

Cover of catalogue designed by John Hutchinson of William Inglis & Son Pty Ltd in 'Wootton Colours'

## S T Wootton Dispersal Sale 1987

'End of an era' is probably an overworked cliché. However I think it's more like an understatement in the case of the final dispersal of Stanley Wootton's bloodstock on 26<sup>th</sup> April 26<sup>th</sup> 1987. It could be appropriate that it was the day after ANZAC day? Coincidentally it's also my wedding anniversary!

The sale was 'embedded' in the Easter Broodmare Sale beginning after Lot 70 in the general catalogue. Twelve mares, three weanlings, seven racehorse fillies and five racehorse colts made up the offering. Six year old mare 'Tobina' in foal to three times champion sire 'Bletchingly, also bred by Mr Wootton, topped the sale at \$200,000:00. Lot 80 'Risca' (Vibrant/Magic Symbol, dam of Biscay) made \$85,000:00 in foal to a very late service to Vain.

'Risca' was the biggest foal I ever saw in my whole professional career. She actually caused a condition known as 'obturator paralysis' in her dam Magic Symbol who was a very big mare indeed and had delivered many foals. 'Risca' had to have a veterinary assisted birth (me) due to 'hiplock'. Both of these clinical conditions are rare in thoroughbreds (and horses in general) although quite commonplace in some breeds of cattle. Magic Symbol finally regained her feet after about 48 hours' recumbency. It was a great relief to all concerned at Bhima Stud where special care had enabled her recovery. It heralded the end of Magic Symbol's breeding life.

In all the twelve mares grossed \$684,000:00 at an average of \$57,000:00. The 'crazy eighties' were inflationary times in a very heated market in the thoroughbred world.

The list of covering stallions was also a firm indicator: Biscay, Bletchingly, Dalmacia, Keen, Lunchtime, Red Anchor, Rutland, Salieri, Tolomeo, Vain and What A Guest.

Having included an encomium to George Ryder it is only fitting and fair that I incorporate a tribute to Stanley Wootton (STW) as well. With G E Ryder I believe STW was the other most significant figure in the evolution of racing and breeding thoroughbreds in Australia and NSW in particular encompassing the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The story of the Wootton family is a legend in itself. As Bob Charley rightly points out it was actually jockey Frank Wootton who was the inchoate superstar. All this is well documented in Bill Eacott's: *'The Wootton Family - Australia to Epsom'* cited by admirable SMH journalist Max Presnell below. Max would know best. His family ran the Doncaster Hotel, Anzac Parade on behalf of the Wootton family for more than a generation.

I was fortunate to have met Stanley Wootton although I can barely claim I knew him well. He was most astute. He actually had a profound effect on both my personal and professional life. I still retain a letter I received dated 14<sup>th</sup> October 1974 from his home at Treadwell House, Epsom Surrey, England. In the letter he thanked me for my congratulations on 'Bletchingly's win recently: ***'This is a very nice horse and I believe will make a good sire one day'***. He did! 'Bletchingly' (Biscay ex Coogee Am.) became a champion sire three times based at Widden Stud. On the strength of STW's recommendation I bought a share. I had to borrow the money from a non-drinking, non-smoking, non-gambling Methodist lay-preaching Bank Manager; 'with a name like a Trotter' according to John Kelso. The rest as they say in the classics is history. Interestingly 'Bletchingly' was the only champion sire actually bred. He will forever be associated with importation of his grandsire Star Kingdom.

**Wootton, Stanley Thomas (Stan) (1895–1986) by J. A. Ryan**

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See: [Biography - Stanley Thomas \(Stan\) Wootton - Australian Dictionary of Biography \(anu.edu.au\)](http://biography.anu.edu.au/StanleyThomasWootton)

WOOTTON FAMILY: Richard Rawson (1867-1946), horse-trainer, Francis Leonard (1893-1940), jockey, and Stanley Thomas (1895-1986), horse-trainer, were father and sons. Richard was born on 31 March 1867 at Taree, New South Wales, second of ten children of William Wootton, bootmaker, and his wife Jane, née Rawson, from New York. William, whose parents had been convicts, became a hotelier at Taree, an alderman and a dairy farmer; he also trained some horses. Dick began his career on local tracks and at 19 won the Manning River Cup with Bay Fly. He moved to Sydney as an owner and trainer and lived at Forest Lodge. On 19 December 1893 at St Andrew's Cathedral he married with Anglican rites 19-year-old Catherine Gertrude Johnson, a blacksmith's daughter.

On the pony tracks and proprietary courses in Sydney Dick Wootton soon won repute as a trainer and punter. His eldest son Frank was born on 14 December 1893 at Glebe; Stanley was born on 26 June 1895 at Surry Hills. In 1902 Dick won the Australian Jockey Club's Metropolitan Handicap at Randwick with Queen of Sheba. The boys had a miserable childhood as their father, determined that they should become jockeys, reputedly did not permit them to have a decent meal. Frank rode track work and training gallops and at the age of 9 was thought by his father to be ready to race; but the A.J.C.'s minimum age for a registered jockey was 14. Dick moved his family and a string of horses to South Africa, where this age limit did not apply.

Settling in the Transvaal, Wootton trained at Germanston racecourse. Frank won his first race in October 1903 and left school; by 1906 his tally was seventeen. That year the Woottons returned to Sydney, where Dick quickly re-established himself by winning the 1906 Tattersall's Club Cup with Fabric. Frustrated by the wait for Frank's licence to ride, within six months the family departed for England. Dick acquired a training establishment at Treadwell House, Epsom, Surrey, but maintained his links with Australia—he brought over a kangaroo and an emu. Kate died giving birth to their fifth child in 1909.

Wootton's training methods, use of lightweight and apprenticed jockeys and careful placement of runners attracted owners such as (Sir) Edward Hulton who brought in superior horses. Beginning in 1906 with fourteen winners, in 1913 Wootton topped the English trainers' premiership with sixty-six, and expanded his training establishment at Epsom. The English Derby, however, always eluded him: in 1913 his horse Shogun, with Frank up, was checked in one of the wildest Derbys on record. Wootton had a reputation for punting plunges and well-planned coups. When accused of fixing races by the bookmaker Robert Sievier in his publication *Winning Post*, Wootton issued a pamphlet attacking Sievier, who unsuccessfully sued him for libel. The litigation continued, however.

Frank's riding technique and experience led, in 1909, to his becoming the first Australian to top the English jockey's premiership, with a tally of 165. Known as the 'Wonderboy', he also headed the jockeys' list in 1910-12 and won many classic races, riding on a retainer for wealthy owners such as Hulton and Lord Derby. Frank rode seven winners at the St Leger meeting at Doncaster in 1908 and at Ascot week in 1912, and ten at the Goodwood carnival in 1911. Increasing weight reduced his opportunities, however, and he had effectively retired by his visit to Sydney in January 1914.

Stanley, more interested in stable management, soon also surrendered his jockey's licence. With reduced racing in Britain during World War I, Dick continued training at Treadwell House. Frank enlisted in the army, served in Palestine and Mesopotamia and was mentioned in dispatches.

Lieutenant Stanley Wootton joined the 17th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers. On the night of 7 July 1916 he won the Military Cross for rescuing a fellow officer during the Battle of the Somme, France.

When his sons returned from the war, Dick left Treadwell House in their hands and by 1921 had returned to Sydney. He established R. Wootton Pty Ltd, hotel and picture theatre proprietors and property owners; his holdings included the Doncaster Hotel, Randwick, and the Doncaster and Vocalist theatres, and residential real estate at Kensington, Randwick and in the city. Wootton also bought a property, Kicatoo, at Condoblin, and developed his interest in breeding. Now wealthy, he raced his horses for recreation; his Zuleika won the Villiers Stakes at Randwick in 1927. He was appointed a judge of thoroughbred entries at the Sydney Royal Show. On 2 February 1931 at St Jude's Church of England, Randwick, he married Frances Young.

Having first won a jumping event while serving in Baghdad after his war service, Frank began a new career as a National Hunt Club jockey and trainer. Riding at 12 stone (76 kg), he retained his balanced riding technique and judgement and in 1921 won the Imperial Hunt Club Cup on Noce d'Argent, trained by Stanley. He was known for his dashing style and the risks he took. Back in Sydney from 1933, he suffered ill health, perhaps partly due to serious falls and to the exacting regime and weight wasting of his youth. He had not married. On 6 April 1940 at Central Police Court, Sydney, he was convicted of drunkenness. Later that day he died in Long Bay gaol of traumatic epilepsy and was buried with Catholic rites in Botany cemetery.

Dick died on 26 June 1946 at Randwick and was buried in the Anglican cemetery there. His wife and their three daughters survived him, as did two sons and two daughters of his first marriage.

Stan maintained a strict establishment at Epsom and remained a successful trainer of horses and jockeys until 1962. He had married Kathleen Griffiths on 15 January 1938 at St Joseph's Catholic Church, Epsom. They separated during World War II. One of the wealthiest and most powerful turf figures in England, Stan Wootton made frequent visits to Australia. From the mid-1950s he was notable as a breeder and owner in New South Wales; he invested in stud properties and sent out selected horses including the famous sire Star Kingdom, who stood at Baramul stud and produced a notable thoroughbred bloodline in Australia; his progeny included the stallions Todman, Biscay and Bletchingly, the Derby winners Sky High and Sky Line and the first five winners of the Sydney Turf Club's Golden Slipper Stakes. In Sydney, Wootton's wins as the owner included the Golden Slipper with Todman in 1957 and the Australian Jockey Club's Epsom Handicap with Noholme in 1959.

Stan Wootton died on 21 March 1986 at Epsom, England, and was buried in the cemetery there. His wife and their daughter Catherine Remond, a successful thoroughbred breeder in Australia, survived him.

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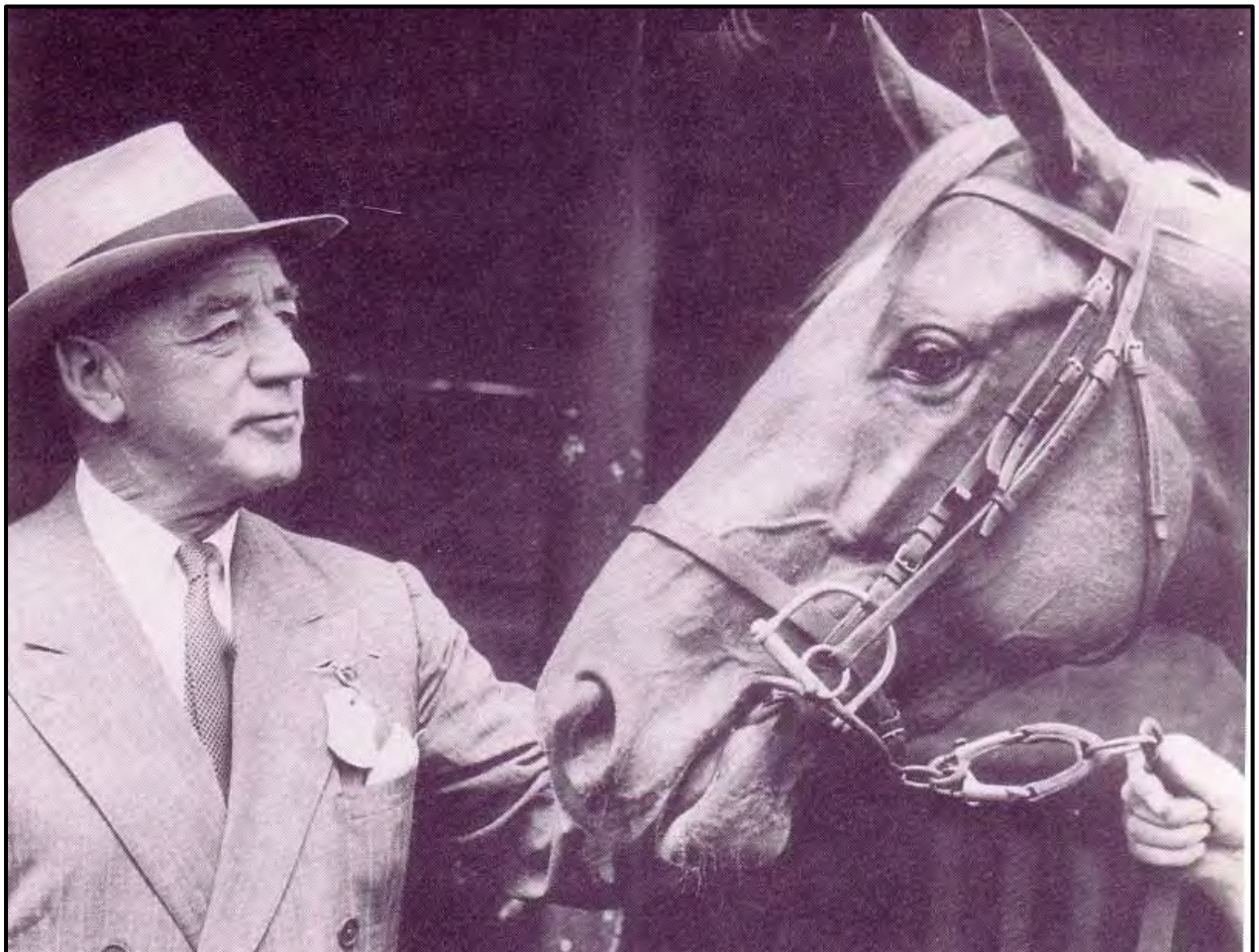
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“Gentleman of the Turf” by Max Presnell

I will leave the soliloquy on STW to the erudite Max Presnell. The image accompanying this vignette says it all: *Gentleman of the turf ... Stanley Wootton with ‘Todman’ left his mark on the Australian racing scene.*



Stanley Wootton and Todman at ‘Baramul’

*“Gentleman of the turf ... Stanley Wootton with ‘Todman’ left his mark on the Australian racing scene”.*

Photo: Acknowledge ‘The Thoroughbred Press’; Peter Pring “The Star Kingdom Story”

<http://www.smh.com.au/sport/horseracing/wootton-was-a-class-apart-20110618-1g8z8.html>

The straight left was delivered with purpose and accuracy by Stanley Wootton, one of the great gentlemen of the Australian or any other turf, and the target fell back onto his chair. Wootton adjusted his cuffs and excused him: "He is either drunk or mad."

It had been a good lunch until Frank Wootton wanted to check the authenticity of a guest, nicknamed "The Boxer". Now you don't get a tag like that for being a butterfly fancier but Wootton, mad, bad and dangerous, called him outside. Brother Stanley took a hand and The Boxer, fortunately, remained in his corner.

With Royal Ascot just completed the question can be asked: who was the best Australian jockey to ride there? Scobie Breasley quickly comes to mind, but some might say George Moore, Togo Johnston or Edgar Britt.

However, the feats of Frank Wootton, a genius on horseback, dwarfed them. In 1912 he rode seven winners at the Royal Ascot meeting. Alas, at ground level he fell well short of his brother Stanley. Never were two brothers so unlike. Stanley was given the accolade of having "his father's brains and a bit more". By this time the patriarch, Richard, owned half of Kensington alongside Randwick racecourse with the Doncaster Hotel the jewel in the Australian crown, but this wealth was overwhelmed by the family's British holdings, including Epsom Downs where they received fees for every horse trained there. The punt, too, was a strong contributor to the fortune.

Stanley, a big contributor to Australian racing by importing the great stallion Star Kingdom, was regarded as one of the most wealthy and influential on the British turf but had outgrown the saddle early. Frank, though, born and groomed for greatness by his father, was a wild child who never grew up.

According to Bill Eacott's *The Wootton Family - Australia To Epsom* Frank was not permitted a decent meal in his youth for fear of putting on weight. Frank was taken to South Africa by his father at the age of eight, rode his first winner at nine when Richard planned a first-up killing with Centurion in the 1903 Goldfields Cup at Johannesburg. Frank was nine years and 10 months and Dick secured a special amateur's licence for him to ride.

Bookies put up 50/1. On the day, the trainer picked up Frank from school to land the plunge. Frank was regarded as the youngest jockey in the world to ride a winner at a registered race meeting.

But his father was constantly seeking new horizons and Richard took 12-year-old Frank and the family to Great Britain with the plan to make him the best jockey in the world. Frank, only 14 when he won the Cesarewitch on Demure, was advised to model his style on the American Danny Maher. In 1912 he came in second to Maher in the jockeys' premiership with 129 winners but blitzed him the following season to take the title with 165.

The Wootton boys were getting homesick, so a kangaroo was imported to the family property, Treadwell House, on Epsom Downs, and Frank played on the British public's infatuation with his background.

"I keep a kangaroo in the garden and spar three rounds with it every morning before riding out," he quipped. By 16 he was earning more money than a British cabinet minister. Frank was the champion jockey in four successive seasons and only four others, Steve Donoghue, Sir Gordon Richards, Lester Piggott and Pat Eddery, were able to achieve the feat. However, he did it before he was 20. By 1913 Frank was losing a battle against increasing weight, yet at the end of his flat career he had 4000 rides for 912 successes and was placed at more than 50 per cent of his engagements.

Apart from his weight problems, Frank's career was limited due to regular suspensions; the opposition constantly wailed: "Wootton knocked me down."

Folklore has it that a rival made the bleat to a trainer only to be told: "That would be difficult because he's not here today. He just rode two winners for Lord Derby at Ripon."

During World War I, Frank followed Stanley into service and joined the Anzac forces in the Middle East, receiving a mention in dispatches. On his return, Frank took out a licence to ride as a National Hunt jockey. In five years he rode almost 200 winners, mainly over hurdles. In 1921 he was champion National Hunt jockey, the only rider in turf history to be champion under both codes. He later trained more than 200 National Hunt winners until 1932.

Gradually, Frank's behaviour became more unruly. He would go out for a drink and not return for days. The family wanted him in Australia to dry out. He boarded the boat at Southampton, but a week later was back in London at his regular haunts. Finally he was taken home. He died in Sydney on April 4, 1940.

The constant wasting, nasty falls and the booze had taken their toll far more than Stanley's straight left.

Stanley Wootton by Bill Eacott

Stanley Thomas Wootton M.C. (1895–1986)  
Epsom Racehorse Trainer



*Stanley Wootton*  
*Image courtesy of Bourne Hall Museum*

The text for this page has been reproduced from the book:

***RACEHORSE TRAINING AT EPSOM***  
***Over 400 trainers, over 50 stables, over 300 big race winners.***

By

**BILL EACOTT**

ISBN 978-0-9548278-1-6

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Name	Address	Known Dates
WOOTTON, Stanley T.	Treadwell House	1915, 1917, 1919-1932
	Shifnal Cottage	1931-1941
	Treadwell House	1949-1959
	Shifnal Cottage	1960-1962



In a brief riding career, Stanley Wootton rode Elizabetta to win the Chester Cup (carrying 6st. 11lbs.), and the Northumberland Plate in 1910. He claimed to have ridden nearly four hundred winners in Britain, France, Belgium and Germany. However, with increasing weight, and with his brother breaking records as a jockey Stanley eased himself into the role of assistant to his father. With his brother Frank, Stanley returned to Australia in November 1913, returning to the U.K. the following April for the Flat racing season. He first took out a training licence in 1915, but his career was interrupted by the outbreak of war. Stanley Wootton took part in the Battle of the Somme, and stories of his wounds received at the front emerged.

Evening Post 13th July 1916:

*"Lt. Stanley Wootton of the 17th Royal Fusiliers has been wounded at the front."*

Numerous papers Auckland Star, Northern Advocate, Dominion, Evening Post 29 July 1916 reported that Stanley Wootton had subsequently died from wounds. Then, two days later,

Evening Post 31st July 1916:

*"Stanley Wootton Not Dead"*

*A cable message on the reported death of Stanley Wootton brought the following reply from his father: "Cannot understand the cable. Stanley awarded Military Cross. Home, convalescent."*

Stanley had been part of a four-man unit that undertook nocturnal raids behind enemy lines; he was awarded the Military Cross on 8th August 1916 by Queen Alexandra at Buckingham Palace. He was later en route to Palestine when the boat was sunk, in addition to the many men lost, five hundred horses drowned. He rescued the ship's ensign and brought it back to Epsom.

In 1919 Stanley Wootton returned to Treadwell House to continue training racehorses. He always bought his horses cheaply, and on three occasions between 1921 and 1926 he trained more winners in a season than any other trainer. He won several big handicaps including the Cambridgeshire, the Imperial Cup, and City and Suburban. By the mid-1920s Wootton had so many horses, (all owned by himself), that he expanded to use Shifnal Cottage as an additional stable. In 1928, he moved into Shifnal Cottage, he later stated that Treadwell House contained too many memories of his late mother and his sisters.

In 1924 Wootton was involved in a bizarre court case, when a man appeared in court, charged with stealing £105 by means of a trick, i.e. purporting to be Stanley Wootton. A man called Crowe met the victim Edward Moore near Marble Arch; he claimed to have "inside information" from "his friend Stanley Wootton". He later introduced the accused, James McMahon to Moore, who told him he was Stanley Wootton and that he had "something very good for Wednesday better than the last"; he was having £200 on it and asked Moore to give him £200 to place on it. In the event Moore could only raise £105; he went to Epsom saw the horse finish third, and saw the real Stanley Wootton unsaddling the horse. McMahon placated Moore by telling him he had something better coming up; they met the following week by which time Moore had finally realised that a trick was perpetrated; McMahon offered his watch and cigarette case in part settlement; after Moore attempted to detain McMahon he was assaulted. Another man called James Saunders had been a previous victim of the trickery. McMahon was convicted of impersonating Stanley Wootton to obtain money by deception, and sentenced to eighteen months imprisonment.

On 2nd March 1925, Stanley Wootton instructed his solicitors to write to the Epsom Grand Stand Association enquiring if they would be prepared to sell to him the training gallops on Six Mile Hill. The E.G.S.A. was in the process of buying Epsom Downs, and needed to sell the surplus land to raise finance. The negotiations, sometimes acrimonious, continued for fifteen months.

In June 1926 the E.G.S.A. wrote to all Epsom trainers to confirm that Stanley Wootton had taken over the Six Mile Hill gallops on Walton Downs. The purchase price was £35,000. At the same time Wootton took a lease on the Winter Gallops, i.e. those within the racecourse.

In 1926, Wootton announced that he was sending a team from England to the United States:

Evening Post 24th February 1926

*"Stanley Wootton, the well-known Anglo-Australian trainer, is sending several members of his huge team to America to race. "I am confident that I will get a fair chance. The American Authorities were splendid to me during my tour."*

In 1930 Stanley Wootton left Epsom to take a six-week holiday in Australia. Edwin de Mestre, formerly assistant to *Richard Wootton*, was rumoured to be taking over at Treadwell House. This story was dismissed by Stanley; *"I am merely going on an extended holiday and the stable will be taken over by brother Frank."*

Younger brother Richard, and sister Brenda accompanied Stanley Wootton. They arrived at Brisbane via Singapore. At a Press Conference, Wootton explained the difference in riding and training techniques in Britain and Australia. He opined that there were "too many racecourses in such a small country", and that consequently public facilities were surprisingly poor in Britain. Adding that there was no meeting in the world to compare to Ascot. He told the Press this was his first visit to Australia since 1913, and that he needed a break from the rigours of managing a large stable, plus his apprentices. When asked if he had the largest stable in Britain, Wootton replied, "I know of none larger."

On his return to Britain, Wootton gradually reduced the number of horses he had in training to concentrate on his expanding property interests. On 14th January 1938 he was appointed as a Justice of the Peace, serving on the bench at Epsom magistrate's court.

Auckland Star 22nd January 1938

*"Emperor of Epsom" Cuts Down Stable.*

*An Australian who settled in Surrey 30 years ago took up the training of racehorses and became known as the "Emperor of Epsom" was this week sworn in as a magistrate. Mr Stanley Wootton has announced his decision to cut down his stable to only a few horses.*

The Sydney Morning Herald 17th January 1938

*"In future I will have only a few horses and will devote myself to being a bad farmer and, I hope, a good honorary magistrate. I am more or less giving up racing."*

The Sydney Morning Herald, 17th January 1938 reported on Stanley Wootton's wedding to Kathleen Griffiths at St. Joseph's Church, Epsom;

*"It was a quiet wedding, only immediate family being present. Mr. Wootton's staff were not aware of the event."*

Stanley Wootton had proved to be the best tutor of jockeys in the 20th century. Although conditions were hard, and pay low, there was a waiting list of boys who wanted a place in Wootton's stable. The boys slept in dormitories above the stables, or three to a room at the house of a local landlady who reported to Mr Wootton on their behaviour. Competition was intense to get accepted for a place at Treadwell House, and Wootton favoured boys who had a brother who had already shown the right aptitude. The brothers Smyth, Dick, Cordell, Ingham, Smirke and Hunter passed through the system. (John Dick brother of David and Robert Dick, was killed in a riding accident on 16th September 1915, aged eleven)

In the financially depressed 1920s and 1930s, small boys from large families in the cities were eager to join the "Wootton Academy". The number of apprentice jockeys in the country was at its highest in the 1920s peaking at 234 in 1926. Philip Welch recalls in his book *Stable Rat* that he had an introduction to Wootton because his father knew Charlie Smirke's father. He recalled that Wootton inspected him feeling his bones to anticipate how big he would grow before declaring that there would be "ten boys in front of him", and recommending that they approach *Herbert Smyth*. Charlie Smirke was the most successful jockey to "graduate" from the stables. He rode four Derby winners, four St Leger winners, two 2,000 Guineas winners, and one 1,000 Guineas winner. In Ireland, he won the Oaks on four occasions, the Derby twice, the 2,000 Guineas twice and the 1,000 Guineas once. Wootton believed good jockeys needed to be tough and tenacious and staged impromptu boxing bouts to identify who had the right qualities. Other Wootton boys to ride Classic winners include *Vic Smyth* who won the 1923 Oaks, *Tommy Carey* who rode the 1943 Derby winner *Straight Deal*, *Bobby Dick* who won the 1936 2,000 Guineas, and Joe Marshall who won the 1929 Derby. When Zabara won the 1952 1,000 Guineas, both the jockey *Ken Gethin* and the trainer *Vic Smyth* had served an apprenticeship with Wootton. Under National Hunt rules Billy Stott and Frenchie Nicholson were both champion jockeys who started from Treadwell House. Stott achieved the Cheltenham double in 1933, and was champion National Hunt jockey for five successive seasons in the years 1927 to 1932. Frenchie Nicholson rode the Champion Hurdle winner in 1936 and the Gold Cup winner in 1942, and was champion National Hunt jockey in 1945. Another "graduate", Sean Magee, (the son of the Irish Rugby captain), rode the Champion Hurdle winner in 1940. Johnny Gilbert set a record by riding ten consecutive winners over a period of twenty-two days in September 1959; it was part of a sequence of sixteen wins from seventeen rides. He was later the first Chief Instructor at the British Racing School, and was awarded the M.B.E. for his services to racing.

Victor Smyth was Champion Apprentice in 1916 and 1917, Charlie Smirke in 1925 and 1926, and Leslie Cordell in 1928.

Jack Crouch, another star apprentice, was jockey to King George VI, but died in a plane crash. Alfie Sharples was killed in an accident in a race at Windsor.

*Staff Ingham, Jackie Sirett, Bobby Dick, Vic Smyth, Ken Gethin, Tommy Carey, Peter Ashworth, Dave Dick, William Smyth and Mick Haynes* were all former Wootton boys who later trained at Epsom. Frenchie Nicholson trained at Cheltenham, and like his mentor Stanley Wootton, was an exceptional tutor of jockeys. Freddie Hunter, John Hunter, and Alec Jack were other Wootton boys who became trainers.

Other jockeys trained by Wootton included Tommy Hawcroft, Arthur Wragg, Frank Field, "Monkey" Morris, Billy Turtle, Archie Smirke, Bernard Rook, Dick Broadway, Pat O'Leary, Dennis Savage, and Maurice Hunter. South African Terry Ryan was sent over to Wootton's at the age of twelve, having ridden sixty winners already. Stanley Wootton ruled his "academy" strictly. Breaches of discipline were dealt with by corporal punishment, or instant dismissal. Boys who showed promise, but a liking for Epsom's nightlife, were sent down to *Gil Bennett's* stables at Polegate for a month or two.

Bennett had a reputation for being as strict as Wootton with the added advantage that his stables were in isolated countryside. In 1928 when Wootton suspected that one of his apprentices, Noel Carroll, was supplying information on the stable runners to a bookmaker, he immediately reported the boy to the Jockey Club, Carroll and the bookmaker concerned were both warned off. The previous year, Carroll had been involved in a serious accident, while riding his bicycle to Wootton's stable; a car knocked him down. He sustained a fractured skull, and was on the critical list for some time.

Wootton's teaching methods were much admired by his colleagues. Scottish trainer John McGuigan said, "The fairest, most conscientious and pain-staking trainer I know with regard to apprentices is Stanley Wootton, who has been rewarded by turning out so many useful jockeys." "Confidence, obedience, cleanliness, -that could be described as the motto of the Wootton Academy, and results have proved there could not be a better one for turning out successful jockeys," recalled Charlie Smirke.

Wootton stopped training on the outbreak of war in 1939. The Dundee Courier 28th June 1940 reported that he had rejoined the Army, taking up a commission with the King's Royal Rifles. In October 1945 he flew to Australia to visit his father who was seriously ill; he told The Sydney Morning Herald, that because of low prize money it was impossible for English owners to make it pay. Wootton stayed with his father until leaving for England on 21st May 1946. Wootton was in Australia again from late 1947 until 9th April 1948; he was at this time developing his bloodstock breeding in Australia, and had a few horses in training there with Maurice McCartan. He spent the winter of 1948-49 in South America, and on his return he took out a training licence in January 1949, telling the press that he intended to train twenty of his own horses and also have three or four apprentice jockeys. He moved back into Treadwell House in 1951.

His post-war success in Australia was first recorded in The Sydney Sunday Herald in April 1951, under the headline "Brilliant Donegal may get Stradbroke Start" the paper noted that owner Stanley Wootton purchased Donegal in France, the horse was an instant success in England, and now had a strong claim to be champion sprinter in Australia.

Back in England, the following year, with just ten horses, Wootton finished 20th in the Trainers Championship. The main contributor was Rawson who won six races including Ascot's Cumberland Lodge Stakes. In 1952, Rawson also won the Princess of Wales Stakes. Wootton continued to train on a small scale throughout the 1950s; at this time he invariably travelled to New York on the Queen Mary (1952-57) returning in April for the start of the Flat racing season. *Staff Ingham* in 1953, *Marjorie Nightingall* in 1947 and 1953, and *Walter Nightingall* in 1954 made the same trip, although their training careers necessitated an earlier return to England. Wootton's 1948-49 cruise to South America was apparently recommended to other Epsom trainers, with Staff Ingham making the trip in 1952 and 1954, and Marjorie Nightingall in 1950.

*Staff Ingham* trained most of Stanley Wootton's horses during this period, and provided mounts for the top boys like O'Leary, Broadway, Henry Jones and *Mick Haynes*.

Wootton extended his interests in Australia to include racehorse breeding. He purchased the horse Star King in 1950, following the horse's success in the Gimcrack Stakes, Richmond Stakes, Jersey Stakes and Greenham Stakes. Star King was known as Star Kingdom in Australia where he sired the first five winners of Sydney Turf Club's Golden Slipper Stakes, and three future stallions in Todman, Biscay and Bletchingley. The Canberra Times, 24th December 1956, described Todman as the "Best Colt Ever" noting that Stanley Wootton the breeder was in Australia when Todman smashed the record for fastest Australasian two year old on his racecourse debut at Randwick the previous day.

By the 1950s Wootton's business affairs attracted the attention of the Inland Revenue. The horse training business was showing a massive loss, year on year. In 1954 the tax inspector for Epsom wrote to the Chief Inspector of Taxes for guidance, pointing out that Wootton "enjoyed a substantial standard of living, but has paid no taxes during or since the war."

Wootton's explanation was that since 1940 he had won £375,000 betting.

The Chief Inspector of Taxes observed, "It is understood that Wootton has the reputation of betting on a grand scale, even so, the suggestion that he has acquired £375,000 by betting is extremely unusual."

Epsom's tax inspector observed that in 1952, "accountants noted that betting receipts and payments were recorded in detail."

The Chief Inspector concluded that Wootton "could be considered primarily as a successful backer who carries on training and farming as a sideline." However, if, he should be taxed on the profits of betting it would provide an opening for trainers to set betting losses against business profits, and the matter was dropped.

Stanley Wootton relinquished his training licence in 1962. In November 1967, after a somewhat uneasy truce of forty years, the Epsom Grand Stand Association gave Wootton notice to quit some of the land on Epsom Downs that he was leasing from them. He contested the notice to quit on the grounds that agricultural land was outside of the landlord and tenant ruling. This was upheld in the courts, and Wootton promptly gave the Six Mile Hill gallops on Walton Downs to the Horserace Betting Levy Board on a 999-year lease, at the rent of "a peppercorn if required." Epsom and Walton Downs were now under one administration.

Stanley Wootton said, "In handing over the gallops, I have in mind what the people of England have given the Wootton family."

Stanley Wootton left an estate valued at £596,650 in the United Kingdom.



## Star Kingdom Legacy

Stanley Wootton will always be remembered for the Star Kingdom Legacy. The following is a picture parade of the early story of the horse with acknowledgments to Peter Pring (The Thoroughbred Press) 'The Star Kingdom Story'.

### Hyperion



*The immortal Hyperion, Star Kingdom's grand-sire, who was six times champion sire in England.*

Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"



## Stardust



*Stardust, Star Kingdom's sire, photographed whilst still in training as a three-year-old.*

Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"



Star Kingdom as a 2 year old in England

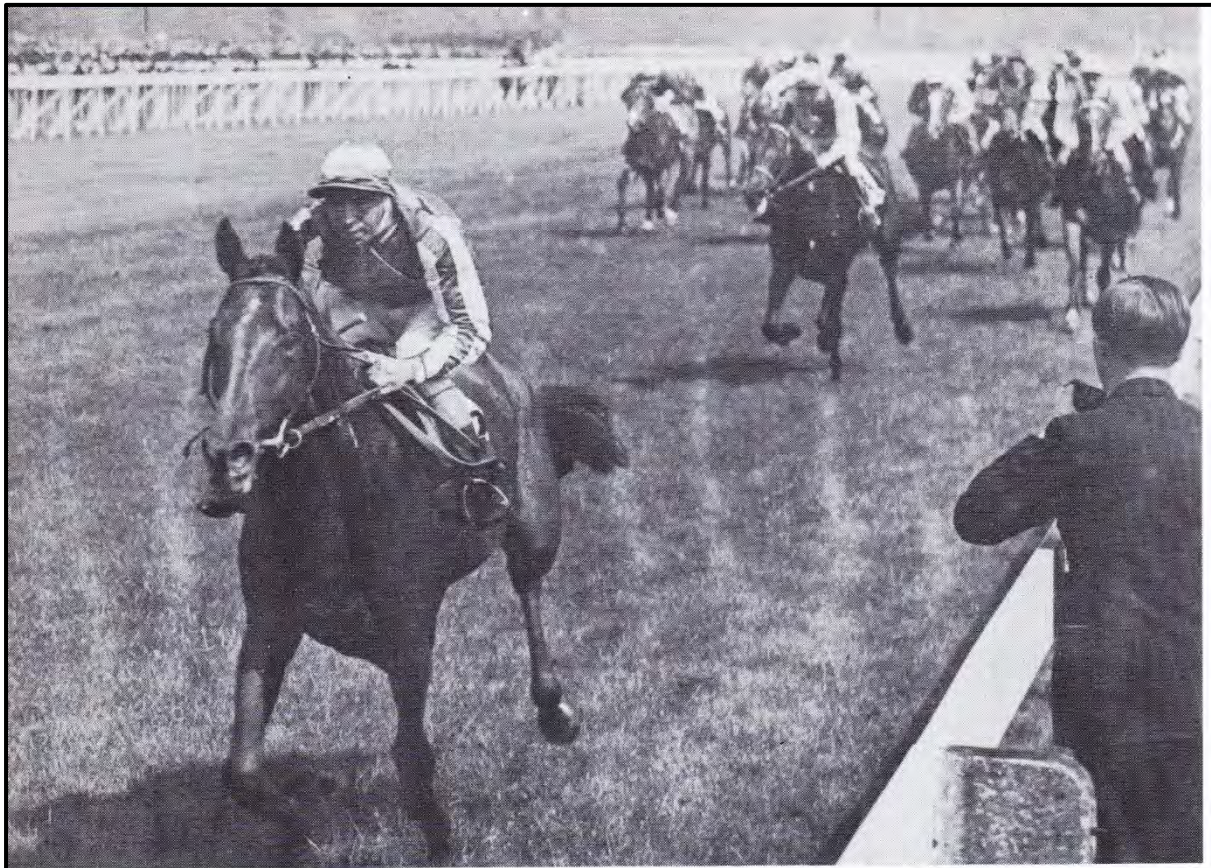


*Star Kingdom as a two-year-old in England, where he raced with great success as Star King.*

Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"



Gimcrack Stakes, York



*Star Kingdom scoring his greatest victory, in the historic Gimcrack Stakes at York.  
The chestnut led throughout and won easily by three lengths.*

Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"



Greenham Stakes. Newbury



*At his first start as a three-year-old Star Kingdom won the Greenham Stakes at Newbury with the greatest of ease.*

Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"



Star Kingdom 1954 @ 'Baramul'



**STAR KINGDOM**

*This posed photograph of Star Kingdom — taken at Baramul stud in 1954 — is his part-owner Mr A.O. Ellison's personal favourite. He says it best captures the true physical character of the horse.*

Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"





*Todman returning to scale after breaking the race record in the Futurity Stakes at Caulfield, his last start in a race.*

Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"





*The flying colt Todman seen winning at his first start in a race, at Randwick in December, 1956. Todman won by ten lengths and ran an Australian record for the five furlongs journey.*

Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"





*Jockey Neville Sellwood and trainer Maurice McCarten who formed a highly successful partnership in Australia in the 1950s. McCarten trained both Todman and Noholme, and Sellwood rode them in all of their 20 victories combined.*

Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"





*Noholme, an outstanding racehorse who won major races in Australia from 6 furlongs to 1½ miles, was later to prove a most successful sire in North America.*

Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"





*Noholme (re-classified in America as Noholme II) was a top sire in the U.S.A. where he got the major winners Nodouble, Shecky Greene and Carnaub. In 1981 his son Nodouble was the champion sire in North America.*

Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"





*Nodouble, son of Noholme II and grand-son of Star Kingdom, was champion sire in North America in 1981.*

Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"





*Sky High was a relative failure at the stud in Australia but sired the top horse Autobiography when exported to the U.S.A. (where he was re-classified as Sky High II).*

Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"





*The brilliant Biscay who, like Todman, broke an Australian record at his very first start in a race.*

Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"



*Trainer Angus Armanasco who met with considerable success with the progeny of Star Kingdom including Star of Heaven, Star Affair and Biscay.*

Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"

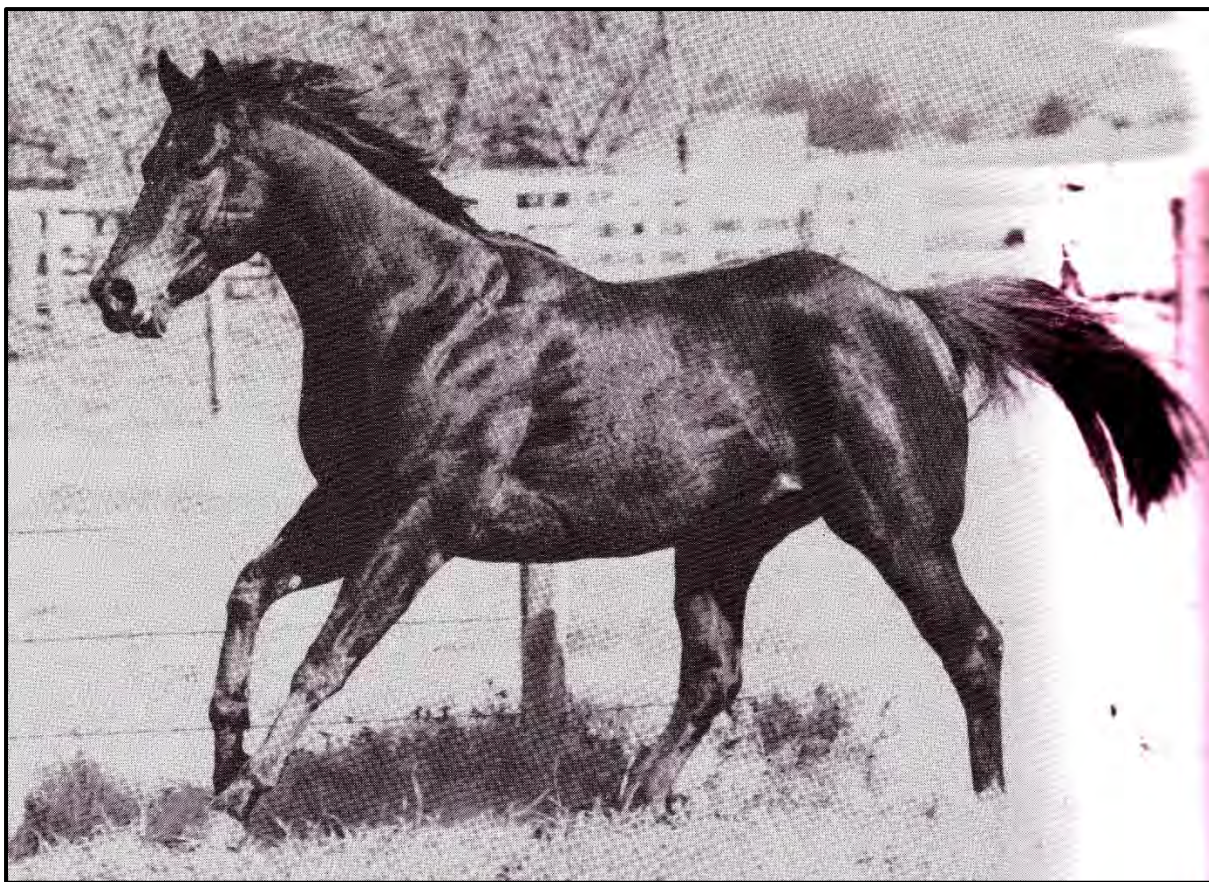




*Biscay — brilliant racehorse, successful sire and outstanding sire of sires.*

Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"





‘Bletchingly’ at Widden

Photo: Acknowledge ‘The Thoroughbred Press’; Peter Pring “The Star Kingdom Story”



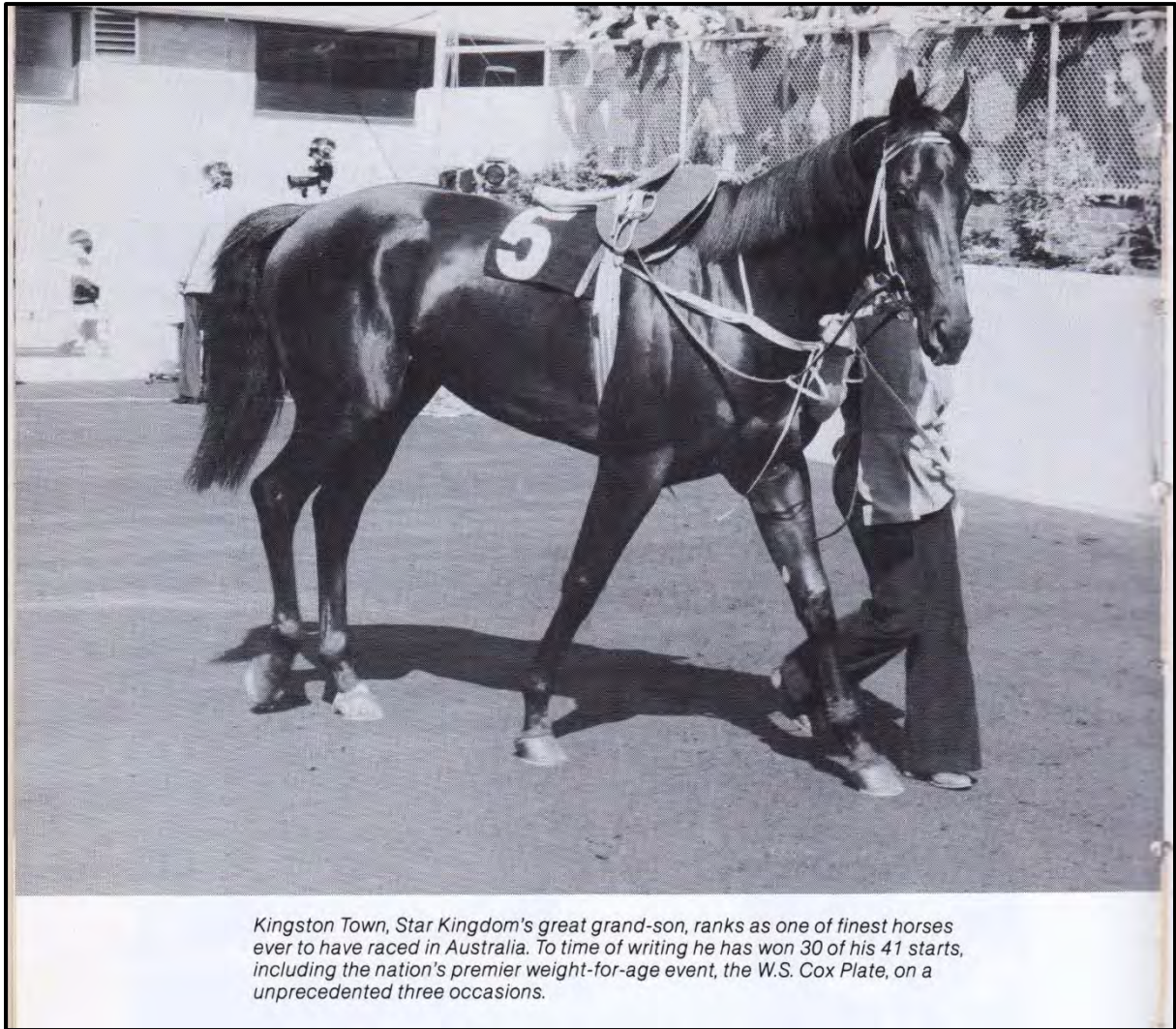


Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"

### **Stanley Wootton @ Bondi**

Just when you think it's all been written and said about Stanley Wootton something seminal happens to remind you of his enduring influence. The inaugural Bondi Stakes run at Royal Randwick on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2019 was the most recent shining example. No-one tells the tale quite like Brian Russell can. The following is taken from his latest 'Australian Thoroughbred Review' distributed to over 5000 online subscribers.



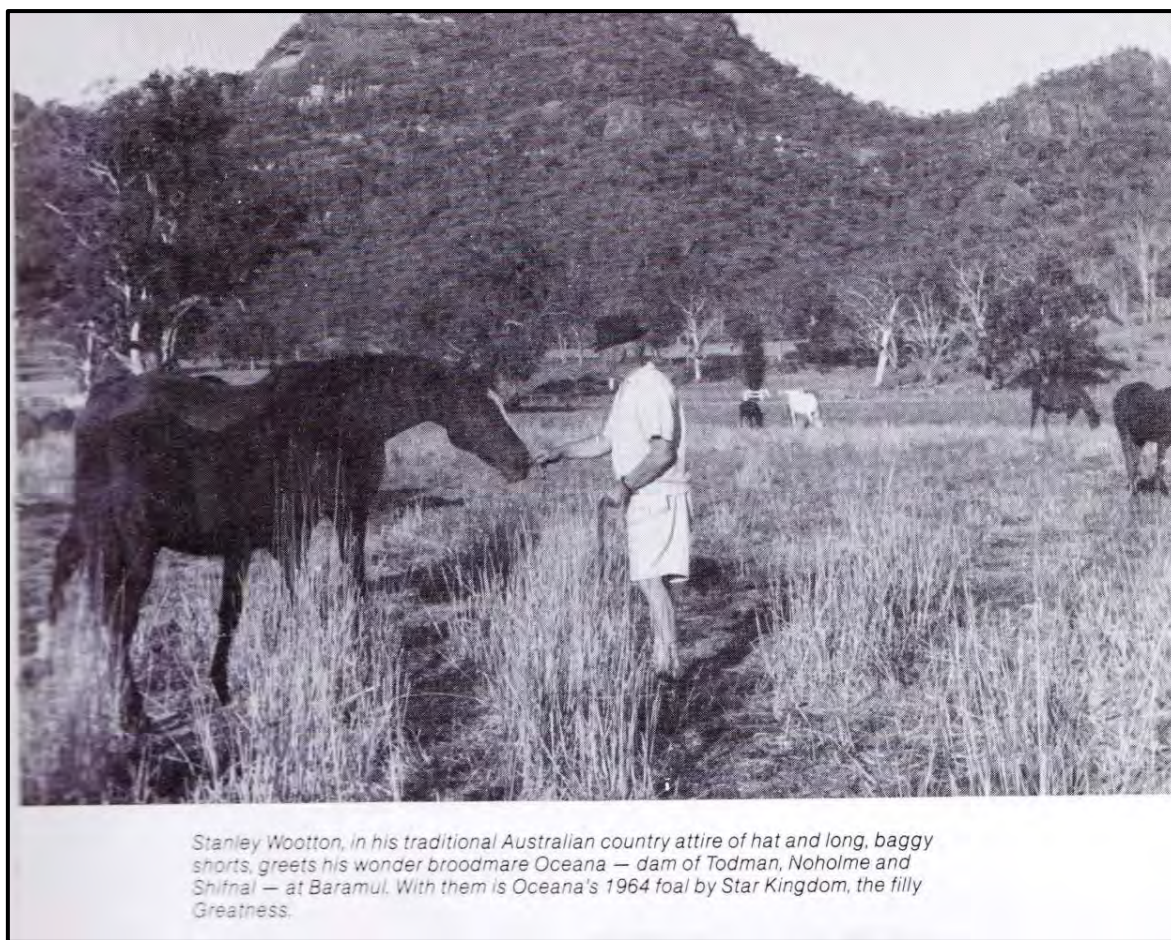


Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"

**Featured Image:** Stanley Wootton at 'Baramul' in 1964 fully resplendent in 'Bombay Bloomers' which would not have been out of place at Bondi Beach (Acknowledge 'The Star Kingdom Story' by Peter Pring; The Thoroughbred Press, Sydney)

### **Stanley Wootton family grabs new million dollar race**

**Like so many good horses of the years after World War 11, Kubrick, the Shooting to Win 3yo colt trained by Chris Waller for one of Australia's most respected and successful syndicators, Denise Martin headed Star Thoroughbreds, who won the inaugural \$1million Bondi Stakes, a 1600m race for 3yos run at Randwick on October 26, is from a family established on Baramul Stud, Widden Valley for Epsom England headquartered Aussie Stanley Wootton.**

Deceased in 1986, Wootton was responsible for sending about 20 stallions to Australia for stud duties, the three most notable being Star Kingdom, Makarpura and Newtown Wonder. The greatest of them was Star Kingdom, the son of the Hyperion sire Stardust who became five times champion sire at the Baramul Stud in the Widden Valley in the ownership of Wootton, Reg Moses and Alfred Ellison. Ellison owned Baramul.



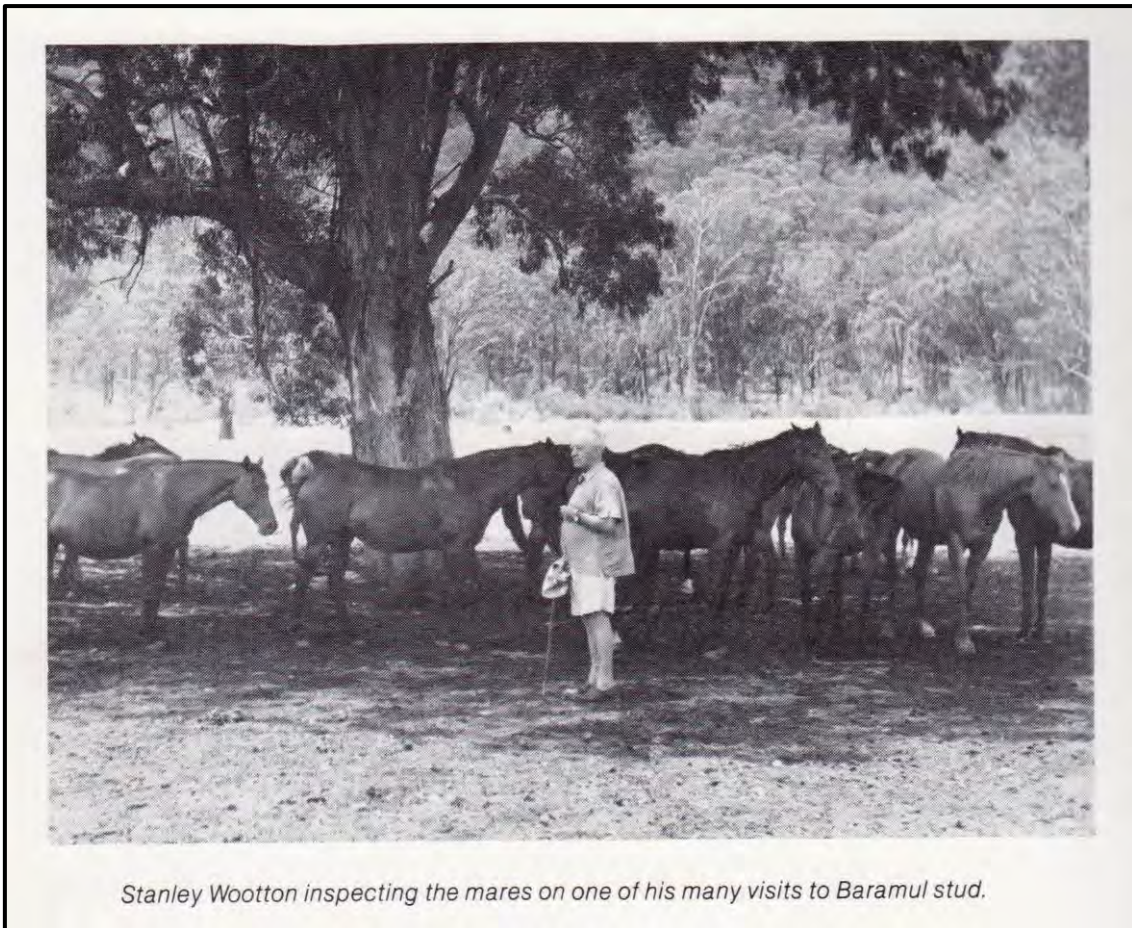


Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"

A lot of Star Kingdom's success came through a collection of imported mares kept on Baramul for Wootton and producers between them of such top performers as Todman, Noholme, Biscay, Star of Heaven and Bletchingly .

Another of the Wootton imported mares was Expulsion, a modest English 2yo winner by the Nearco sire Infatuation who supplied nine winners out here, including a Biscay flyer called Selsey and her Bletchingly three-quarter sister Extradite.

A 1982 foal, Extradite became the principal lasting monument in the ownership of his Sydney based daughter Catherine Remond to Wootton's contribution to racing excellence, a history which gained a new chapter when Kubrick won the Bondi.

Remond bred nine winners using Extradite, the best of them being Twiglet, a Twig Moss (Fr) winner of three stakes, including the G2 Edward Manifold at Flemington. Remond mated Twiglet 19 times for 13 foals, three of which won stakes, the Danehill brother and sister Fairy King Prawn (Hong Kong Horse of the Year twice, leading sprinter thrice, leading miler twice, 12 wins, seven stakes, the first HK trained horse to win abroad, capturing a G1 sprint in Japan) and Crevette (three Listed wins inc VRC Red Roses).

A mating of Twiglet made by Remond with Baratheia, a Widden Stud visitor by Sadler's Wells, resulted in Easy Rocking, a leading sprinter whose efforts included wins in the VRC Salinger Stakes, AJC Challenge Stakes and STC Canterbury Stakes and seconds in the BTC Doomben10,000 and AJC San Domenico.

Retired to stud at the Turkington's Wattle Brae Stud at Nobby, Darling Downs, Easy Rocking has been responsible for 329 winners (65.7%) including 12 SWs of 996 races and over \$20m. Following the sale this year of Wattle Brae, Easy Rocking is covering at the Clear Mountain Fairview Stud, Greenmount, Qld.

Remond also bred a top performer out of Crevice in Cosmic Endeavour (7 wins, \$1,447,280, two G1s, Canterbury Stakes and Qld Tatt's Tiara) and using Twiglet's half-sister Fortunata (Dr Grace Sydney winner, Listed second twice) a Redoute's Choice Listed Stakes winner, Chic Choice.

Alcatraz, a non-winning three-quarter sister by Fastnet Rock to Chic Choice bred by P Webb, Mrs C Webb and Segenhoe Stud Pty Ltd and now breeding for Ross Ferris's Two Bays Farm on the heel of Victoria's Mornington Peninsula has brought new distinction to this Wootton family by supplying Kubrick as her first runner.

A\$250,000 Inglis Melbourne yearling, this 3yo chestnut colt has contested seven races for three wins, two at two, a second in the JJ Atkins-G1 (2yo, 1600m) and a fourth in the ATC Run For The Rose-G2 (1600m). He is one of 17 winners in the first crop of Shooting to Win, a Caulfield Guineas and Stan Fox winner, Golden Rose and Randwick Guineas third located at Darley's Kelvinside Stud, Aberdeen HV.

Shooting To Win is a year younger brother to the brilliantly performed and booming young sire Deep Field, a resident at Darley's neighbour, Newgate Farm. A winner of five of eight starts, setter of a new 1100m record at Canterbury, Deep Field like Shooting To Win retired to stud in 2015 and in consequence his oldest are 3yos.

Deep Field made a huge impression with his first crop juveniles including 21 winners (2 SWs, 5 SPs) and is now the leading two crop sire numerically and second on earnings. Three of his winners are from mares by Fastnet Rock, sire of the dam Kubrick

### **Stanley Wootton Letters**

I have in my possession three letters written by the late Stanley Wootton in his nether years. The first is a carefully worded hand-written long letter to Murray Bain dated 31<sup>st</sup> December 1972. It is on quite flimsy 'branded' writing paper from the Hotel Southern Cross in Melbourne. Mr Wootton outlines his thinly disguised 'dismay' at the state of play at Baramul Stud since the total dispersal of bloodstock in 1969/1970. Enough said!

This was pivotal in my decision to invest in a share in 'Bletchingly' following his retirement from racing to stand at Widden Stud in 1975. It was the 'big lottery win' of my life!

I think both letters considered together paint a vivid word picture of the iconic thoroughbred breeder Stanley Wootton?

Letter from STW to AMB 1972  
Transcript from the original letter

*Hotel Southern Cross  
Melbourne's Intercontinental Hotel  
131 Exhibition Street  
Melbourne 3000 AUSTRALIA*

*31 – 12 – 1972*

*My dear Murray,*

*It was very nice seeing you and Mace again & I am sorry that we could not have had a few words together.*

*Baramul*

*I am sure that you know now what is happening there. I am concerned and therefore make the following comments.*

*One man not experienced looking after all our Bloodstock and he only part time. Running all the yearling Colts and also the yearling Fillies in one Paddock is asking for trouble, and this we have had – of our 14 yearlings 7 cannot be trained or Raced because they were born deformed or been injured. The weak foals or yearlings should have been separated and given special care and attention with all manner of good food, Milk, Vitamins etc.*

*Pyrmont*

*My best Brood Mare has a deformed yearling, a deformed foal and had again been sent to Todman. BIM Thompson was doing everything possible to get this obviously sick and (???) unhealthy mare in foal. Fortunately I saw her and told him not to attempt to serve her again.*

*I am particularly anxious that none of my own mares should be served unless they are clearly healthy and have healthy foals. Those that have been ill leave alone. Could you please make this sure to all concerned. I am going to sell about 12 of my Brood Mares at the April Sydney Sales. I will send you a list of all my mares and also those that we could consider selling and would like your views please. I gather their names have to be given by the end of Feb?*



*On our arrival in Melbourne we had 19 horses in training here. We have now only 2 ½ (?) in work. I will not go into the reasons why except to say that we sold at least 4; sent these to Francis Wootton. One has had a knee operation, 3 others have had their knees fired and the remainder turned out to enable them to grow and mature properly before being put into training again.*

*I think that the last yearlings to come here from Baramul were on the whole very immature and underdeveloped. I naturally discussed all matters with Alfred, including the feeding of my broodmares when in foal & carrying a foal; and all other matters but obviously I can only suggest what should be done.*

*I naturally write you in the strictest of confidence but I do know that Alfred will at least take notice of you and very much admires your work.*

*Vivian Bath and Rosemary were very kind to us and David obviously doing everything possible for the wellbeing of the Bloodstock under his care. Biscay is clearly developing into an attractive Sire and our most promising two year old Bletchingly is by him.*

*Alderney I thought was progressing well.*

*We are due to leave here on January the 17<sup>th</sup> flying to Cape Town. Home on February the 5<sup>th</sup>. It is most unlikely that we will be able to come to Australia again. We are now old and rather shaky but we are fortunate in having lasted so long.*

*Doris joins me in sending our Love and best wishes to you both.*

*Yours always*

*Stanley*

*You mentioned that you might like me to purchase a young mare in England for you. I will gladly attempt to do so but they are now very costly. Also the cost by sea without insurance is £1000 (pound).*

*Separate Page*

*Suggested for sale; not less than 10. We could buy an odd one in if necessary.*

*Charming Lady  
Fairvale  
Talented  
Talentina  
Todlea  
Nancarrow  
Palanna  
Star Ocean*

Gay Wendy

Fluted Charm (Corifi out of Bendoric at present with Mrs Francis Wootton)

S Wootton's Broodmares      3 – 1 – 1973

Ages August 1972

	Age	Sire	Dam
Ballina (IMP)	13	Whistler	Aspen
Bendoric (IMP)	15	Kings Bench	Dorica
Biarrin	8	Biarritz	Incuria
Charming Lady	14	Rawson	Pearl Bank
Charming Pearl	9	Todman	Charming Lady
Circling	6	Star Kingdom	Widden
Coogee (IMP)	13	Relic	Last Judgement
Constella	16	Star Kingdom	Conveyor
Cowra (IMP)	12	Matador	Misere
Domremon	8	Star Kingdom	Morin
Downs Way	9	Faubourg	Conveyor
Expulsion (IMP)	7	Infatuation	Roedean
Faudaly	10	Faubourg	Farah
Fauvale	10	Faubourg	Constella
Fifine	5	Todman	Gay Wendy
Gay Wendy (IMP)	11	Hook Money	Happy Girl
Greatness	8	Star Kingdom	Oceana
Magic Lane	4	Todman	Magic Wonder
Magic Symbol	16	Makapura	Magic Wonder
Manila	8	Star Kingdom	Coogee
Morin (IMP)	16	Vilmorin	Irish Candy
Morrina	4	Todman	Morin
Nancarrow	8	Biarritz	Sheila
Palanna (IMP)	13	Royal Palm	Alanna
Phyllis May (IMP)	15	Denturius	Easton Song
Pyrmont (IMP)	14	Rockefella	Rosabella
Sheila	12	Rawson	Magic Wonder
Star Ocean	14	Star Kingdom	Oceana
Talented	10	Star Kingdom	Morin
Talentina	4	Biarritz	Talented
Tobalina	9	Todman	Ballina
Todlea	8	Todman	Devon Leaf
Tolana	5	Todman	Palanna
White Leaf	11	Todman	Devon Leaf
Widden (IMP?)	13	Nimbus	Tenebel



TOTAL = 35

I own or have shares in the following stallions:

Todman

Biscay

Vibrant

Alderney

Convamore

Tattenham

Town Major (about to arrive in Victoria and will stand there).

S.T. WOOTTON Fick

Treadwell House,  
Treadwell Road,  
EPSOM, ENGLAND.

11th. March 1974.

Dear Bill Howey,

Thank you very much for your interesting and informative letter about my bloodstock, but first I would like you to give Murray and Mace our love and best wishes,

Yes, I agree that "Bhima" in getting fourteen out of seventeen mares in foal did very well particularly so because we seem to have a number of ~~our~~ elderly and doubtful mothers -to-be.

I am sure you have passed the information on to Vivian Bath and David, if not would you kindly do so.

We were naturally delighted with "Forina's" latest success, and I think "Vibrant" is particularly suitable for small or light mares because he is a strong horse with a lot of bone.

"Convenmore" - was a very good class race-horse here at three and four years old. I have not seen the horse since he left here. Will you please tell me - 'Confidentially' what kind of sire you consider him to be. I have a small interest in him.

We naturally were very sorry we could not go to Australia last year. I believe you know the problem but we still hope to do so again.

With kind wishes from us both,

Yours

*S. T. Wootton*

I mare only I believe was omitted from your list, viz. "Phyllis May" who went to "Tottenham" this year. Will you give this information to Vivian Bath in case she has not returned to Bhima.

P T O

W. P. Howey Esq.,  
198, Kelly Street,  
SCONE 2337,

N.S.W.



Treadwell House,  
Treadwell Road,  
Epsom, Surrey,  
ENGLAND.

14th. October 1974.

Dear Mr. Howley,

Thank you for your letter regarding a Sales  
Complex at Scone. When I hear from Mr. Ellison I will  
write to you again.

Thank you for your congratulations on "Bletchingly"  
win recently. This is a very nice horse and I believe  
will make a good sire one day.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

*Stanley Wootton*

W. P. Howley Esq., B.V.M.S.,  
P.O. Box 280,  
ME 2337, N. S. W.,  
ITALIA.

Featured Image: Letter from Mr Wootton to me in October 1974

This letter was pivotal in my decision to invest in a share in 'Bletchingly' following his retirement from racing to stand at Widden Stud in 1975. It was the 'big lottery win' of my life!

I think all three letters considered together paint a vivid word picture of the iconic thoroughbred breeder Stanley Wootton?

## Treadwell House





## The Wootton Family

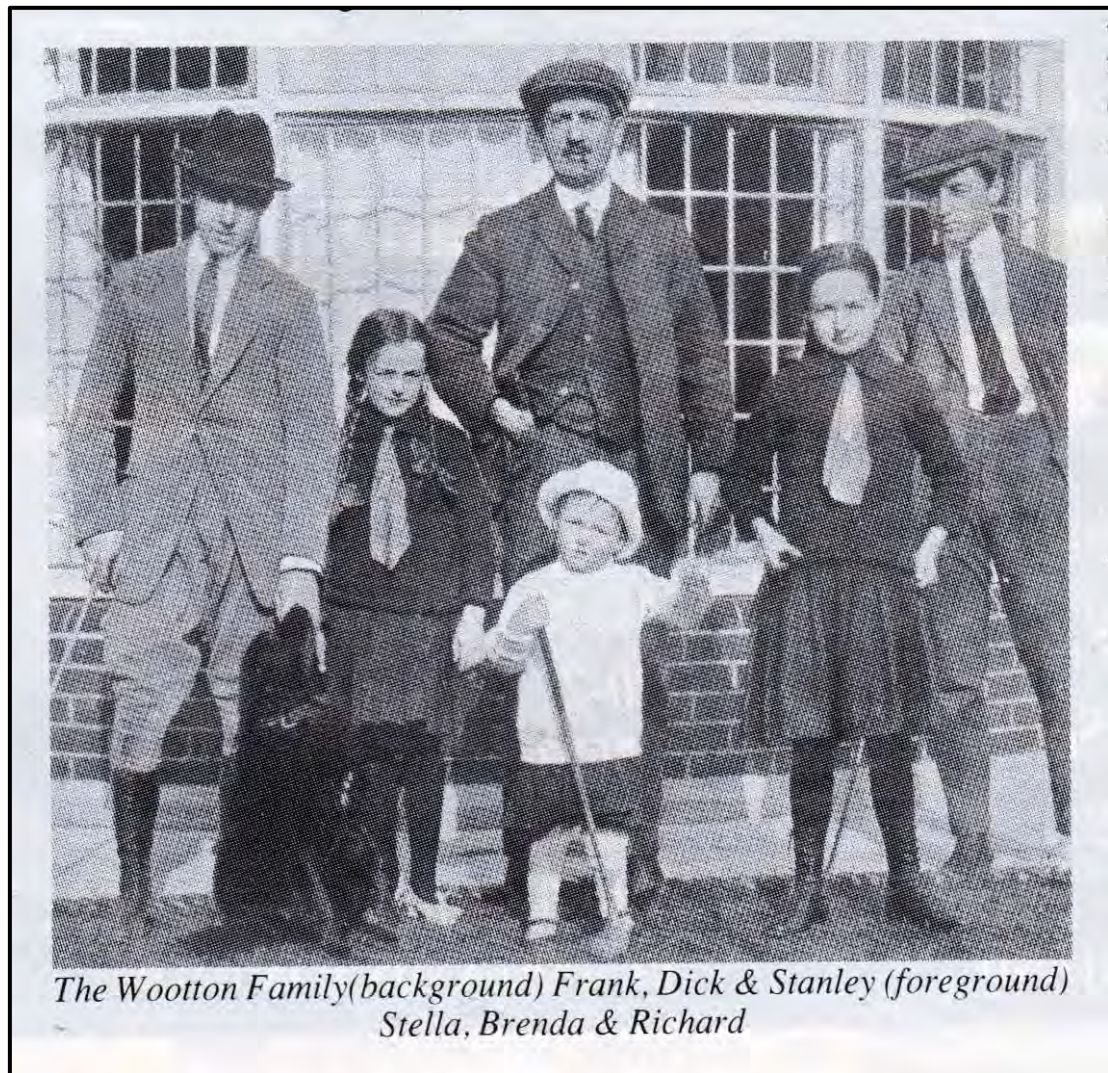


Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"

Acknowledge: "Lillye on Legends" by Bert Lillye AJC Racing Calendar, December 1991

Featured Image: The Wootton Family

History suggests ..... A Racing Relationship Without Peer

Australian Racing has spawned some fascinating father and son relationships ... names that spring to mind almost without thought.

Those great Racing Families – some not far removed from dynasties – whose names become household words; particularly in the days when sentiment was not obfuscated by the now all-important TAB numerals.

Has any father and son combination been more popular with the racegoer in general than champion jockeys Bill and Peter Cook who between them won four Melbourne Cups?

The Paydens were a renowned family on thoroughbred expertise .... father Tom and son Bayly each enjoying for lengthy periods, the distinction of being Sydney's champion trainer.

But there are so many others ... the Kelsos, the Cracknells, the Sheans; and across the Tasman, the Didham clan who put their mark on Racing over there, also here ... the McGraths, the Hoysteds and the McKennas.

But none was more successful – or colourful – than the mighty Munros!

Father Munro won the 1901 Melbourne Cup with Revenue, stablemate of wonder mare Wakeful which he saddled for the race.

Hugh sired the champion jockeys James and David ("Darby") Hugh whose deeds put the formidable Kuhn jockey brothers to shame: which says a lot.

Jim Munro won the Melbourne Cup on Windbag and Statesman and rode every champion of the era; while Darby won the Cup on Peter Pan, Sirius and Russia; also placings on Maikai and Beau Vite.

And more recently, we have the Cummings triumvirate ... James, James Bartholomew, and Antony James; "Bart", the middle pin, carving up the Melbourne Cup like no other., making our greatest race his own!

Hard on the Cummings clan's heels are Colin Hayes and his sons Peter and David; the last-named making a bold bid to have the initials "LP" stand for "long-playing" as much as "Lyndsay Park".

My apologies to those great Racing families I have omitted; but the above is sufficient to underline my point.

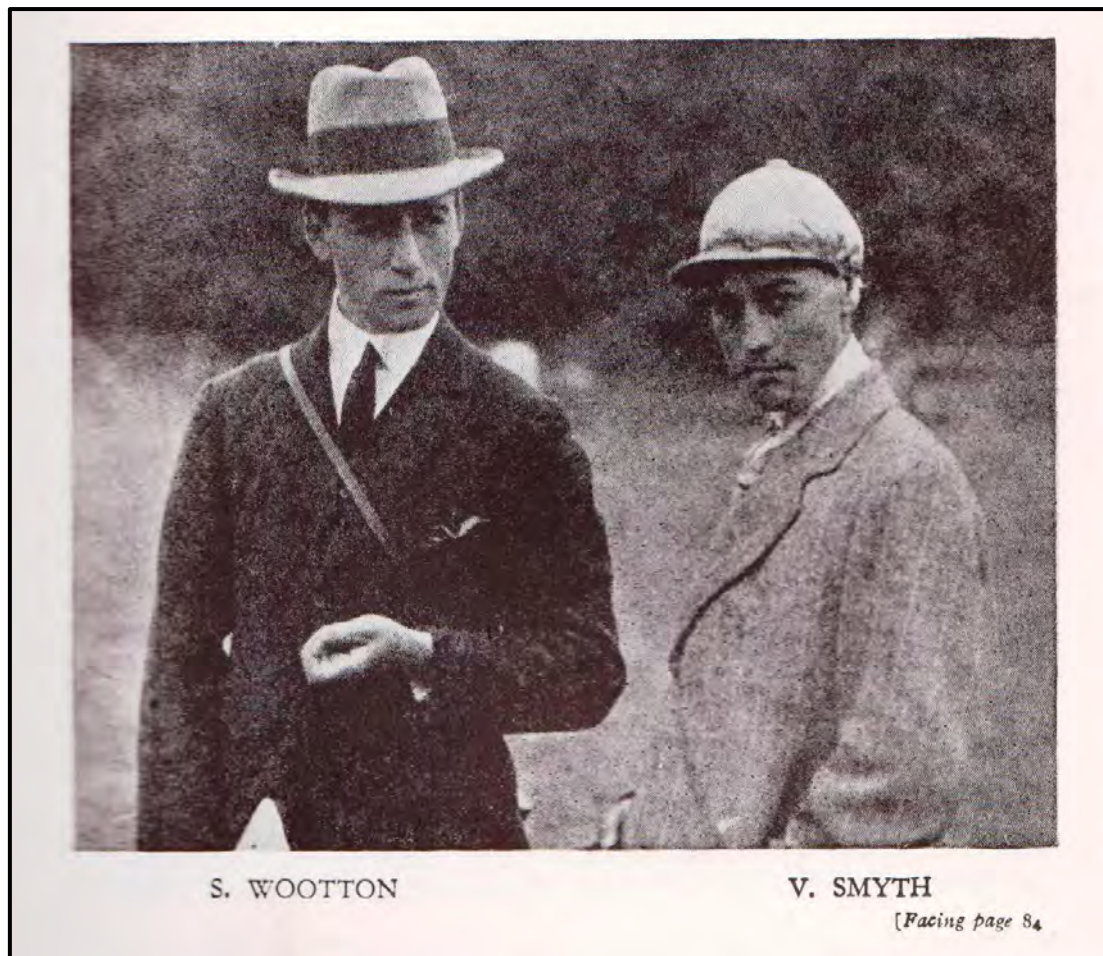
Dare I suggest that not one of the father and son combinations listed above achieved quiet as much as the Wootton family ... father Richard and his sons Frank and Stanley?



Frank Wootton, Richard Wootton, Mr Curtis, and Stanley Wootton 1908

Photo courtesy of Bill Eacott: 'The Wootton Family – Australia to Epsom'





Young Stanley Wootton in England

Photo courtesy of Bill Eacott: 'The Wootton Family – Australia to Epsom'



Photo courtesy of Bill Eacott: 'The Wootton Family – Australia to Epsom'

Their deeds, although not nearly as familiar to the Australian racegoer as those mentioned above, were indeed more remarkable; and strengthened by the fact that most were achieved against the best that Great Britain could muster.

... And at a time when English Racing led the world!

Wootton is a name read often whenever Star Kingdom is mentioned but there is much more behind it than the selection and importation of a great sire.

Wootton is a name that spells great Racing history ... further testimony to the old proverb that tells us that "none can guess the jewel by the casket".

Richard Lawson Wootton, always known as "Dick", was born at Moree in 1868. He died at his Randwick home on June 24, 1946, a span of 79 years that saw him succeed as jockey, trainer, owner and breeder.

He owned most of the horse he trained in Sydney and his first feature win came in 1902 when he took the AJC Metropolitan with Queen of Sheba.

Frank, his eldest son, was two months short of 10 when Queen of Sheba won the Metropolitan but the lad rode the mare in much of her training.

Dick Wootton had such extraordinarily high regard of young Frank's potential as a jockey that he was impatient at the AJC regulation which prevented him riding in races until he was 14.

He became so impatient, in fact, that he pulled up stakes and invaded South Africa with a team of horses, which included Queen of Sheba, and his son Frank.

His reason for such a bold decision being that young Frank, then 10, could ride in races over there.

Frank's mother was more keen for her son to have schooling rather than saddlery when the family moved to South Africa.

Consequently, it was against her wishes –and furthest thought – the days Dick took young Frank out of class, to attend a Race Meeting at Germiston in the Transvaal.

Frank was given an amateur rider's permit to compete in the pony races that were staged between races for all-heights.

There was much speculation when Frank won on his father's pony Kempsey, and it was that he had made history in being the youngest jockey to win a registered race.

If there was any doubt, the Woottons consolidated the claim a few weeks later when Frank won the prestigious 1903 Goldfields Handicap at Johannesburg on Centurion, bringing off a first-up family coup.

Frank, then only 10, was certainly the youngest rider to win a feature race in South Africa, if not the world.



The Woottons remained in South Africa for several years before returning to Sydney, by which time young Frank had stretched his race wins tally to 17.

Dick Wootton bought 30 horses on his return to Australia and won with most of them, including Fabric who took the 1906 Tattersall's Club Cup at Randwick.

Frank was still too young to ride in Sydney so the mount on Fabric went to another of Wootton's apprentices, W H ("Midget") McLachlan who went on to become one of the greatest jockeys Australian Racing has produced.

McLachlan, who accompanied Wootton to South Africa, won the Melbourne Cup three times, on Prince Foote, Comedy King and Westcourt. He also rode with success in England and was the first Australian jockey to ride for the Royal Family.

Norman Godby, who won the Melbourne Cup on Lord Cardigan, was another of Wootton's apprentice jockeys.

Wootton had been back in Australia only six months when he decided to try his fortune in England; his main reason again being, to give young Frank the most opportunity.

He sold all 30 horses in his Sydney stable, but kept his favourite pony "hack" which he took to England where he took charge of the famous "Treadwell House" stable at Epsom.

He trained mainly for one client, Sir Edward Hulton, and in his first season over there, in 1906, he won only three races but had only three horses.

The following season he had charge of 12 horses and won 14 races which attracted plenty of attention.

In 1908, his team increased to 23 horses and he won 36 races. A year later, "Treadwell House" boasted 29 horses which won 48 races.

Dick Wootton continued to make steady progress season by season. In 1910, eh trained 45 winners, the following year 48 and in 1912 his 33 horses won 63 races.

**Season 1913 saw Dick Wootton top the English Trainer's Premiership with 66 wins, the first Australian to achieve the feat!**

He was unlucky not to win the English Derby in 1913, his representative, Sir Edward Hulton's Shogun was one of the victims of the infamous scimmaging that took place in the classic.

Dick Wootton hit the headlines in other ways during his stay in England, the most famous being his success against a libel taken out by Robert Sievier .

He was third on the English training premiership on two occasions, in 1912 and 1914, but on both occasions trained more individual winners than those who won the premiership.

Dick retired as "Master of Treadwell House" at the close of the 1914 season, achieving the excellent tally of 372 flat races in nine seasons.



Stanley Wootton 1925. Temporarily on crutches.



STANLEY WOOTTON 1908

Photo courtesy of Bill Eacott: 'The Wootton Family – Australia to Epsom'

His best performers in England included Lomond, Flippant, Stornoway (all three winners of the Gimcrack Stakes); also Silver Tag, Torloisk, Fairy King and Shogun.

Wootton returned to Australia in 1915, took up training again but on much smaller scale. His principal interests were business investments, property management and thoroughbred breeding.





Windsor Races 1916. The Wootton brothers on leave. Stanley (left), who was recently awarded the Military Cross, and Frank (right) are joined by fellow Australian Dr Rosenthal (centre).

Photo courtesy of Bill Eacott: 'The Wootton Family – Australia to Epsom'

His most important success as a trainer, following his return to Australia at the outbreak of World War I, was the Villiers Stakes at Randwick with Zuleika, a mare bred in England by his son Stanley.

Zuleika became one of the cornerstones of Dick Wootton's breeding venture. Her many descendants included Lady Marie who won seven races when trained for Dick Wootton by Maurice McCarten.

Lady Marie was daughter of Air Balloon, as was Wansey, another filly that Dick Wootton bred and raced successfully under McCarten's care.

Lady Marie (Dick Wootton's last winner) and Wansey won him a double at Rosehill in April, 1944, when both were ridden by the champion claiming apprentice Ted Doon.

Among Dick Wootton's business investments was the Doncaster Hotel at Kensington and little more than a stone's throw from Randwick Racecourse. He was also judge of thoroughbred exhibits at Sydney's Royal Easter Show for many years.

Dick Wootton Junior despite his tender years, was an instant success in England, soon being hailed as "The Wonder Boy".

He won at his first ride on English soil, scoring on his father's horse, Retrieve, in the Cinque Ports Handicap at the 1906 Folkestone Summer Carnival.

He was then 13 and before his first English season was over, young Frank had won 16 races.

One of those wins was on Nero in the Portland Plate at the Doncaster St. Leger meeting, an impressive performance by any standard; but what excited English experts was the fact that the young Australian had beaten the great Danny Maher who was on the favourite, Melayr.



Photo courtesy of Bill Eacott: 'The Wootton Family – Australia to Epsom'

Frank had only 67 rides in his first season, achieving the high ratio of 16 wins. The following year (1907) he had 282 rides for 39 wins, including the first of 56 major race wins.

Shakespeare tells us, "It is a wise father that knows his own child" (Merchant of Venice); well, Dick Wootton was ultra-wise on his son's riding talent.

Wootton, senior, making his first real bid to win a major race in England, needed a light-weight rider for Demure in the prestigious Cesarewitch Stakes of 1914.

The wise father did not hesitate, even though he knew the field would be big and highly competitive. He gave the mount to his 14-year-old son who showed judgement well beyond his years to win in a style that had the experts hailing "another Archer".

Young Frank went from strength to strength, becoming a sensation almost overnight.



In only his third English season, young Wootton achieved the remarkable tally of 129 wins, placing him second to Danny Maher in the 1908 premiership.

Frank finished 10 wins short of Maher's tally but missed a month's riding following a fall at Ascot and further time because of a family bereavement.

**The following season (1909) Frank Wootton became the first Australian to head the English Jockey's premiership, notching 165 wins.**

He held the tile for the following three years, with tallies of 137 wins (1910), 187 wins (1911) and 118 (1912).

Frank was runner-up in 1913 to Danny Maher with 91 wins but at the outbreak of World War I, he joined the army and was stationed in the East.

**He did not ride again on the Flat in England.**

In eight seasons of Flat racing in England, Frank had 3,866 rides, which yielded 882 wins, 705 seconds and 452 thirds ... better than a 1-in-2 place ratio!

There were many, many high notes in the young Australian's capture of English racing; not the least being his retainer as No. 1 stable jockey for Lord Derby's "Stanley House" ... at 27, for the then huge yearly fee of £2,500.

That year, (1910), Wootton won the premiership despite being suspended for two months following a protest by Danny Maher and among his 137 wins was the St. Leger on Swynford, also the Cesarewitch on Verney.

Frank won his first English Classic, the 1909 Oaks, on Perola.

Other highlights of an extraordinary career in England, included the following:

**\*Seven winners at the 1908 Doncaster St. Leger meeting**

**\*Ten winners at the 1911 Goodwood carnival**

**\*Seven winners at the 1912 Royal Ascot week**

His other major successes included the Grand Prix de Paris (Houli, 1912), Doncaster Cup (Lemberg, 1913), Prince of Wales and Jockey Club Stakes (Stedfast, 1911), Chester Cup (Glacis, 1908), Manchester Cup (Marajax, 1911) and Prince Edward Handicap (Aurina, 1910).

Wootton's last Flat race win in England was achieved on Fairy King in the 1913 Autumn Plate at Warwick, three days before he retired after riding Sir Raymond in the De Trafford Plate at Manchester on November 20, 1913, a month short of his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday.

Frank's weight had risen to nine stone (57kg) in his last Flat season and he got heavier during his army service in France and Mesopotamia.

It was during military service that Frank Wootton became interested in hurdle racing and he won several races over obstacles in Baghdad.

He was too heavy for a return to Flat riding when discharged from the army, so he took on hurdle racing, having his first English ride on November 29, 1920, at Birmingham.

He finished third but later in the day he was successful on Bobbydazzler. His first season riding over the sticks yielded 11 wins and he forfeited his allowance.

**It was no disadvantage. Frank's natural riding ability saw him win 61 races in his second season under National Hunt rules and he headed the jumping premiership, a masterly performance.**

In 1922, he won 42 races and the following year he won 52 N.H. races but then returned to Australia where he spent some time on his father's stud farm.

Frank returned to England in 1927 to act as trainer for his younger brother Stanley who had taken over his father's stable at Epsom.

The after effects of several heavy falls while riding over obstacles played havoc with Frank Wootton's health in later years.

He gave up riding in England, returned to Australia where he died on April 6, 1940, at the comparatively young age of 49.

But not before he left his indelible mark on race riding, of the highest order.

***The Woottons ... Richard, Frank and Stanley ... Racing's father and son relationship without peer. Agree?***

**Stanley Thomas Wootton** was born at Surry Hills, Sydney, on June 28, 1897.

He went to England with his family in 1906 and at the age of 11, began his apprenticeship with his father at "Treadwell House".

He had his first race ride in 1908 but did not achieve anywhere near the success of his brother Frank.

Nevertheless, Stanley rode winners in England and on the Continent as a junior jockey; his principal victory being on the good staying mare Elizabetta in the 1910 Chester Cup.

Young Wootton's best riding successes were for the "Manton Stables" but he was forced to retire from riding when he was 16 because of weight problems.

He then worked for his father's stables, taking control in 1914 when Dick Wootton returned to Australia.

It was a short-term control as he enlisted at 17, serving in France, Greece and Palestine.

He was wounded in action at Salonika where he was awarded the Military Cross for bravery.

Stanley returned to training after the War beginning with a single horse which he bought for 40 guineas, gaining quick success.

In 1922, Stanley again took over "Treadwell House" and within four years, he had 100 horses in training.



In 1926, he trained 84 winners on the Flat and two seasons later, he had 43 winners of 88 races.

Stanley, unlike his brother Frank, developed a keen business sense which led to many successful investments, which in further turn, resulted in prestigious appointments.

He purchased the Principal Gallops on Epsom Downs in 1927 and five years later he assumed the role of Lord of the Manor at Epsom. This gave him control of all the training areas (known as "The Gallops"); also 2000 acres of prime farming land.

He served as Magistrate of Surrey for almost 20 years, was chairman of the Owners' Association of England; also the Trainers' Association of Surrey, and was a director of Kempton Park Racecourse.

He owned all of the Epsom "Gallops" for more than 25 years and every trainer who worked his horses there was Wootton's tenant.

Stanley Wootton served on the board of numerous companies and was chairman of several.

He eventually presented Epsom Downs to the Government but not before he trained in excess of 1000 winners, his best seasonal tally for Flat racing being 94.

And not before he established himself as England's best producer of young jockeys. Among the many champion junior jockeys he tutored were the Smirke brothers, Stafford Ingham, Sean Magee; also J. Sirrett and J. Dick.



Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"

Field Green Jack Cordell Wragg Carroll Feltham Duffy MvGonigle Donoghue Newcastle Carey ? Swift  
Caldwell Bobby Dick **S T WOOTTON** C. Smirke S. Ingham  
Turtle Warren Lechley Atkins Rook Marshall





Photo courtesy of Bill Eacott: 'The Wootton Family – Australia to Epsom'



Photo courtesy of Bill Eacott: 'The Wootton Family – Australia to Epsom'



Each year, he sifted through the hundreds of letters from parents who wanted their boys to learn horsemanship from Stanley Wootton.

In the end, he was taking on 50 apprentices at a time and personally managing their affairs. It was commonplace for Stanley Wootton to have as many as 10 of his boys in one race, riding under retainer for outside stables.

Although his interests were greatly diversified, he never veered from a desire for perfection. He developed a great insight into the make-up of a thoroughbred. His judgement was uncanny.

Alf Ellison, his close friend and manager of Wootton's Australian racing and breeding affairs, told me a good deal about Stanley's intellect on thoroughbred stock.

He explained that whenever Wootton visited "Baramul" stud he would walk into the paddocks where the young horses were quartered, then stand for hours at a stretch peering intently into each face as a foal or weanling came up to him.

"At the end of a very long session, Stanley would tell me which youngsters would do best on the racecourse. He was rarely wrong", Alf told me.

I mentioned this recently to Mrs Phillips, who was in charge of the "Baramul" homestead for 24 years.

"Yes, Stanley Wootton judged horses by their eyes ... the same as he did with humans", she explained. "He was very precise and an expert in anything he did."

"He was a great guest, a real gentleman and was most humorous in conversation", Mrs Phillips recalled.

When I asked her what was Stanley Wootton's favourite horse on "Baramul", she said, "Star Kingdom, of course, but he also had great affection for Todman".

"And old Oceana was his favourite broodmare", she explained.



Star Kingdom and Todman at 'Baramul'

Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"





Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"



*Star Kingdom taking his daily exercise. In the background are the majestic sandstone escarpments which surround Baramul.*

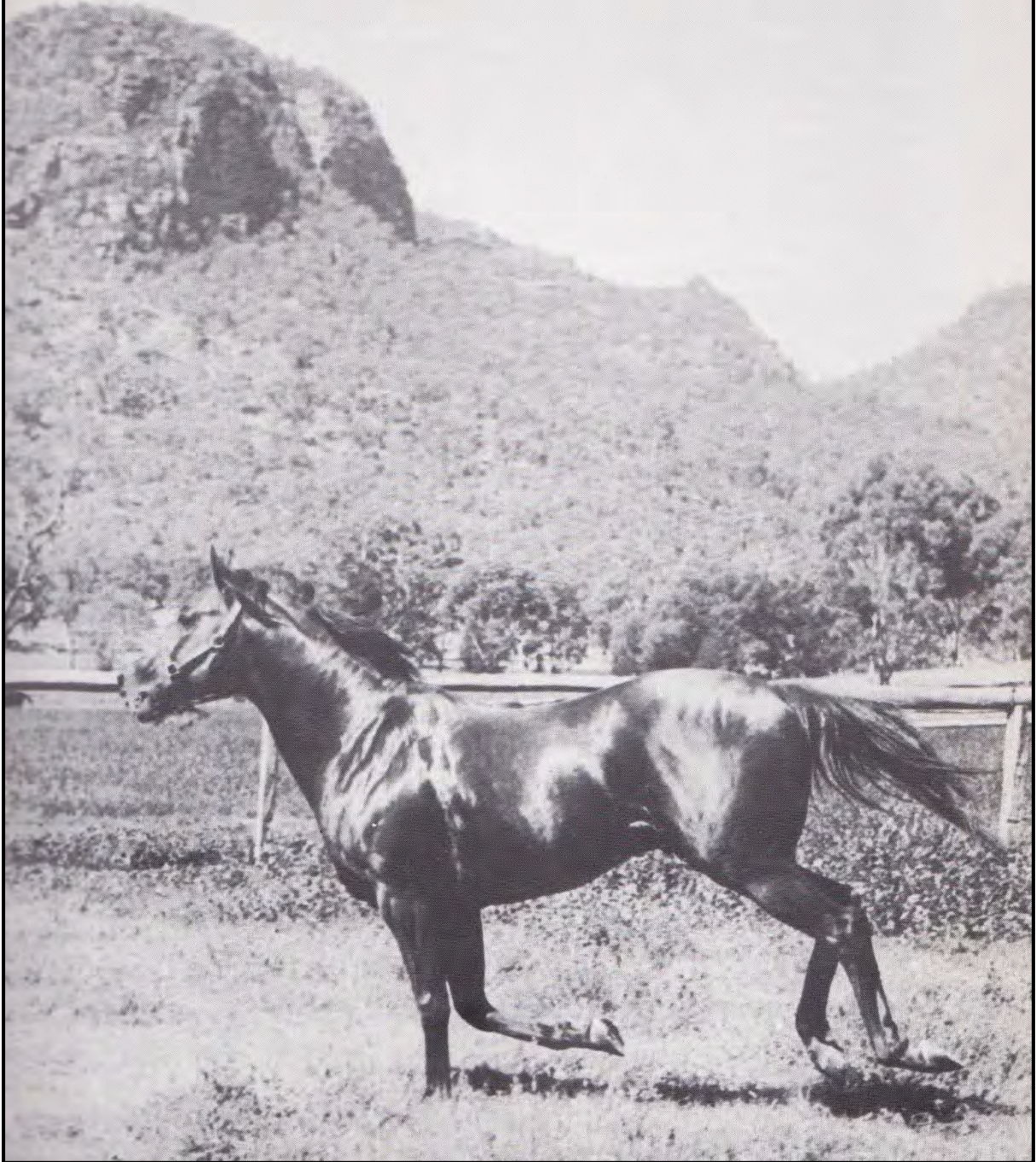


Photo: Acknowledge 'The Thoroughbred Press'; Peter Pring "The Star Kingdom Story"

And why not? It was the mating of Star Kingdom and Oceana that gave Stanley Wootton, Todman and Noholme.

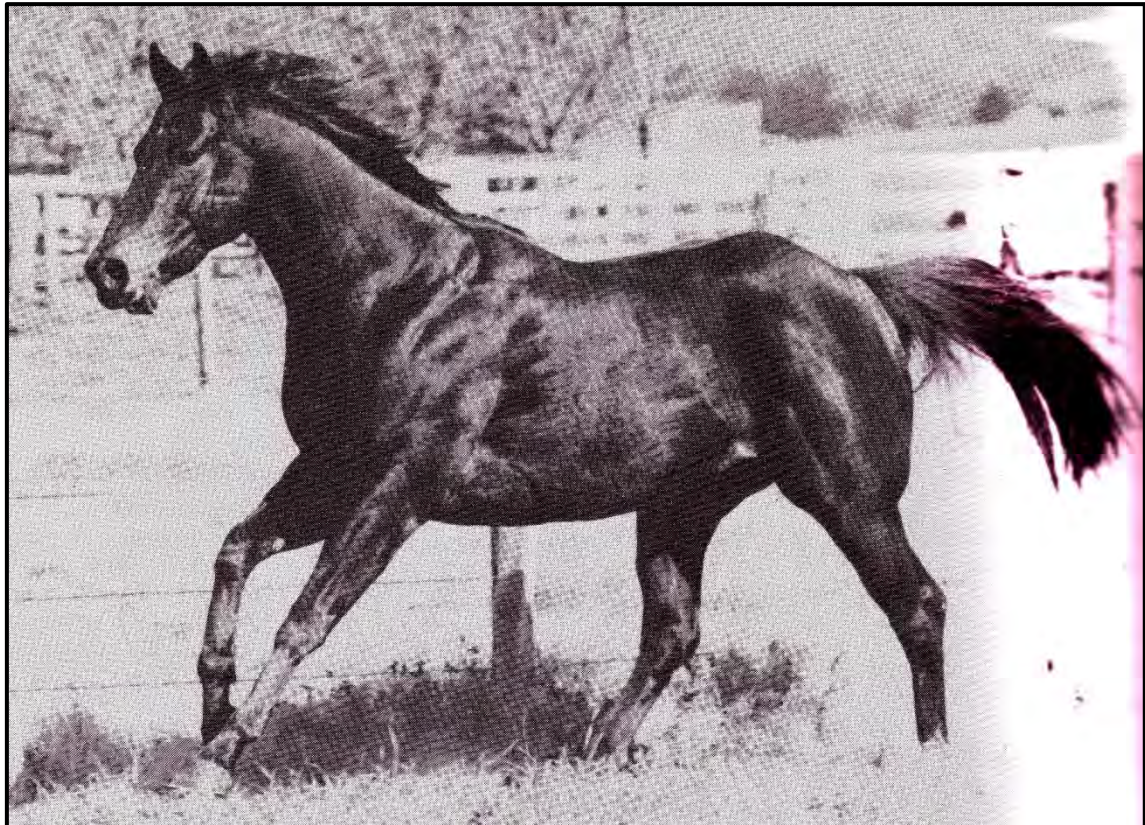


He selected Star Kingdom for stud in Australia, paying £4000 for the good two-year-old performer who raced in England as Star King, plus £115 to ship him here.

The young sire was an instant success, his first two runners, Kingster and Ultrablue, winning the Breeders' Plate and Gimcrack Stakes respectively.

He went on to become the greatest thoroughbred progenitor in Australian Racing History.

It was Stanley Wootton's uncanny judgement that made him send Oceana to Australia; also the Relic mare Coogee who became the dam of Bletchingly.



'Bletchingly' @ Widden

He selected many other thoroughbreds for import into Australia.

Among them were Port Vista, Newtown Wonder, Bob Cherry, Makapura, Just Great and Kerry Piper.

Although most of his life was spent in England, Stanley Wootton never forgot his birthplace. This is reflected in many of the names he selected for his horses ... Todman (Todman Avenue, Kensington), Coogee, Ballina, Pyrmont, etc.

He also had great admiration of Australian jockeys ... "in Sydney, equal to the best in the world", he said on a visit to Australia in 1948.

"I admire the mastery of Bill Cook. Darby Munro is a really great rider and (George) Moore, (Jack) Thompson and (George) Mulley are first-rate horsemen", he explained.

“Any of those jockeys would be bound to do well in England. It would not be necessary for them to change their styles of riding.

“English jockeys do ride with a longer rein, but the Australians do not go to the other extreme of grabbing their mounts close to their ears. They would not appear crude in opposition to the best English jockeys”.

That was in 1948. If Stanley Wootton was alive today, he would be equally enamoured of the skills of Mick Dittman, Shayne Dye and Jim Cassidy, to name just three.

Likewise, Dittman, Dye and Cassidy would be just as quick to acknowledge the achievements of Frank Wootton against the best of his era in England.

Young apprentice jockeys of today, would do well to heed the advice that Stanley Wootton gave when he addressed the AJC Apprentices’ School at Randwick in 1948. He said:

“You must learn – and be prepared to learn – anywhere, if you are to succeed as jockeys.

“You must keep an eye on the best riders and imitate them.”

“Get up in the stands when you are not riding and watch the leading riders of the day. See how they handle horse and situation”. (Today, junior jockeys can study the action on “live” TV monitors in the jockeys’ room).

“In this way, you too will learn to become good horsemen.

“If you are using the whip, use the whip and rely on it alone.

“The two operations, whip and hands and heels, cannot be carried out together.

“If you are using the whip; hold your horse together firmly with the other hand. You must not try to hit with the whip and at the same time push your horse along.

“But, above all, keep your eyes between the horse’s ears and you will help to keep your horse straight. If you do, you will not have to do a lot of explaining why your horse did not keep a straight course.”

Stanley Wootton’s name became synonymous with the Golden Slipper when he bred and raced the inaugural winner Todman.

Star Kingdom sired Todman, then the next four Golden Slippers; followed not long after by Eskimo Prince who was from the first crop sired by Todman.

The Wootton – Star Kingdom influence goes on and on. It did not end when Stanley Wootton died on March 21, a few days before the running of the 1986 Golden Slipper Stakes.

His death, at 88, was the result of an accident in Spain in which he fractured a hip.

The Woottons ... Richard, Frank and Stanley ... Racing’s father and son relationship without peer. Agree?



**‘The Thoroughbred Press’; Peter Pring “The Star Kingdom Story”:**

Stanley Wootton’s ability to judge the various merits or demerits of a Thoroughbred is/are internationally renowned.

Mr A O Ellison says of him:

***“He is an absolute marvel. He can tell you everything about a horse’s condition, and its constitutional strengths and weaknesses. It is uncanny; as a horseman it is as if he had second sight”. QED***