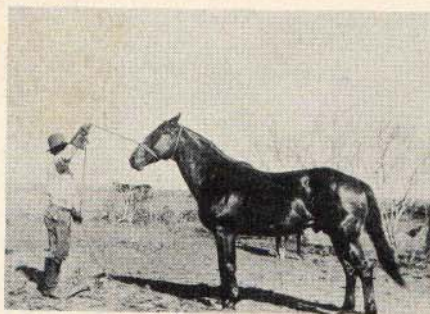


Many men have had pictures painted of prized horses. But few have ever been so loyal that they wore the pictures on their backs. And seldom has any man expressed that much sentiment for a horse which died 23 years ago. I guess that comes as near to paying personal tribute as you could.

The little man sat on the veranda of the Eagle Hotel at Eagle Pass, Tex., which is smack-dab on the Rio Grande. He wore the regulation garb of cow country folks, with one important exception—a fringed leather jacket on the back of which was painted the picture of a horse and the words "Little Joe."

The man's name is Ott Adams and he's known throughout the Southwest as the grandpappy of Quarter Horse



• Ott Adams and his famous stallion Little Joe, which sired such outstanding racers as Zantanon, known as the Mexican Man O' War.

breeders. He is 84 years old and lives on the Tecolotte Ranch where he was born. Tecolotte is Spanish for "owl," and Ott's father settled on the ranch in 1868, using the R 4 brand on his cattle.

Ott Adams has been out of Texas only once, when he attended a horse race at Tucson in 1947. In fact he had never seen a mountain until he made that trip. But he has seen some of the best horses ever raised in the Southwest, and he bred quite a batch of them himself.

"I believe in breeding horses that'll bring home the bacon," Ott told me. "And there's only one way to get the job done. You've got to breed speed to speed."

In other words, having a stallion with speedy bloodlines isn't enough, according to Ott. It takes a mare with the right breeding as well.

"They used to say that my stud Little Joe could be bred to a packin' crate and get a colt that would be a winner," Ott said with a twinkle in his eyes, "but that just isn't so. It wasn't the way I got Joe Moore, one of the best that ever lived. He inherited part of his greatness from his mammy, the good mare Della Moore."

Getting back to Little Joe, Ott said: "He was just about the best producer of speed horses in the state of Texas. I believe he contributed more to Quarter Horse breeding than any sire of his time."

According to the records, Little Joe, which was by the immortal Traveler, was foaled at Alfred, Tex., on the Shely Ranch in 1904. Three years later he was sold to George Clegg of Alice, Tex., who trained and raced him with considerable success until 1911 when he went to the breeding farm of Ott Adams. There he was bred to Della Moore (by Old D. J.), a mare that had literally burned up the Texas quarter tracks. The result of this mating was a colt named Joe Moore, which was sold as a yearling to a man named Rogers, and; oddly enough, was never raced. By the time Ott Adams bought him back he considered Joe Moore too

old for racing, and used him as a sire.

"Joe Moore proved my theory," Ott pointed out. "He was the product of breeding speed to speed. He had it on both sides, and he passed it on, siring such fast get as Stella Moore, Ben Jay, Johnny Moore, Boogier Red and many others."

Stella Moore, owned by Q. I. Roberts of Palatka, Fla., and nationally famous for her speed, was out of Canova which was by Chicaro's Bill who in turn was out of Verna Grace by Little Joe. Thus Stella Moore has two crosses to Little Joe.

"She's positive proof of what I say about breeding speed to speed," Ott said with the quiet conviction of a man relating an established fact. "You've got to keep in mind that one bad cross can take speed out, but it takes up to seven crosses to breed speed back in."

Then he added, not bragging nor boastful but sort of proud, "Most of the fastest horses have Joe blood in em — the blood that goes back to Traveler and Sykes Rondo, such fast ones as Blue Eyes, Nettie Harris and Mamie Sykes."

Ott raised Ada Jones (by Little Joe out of Mamie Crowder), whose granddaughter, Miss Princess, met the best in the west and beat them.

Although he well remembers the year of the Big Die, 1901-1902, when cattle and horses died like flies because of the drouth in Texas, Ott doesn't have to worry about dry weather these days. A wild-catter discovered oil on his ranch a few years ago and the wells keep on producing their oil crop, come rain or shine.

"One nice thing about oil wells is that you don't have to feed 'em cotton seed cake during a big dry," Ott reflected. "It sure has changed things considerably in my part of the country."

But you can tell by looking at him that Quarter Horses are what he sets real store by. He isn't wearing a picture of a derrick on the back of his leather jacket.

It's a picture of a horse.

Ott Adams appears fourth on the recent AQHA list of leading breeders through 1951 according to the number of AA qualifiers in the Register of Merit, with six out of a total of 9 head.

Martini Girl won the get-away Quarter Horse allowance at La Mesa Park, with Barjo second and Polleo third. Owned by F & G Bracco of Trinidad, Colo., the winner was clocked in 20.7 for the 400 yards.

Total mutuel play for the 22-day meet at Raton was \$2,684,666. G. Crowell led the short hoss jockeys with