

BLOODSTOCK WORLD

The seventh in a monthly series celebrating the achievements of ten breeders who have enjoyed outstanding success and played crucial roles in the development of the thoroughbred in the course of the last 200 years. This month's subject is **Edward Stanley, 17th Earl of Derby**, who bred a record 19 British Classic winners and was the leading breeder ten times

WHEN Edward Stanley, 17th Earl of Derby, died in 1948, the authoritative Bloodstock Breeders' Review commented: "Throughout the long history of the British Thoroughbred no single breeder has exercised more influence on the breed than the late earl."

That carefully worded tribute was well merited, reflecting the fact that Derby's impact was noticed not just in the extraordinary success he enjoyed on the racecourse with the products of his Stanley Stud, but also that among the colts he bred were several who became outstanding sires, duly recognised as staple ingredients of the breed.

It was the 12th earl who was instrumental in founding the Derby and the Oaks in the late 18th century, but his successors did not all share his enthusiasm for the Turf, the 15th earl professing complete indifference. But the 16th determined to re-establish the family stud, engaging George Lambton as his trainer and finding almost instant success with the Oaks victory of yearling purchase Canterbury Pilgrim in 1896. He won that Classic again ten years later with the Persimmon filly Keystone, and when he died in 1908 Canterbury Pilgrim had a yearling son by John o' Gaunt who would provide the 17th earl with his first great triumphs as an owner.

That colt was Swynford, whose victory in the St Leger provided the first of his 20 Classic victories as an owner and was the best horse in training as a four-year-old, when he added a win in the Eclipse Stakes.

Swynford was by no means the only important horse that Eddie Derby inherited. Keystone, Santa Brigida, Be Sure and Glasalt, who were all to make sterling contributions, featured among the broodmare band, and there was Chaucer, never a top-class runner, but a quality individual, who was afforded his chance as a stallion and who played a surprisingly significant role through his daughters.

Also inherited, and key influences on the development of the stud, were Lambton as trainer, Walter Alston as manager and pedigree guru, and John

A man whose colts became basis of the modern thoroughbred

TONY MORRIS'S BREEDING GREATS



Griffiths as stud groom.

There seemed to be considerable potential among the mares, but Lambton was conscious of a need for more speed and toughness, so Alston was charged with the task of recruiting stock who would impart those qualities. In 1911 Bromus was acquired for 3,200gns, in the following year Anchora for 1,300gns and Gondolette for 1,550gns. None of them had obvious credentials for success as a broodmare, but Alston had his reasons for liking their pedigrees and had strategies in mind as to how to mate them.

Bromus had won only one of her ten races and was the only winner out of her dam; her first two foals had run a total of 17 times without a single victory. But she was inbred 2 x 3 to Springfield, the fastest horse of his day. She was promptly booked to Polymelus and the outcome was Phalaris, who duly proved himself the fastest horse of his day, a great weight-carrier, and twice the top older horse in training. Better than that, he became twice champion sire and in due course was acknowledged as the most important sire of the 20th century.

Anchora was by no means

fashionably bred, but she had been tough enough to run 51 times over six seasons in training and had eight wins to her name. Her first mating was with Chaucer and the result was Scapa Flow, winner of three little races over a mile and a half as a three-year-old. Her term at stud began with a visit to Phalaris, then in his first season, and the result was Pharos, second in the Derby, winner of a Champion Stakes and, like his sire, twice the leading older horse. A repeat of that mating five years later yielded Fairway, who won the St Leger, an Eclipse and two editions of the Champion Stakes.

AND there was a sister, Fair Isle, successful in the 1,000 Guineas. Fairway was to become champion sire on four occasions, while Pharos also excelled as a stallion, most notably with two great unbeaten sons in Nearco and Pharis.

Gondolette was in foal to Minoru at the time of her acquisition, the outcome being Serenissima, who won a couple of little races as a three-year-old. More consequential winners at that age were two of her products by Swynford in Ferry, who won the

1,000 Guineas, and Sansovino, who became the first Derby winner in the Derby colours since Sir Peter Teazle scored for the 12th earl in 1787.

Serenissima became an exceptional broodmare. She delivered three notable runners by different sires, beginning with the Chaucer filly Selene, who won eight of her 11 races as a two-year-old, including the Cheveley Park Stakes, and repeated that feat in the following season, with the Nassau and Park Hill Stakes among her successes. Considered too small as a yearling to be worthy of Classic entries, she was nevertheless the best of her sex at three. Tranquil, Selene's year-younger half-sister by Swynford, was engaged in the Classics and she won two of them, the 1,000 Guineas and the St Leger, in which she comfortably beat Derby hero Papyrus. The best of Serenissima's sons was the Son-In-Law colt Bosworth, beaten a short head in the St Leger, but successful at four in the Gold Cup.

While Tranquil's stud career proved disappointing, Selene's was triumphant. Her first two foals were Sickle and Pharamond, high-class performers who underlined the efficacy of the Phalaris-Chaucer cross

and were later to enjoy great success at stud in America, but far more important was the mating with Gainsborough that resulted in Hyperion, who might be termed the crowning glory of the Stanley Stud.

Probably the best horse anyone had seen up to that point in the 20th century, Hyperion won the 1933 Derby and St Leger by wide margins before becoming an outstanding sire, six times champion at home and represented by successful sons at stud all over the world.

Phalaris, who gave Derby two other stars out of Chaucer mares in Colorado (2,000 Guineas, Eclipse Stakes) and Caerleon (Eclipse), died in 1931 and two other connections were severed two years later with the death of Walter Alston and the surprise sacking, in the wake of Hyperion's St Leger triumph, of Lambton. Things were never quite the same again, though there were plenty more notable successes, many with the products of Fairway and Hyperion.

Derby was leading breeder on ten occasions and leading owner on seven. He bred the winners of 19 British Classics and owned the winners of 20, equalling the record in both spheres. And what made those tallies so remarkable was that his broodmare band rarely exceeded 25, far fewer than rivals such as the Aga Khan and Marcel Boussac possessed. In his lifetime, Stanley Stud stallions headed the sires' list 13 times, and more titles accrued after his death.

Hyperion's last championship came in 1953, and the last two notable horses he bred, Alycidon and Mossborough, had turns at the top, in 1955 and 1958.

Nobody ever doubted that Derby owed an enormous amount to Alston, who was responsible for buying some of the key mares, and for many years devised the matings and managed the stallions, dealing with applications for their services. With the mares, Alston favoured inbreeding to influential ancestors and if he thought that a mating was right, he was content to repeat it, even if it did not achieve the desired result at first. His employer had every reason to trust his judgement.

NOTABLE HORSES BRED BY THE 17TH EARL OF DERBY

- ▶▶br c **Phalaris** (1913, Polymelus – Bromus, by Sainfoin). Champion older horse at 4 and 5.
- ▶▶b f **Canyon** (1913, Chaucer – Glasalt, by Isinglass). 1,000 Guineas.
- ▶▶b f **Ferry** (1915, Swynford – Gondolette, by Loved One). 1,000 Guineas.
- ▶▶br f **Keysoe** (1916, Swynford – Keystone, by Persimmon). Champion 3-y-o filly; St Leger S.
- ▶▶b f **Selene** (1919, Chaucer – Serenissima, by Minoru). Champion 3-y-o filly.
- ▶▶b c **Pharos** (1920, Phalaris – Scapa Flow, by Chaucer). Champion older horse at 4 and 5; Champion S.
- ▶▶b f **Tranquil** (1920, Swynford – Serenissima, by Minoru). Champion 3-y-o filly. 1,000 Guineas, St Leger.
- ▶▶b c **Sansovino** (1921, Swynford – Gondolette, by Loved One). Derby.

- ▶▶b c **Colorado** (1923, Phalaris – Canyon, by Chaucer). Best horse of the year at 4; 2,000 Guineas, Eclipse.
- ▶▶br c **Sickle** (1924, Phalaris – Selene, by Chaucer). Prince of Wales's.
- ▶▶br c **Fairway** (1925, Phalaris – Scapa Flow, by Chaucer). Champion 2-y-o, best horse of the year at 3 and 4. St Leger, Eclipse S. [twice], Champion S.
- ▶▶b c **Pharamond** (1925, Phalaris – Selene, by Chaucer). Middle Park S.
- ▶▶b f **Toboggan** (1925, Hurry On – Glacier, by St Simon). Champion 3-y-o filly; Oaks S.
- ▶▶br c **Bosworth** (1926, Son-In-Law – Serenissima, by Minoru). Best horse of the year at 4; Gold Cup.
- ▶▶br c **Caerleon** (1927, Phalaris –



The Earl of Derby leads in Hyperion after the colt's success in the 1933 Derby

- Canyon, by Chaucer). Eclipse S.
- ▶▶br f **Fair Isle** (1927, Phalaris – Scapa Flow, by Chaucer). Champion 2-y-o filly; 1,000 Guineas.
- ▶▶ch c **Hyperion** (1930, Gainsborough – Selene, by Chaucer). Best horse of the year at 3; Derby S., St Leger S.
- ▶▶b c **Plassy** (1932, Bosworth – Pladda, by Phalaris). Coronation Cup.
- ▶▶br f **The Nile** (1932, Pharos – Pyramid, by Papyrus). Poule d'Essai des Pouliches.
- ▶▶br f **Tide-way** (1933, Fairway – Drift, by Swynford). 1,000 Guineas.
- ▶▶br c **Fair Copy** (1934, Fairway – Composure, by Buchan). Middle Park S.
- ▶▶br c **Heliopolis** (1936,

Hyperion – Drift, by Swynford). Imperial Produce S.

- ▶▶b c **Watling Street** (1939, Fairway – Ranai, by Rabelais). Derby.
- ▶▶b f **Herringbone** (1940, King Salmon – Schiaparelli, by Schiavoni). Champion 3-year-old filly; 1,000 Guineas, St Leger S.
- ▶▶b f **Garden Path** (1941, Fairway – Ranai, by Rabelais). 2,000 Guineas.
- ▶▶ch f **Sun Stream** (1942, Hyperion – Drift, by Swynford). Champion filly at 2 and 3; 1,000 Guineas, Oaks S.
- ▶▶b c **Gulf Stream** (1943, Hyperion – Tide-way, by Fairway). Champion 2-y-o; Eclipse S.
- ▶▶ch c **Alycidon** (1945, Donatello – Aurora, by Hyperion). Best horse of the year at 4; Gold Cup.
- ▶▶ch c **Mossborough** (1947, Nearco – All Moonshine, by Bobsleigh). Churchill S.