



ABBEY

BY JOY POOLE (OAM)



Theo Hill on ABDUL winner of the Warwick Gold Cup

Theo remembers clearly the first time he saw ABBEY being ridden, "It was on his second ride out. Bonnie and I were on our way to town from Comara and came across Harry with a mob of cattle; the dogs were holding the cattle while Harry tried to get on the colt who kept stepping away from him. I held ABBEY while Harry mounted. That day ABBEY was just another black horse, but after he won at Taree people started to talk about him."

Harry was so anxious to get ABBEY started that he broke him in at 16 months of age.

Jack Hope, friend and contemporary of Harry also remembers ABBEY's breaking in. "Harry was 10 miles further back from me, up the river. I knew he was breaking in the black colt, he wasn't much more than a foal. He rang me one day and said, 'Come on up, there's something I want you to see.' I asked what it was but Harry just said, 'Come on up.' I finished what I was doing and went up to Harry's. ABBEY was tied up. I knew he'd been breaking him in less than a week. There were some Angus heifers in the paddock and Harry said, 'Get on that horse and cut one of those heifers out.' I said to Harry you must be dreaming man.

'No, do as I ask,' said Harry.

I cut one out, it was a shooting, darting heifer. As it dashed and changed directions, ABBEY followed that beast like a fully trained horse. He swapped legs to follow it whichever way it darted."

ABBEY won his first campdraft at Taree at 22 months of age.

During the time Harry campdrafted ABBEY he was reluctant to take mares to him but when he moved to Theo and Bonnie Hill's, he became a full time sire. Here he went from a champion performer to champion sire.

In February 2002, no less than 19,264 horses in the ASH Studbook trace back to this amazing sire, ABBEY. To put this in perspective, the next Foundation Sire to him, the outstanding REALITY, at the same time, February 2002, had 6,367 descendants.

Jack Hope remembers, "Harry's father, Hilton Ball, had been killed campdrafting. He had taken a fall at Taylors Arm, broken his arm - gangrene set in and he died. Harry's mother didn't want Harry to follow this same course, so shifted to Sydney where he was apprenticed as a baker. This didn't last and it wasn't long before Harry returned to the Macleay River and a small dairy farm."

"Harry always wanted to breed a campdrafter. 'I know where I can get the stallion,' said Harry, referring to a stallion called

Radiant that his uncle, Charlie Ball, had won a lot of campdrafts on. I actually got Radiant to compete on when he was 17 years of age." Jack Hope won campdrafts on Radiant and particularly remembers a time he took him to Glen Innes.

"I had him in a stall at Glen Innes and I went round fairly early on the morning of the campdraft to take him for a ride. When I got on, for the one and only time while I had him he tried to buck. It frightened me! I thought if he does that when I go on the camp I won't ride him. Radiant was a very good horse but that day, when I rode onto the camp, he was watching like he'd never watched before. After the first round we were leading with a score of 89, three points clear of the field. In the draw for the second round I came out No 1. I scored 90. As I rode past the timekeeper, he said he had clocked me at twenty seconds - the fastest he had ever clocked. I sat in the stand laughing, watching the rest of the runs as I knew there was nothing anyone could do to beat me."

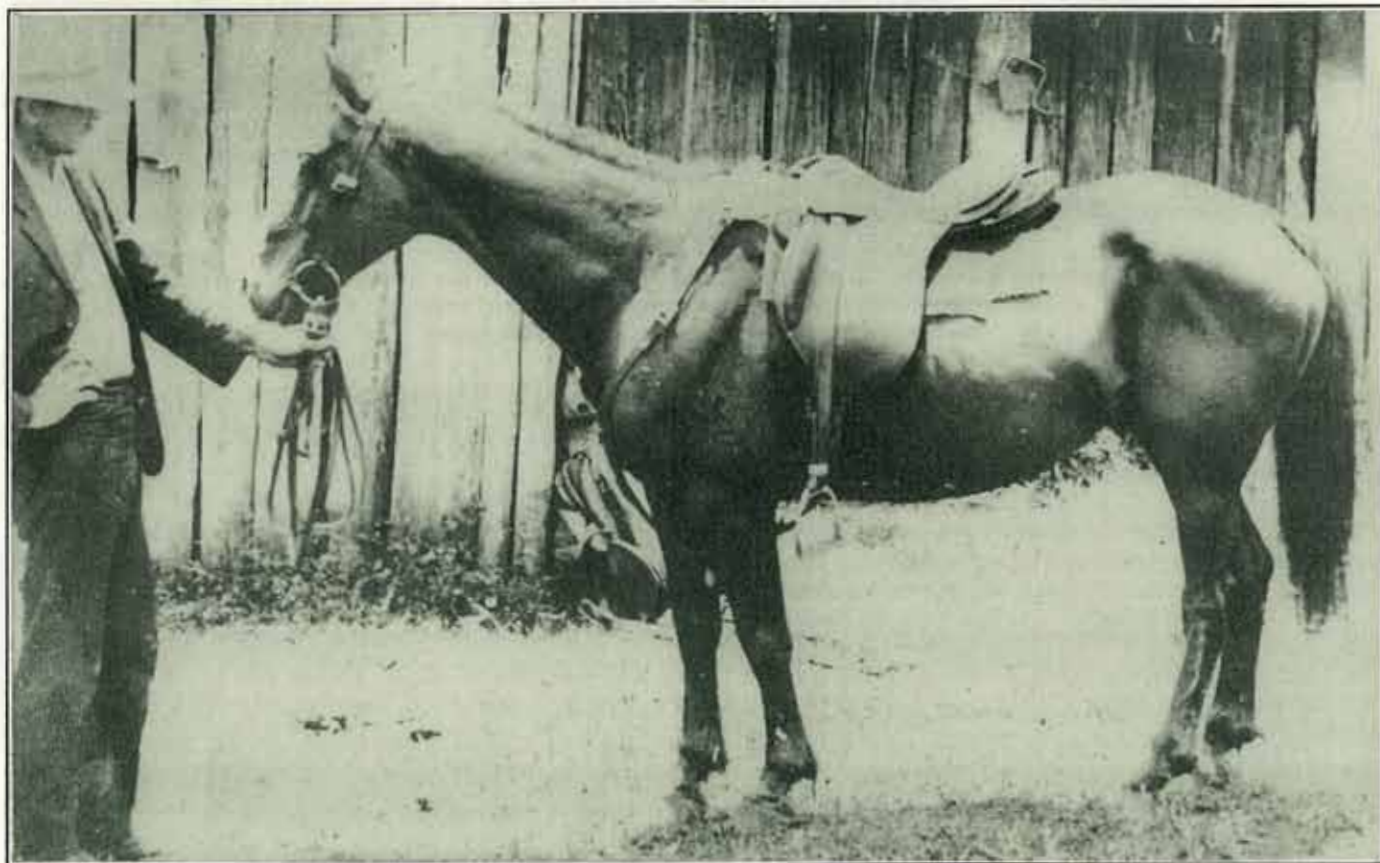
So, ABBEY was by a very good horse in Radiant, and the breeding of Radiant was the result of the knowledge of a very astute breeder called Roy Harwood who lived at Nabiac.

Jack continues his story, "There was a cattleman from Kempsey called Victor Farrell who was over at a Gloucester cattle sale one day and saw a man riding a young horse. This horse was bought by Victor and was known as Radium III; he was a full brother to Radiant. This made Charlie Ball keen to get Radiant when he saw this horse. Roy Harwood was incredible at picking Thoroughbred mares from which to breed stallions. He picked Lady Squires as the mare to put to Radium II to breed Radiant and Radium III.

It wasn't a fluke, as later on I went with him to a Scone Thoroughbred Sale when he was looking for another Thoroughbred mare to put to Radiant, to breed another stallion. I remember it well - everywhere you looked there were beautiful mares and foals but Roy had his mind fixed on this one mare, Interrogate. He said to me, 'What do you think of her?' I like her I said but there are beautiful mares everywhere. He bought the mare and brought her home and put her to Radiant but our first foal was a filly. Unfortunately Radiant died before we could



Herb O'Neill on Radium



Cecil - ABBEY has four lines back to Cecil and very likely a fifth through a Cooplacurripa Station Mare

breed to this mare again, so Roy put her to another Radium bred stallion, Wisemantles Ken Radium, the resultant foal was the stallion, INTERVIEW, one of the greatest campdrafters ever seen on the NSW North Coast. Roy Harwood had an incredible knack of breeding champions.

ABBEY's pedigree is just so solid with outstanding horses. Radiant was by Radium II and Jack Hope continues, "Radium II was a champion horse for Glen Wisemantle of Gloucester; as a matter of fact, I don't think there was much between Radium and Radium II."

Of course both these horses are coming from the greatest ASH Taproot family of all, Cecil. It is interesting to note some links in ABBEY's pedigree with Cooplacurripa Station.

Cecil spent some of his stud career at Cooplacurripa Station and in an interview with The Stockwhip Magazine in 1976 the late Ken McKay of Cangon, Dungog said, "When I first went up to Cooplacurripa Station in 1931 there were upwards of 30 station horses there by Cecil and the youngest would have been 7 years old. They were all good sized horses from 15 hands to an odd one at 15.2, all very good types. The Manager then, the Late Robert Wilson, gave me two to bring home to Dungog."

Radium II was by Radium who was by Cecil. Radium II was out of Molly who was by Zaraff out of an Eclipse Mare. Eclipse was bred at Cooplacurripa and was by Cecil out of a Thoroughbred mare, Mossrose, whose exact breeding was lost. Ken McKay in the same interview said, "Eclipse was used as a sire first at Cangon, after he was sent down to me in 1933 and for some years after, but I eventually sent him back to Cooplacurripa where I considered he belonged. He was a very good sort, but only 14.3 hands high, very thick and muscly, and won many prizes in the showing and once the champion Thoroughbred stallion. I had many good rides on him. He was a very great little horse!"

On the dam's side of ABBEY, Joys Pal was once again by Radium II out of a Cooplacurripa Station Mare. This gives ABBEY four lines back to Cecil and very likely a fifth through the Cooplacurripa Station Mare.

Joys Pal was named after Joy Flood, the publican's wife at Willawarrin, Hugh Flood, who owned Joys Pal. Harry Ball rode and

had great success with Joys Pal, winning campdrafts on her and was very pleased when he was able to borrow her to breed his foal.

ABBEY was certainly no fluke. His pedigree is filled with star studded horses. He was deliberately line bred back to Cecil.

Jack Hope recalls, "The last time I rode out with Harry he was on ABBEY and I was on a young INTERVIEW. I showed Harry what he could do. I grabbed a young heifer and spun her around one way then changed over and took her around the other way. Harry laughed, 'He won't be a maiden long!'

Unfortunately Harry was killed not long after that. I started to campdraft INTERVIEW and my first wins were at Gladstone. I won the Maiden, Novice and Open on the one day. My only regret was the Open was The Harry Ball Memorial.

I am probably the only person to have ridden Radiant, ABBEY and INTERVIEW."

Just as ABBEY was the product of champions, he continued by producing an endless string of champions. In 1982 when a tribute was written to ABBEY in the ASH Magazine on his death the following progeny with their performances were mentioned to that time - PALMERS ABELENE winner of 28 campdrafts including the World Championship at Sydney 1973 and 1975 and the Melbourne Show Campdraft 1974-1975, JERICHO winner of 32 open campdrafts including the 1978 ABCRA Australian Championship at Warren, ABDUL winner of 35 campdrafts including the Warwick Gold Cup in 1973 and the World Championship Campdraft 1972 and 1974. BLUE MOON MYSTIC multi campdraft winner including the Warwick Gold Cup and TOP GUY also winner of the Warwick Gold Cup. In 1981 10% of horses entered in the Gold Cup were by ABBEY.

But these are only the tip of the iceberg. With 252 registered progeny a run through these horses is like a Who's Who of Australian Stock Horses. Names like SCRUMLO VICTORY, ROSEBROOK ABOU, LITTLE ABBEY, JACK, all the wonderful Comara Horses, BROWN HIGHWAY and BROWN MY WAY and far too many champions to list are there for all to see.

Perhaps the fact that he was the product himself of so many champions that he had the genetic makeup to pass this greatness on to his descendants. *A.*