bitters, and two others, and in each case the Ring demanded odds of 100 to 7.

This wonderful filly, whose two-year-old career had been such a phenomenally successful one, then retired into winter quarters with an unbeaten certificate.

## CHAPTER II

### THE TREBLE EVENT

**D**URING the winter months there was much speculation in the sporting columns of the Press as to how the daughter of Gallinule would acquit herself as a three-year-old, and as to whether or not she would "train on."

As has been before stated, there has existed an idea among many people that Gallinule's stock are unlikely to stay, and consequently at this early stage of Pretty Polly's career there were not a few who predicted that so forward a two-year-old was not likely to train on, and that although she might shine as a brilliant sprinter she would fail over any longer course than six or seven furlongs.

On the other hand there were plenty of people who confidently predicted that a greater than Sceptre had arisen, and this opinion was given practical weight to by the taking of the very narrow odds of 6 to 1 that the filly did not win the One Thousand, Oaks, and St. Leger.

Treble events on these particular races must be very rare nowadays, but these were the odds taken towards the close of the recess when it was known that the filly had wintered well.

The Two Thousand Guineas were won easily enough by St. Amant, whose superiority over the colts of his own age was thus confirmed.

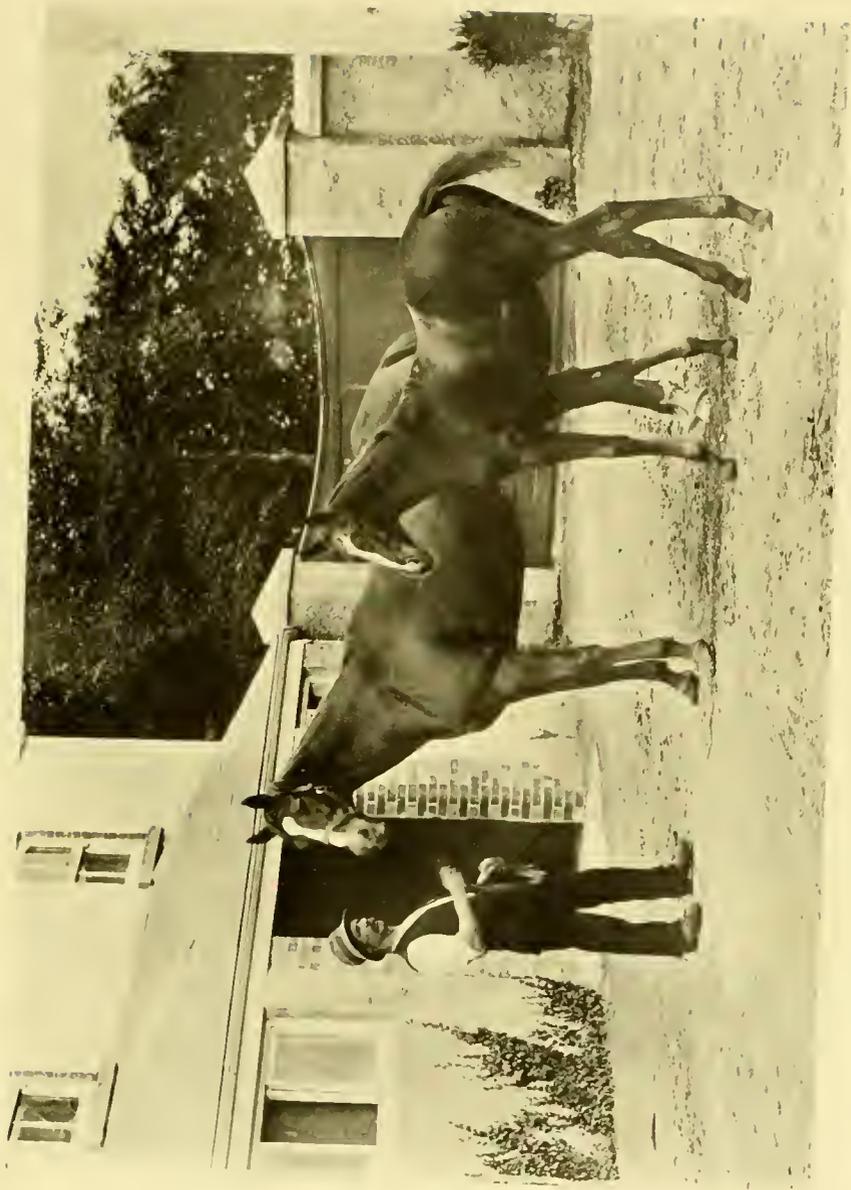
On the afternoon of her first classic race Pretty Polly was early on view in the paddock preceded by a cob to which she was much attached, and who always accompanied her to the course.

The filly fully bore out the assertion that she had wintered well, and had thickened out a little, although she had not grown more than half an inch.

Pretty Polly's sweet temper is not the least of her good qualities, and she submitted with the utmost good grace to be surrounded by a crowd of spectators while she was being saddled.

The field for the One Thousand totalled seven, including Lord Falmouth's unbeaten filly *Fiancée*, and the Malton filly *Barbette*, who had won the Gimcrack Stakes at the York August Meeting.

The former looked very fit and was confidently expected to be the runner up to the favourite, but the race was looked upon to be such a certainty for Pretty Polly that she started at 4 to 1 on, 6 to 1 being offered against *Fiancée*. Four minutes after the scheduled



ADMIRATION  
(WITH COLT FOAL BY BRIGGLASS, NOW ADMIRABLE CRICIFOS)  
*Photo Clarence Hart*



time of the race the lot were dispatched to an excellent start and the first to show in front was Pretty Polly, who drew out clear on settling down, and making the whole of the running, won without the least semblance of an effort by three lengths from Leucadia, Flamma being placed third four lengths away, Barbette close up fourth, Altcar fifth, and Fiancée, who ran in very disappointing manner, last.

The time—one minute and forty seconds—is the present record for this race.

It was the wonderfully effortless way in which she won and the absolute ease with which she effected her task which so impressed onlookers.

She looked as cool and unconcerned as possible after returning to scale, and amused herself by cropping at the short grass in the Birdcage.

It has become quite a custom with many of us—a custom, alas! which has now ended—to run down the Stand at Newmarket after Polly's races and risk one's neck down the steps in that miserably illuminated tunnel, which might well be abolished, to go to the little unsaddling enclosure by the weighing-room door and see her come in and get her lump of sugar from Mrs. Gilpin while her jockey weighed in.

The outcome of the race for the One Thousand Guineas naturally had the effect of paralysing all speculation, monetary or otherwise, on the result of the

Oaks, as it was universally recognized that, so long as Major Loder's wonderful filly kept fit and well, the race was a good thing for her.

Consequently the opposition was numerically one of the weakest on record, numbering only three—Fiancée, Bitters, and St. Mindred.

The favourite was, as usual, preceded in the paddock by her old friend the cob, and looked a perfect picture, and she had evidently done good work since her last outing. From a wagering point of view, the race was practically left out by backers, for only those who had backed the favourite weeks before the race, or who, like one man I know, got one of his bookmakers to lay him 60 to 40 twice against Pretty Polly winning Oaks and Leger, were able to get on at an equitable price, as 100 to 8 on was the starting price, 100 to 7 being offered against Fiancée, 20 to 1 Bitters, and 100 to 1 St. Mindred.

There was practically no delay at the post, and Fiancée got off first, but after a hundred yards had been covered, Bitters settled down in front of the favourite and Fiancée.

Six furlongs from home Pretty Polly drew out clear, and making the remainder of the running, won in hollow fashion by three lengths from Bitters (who twisted her off fore plate), Fiancée being a bad third, about a hundred yards behind, while St. Mindred was beaten



PRETTY POLLY  
(W. LAKE UP)  
*Photo, Clarence Butler*



about a quarter of a mile by the winner. A procession truly! Time : 2 mins.  $46\frac{1}{2}$  secs.

In spite of this decisive victory over a mile and a half, there were still some who disbelieved in Pretty Polly's staying ability.

It is quite true that she changed her legs towards the close of the race for the Oaks, but this, as subsequently proved, was a habit of hers.

"An eminent trainer," who saw the Oaks, was reported after the race to have said that she would not win the Leger. I have a strong suspicion that this gentleman is the same man as the one who said after the Jockey Club Cup that she was "all out."

Perhaps my readers will be of opinion that some one was certainly "all out," but not Pretty Polly!

In the interval between Epsom and Doncaster she appeared twice in public, on both occasions against fillies of her own age.

In the Coronation Stakes, at Ascot, she defeated Montem and six others, and at Goodwood, in the Nassau Stakes, she ran away from two fifth-rate opponents, starting at 5 to 1 on in the first race, and 33 to 1 on in the second.

M. Edmond Blanc, who had obtained second place to Rock Sand in the Derby of 1903, with Vinicius, had attempted to improve on his luck with Gouvernant, a son of Flying Fox.

It will be well within the memory of those that read these pages that M. Blanc was the purchaser of this famous horse when, on the death of the late Duke of Westminster, he was put up for sale and realized the record price ever paid for a racehorse. It is perhaps beside the point to descant on the pity it was that such a stallion was allowed to leave the country, but our loss was the gain of France. With the sons of this sire, Ajax, Gouvernant, Adam, Val d'Or, and Jardy, his owner has since swept the board in his own country, and he stood a very good chance of being the first owner to emulate the performance of Count de Lagrange's Gladiateur in the Derby.

Gouvernant, whether owing to the elements or to the journey, failed to make his mark in St. Amant's Derby, although his subsequent performances stamped him as a real good horse.

It had been his owner's intention to send Ajax to Doncaster, but he succumbed to the exigencies of training, as did the Derby runner-up, John o' Gaunt.

The field was consequently left to the English horses, and only those who still doubted the staying qualities of Pretty Polly could imagine that the Derby winner would reverse the two-year-old form between the pair.

Consequently Pretty Polly became a strong odds on favourite and eventually started at 5 to 2 on.

The St. Leger is to us, who dwell in the north, and



ST. AMANT  
(K. CASSIUS DE)  
*Photo. Clarence Hartig*



perhaps to many others as well, the most important as well as the most interesting of all the five classic races, and on the beautiful September afternoon on which it was contested in the year 1904 there was a record crowd on the Town Moor.

The King invariably attends Doncaster, and in that quiet simple way in which he is accustomed to go, driving up to the course in a plain wagonette as a private English gentleman.

His Majesty must have been gratified at his colt Chatsworth's success in the earlier stages of the Leger afternoon, amid a spontaneous outburst of cheering which must have reminded him of Persimmon's Leger.

There were six runners for "t' great race," including, as well as the Derby and Oaks winners, Henry the First, who was deemed to have been unlucky in the former race, Almscliff, St. Denis, and Andover. In the preliminary canter much amusement was caused by Polly's cob Little Missus joining in it and accompanying her friend to the post.

The favourite, as previously stated, started at odds of 5 to 2 on, 4 to 1 being booked against St. Amant, 100 to 6 Almscliff, 25 St. Denis, 50 Henry the First and Andover.

The running was made by St. Amant, who cut out the pace at a tremendous rate, it being evidently the order of his jockey to try forcing tactics as in the Derby.

But if St. Amant could gallop fast, the favourite could gallop faster, and when on coming round the bend Lane let her go, she promptly collared St. Amant (who declined to make any further show), and thenceforward Pretty Polly, making the remainder of the running, won in a canter by three lengths from Henry the First (the surprise of the race) and Almscliff (who finished six lengths behind the second) in 3 minutes  $5\frac{1}{5}$  seconds. St. Amant was last!

Two days later Pretty Polly attempted the task in which Sceptre had failed, and ran in the Park Hill Stakes for three-year-old fillies over the St. Leger course.

Starting at 25 to 1 on, she completed her task with consummate ease, winning in a canter by three lengths from Bitters and three others.

Shortly after Doncaster it was announced that Pretty Polly's next engagement would be the Prix du Conseil Municipal run at Longchamp early in October.

Opinions were divided as to the advisability or otherwise of this step, which was, owing to the conditions of the race, very like running the filly in a handicap.

Penalties are imposed in proportion to the value of races won, and consequently both Pretty Polly and Zinfandel, who was also entered, were heavily penalised, having to carry 9 st.  $8\frac{1}{2}$  lb. and 9 st. 1 lb. respectively. People who remembered that this race had not been



“LITTLE MISSUS”  
(PRETTY POLLY'S COMPANION)  
*Photo. Clarence Hatley*



won by an English competitor for many years, and considered the conditions of the race and reflected as to the stormy nature of the crossing at this time of the year, shook their heads and were inclined to think that it was unwise to risk a possible reverse.

On the other hand it was argued by the majority that those connected with the filly were acting in a very sporting manner in thus throwing down the gauntlet to France, and in desiring to prove that the flying English three-year-old was incontestably the best of any age in either country, and that a horse of the calibre of Pretty Polly was superior to all conditions either of weight or climate.

## CHAPTER III

### THE REVERSE AT LONGCHAMP

ON Saturday, October 8th, D. Maher rode the winner of the Duke of York Stakes at Kempton Park, and left by the night boat for Paris to fulfil his retainer for Pretty Polly in the Prix du Conseil Municipal, which is perhaps better known to Parisians as the Grand Prix d'Automne.

A change of jockeys was inevitable, owing to the fact that W. Lane, who had ridden the filly in several of her earlier races, and all her three-year-old victories up to date, had sustained a terrible accident by the falling of Belosselsky at Lingfield, in September, and was then, and for long after, hovering between life and death, being unconscious for weeks, and only eventually recovering after months of convalescence.

Maher had never previously ridden Pretty Polly in any of her races, but he was well conversant with the Paris course, and had ridden winners there in his earlier days before he settled in England, and had the previous year been up on the second to La Camargo, Wavelet's Pride.

It is probable that no better jockey could have been substituted for Lane under the circumstances, and, in the light of certain conjectures subsequently made in connection with the race, it is well to remember that he had the mount on Pretty Polly in the Free Handicap a fortnight later, and in the Champion Stakes in 1905.

Zinfandel, who may be remembered as unfortunately debarred from attempting classic honours owing to the death of his nominator, was also entered in the Prix du Conseil Municipal, and it may, I think, be stated with considerable confidence that England was represented by the best mare and the best horse in training, and that never before or since have such a pair crossed the Channel to do battle under the banner of St. George.

Zinfandel crossed early in the week preceding the race, but Pretty Polly was delayed at Folkestone by bad weather, and eventually reached Paris, after a rather choppy voyage, two days before the race.

On the Saturday evening the rain poured down literally in torrents, and the course was thereby converted into exceedingly heavy going.

Next morning the sun shone brightly on a perfect autumn day, with just a tinge of frost in the clear air.

The crowd on the course was quite a record one, and the stands were filled with people, many English being present to witness the international race of the afternoon.

Ypsilanti, the dual winner of the "Great Jubilee," ran in the Prix Newmarket, ridden by Bernard Dillon, but he was unable to get nearer than third to Monsieur Charvet and Ma Lady Lu.

A few minutes later the competitors for the Prix du Conseil Municipal of one hundred thousand francs were on view in the paddock. They numbered eight.

Of the French horses engaged, Macdonald II had far and away the best-class winning form, and to the English horses and himself the three places were universally assigned by public opinion.

Pretty Polly was, of course, the cynosure of all eyes as she walked round the paddock preceded by her travelling companion.

It may have been fancy, or it may be that in the light of future events their shadow was cast before, but I certainly thought that she seemed a trifle listless, and that when she cantered down to the post she did not move with the fire and dash of the St. Leger afternoon a month before.

Meanwhile, the offices of the Pari Mutuel were crowded with Englishmen and Frenchmen, tumbling over each other to back one or other of the English horses, and, in the majority of cases, of course, Pretty Polly, or rather her number, was the selected one.

There are certainly advantages connected with this mode of betting; but I think that the old-fashioned

way of getting rid of one's superfluous cash, either by wire or on the course, is the preferable one, as it saves much time and trouble, although it is doubtful whether it saves money, as people are generally more careful when they are risking hard cash.

The start for the Prix du Conseil Municipal takes place on the opposite side of the course to the stands, and an excellent view can be obtained of the whole of the race, excepting perhaps at the corner coming round the bend into the straight.

The horses were dispatched on their journey with commendable promptitude, there being practically no delay at the post, and the first to break the line was an outsider whose jockey's colours were distinguishable by his mauve sleeves and cap, and who dashed off with a lead of several lengths.

Coming round the bend Pretty Polly and Zinfandel took closer order, and entered the straight close to each other and behind the French outsider, who was still leading.

At the distance he appeared for a moment to be coming back to his horses, but answering with the utmost resolution to a call by his rider went on without any further symptoms of stopping.

The onlookers until now had watched the race with equanimity, expecting every moment the leader to drop back or the English pair to overhaul him, but

to the consternation of all this is exactly what did not happen.

Neither horse appeared to be able to go any faster, and when Cannon and Maher called on their mounts neither could respond, and one missed the electrical rush with which Pretty Polly had swept past her horses in the Leger, just as Sceptre had swept past Rock Sand in the Jockey Club Stakes a year before.

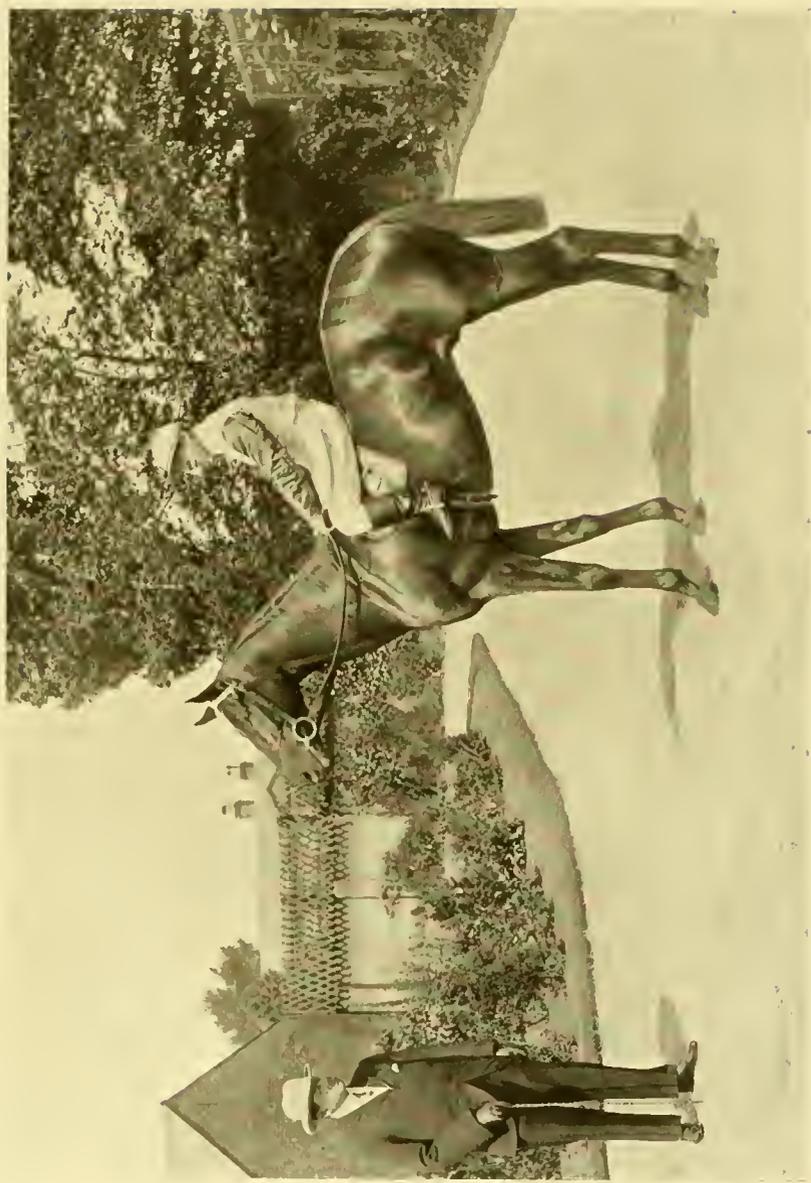
The hopes of England and of an English triumph are finally dashed to the ground, for the outsider with the mauve sleeves and cap has passed the post winning easily by two and a half lengths from Pretty Polly, with Zinfandel half a length behind, Macdonald II four lengths further off, and the remainder of the field strung out in a long line.

The numbers are hoisted—10, 5, 3. The outsider is so much an outsider that probably no foreign visitor knows what he is, and all that he knows is that the French have won.

Number 10 is Presto II by Rueil out of Mlle. Préfère, owned by M. Gaston Dreyfus, ridden by J. Ransch, and trained by Lawrence at Maisons Laffite.

A 66 to 1 outsider had overthrown the form of both France and England, and Pretty Polly had to submit to the unkind fate of defeat by an immeasurably inferior animal.

Those were not the days of the "entente cordiale,"



HENRY THE FIRST  
(O. MADDEN UP)  
*Photo. Clarence Hall.*



and the defeat of England was not unwelcome to the national pride even if it did not fill or rather might have emptied the private pocket.

“Ah, ces Anglais!” shouted a lady close to me as the horses passed the post, and instinctively the retort in her own language sprang to my lips: “We didn’t talk like that, madame, when Gouvernant was beaten at Epsom!”

Such a remark from a total stranger must have considerably astonished her, but at the moment one felt incapable of restraining one’s natural feelings.

The remainder of that afternoon was spent in wondering how it had all happened, and if it could really be true that Pretty Polly had run for (and lost) her sixteenth race.

Next morning the Gare du Nord presented the appearance of the retreat from Moscow as the English contingent entrained for the return journey, and eagerly were the sporting papers bought up on Calais Pier to see what they would say and what explanation the Turf journalists would think fit to give.

And now it must be stated that, among a certain section of racing men, the opinion (which was ventilated with respect to the Ascot Gold Cup when Sceptre and Zinfandel succumbed to Throwaway) exists that in the Prix du Conseil Municipal the English jockeys were so busy watching each other that they allowed Presto II to

steal the race. This is an opinion which can only be offered by a small minority, and cannot be seriously maintained by any one who saw this race.

It is also an opinion which would so gravely reflect on both Maher and Cannon (and Maher indeed was not concerned with the Gold Cup race) that, if true, it would, one should imagine, preclude their employment in the future by the same owners.

Yet M. Cannon rides Zinfandel and D. Maher rides Pretty Polly to victory a fortnight after the race.

The writer is not in any sense a professional racing man, and offers his opinion with some diffidence, but gives it for what it may be worth.

Every one knows that a journey across the sea, and to a foreign country, seriously handicaps any horse (and especially a three-year-old filly) undertaking it.

Add to this a course which is exceedingly holding and (from a weight for age point of view) a very inequitable ratio of weights, for, as I have pointed out in the previous chapter, the race is not exactly similar to our weight for age contests, but is a weight for age race with penalties and allowances, and is more akin to a handicap.

In England, at weight for age, Pretty Polly would have carried 8 st. 2 lb. to Presto II's 8 st. 5 lb., but here she gives him 13 lb. (including sex allowance)!

In this race, handicapped as she was by weight, by



PRESTO II  
(BY RUEIL - MADEMOISELLE PRÉFÈRE)  
*Photo. C. Muggeridge*



the ground, and by the sea, yet she beat most decisively and uncompromisingly, all the French horses except one, as well as her compatriot.

I think that both the English horses were off colour on this day, but that Zinfandel suffered the least, which enabled him to finish within half a length of her.

Next time they met it was a canter three lengths; and, extraordinary as it may at first seem, I am inclined to think that in defeat Pretty Polly has shown herself to be *victa invincibilis* ("conquered yet invincible"), and that she may very possibly have accomplished a greater thing in her reverses than she has ever achieved in victory, by doing as much as she did do when unable to make that final effort which would have secured the judge's verdict.

There was no question, in my opinion, of "slipping his field."

Presto II was never so far away that he could not have been caught, and both jockeys rode a patient and very well-timed race. *But when the time came for the English horses to go out and win they were physically incapable of further effort.*

It was the Straits of Dover, and not Presto II, that really won that race.

It must be conceded that the winner was, on his day, a very good handicap horse, but he had no pretensions whatever to classic form, and had been well beaten at a

difference in his favour of 12 lb. by Hebron, one of the horses who finished behind him on this day.

As I have before had occasion to remark, these were not the days of the now happy "entente cordiale."

The comments on the race in the French Press were equivocal and, in one case, bitterly sarcastic.

"M. Gaston Dreyfus," said one publication, "is like a man who unexpectedly lands a big stake, while Major Loder is like a gambler who has risked and lost all his winnings on one throw of the dice, and Pretty Polly has lost all the moral gain of her fifteen successive victories."

In one case, however, I can quote a happy difference of opinion.

All honour to the talented writer over the signature George Frederick in the "Echo de Paris" of Monday, October 10th.

I make no apology for quoting his comments *in extenso*.

"For true sportsmen," he declares, "Pretty Polly has lost not one ounce of her value. The English filly remains invincible. She beats her chief opponent, Zinfandel, and Macdonald II retains the place assigned to him by general opinion at the head of the French horses.

"All are in their places—except the winner. The victory of Presto is like a cracker which explodes without leaving any trace behind.



MACDONALD II  
(BY BAY RONALD—MYETLEDFESE)  
*Photo. C. Muggenidge*



“The past has proved it, and the future will prove it. . . .”

And the future *has* proved it, and proved it up to the hilt.

For Macdonald II won this race the following year in a common canter with the welter weight of 10 st. 1 lb. up.

And how Pretty Polly and Zinfandel have proved it is known to all.

Hardly had a fortnight elapsed when, on the classic heath of Newmarket, Zinfandel, in the Jockey Club Cup, and Pretty Polly, in the Free Handicap, demonstrated that they had shaken off the effects of sea and climate, for in these two races each won in the very commonest of canters.

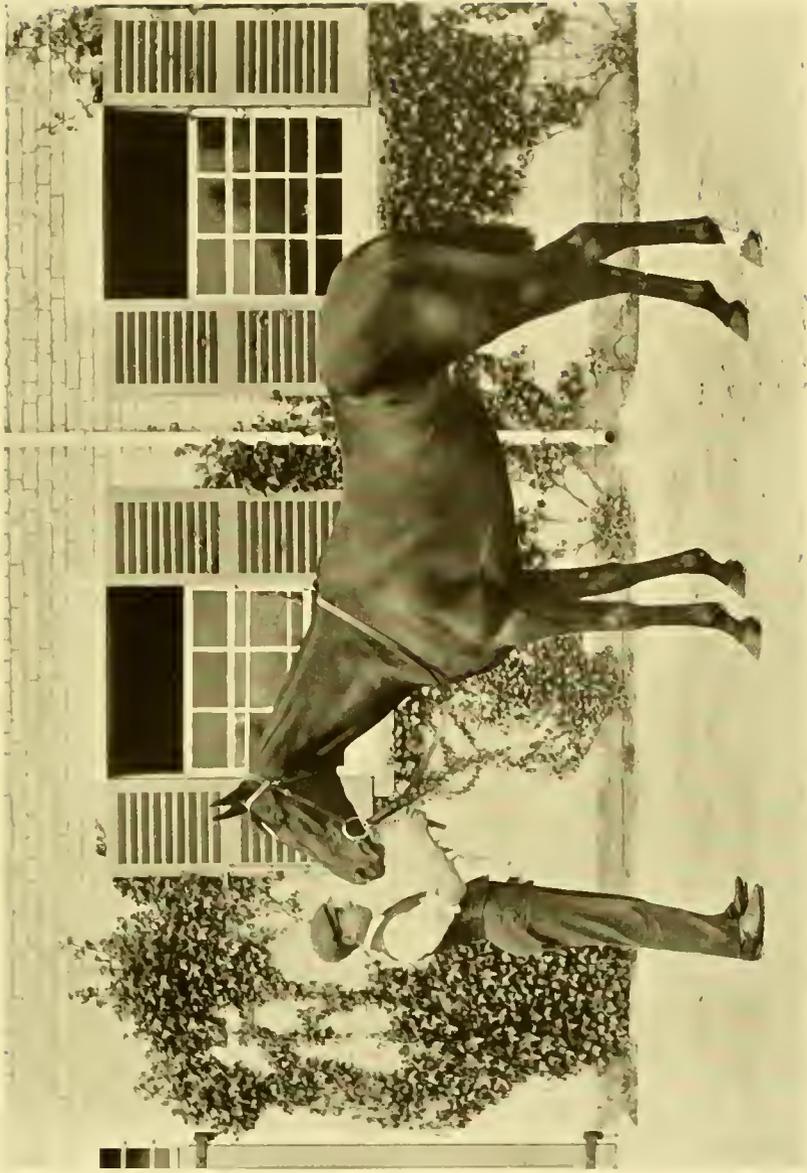
In the latter race Pretty Polly receded in the betting in an extraordinary manner from 8's and 10's laid by backers to offers by the Ring to take 7 to 2, owing to some fancied disinclination on her part to go to the post.

But there was no disinclination, fancied or otherwise, on the return journey Across the Flat, for Pretty Polly jumped off on the lower ground, and holding the lead throughout won, with her ears pricked, in a canter from Rydal Head and His Majesty, St. Amant, the Derby winner, being amongst the unplaced.

French visitors, who had seen these two horses easily

beaten in Paris a few days before, marvelled, as well they might, and the beaming smiles which are so seldom revealed on a winning jockey's face were reflected in the faces of the bystanders as Danny Maher rode into the Birdcage to weigh in.

The clouds of Longchamp were broken, to be finally dissipated at Epsom for the future triumphs of Newmarket.



HAMMERKOP  
(BY GALLINULE—CONCUSSION)  
*Photo. Clarence Hartley*



## CHAPTER IV

### THE CORONATION CUP—AND AFTER

**T**HE Coronation Cup is run over the Derby course on the Thursday in the Epsom Summer week.

It usually attracts few runners but these are generally of the highest class, and the year 1905 was no exception to the rule when three runners faced the starter, M. Edmond Blanc's Caius, Lord Howard de Walden's Zinfandel, and Major Eustace Loder's Pretty Polly.

Caius had some excellent French form to recommend him and had run fifth in Hackler's Pride's second Cambridgeshire, but it was considered that the race lay between the other two.

The result of the race in Paris may possibly have caused waverers to think that the half-length difference between the pair might now be reversed, though this opinion could only be seriously advanced by those who maintained that the mare gave her true running on that occasion.

Perhaps the bookmakers may have started with this

view, for it was possible soon after the numbers had gone up to lay as little as 6 to 4 on Pretty Polly.

These odds, however, were very materially increased and at the start became 9 to 4 on Pretty Polly, 7 to 2 against Zinfandel, and 13 to 2 against Caius.

The favourite was ridden for the first time by Madden, M. Cannon being up on Zinfandel, and Stern on Caius.

The latter jockey had evidently orders to emulate Ransch's tactics in the Prix du Conseil Municipal, for he brought the others along at a tremendous rate which forcibly reminded one of the French race.

The race was, in fact, run from end to end at a terrific pace, and if there was a soft spot in Pretty Polly a better method could not have been devised of testing her stamina.

Round Tattenham Corner they sweep, but the pace has told on Caius, and he has well-nigh shot his gallant bolt.

Madden has until now been riding a waiting race on the favourite, but now he lets her have her bridle.

Up to Zinfandel she sweeps, with that easy and yet terrific stride we know so well.

The son of Persimmon struggles gamely to hold his own, but he has not a Sceptre or a Rock Sand in the Coronation Cup to beat to-day.

The remainder of the race may well be summed up in



ZINFANDEL  
(BY PERSIMMON—MEDORA)  
*Photo. Clarence Hartley*



the words of the representative of our leading Turf journal.

“Pretty Polly swept up to Zinfandel in her old, irresistible style; he could not hold her for a single stride. In fact, she made common hacks of two of the best horses at present in training, and I do not think I am exaggerating in writing that I have never seen such a filly in all my experience of the Turf.”

Thenceforward the race was a procession, and Pretty Polly won in a canter by three lengths, with five lengths separating second and third.

In the Derby the previous day Cicero had beaten all records for the race by completing the course in 2 mins.  $39\frac{3}{5}$  secs.

On the Friday Cherry Lass beat this record in the Oaks by  $1\frac{2}{5}$  secs.

But Pretty Polly signalized her Epsom Coronation by traversing the selfsame course in 2 mins.  $33\frac{4}{5}$  secs.,  $5\frac{4}{5}$  secs. faster than the winner of the Derby, and in  $4\frac{1}{5}$  secs. shorter time than the first in the Oaks!

Of all her many performances this race at Epsom stands out in bold relief, and if she were to be judged for her place in the roll of honour by one race alone this is the one which, taken alone and by itself, stamps her as a really great horse.

And the form as compared with the Paris form be-

tween Zinfandel and Pretty Polly shows incontestably how untrue that form was.

It now appeared merely a question of health for her to succeed in adding the jewels to her Epsom crown, and to set the final seal to her undying fame by winning the Ascot Gold Cup, and so it may well indeed have been, but her chance of victory in the greatest long-distance weight for age contest in the world was unavoidably deferred.

For a few days after her sensational success in the Coronation Cup the racing world was electrified by the news that she had met with an accident at exercise, and for six weeks or more her name was absent from the training reports.

That she would easily have appropriated the Gold Cup on this occasion can scarcely be doubted, as Zinfandel, whom she so crushingly defeated at Epsom, won in a canter from Maximum II and Throwaway in record time.

The accident which had so unfortunately befallen Pretty Polly was a severe strain to the muscles of her quarters, and is believed to have originated when pulling up after an exercise gallop.

It was, at first, believed that the strain was of a very serious nature, and certain papers published very pessimistic reports as to her condition, and freely opined that she had run her last race.

The long rest and the unremitting attention of her clever veterinary attendant resulted in a complete cure, and her trainer was able to prepare her for her later autumn engagements.

In the meantime her own sister, Adula, won the Park Hill Stakes at Doncaster, and brought to mind Pretty Polly's victory in that selfsame race twelve months previously.

Pretty Polly made her reappearance in the Champion Stakes at the Second October Meeting, in which race her sole opponent was the dual Cambridgeshire winner, Hackler's Pride, who had lately become the property of Sir Tatton Sykes, whose colours, orange with purple sleeves, are but seldom seen on a racecourse nowadays. She was ridden by her usual pilot, B. Dillon, D. Maher being up on Pretty Polly.

The bookmakers were content for once to trade at a fairly liberal price, because, although Hackler's Pride's best distance was seven furlongs, and a mile about as far as she would care to go, yet it was Pretty Polly's first appearance on a racecourse since the Coronation Cup in June, and there was a possibility that she might have lost her brilliant form.

Also, the race was practically a match, and one can never tell what may happen in a match.

So it was possible at the close to lay as little as 5 to 2 on the favourite.

Hackler's Pride made the running at a strong pace and for eight furlongs retained the lead, but at the Bushes Pretty Polly shot to the front and, making the remainder of the running, won as she liked by two lengths.

Next day saw another triumph for the yellow and dark blue sleeves, for Hammerkop won the Cesarewitch from Merry Andrew and seventeen others.

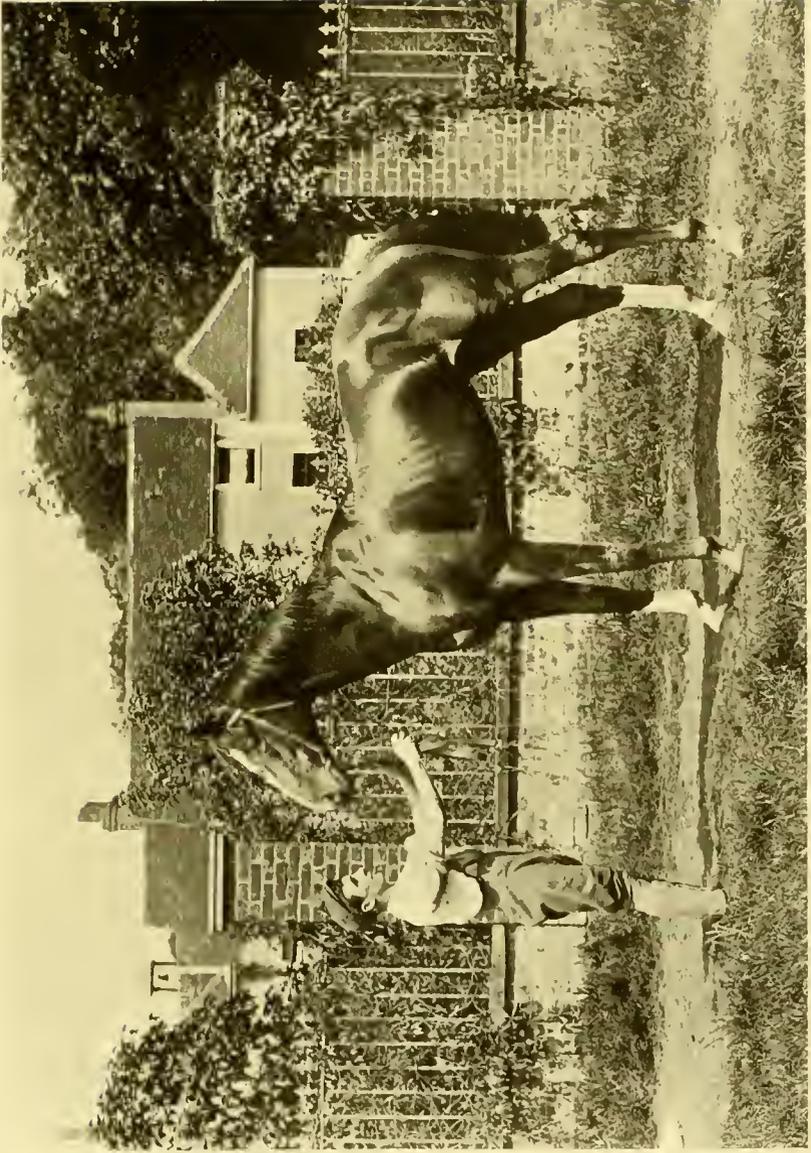
It is a curious coincidence that on two occasions in two years in succession Hammerkop won on one day and Pretty Polly the next, or vice versa.

For Hammerkop won the Great Yorkshire Handicap the day before her stable companion was successful in the St. Leger, and now on the day following Pretty Polly's victory in the Champion Stakes Hammerkop wins the great long-distance handicap.

A fortnight later Pretty Polly cantered home from a solitary opponent, Mondamin, in the Limekiln Stakes, starting at the phenomenal odds of 55 to 1 on.

Her last appearance for the season took place in the Jockey Club Cup of two and a quarter miles, run on the Thursday of the Houghton week.

Hammerkop had been also entered, but Pretty Polly proved "Major Loder's selected" for the race, her opponents being Bachelor's Button, the French filly Nimay, who had run very respectably in the St. Leger, and Horn Head, who was evidently in to make the running for Bachelor's Button.



CATUS  
(BY REVÉREND—CHOICE)  
*Photo, Clarence Bailey*



Bernard Dillon, the present jockey for the Clarehaven Lodge stable, had the mount on Pretty Polly, Maher riding Bachelor's Button, and Bartholomew being up on Nimay.

Bachelor's Button was set to give the favourite 7 lb., but to counterbalance this great advantage in her favour was the fact that she had not been specially trained with a view to this race and had never run previously in public over a greater distance than a mile and three-quarters.

It is curious to note the doubts that have always existed in certain quarters with regard to Pretty Polly's stamina (although I suppose a victory in the Gold Cup would have dissipated these doubts for ever), as apparently in some people's imagination a horse that has tremendous speed can never stay.

I am quite ready to agree that this may sometimes be the case, but it must always be remembered that Pretty Polly is a phenomenon and outside the law of averages, and she has shown her ability to win over any distance from five furlongs to two miles and a quarter.

Both Bachelor's Button and Pretty Polly looked quite at their best, and the former was as fit as hands could make him.

In the betting Pretty Polly was favourite, five "ponies" being offered and taken "bar" one.

At the start the odds were: 5 to 1 on Pretty Polly,

5 to 1 against Bachelor's Button, 33 to 1 Nimay, and 100 to 1 Horn Head (offered).

The latter fulfilled his office as pacemaker till half-way across the flat, when he dropped back last, and Bachelor's Button, in the centre, went on from Pretty Polly, on the left, and Nimay, on the right, to the dip, where Pretty Polly drew to the front and won, hard held, by half a length ; a bad third.

And so Pretty Polly won her twentieth victory.



HACKLER'S PRIDE  
(B. DILLON UP)  
*Photo. Clarence Barr.*



## CHAPTER V

### THE LAST CORONATION OF PRETTY POLLY

**P**RETTY POLLY made her reappearance in the March Stakes at Newmarket run on the day succeeding the decision of the Two Thousand Guineas.

She was accompanied in the paddock by another cob, her old friend, Little Missus, having, so it was said, succumbed to rheumatism.

The mare looked exceedingly well and was as forward in condition as the occasion required.

The field to oppose her was of but small dimensions, and the fact that there were seventy-five sovereigns for the runner-up may have prevented a walk-over.

Besides Mondamin, second to the mare in the Limekiln Stakes at the previous Houghton Meeting, were two good-class handicap horses in St. Wulfram and His Majesty, but at weight for age they were obviously outclassed.

There was practically no betting, the nominal odds of 35 to 1000 being asked for, and the tempting offer

of one bookmaker to bet 1000 to 35 that Pretty Polly was not second remained unheeded.

The race needs little description.

Mondamin, on the left, made the running from Pretty Polly, in the centre, and His Majesty to the Bushes, where Pretty Polly was allowed to stride to the front, and making the remainder of the running, attended by Mondamin and His Majesty, she won in a canter by two lengths, four lengths separating second and third.

It was a race of no great importance seemingly, but although none could have foreseen it, it was the last time that Pretty Polly was to run at Newmarket.

For the very last time she re-entered the Birdcage amid the admiring comments of the bystanders, and as she passed out of the gate at the further end there passed out of the active history of Newmarket Racecourse the mare of all the centuries, who had always run to win, and whose two defeats, accomplished as they were when she was not herself, show forth, by the gallant way in which she struggled on against hopeless odds, that in her failures she was perhaps even more gloriously triumphant than in all her victories.

Pretty Polly's next engagement was in the Coronation Cup at Epsom, a race to be ever memorable by reason of what was perhaps her greatest victory in that selfsame event twelve months before.



ADULA  
(BY GALLINULE—ADMIRATION)  
*Photo, Carome Halls*



The day previously her owner had won the Derby with Spearmint, a son of Carbine, a colt who had been bought as a yearling by Major Loder at the annual sale of the Sledmere youngsters at Doncaster.

It was a lucky purchase, as the colt not only won the Derby, but also, although only after a hard struggle, the Grand Prix.

Many sensational stories were afloat preceding the Derby as to a wonderful trial in which the son of Carbine was supposed to have defeated Pretty Polly at 19 lb.

The trial was altogether mythical, as the two had never been tried, and good honest colt as Spearmint was he was no better than the best of a moderate lot, and had Maintenon given his best running at Longchamp it is very questionable whether the Grand Prix would not have remained at home.

It had been confidently expected that Cicero would have had a cut at the great mare in the Coronation Cup, but owing to the hard ground it was decided to reserve him for Ascot, and besides her old friend St. Amant, whose sensational victory in the Jockey Club Stakes had resuscitated him, there was only the three-year-old Achilles, who had some form to recommend him (as well as a very big pull in the weights), as he had won the Champagne Stakes at the previous Doncaster September Meeting.

Pretty Polly was in grand condition and exceptionally fit and well in herself.

The Ring, after asking in vain for extravagant odds, were content to take 11 to 2, this price being booked against St. Amant, while 33 to 1 was offered against Achilles.

For about a quarter of a mile Pretty Polly held a slight lead of Achilles, when St. Amant took second place.

So they ran till about six furlongs from home, when St. Amant dropped back and Achilles raced up alongside the leader.

It was worth witnessing, the gallantly determined but absolutely ineffectual way in which the three-year-old tried to get on terms with his great opponent, but the momentary effort made no impression on the favourite, who, gradually drawing away, won as she liked by a length and a half, in the same time as the Derby record of her stable companion, 2 mins. 36 $\frac{1}{2}$  secs.

Doubtless had she been needed to do so she would have broken her own record of the previous year, 2 mins. 33 $\frac{1}{2}$  secs., which remains, and will probably for all time remain, the record time in which the mile and a half, which constitutes the course over which the Derby is run, has been covered.

On returning to scale Pretty Polly was received with an outburst of cheering, and few who witnessed that



ACHILLES  
(BY AVINGTON—ANSEL)  
*Photo. Clarence Hilly*



day could have imagined that it was her last coronation, the last time that she should be acclaimed the actual victor.

In the light of after events, it may be that the owner of Pretty Polly thinks that the gods exacted too heavy a price for Spearmint's Derby and Grand Prix.

So must the world have enthused over the good fortune of Polycrates of Samos, even when his destruction was impending.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE TRAGEDY OF ASCOT

**T**HE Ascot Gold Cup is run over two miles and a half, with a trying ascent at the finish, and owing probably to its being a severe test of a horse's stamina and endurance, as well as to the fact that its competitors are supposed to be exclusively drawn from the ranks of animals of the highest class only, it is popularly held to set the seal on its victor's fame.

Certainly some great horses have won this race in recent years, Isinglass and Cyllene to wit ; whilst some inferior animals have also won, to instance only Throw-away and Maximum II ; whilst several horses of undoubted pre-eminent ability, such as Sceptre and Zinfandel (the latter at the first attempt), have failed ; so, on the whole, it can scarcely be said that a victory or a defeat in the Gold Cup is, by itself, a guarantee of immortal fame or otherwise.

The entry for the Ascot Gold Cup, 1906, was a very flattering one, although like many Cup contests its proportions were destined to be considerably lessened.



CICERO  
(BY CULLENE—GAS)  
*Photo. Clarence Hart*



Among those entered were, besides the subject of this sketch, Presto II, the only horse who had hitherto finished in front of her; Clyde, a famous French mare; Cicero, a winner of the Derby; Challacombe, a winner of the St. Leger; St. Denis, a winner of the Princess of Wales's Stakes; Great Scot, a winner of the Viceroy's Cup; and Bachelor's Button, who may very fairly be described as the best handicap horse then in training, and who had recently shown himself to be in form by winning the Manchester Cup.

The French horses eventually declined the contest, which ultimately was confined to five—Pretty Polly, Cicero, Achilles, St. Denis (who was started to make the running for his stable companion), and Bachelor's Button.

The Ascot Meeting had opened very brilliantly as far as the weather was concerned, as it was excessively hot all four days, and the course by Cup Day was as hard as a turnpike road.

Nature does not seem to have intended the Royal Heath for a racecourse, as the going generally appears to be either exceedingly hard or exceedingly holding according to the prevalent weather conditions.

Of all the four days, Cup Day was perhaps quite the hottest and the most sweltering.

On arrival at the course there were certain rumours about as to Pretty Polly, and there was some idea in the

Ring before racing that the mare had been sent back to Newmarket.

It had transpired that she had been caused some inconvenience by a certain prominent wart on her belly, which had been lanced by her veterinary attendant, and it was thought by some people that this was more serious than really was the case.

As a matter of strict fact, the writer of these pages has the very highest and best authority—that of Major Loder—for stating that, although it was quite true that she had been troubled by a large wart under her belly, there was nothing to indicate in the way she was doing in the stable or at her work that she was the least off colour. Although, looking back at the race, one can hardly doubt that she was not at her very best on that day, still, when one considers what a great race she ran all the same, it is difficult to see how any one could have judged that she was not quite in her top form.

Only the race itself could settle that question. I have considered it only right to lay some stress on the above point, as there were many people who unfairly, if unconsciously, blamed Pretty Polly's connections for running her on the assumption that they ran her knowing she was off colour.

That this is an entire fallacy I have, on the highest and best authority, proved.

After Queen's Holiday had walked over for the All



D. MAHER



B. DILLON



O. MADDEN



MR. PETER PURCELL GILPIN



W. HALSEY



W. LANE



C. TRIGG

PRETTY POLLY'S TRAINER AND JOCKEYS  
*Photo. Clarence Halsey*



Aged Stakes, there was a long delay before the time set for the Cup to be run.

Pretty Polly was early on view walking round the paddock, preceded by Hammerkop.

She was certainly sweating a good deal, but considering the tropical heat this is hardly to be wondered at.

Cicero was also walking about, and this handsome little son of Cyllene certainly never looked better in his life.

The writer was standing outside Pretty Polly's box while she was being saddled, and if any collateral evidence were necessary to support the assertion that the mare carried the full confidence of those associated with her, this evidence was forthcoming in the hearty laughter of her trainer while her toilet was being attended to, and one left the paddock with the firm conviction that she would win her race pulling up.

In the betting there was little, if any, indication that the Ring had forecasted the result, because although there was plenty of fielding against the favourite, she was a hard odds on chance at 11 to 4, 7 to 1 being freely offered "bar" one.

11 to 4 *on*, 7 to 1 "bar" one does not usually presage a disaster, especially when one considers how excessively liberal the odds against the second favourites were.

At the close the prices were: 11 to 4 on Pretty Polly, 7 to 1 against Cicero and Bachelor's Button (this

proves that the 1905 Derby winner was considered to have as good or rather as forlorn a chance as the Jockey Club Cup second), 40 to 1 against Achilles, and 500 to 1 against St. Denis (offered).

The latter led the parade from Bachelor's Button and Cicero, with Pretty Polly last.

A capital start was effected eight minutes after the scheduled time, St. Denis, in the centre, at once setting the pace to Cicero, on the left, and Pretty Polly, on the right, with Bachelor's Button next, to the stands.

Here Cicero, who was fighting hard for his head, was deprived of second place by Achilles, Bachelor's Button dropping into the rear.

The jockey on St. Denis had evidently been ordered to make the pace a hot one, and he fulfilled his instructions to the letter.

Turning out of the straight Cicero resumed second place with Achilles next, and Pretty Polly dropped back last.

Along the Swinley Bottom the pace became a cracker, and one instinctively knew that if Pretty Polly won it would be in record time.

St. Denis retained the lead till six furlongs from home, when the terrific pace told on him and he dropped back last, and Achilles came on clear with the other three almost in a line.

When fairly in the straight Pretty Polly drew up to

Achilles' girths with Bachelor's Button close up in advance of St. Denis.

At the distance Pretty Polly was carried out very wide indeed by Achilles, who was dropping back beaten, and this must have cost her several lengths.

Pretty Polly then went on from Bachelor's Button, and it was then seen that the issue lay between the two.

For a few strides she led by half a length or more, and looked like coming away and winning in her usual form, but Bachelor's Button stuck to her with bulldog tenacity, and it was soon seen that it would be a race.

A hundred yards from home Bachelor's Button drew to the front.

Pretty Polly struggled on with the courage of a lion, but as they passed the stands a second time it was seen that Bachelor's Button would almost inevitably win.

The great mare had done her utmost, striving on with all against her, with the pace forced for Bachelor's Button by St. Denis, and even when he was beaten, with Achilles continuing the running and giving her no quarter, carried out at the turn for home, and with that tiring hill to ascend at the finish, probably the severest finish in the world.

Right valiantly she struggled on, game to the end, but the latent physical want of her highest point of vitality had told its tale on her at Ascot as at Longchamp.

It was Paris all over again.

As then, so now, one glanced at the winning-post and at the two horses as they neared it, and hoped against hope that Pretty Polly might have that momentary return of vitality which would land her a victor, even if it were only by the shortest of margins.

But as it was at Longchamp, so it was at Ascot, and the horse holding his own to the end won by a length amid a silence as of death.

I have seen many races and many sensational results, but nothing to equal the absolute silence as Bachelor's Button passed the post the winner of the Ascot Gold Cup in record time.

To freely translate a Latin epigram, it might be said that, although the gods had decreed the success of the victor, the success of Pretty Polly was desired by every man of that great Ascot multitude, layer and backer alike, such a hold had she on every unit of that great army of those who go racing.

I believe it is said that some people cried, and I am not the least ashamed to own that the tears came into my own eyes as I saw for the second time Pretty Polly's number second in the frame.

No one cared about the money; one would have gladly given the money twice over rather than have seen her defeated.

To the reader totally uninterested in racing, or to one



BACHELOR'S BUTTON

(D. MAMER UP)

*Photo. Clarence Hatfield*



who perhaps looks upon racing as a synonym for all that is evil, it may seem curious that the success or failure of a certain horse, taken absolutely apart from financial circumstances, should raise any feeling of emotion.

But to those thousands who have seen Pretty Polly in any or all of her races the feeling of sadness that the once deferred Triumph of Ascot had become a Tragedy instead was as natural as it was general.

No one could see Pretty Polly and not love her.

But Pretty Polly stood for something more than her own beautiful gentle self.

She stood for all that is best, all that is truest, all that is least venial in the world of racing.

Whilst there are horses like Pretty Polly (although far removed though they be from her phenomenal superexcellence), owners like Eustace Loder, trainers like Peter Purcell Gilpin, and jockeys as straight as Bernard Dillon, no man need despair of the Turf of England.

Turning back to the Ascot Cup, there can be but little doubt that she was distinctly unlucky in the race, and that she was latently a little below her top form, and that these causes were the reason of her defeat.

Bachelor's Button was a handicap horse of the highest class, but he had no pretensions to classic form,

and he had been beaten fairly and squarely at Newmarket by the mare, despite all the assertions of those who stated that she won "all out" on that occasion.

If Bachelor's Button was such a great horse then Mark Time would have beaten Pretty Polly, for the former only managed to defeat Mark Time at even weights by a short head at Doncaster.

To say that Pretty Polly failed to stay is absurd.

It was want of vitality, not want of stamina, that lost her the Cup.

As has before been remarked in these pages with reference to the only other defeat the wonderful mare has suffered throughout her career, so it might be said again with reference to Ascot that in defeat she was, perhaps, more glorious than in victory.

No want of commendation for the winner, good, honest horse that he was, but knowledge of the respective class and merits of the pair, as judged by the career of each, prompts any one who is an impartial judge to hold conclusively that had Pretty Polly been absolutely at the top of her form on that tragic day she would inevitably have won, and won, too, with consummate ease.

Pretty Polly was no worse for her severe race, and was confidently expected to appear again under colours in the Doncaster Cup.

Unfortunately, owing to the hard ground, she jarred



MAJOR EUSTACE LODER

*Photo, Clarence Haily*



her off fore joint when doing her last gallop on the Saturday before the Doncaster Meeting.

The injury was not severe, and doubtless after the winter's rest she would have stood training again, but it was decided by her owner that it was time she retired to the stud, and on the last day of October she left Newmarket for her early home in Ireland with a view to being mated with Laveno in the spring.

During her career on the Turf she won twenty-two races, and was twice second. In stakes she won £37,295.

In accurately assigning to her the exact niche in Turf history that she is rightfully entitled to, one is faced by the difficulty that it is inherently impossible to compare horses of the present with a past generation with any degree of absolute certainty.

To assert publicly that she is the horse of all time may seem temerity, whatever one's private opinion may be.

But it may be maintained with every show of certainty that no mare, not even Sceptre, could have made her gallop, and not many horses either.

It may be said that with the exception of Zinfandel and Hackler's Pride she never beat much.

This may or may not be the case.

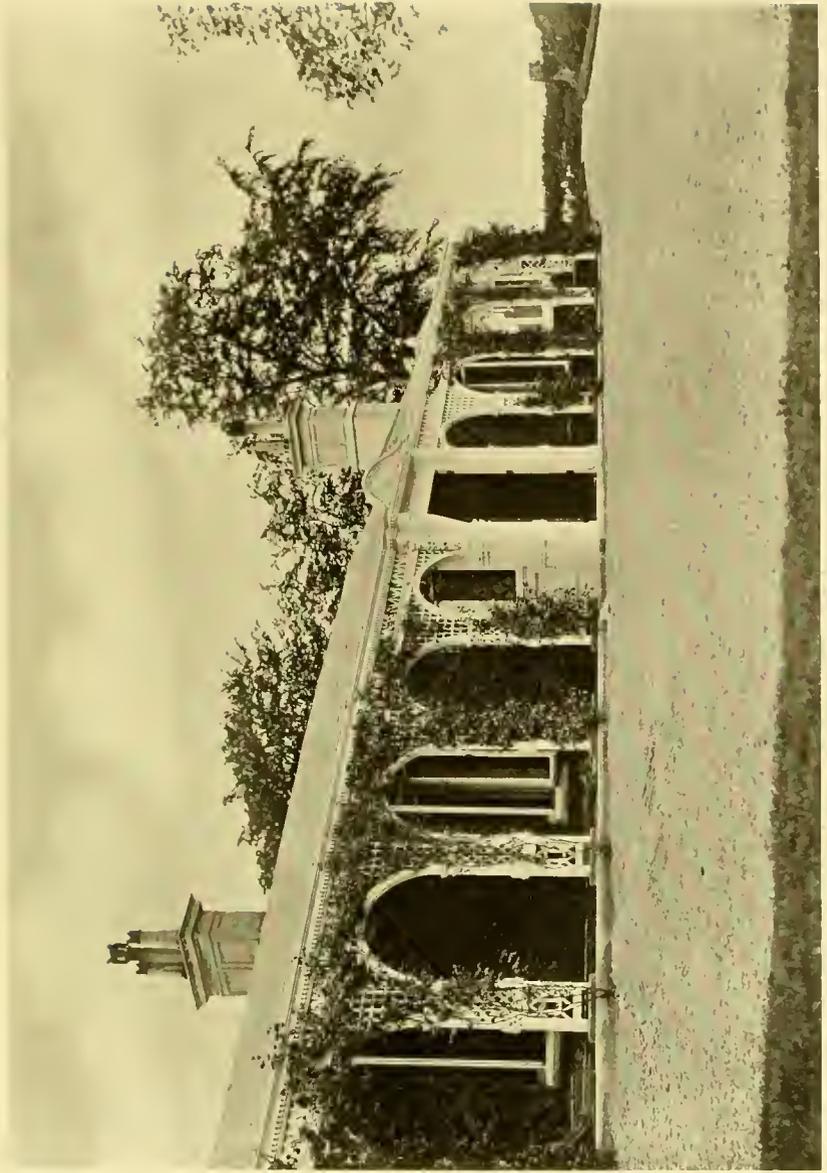
People are apt nowadays to put all horses down as moderate when there is a phenomenon like Pretty Polly in the field.

It is, as has before been remarked, the absolutely effortless way in which her races have been won that denotes her pre-eminent ability.

Her victory over Zinfandel at Epsom stands out as a wonderful performance for all time. For Zinfandel was undoubtedly a good, and indeed a great, horse.

And so with the Tragedy of Ascot, a tragedy that is not perhaps yet wholly devoid of its triumph, in the great race that she ran, and the gallant fight that she made when the odds were all against her, Pretty Polly leaves for ever the racecourse for the paddock, but she leaves a void in the life of the Turf which is never likely to be adequately filled.

It may be hoped that some of her stock will uphold the honour of the yellow and dark blue as worthily as she has done, and that in them may be some at least of the characteristics of the great mare whose blood runs in their veins, and whose deeds will never be forgotten, for as long as the world endures the glorious daughter of Gallinule and Admiration will always be remembered with pride and gladness, not only by those who have had the privilege of acclaiming her victories, but by future generations, who will have handed down to them as an everlasting tradition the name which embraces the most brilliant era in the annals of the English Turf,—that of Pretty Polly.



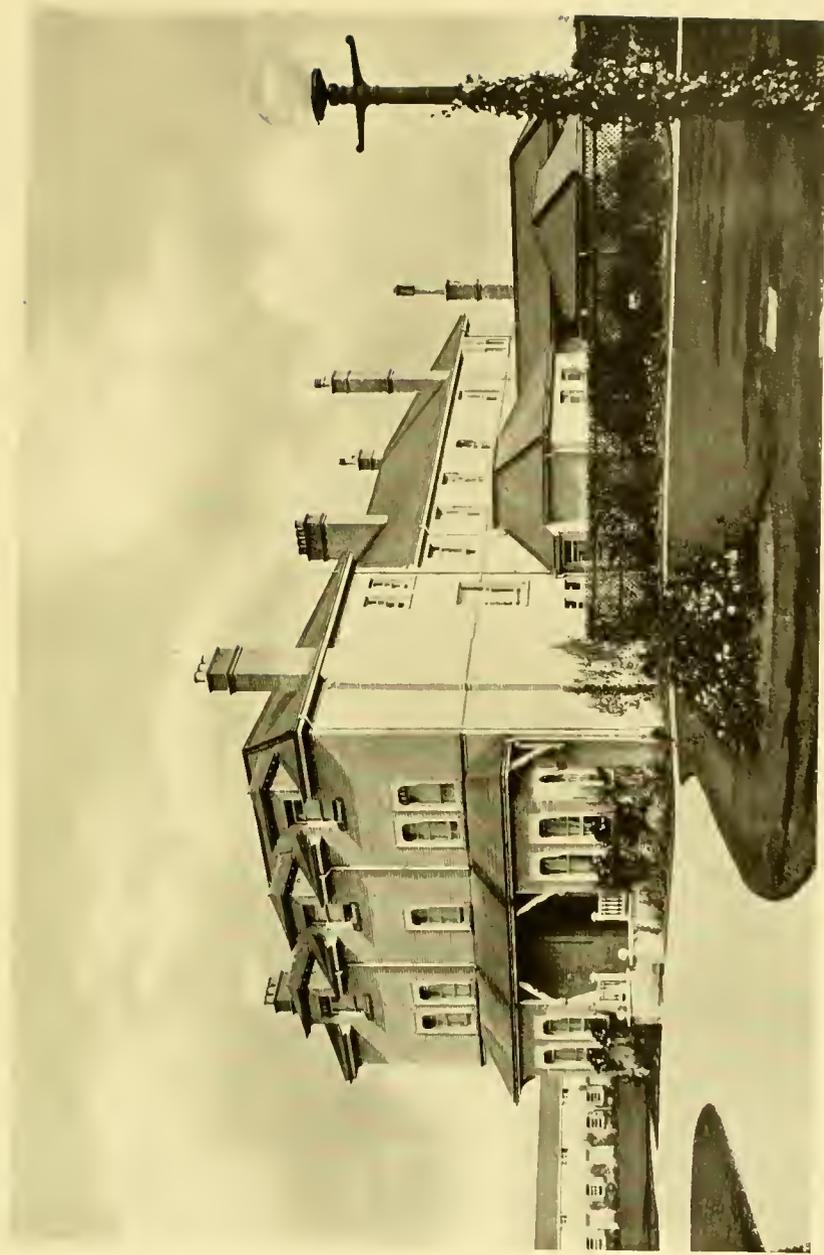
EYREFIELD LODGE, THE CURRAGH

*Photo: Clarence Hatley*



## APPENDICES





CLAREHAVEN LODGE, NEWMARKET  
*Photo, Clarence Harris*



APPENDIX A  
 PEDIGREE OF PRETTY POLLY

PRETTY POLLY (1901)

GALLINULE (1884).		ADMIRATION (1892).	
Isonomy (1875).	Sterling (1868)	Oxford (1857)	Birdcatcher (1833) Honey Dear (1844)
	Isola Bella (1868)	Whisper (1857)	Flat Catcher (1841) Silence (1848)
Moorhen (1873).	Hermit (1864)	Stockwell (1849)	The Baron (1842) Pocahontas (1837)
		Isoline (1860)	Ethelbert (1850) Bassishaw (1847)
	Sister to Ryshworth (1865)	Newminster (1848)	Touchstone (1831) Beeswing (1833)
		Seclusion (1857)	Tadmor (1846) Mrs. Sellon (1851)
Gaze (1886).	Saraband (1883).	Skirmisher (1854)	Voltigeur (1847) Gardham, m. (1843)
		Vertumna (1859)	Stockwell (1849) Garland (1835)
Gaze (1886).	Saraband (1883).	Doncaster (1870)	Stockwell (1849) Marigold (1860)
		Windermere (1870)	Macaroni (1860) Miss Agnes (1850)
Gaze (1886).	Saraband (1883).	Scottish Chief (1861)	Lord of the Isles (1852) Miss Ann (1846)
		Masquerade (1861)	Lambourne (1854) Burlesque (1843)
Gaze (1886).	Thuringian Prince (1871)	Thormanby (1857)	Windbound (1850) Alice Hawthorn (1838)
		Eastern Princess (1858)	Surplice (1845) Tomyris (1851)
	Eyepleaser (1876)	Brown Bread (1862)	Weatherbit (1842) Brown Agnes (1857)
		Wallflower (1869)	Rataplán (1850) Chaperon (1855)

## APPENDIX B

### COMPLETE RECORD OF PRETTY POLLY'S RACES

SANDOWN PARK (JUNE, 1903)

*British Dominion Two-Year-Old Race. 5 furs.*

Pretty Polly . . .	8-4 . . .	Trigg	1
Vergia . . . . .	8-7 . . .	H. Jones	2
John o' Gaunt . . .	8-10 . . .	Mr. Thursby	3
Castello . . . . .	8-10 . . .	K. Cannon	0
Kava . . . . .	8-4 . . .	Compton	0
Jack Hawthorn . . .	8-7 . . .	Madden	0
Sainte Marquise . .	8-7 . . .	W. Lane	0
Herbert Vincent . .	8-7 . . .	J. Martin	0
Lanfine . . . . .	8-7 . . .	M. Cannon	0
Armœa . . . . .	8-4 . . .	Maher	0

Betting: 2 to 1 John o' Gaunt,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  Jack Hawthorn, 4 Lanfine,  
6 Pretty Polly, 10 Vergia and others.

Won ten lengths; a neck.

## RECORD OF PRETTY POLLY'S RACES 55

SANDOWN PARK (JULY, 1903)

*National Breeders' Produce Stakes. 5 furs.*

Pretty Polly . . .	9-6 . . .	Halsey	1
Bobrinski . . .	9-0 . . .	Lyne	2
Marsden . . .	9-6 . . .	W. Lane	3
Warrior . . .	8-4 . . .	Madden	0
Perchant . . .	9-0 . . .	M. Cannon	0
Flying Star . . .	8-4 . . .	J. Martin	0
Merryman . . .	9-2 . . .	K. Cannon	0
Gloriana . . .	8-11 . . .	Watts	0
Royal Arch . . .	9-0 . . .	Higgs	0
Kate Angelo . . .	8-11 . . .	T. Dixon	0
Ravenshoe . . .	8-9 . . .	Hardy	0

Betting: 2 to 1 Pretty Polly,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  Flying Star,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  Warrior, 100 to 8 Marsden, 100 to 7 Bobrinski and Perchant, 16 Royal Arch, 20 others.

Won by two lengths ; three lengths.

LIVERPOOL (JULY, 1903)

*Mersey Stakes. 5 furs. 110 yds.*

Pretty Polly . . .	8-11 . . .	Halsey	1
C. by Grey Leg—			
Navaretta . . .	8-0 . . .	Madden	2

Betting: 33 to 1 on Pretty Polly.

Won easily a length and a half.

## PRETTY POLLY

DONCASTER (SEPTEMBER, 1903)

*Champagne Stakes. 5 furs. 152 yds.*

Pretty Polly	.	.	8-11	.	W. Lane	1
Lancashire	.	.	9-0	.	Lyne	2
St. Amant	.	.	9-0	.	K. Cannon	3
Hands Down	.	.	9-0	.	J. Martin	0
Cinquefoil	.	.	9-0	.	Maher	0

Betting: 11 to 10 Pretty Polly, 6 to 4 St. Amant, 8 Cinquefoil, 33 Lancashire and Hands Down.

Won in a canter a length and a half; two lengths. 1 min. 11  $\frac{1}{5}$  secs.

MANCHESTER (SEPTEMBER, 1903)

*Autumn Breeders' Foal Plate. 5 furs.*

Pretty Polly	.	.	9-5	.	W. Lane	1
Don Paez	.	.	8-9	.	Lyne	2

Betting: 25 to 1 on Pretty Polly.

Won canter three parts of a length.

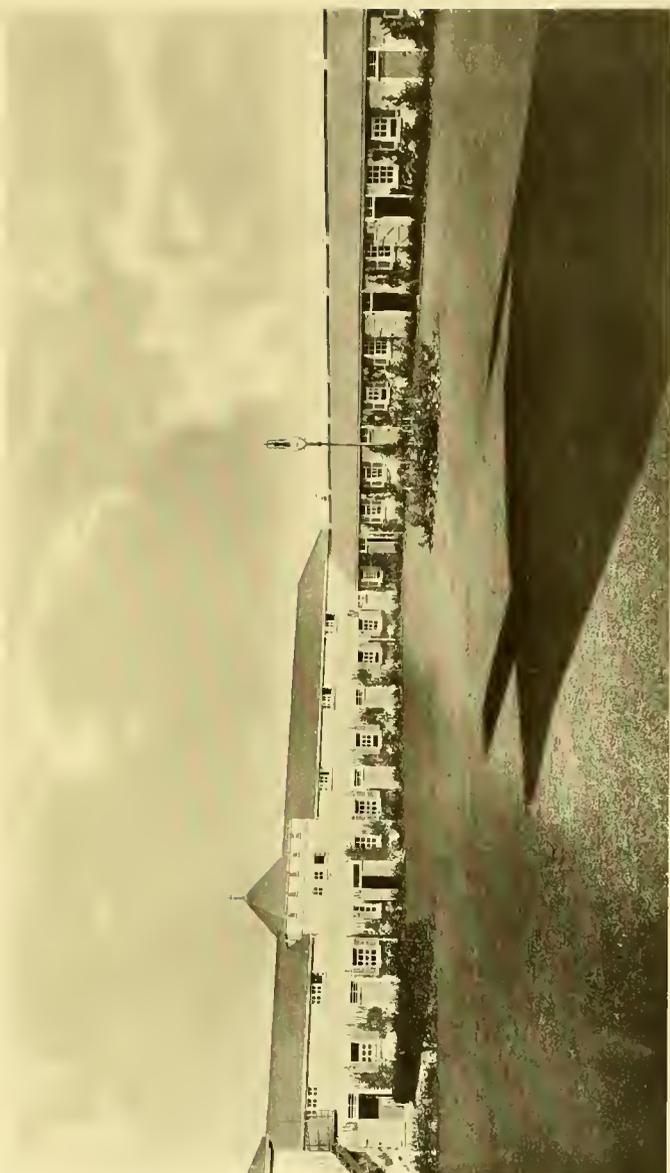
NEWMARKET (SECOND OCTOBER MEETING, 1903)

*Cheveley Park Stakes. 6 furs.*

Pretty Polly	.	.	9-3	.	W. Lane	1
Vergia	.	.	8-10	.	Madden	2
Flamma	.	.	9-0	.	Maher	3
Mary Belle	.	.	8-10	.	J. Martin	0
Queen Beauty	.	.	9-0	.	Croft	0
Pomegranate	.	.	8-10	.	H. Aylin	0
Tripping	.	.	8-10	.	Lyne	0

Betting: 100 to 8 on Pretty Polly, 100 to 8 against Flamma, 50 Vergia and others.

Won a canter three parts of a length; two lengths.



CLAREHAVEN LODGE, NEWMARKET  
(THE STABLES)  
*Photo. Caroline Hardy*



# RECORD OF PRETTY POLLY'S RACES 57

## *Middle Park Plate. 6 furs.*

Pretty Polly	. . . 9-0 . . .	W. Lane	1
St. Amant	. . . 9-3 . . .	K. Cannon	2
Hands Down	. . . 9-0 . . .	J. Martin	3
Lancashire	. . . 9-3 . . .	Lyne	0
Andria	. . . 8-10 . . .	M. Cannon	0
Leucadia	. . . 9-0 . . .	H. Aylin	0
Perfect Love	. . . 8-7 . . .	H. Jones	0

Betting: 2 to 1 on Pretty Polly,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 St. Amant, 8 Lancashire, 20 others.

Won easily three lengths; length. 1 min. 17 secs.

## NEWMARKET HOUGHTON MEETING (OCTOBER, 1903)

### *Criterion Stakes. 6 furs.*

Pretty Polly	. . . 9-2 . . .	W. Lane	1
Hands Down	. . . 9-1 . . .	J. Martin	2

Betting: 100 to 7 on Pretty Polly.

Won a length and a half.

### *Moulton Stakes. 5 furs.*

Pretty Polly	. . . 9-1 . . .	W. Lane	1
Bitters	. . . 8-7 . . .	M. Cannon	2
Charmus	. . . 8-3 . . .	Madden	3
Versatile	. . . 8-7 . . .	J. Martin	0

Betting: 100 to 7 on Pretty Polly, 25 others.

Won a canter two lengths; four lengths.

## NEWMARKET FIRST SPRING MEETING (APRIL, 1904)

*The One Thousand Guineas Stakes. R. M. (1 mile).*

Pretty Polly . . . . .	W. Lane	1
Leucadia . . . . .	H. Aylin	2
Flamma . . . . .	D. Maher	3
Barbette . . . . .	H. Randall	0
Fiancée . . . . .	J. Watts	0
Altcar . . . . .	O. Madden	0
Piari . . . . .	H. Jones	0

Betting: 4 to 1 on Pretty Polly, 6 to 1 against Fiancée,  
 33 Leucadia, Barbette, 100 to 1 any other.

A canter three lengths; four lengths. Time: 1 min. 40 secs.  
 A record for the race.

## EPSOM SUMMER MEETING (JUNE, 1904)

*The Oaks Stakes. About 1½ miles.*

Pretty Polly . . . . .	W. Lane	1
Bitters . . . . .	K. Cannon	2
Fiancée . . . . .	J. E. Watts	3
St. Mindred . . . . .	W. Halsey	0

Betting: 100 to 8 on Pretty Polly, 100 to 7 against Fiancée,  
 20 Bitters, 100 to 1 St. Mindred.

Won a canter three lengths; bad third. Time: 2 mins.  
 46½ secs.

# RECORD OF PRETTY POLLY'S RACES 59

## ASCOT MEETING (JUNE, 1904)

### *The Coronation Stakes. 1 mile.*

Pretty Polly	. . . 9-10 . . .	W. Lane	1
Montem	. . . 8-10 . . .	H. Jones	2
Pieria	. . . 8-10 . . .	K. Cannon	3
Leucadia	. . . 8-10 . . .	H. Aylin	0
Vergia	. . . 8-10 . . .	O. Madden	0
Flamma	. . . 8-10 . . .	D. Maher	0
Chelys	. . . 8-10 . . .	Watts	0
Kilbirnie	. . . 8-3 . . .	Halsey	0

Betting: 5 to 1 on Pretty Polly, 100 to 8 against any other.  
A canter three lengths; neck.

## GOODWOOD MEETING (JULY, 1904)

### *Nassau Stakes. 1 mile 4 furs.*

Pretty Polly	. . . 9-8 . . .	W. Lane	1
King's Favour	. . . 8-5 . . .	M. Cannon	2
Dark Lantern	. . . 8-5 . . .	W. Halsey	3

Betting: 33 to 1 on Pretty Polly, 40 to 1 against King's Favour, 50 to 1 Dark Lantern.

Won in a canter five lengths; bad third.

## DONCASTER SEPTEMBER MEETING, 1904

### *The St. Leger Stakes. 1 mile 6 furs. 132 yds.*

Pretty Polly	. . . 8-11 . . .	W. Lane	1
Henry the First	. . . 9-0 . . .	O. Madden	2
Almscliff	. . . 9-0 . . .	D. Maher	3
St. Denis	. . . 9-0 . . .	W. Halsey	0
Andover	. . . 9-0 . . .	M. Cannon	0
St. Amant	. . . 9-0 . . .	K. Cannon	0

Betting: 5 to 2 on Pretty Polly, 4 to 1 against St. Amant, 100 to 6 Almscliff, 25 St. Denis, 50 Henry the First and Andover.

Won a canter three lengths; six lengths. 3 mins.  $5\frac{4}{9}$  secs.

## PRETTY POLLY

*Park Hill Stakes. St. Leger Course.*

Pretty Polly	.	.	9-8	.	W. Lane	1
Bitters	.	.	8-13	.	Hardy	2
Pieria	.	.	8-10	.	K. Cannon	3
Leucadia	.	.	8-13	.	H. Aylin	0
Rhodanthe	.	.	8-6	.	Maher	0

Betting: 25 to 1 on Pretty Polly, 33 to 1 against others.  
 Won a canter three lengths; bad third. 3 mins.  $8\frac{4}{5}$  secs.

## PARIS AUTUMN MEETING (OCTOBER, 1904)

*Prix du Conseil Municipal. 1½ miles.*

Presto II	.	.	8-5	.	Ransch	1
Pretty Polly	.	.	9-1	.	Maher	2
Zinfandel	.	.	9-9	.	M. Cannon	3
Macdonald II	.	.	9-5	.	Reiff	0
Hebron	.	.	9-9	.	O'Connor	0
Frisquet	.	.	8-9	.	Carter	0
Rataplan	.	.	8-5	.	Stern	0
Lorlot	.	.	8-5	.	Bellhouse	0

N.B.—The Pari Mutuel being the official medium of speculation, the so-called betting as given in the English papers is unreliable. The Pari Mutuel returned the price of the winner at about 66 to 1. For places the Pari Mutuel paid 2 to 5 Pretty Polly and 1 to 2 Zinfandel.

Won by two and a half lengths; half a length.

# RECORD OF PRETTY POLLY'S RACES 61

## NEWMARKET HOUGHTON MEETING (OCTOBER, 1904).

### *The Free Handicap. 1 mile 2 furs.*

Pretty Polly	. . .	9-7	. . .	Maher	1
Rydal Head	. . .	8-5	. . .	M. Cannon	2
His Majesty	. . .	7-11	. . .	Madden	3
St. Amant	. . .	9-4	. . .	K. Cannon	0

Betting: 7 to 2 on Pretty Polly, 100 to 12 against Rydal Head, 10 St. Amant, 20 His Majesty.

Won a canter two lengths; a head.

## EPSOM SUMMER MEETING (MAY, 1905)

### *The Coronation Cup. 1½ miles.*

Pretty Polly	. . .	9-0	. . .	Madden	1
Zinfandel	. . .	9-6	. . .	M. Cannon	2
Caius	. . .	9-6	. . .	Stern	3

Betting: 9 to 4 on Pretty Polly, 7 to 2 against Zinfandel, 13 to 2 Caius.

Won in a canter by three lengths; five lengths. Time: 2 mins. 33 $\frac{4}{5}$  secs.

This is the record time for the Derby course, and beats the previous record (Cicero in the Derby the previous day, 2 mins. 39 $\frac{2}{5}$  secs.) and the following day's Oaks record (Cherry Lass, 2 mins. 38 secs.). It also beats Spearmint's (the present) record for the Derby, 2 mins. 36 $\frac{2}{5}$  secs.

## NEWMARKET SECOND OCTOBER MEETING (1905)

### *The Champion Stakes. A. F. 1 mile 2 furs.*

Pretty Polly	. . .	8-11	. . .	D. Maher	1
Hackler's Pride	. . .	8-11	. . .	B. Dillon	2

Betting: 5 to 2 on Pretty Polly.

Won in a common canter by two lengths. 2 mins. 7 $\frac{1}{5}$  secs.

## PRETTY POLLY

NEWMARKET HOUGHTON MEETING (OCTOBER, 1905)

*Limekiln Stakes. A. F. 1 mile 2 furs.*

Pretty Polly	. . . 9-11 . . .	B. Dillon	1
Mondamin	. . . 8-1 . . .	O. Madden	2

Betting: 55 to 1 on Pretty Polly.

Won easily by a length.

*The Jockey Club Cup. 2 miles 2 furs.*

Pretty Polly	. . . 8-9 . . .	B. Dillon	1
Bachelor's Button	. . . 9-2 . . .	Maher	2
Nimay	. . . 7-9 . . .	Bartholomew	3
Horn Head	. . . 7-12 . . .	Madden	0

Betting: 5 to 1 on Pretty Polly, 5 to 1 against Bachelor's Button, 33 Nimay, 100 Horn Head.

Won, hard held, by half a length; bad third. 4 mins.  $1\frac{2}{5}$  secs.

NEWMARKET FIRST SPRING MEETING (MAY, 1906)

*The March Stakes. A. F. 1 mile 2 furs.*

Pretty Polly	. . . 9-7 . . .	B. Dillon	1
Mondamin	. . . 8-4 . . .	W. Higgs	2
His Majesty	. . . 9-7 . . .	D. Maher	3
St. Wulfram	. . . 9-4 . . .	H. Randall	0

Betting: 1000 to 35 on Pretty Polly.

Won in a canter by two lengths; four lengths.

EPSOM SUMMER MEETING (MAY, 1906)

*The Coronation Cup.  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles.*

Pretty Polly	. . . 9-3 . . .	B. Dillon	1
Achilles	. . . 8-0 . . .	H. Randall	2
St. Amant	. . . 9-6 . . .	K. Cannon	3

Betting: 11 to 2 on Pretty Polly, 11 to 2 against St. Amant, 33 to 1 against Achilles (offered).

Won in a canter by a length and a half; two lengths.

# RECORD OF PRETTY POLLY'S RACES 63

ASCOT MEETING (JUNE, 1906).

*The Gold Cup. 2½ miles.*

Bachelor's Button	. 9-4	. .	D. Maher	1
Pretty Polly	. . 9-1	. .	B. Dillon	2
Achilles	. . . 7-7	. .	A. Templeman	3
Cicero	. . . 9-2	. .	H. Jones	0
St. Denis	. . . 9-4	. .	G. McCall	0

Betting: 11 to 4 on Pretty Polly, 7 to 1 against Cicero and Bachelor's Button, 40 to 1 Achilles, 500 to 1 St. Denis (offered).

Won by a length ; five lengths.



# Great Record Of Pretty Polly

By WARREN HILL (Willie Standing)

MY reference in last week's letter to Pretty Polly's misadventure—not of her own fault—which was thought, in the stable, to have lost her the Ascot Cup, and to the Epsom and Ascot courses as being trappy in some degree, have brought me enquiring letters from two North-country readers.

The one asks whether such an accident as was this one to a first-class racehorse, or the ill-luck which befell Colombo, Shogun, and others in the Derby, and Rhodora in the Oaks, could have happened had the running taken place on such spacious courses as York and Doncaster.

The other question is whether Pretty Polly, in view of her two defeats, was an out-and-out stayer, like some Gold Cup contestants which my correspondent mentions.

## SPACIOUS YORK

It is not because I am from the North Country that I hold up both hands for York and Doncaster as being fairer battle-grounds than Epsom and Ascot, in the sense that chances are the less influenced by ill-luck on the two courses in Yorkshire.

I have frequently walked them all, and can confirm what a visitor might gather, on first acquaintance, from a bird's eye view from the best position on the stands, that the broader sweep of the tracks on Town Moor and Knave-nire affords the runners more "elbow-room" at the turns.

In this respect York is, in my personal opinion, next up with Newmarket, where there is only one turn on either of the tracks, while, when the late Colonel Wilkinson, who lived at adjoining Dringhouses, was in charge, the surface conditions, considering that it was an open course, were excellent.

Like Mr Marriott here, he was expert on matters concerning herbage.

Perhaps Nature, in respect of subsoil conditions, was helpful.

With regard to Pretty Polly's stamina, one would not, of course, place this on a nearly so high a plane as that attained by a whole gallery of celebrities, amongst whom I would include members of her own sex such as La Fleche and, on her best day, Scentre.

## MAHER'S OPINION

One of our greatest authorities in the training profession and who, at over eighty years of age, is still turning out winners, and has had some of the best racers at all distances in his charge, would reply with an emphatic negative if asked if Pretty Polly was a genuine stayer.

Such opinion was confirmed by the late "Danny" Maher, who rode her when she was beaten in her Paris race as a three-year-old, and against her, subsequently, when she twice met Bachelor's Button.

My friendship with Maher could be said to have dated from the afternoon of his first public appearance in England on the old course at Manchester.

It was at the time when Sloan with his wizardry had so much captured public favour, while the Reiffs were riding winners galore.

At Manchester in those days the Press room, jockeys' room, and the Clerk of the Course's office were adjoining, and reached by one entrance.

As I happened to pass out to our stand in the paddock the latest American arrival, dressed for his mount onPalette in the next race but one, was leaping against the door at the entrance, virtually unnoticed and looking, as I thought, somewhat forlorn, so that I was emboldened to give him a cheery Lancashire welcome.

Such was just as the flicker of the lightest feather in the air compared with the reception Maher got a little later when returning from the winning ride on Palette, and when the crowd recognised that a likely rival to Sloan had come amongst us.

But the chance meeting alluded to has always remained a pleasant memory with the writer.

It began a happy association which lasted to the end of the great jockey's career in the saddle. It ripened into something much more than a casual acquaintanceship.

Success never led to Maher having an inflated opinion of himself, as was the case with others in the same profession who came from the other side of the Atlantic.

He may have appeared, after his rise to fame, to be petulant at times, and would get very cross with jockeys who, he considered, had not strictly observed riding etiquette. He did not, by the way, observe this every time.

He invariably abided by his own opinion concerning incidents emerging from his own riding, although they did not coincide with the views of others, and which led in one case to the severance of his connection with a leading owner.

Reverting to my correspondent's question concerning Pretty Polly's stamina, such had appeared open to be challenged when she went over to Paris in the autumn of her three-year-old days and was beaten by Presto II, who was in receipt of 10lb, the older Zinfandel finishing third.

## GREY TICK'S WIN

The last named's moderate position recalled that it was in similarly heavy going that he had just narrowly lost the Odsarewitch the previous October to the feather-weighted Grey Tick when he was carrying 8st 4lb on his three-year-old back.

I can now picture him, in the mind's eye, struggling hard, but unavailingly, in the Abingdon Dip, which so much resembled a swamp.

He was a very good horse, and would probably have won all three classics that year in face of Rock Sand but for his entries becoming void owing to the death of Col. McCalmont.

Yet Pretty Polly's despite having had a delayed and bad journey over the Channel, beat him on the occasion mentioned, and confirmed the form when they reposed months afterwards in the Coronation Cup on sounder going.

The Paris winner, Presto II, had not long before been successful by similar tactics—establishing the lead from the start and adding to it—so that he was never quite caught.

In the circumstances, Maher, who rode Pretty Polly at short notice, may have been a little premature in adjudging that she was not a true stayer.

## UNLUCKY LOSER

But he was emphatic on the point—the following season, after the mare had narrowly beaten Bachelor's Button in the Jockey Club Cup, and when the two met again in the Ascot Cup his opinion that the "Button" was the stouter was at least reflected by the result.

This was Pretty Polly's final appearance in public, and, whether or not she was at her best, this was the only time in her career when she took so much persuasion to follow her regular companion, Little Missile, on to the course for the preliminary canter.

She nevertheless was a strong odds-on favourite, and I fancy very many people who saw the race will share the writer's opinion that she was a most unlucky loser.

Bachelor's Button was a good stout horse in his class. His was a flukily-gained victory, however, in this Ascot Cup. Yet the winning of it would not have entitled the mare to equal rank with some other celebrities we have seen contesting the corresponding event.

What greatly stands to her credit is the record of twenty-two victories in twenty-four starts.

## COURSE WINNERS

Brown Jack, during his sequence of Queen Alexandra Stakes victories, had generally a weak opposition to tackle, but he also won the handicap Ascot Stakes.

Since his day Fawn has scored twice in the corresponding event, and in the long ago the same feat was performed by Lord Lorne and Teviotdale. Each was substantially advanced in the weights in connection with the second attempt.

Aptitude over the particular journey, with its undulations during the early and middle stages, and the long, gradual climb out of Swinley Bottom, has to be credited to exponents such as these were.

At the spot just mentioned, though, there have been cases of interference and crowding, to the detriment of well-fancied competitors, and at least one fall.

Opinion in the Clarendon stable, on the occasion of Pretty Polly's Gold Cup defeat by Bachelor's Button, was that the mare would have won but for being carried wide at the far side turn when St. Denis, who was in the lead, ran across the course. And this in a field of five!

*The Reference*  
MAY 1946

## "DARKIE" MYLES

Death has taken place recently of F. Myles, who, for over 45 years, has been known in the racing world.

When with the late Michael Dawson at The Curragh he looked after such famous horses as Bachelor's Button when that horse beat Pretty Polly at Ascot, Arnall, Melfont, Ugly Duckling, and Arravale, a good chaser.

J. Cauty and J. Moloney will remember him, and he was also known to the late Fred Fox. He was always referred to as "Darkie."

At the time of his death he was employed by Jack Scott at Letcombe, for whom his son, W. E. Myles, rides under National Hunt Rules.

# PRETTY POLLY



## Steps In Career Of An Amazing Filly

TOOK HONOURS EVEN IN DEFEAT

WITH the Arctic conditions prevailing throughout the country, there is little to occupy the time and mind of the ardent racegoer. However, the study of Turf history never palls, and now is a good time to recall the great ones of the past.

In 1902 Major Eustace Loder bred a filly by Gallinule out of Admiration and named her Pretty Polly.

The chief characteristics of this foal were particularly good shoulders, ample heart room, and immense power behind the saddle. From her earliest days Pretty Polly bore a marked personality, and soon became a favourite amongst those responsible for breaking her in and her early schooling.

### LOVEABLE FILLY

The filly possessed such endearing qualities that she occupied a place in the affections of all, in the same way that Brown Jack did in later years.

Pretty Polly's first appearance in public gave some indication of her future greatness, for she won the British Dominion T.Y.O. Plate at Sandown Park with the greatest of ease in a field of 10 runners.

After two furlongs Pretty Polly had such a commanding lead that the public thought there had been a false start, and the further they went the greater became her lead. She won in a canter from Vergia, with John o' Gaunt third.

It is true that Sir George Thursby eased John o' Gaunt at the end of the race, but not until he realised the position was hopeless, and he was unable to issue a challenge to the speedy filly.

### EIGHT VICTORIES

John o' Gaunt was third in the Derby of the following year, and later sired the great Swynford.

As a two-year-old Pretty Polly never tasted defeat, winning eight races and never being extended. She won the National Breeders Produce Stakes in a canter; the Mersey Stakes at Liverpool by 1½ lengths; the Champagne Stakes in a canter, with St. Amant, the following year's Derby winner, only third 3½ lengths behind; the Manchester Autumn Breeders' Foal Stakes in a canter; the Cheveley Park Stakes in a canter; the Middle Park Plate with the greatest ease, with St. Amant 3 lengths behind her; the Criterion Stakes by 1½ lengths, and finally the Moulton Stakes by 2 lengths.

At two years Pretty Polly was burly in appearance, and some doubts were cast as to whether she would train on and fulfil her early promise.

### RECORD TIME

In the April of her three-year-old career she made her first appearance in the One Thousand Guineas, and it was apparent that she had filled out and made general improvement.

The race was never in doubt. She made hacks of her opponents, winning by three lengths in the then record time of 1min. 40sec.

The reputation of this magnificent filly had grown to such heights that the field for the Oaks cut up badly and only three other fillies opposed her. Their courage and, indeed, their presumption was to be admired, but none of them could make any impression on Pretty Polly, and she cantered home three lengths in front of her nearest rival, amid great jubilation from her immense public, who had turned up in their thousands to applaud her victory. The Coronation Stakes at Ascot did not trouble her, and she won in a canter by three lengths.

The season drew on to Goodwood, and Pretty Polly was entered for the Nassau Stakes, where she enhanced her reputation by winning this race by five lengths.

In the St. Leger, it was argued that one of the colts might lower her colours, but the story of the race need only be brief. Pretty Polly won in a canter by three lengths.

After the St. Leger of 1902 that other great filly Sceptre tried to win the Park Hill Stakes, and, where Sceptre failed, Pretty Polly succeeded, for she was never extended and won by three lengths.

Up to this time Pretty Polly had never been beaten, and, further, had never met an opponent capable of forcing her out of a canter. She had become the idol of the public, and was considered the greatest mare ever to have graced the Turf.





Fifteen victories were to her credit when it was decided to let her show herself to her Continental admirers. Consequently she was sent over to France to run in the Conseil Municipale, but her luck changed.

### FIRST DEFEAT

Owing to appalling weather she was delayed at Folkestone, then had a terrible crossing. Rain fell in torrents, and the going was hock deep.

Zinfandel and Macdonald II, the French champion three-year-olds, were considered her most dangerous opponents, and to a certain extent these calculations were right, for Pretty Polly was second, Zinfandel third, and Macdonald II fourth, all three being beaten easily by Presto II, against whom odds of 66 to 1 were obtainable.

Excuses offered for her defeat were that the going was extremely heavy and she had suffered a bad crossing, but the general opinion of contemporary writers was that she ought to have won.

D Maher, her jockey, thinking the outsider was bound to come back to him, allowed Presto II to retain a long lead, which Pretty Polly was unable to reduce when the crucial moment arrived.

### NOT AT HER BEST

According to the Calendar, though the weights carried are disputed, Pretty Polly was conceding 9lb to the winner and the saying that you can give weight away and you can give distance, but you cannot give both proved right.

However, Pretty Polly soon made amends for this defeat, for she won the Free Handicap with 9st 7lb in the saddle in a canter.

At four years Pretty Polly again beat Zinfandel in a canter in the Coronation Cup, and did the fastest time for the Epsom 1½ miles then recorded. To this victory she added the Champion Stakes, Limekiln Stakes and the Jockey Club Cup of 2 miles 3 furlongs, and retired at the end of the season with an unbeaten certificate.

At five years Pretty Polly won the March Stakes, the Coronation Cup for the second time, but met defeat for the second time in her career in the Ascot Gold Cup won by Bachelor's Button.

Whether on this fateful day Pretty Polly was at her best is open to discussion for she had a wart on her abdomen, which had to be lanced on the day of the race, and it was noticed that for the first time in her glorious career she was reluctant to leave the paddock.

She was defeated but not disgraced, for she only succumbed to Bachelor's Button by a length after a desperate race.

Thus ended the racing career of a great and loveable mare. Her reputation might have been even greater, for there can be no doubt that, had she been entered for the Two Thousand Guineas and the Derby she would have won them both.

Thus she would have stood out in bold relief as the only mare to win all the five classics—a feat yet to be accomplished.

G. L. F.

