



The SHIRETOWN CONSERVER

The Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society
Volume 22, Number 4 Winter 2019

Emma B. 2.22



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Thinking about Winter and “one horse open sleigh’s”, suggests that an issue featuring horses would fit nicely. We start with probably the most famous race horse to come from Maine – Emma B. (Thanks to Dave Lockwood for getting permission to reprint this article)



Emma B 2.22

by Clark P. Thompson

The gray trotting mare Emma B was foaled on the Foxcroft farm of Cleoral E. (Chamberlain) and Phineas M. Jefferds. This we know because of the work of John W. Thompson, editor of “The Maine Horse Breeders’ Monthly” (hereinafter “the Monthly”), who published a short article about her in January of 1880. Editor Thompson’s article states that she was foaled in 1873. (Note: This may be in error as her sire, Bayard, made only one season (1871) in Maine. This is supported by at least two subsequent articles in “the Monthly”. One such article published in May of 1883 noted that Bayard was then in New Hampshire and that he “stood one season several years ago, in Maine, where he sired Emma B., record 2.22”.)

Before proceeding, a few words about the Jefferds is in order.

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The Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society

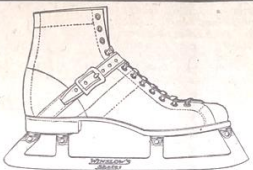
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The Society's legal address is 28 Orchard Road, Dover-Foxcroft ME 04426. The *Shiretown Conserver* is published quarterly. Contact the editor at 874 West Main Street, Dover-Foxcroft, Me 04426 or e-mail chrism@roadrunner.com, or by phone at 207-924-4553

1927


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\$1.25 a pair and up



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Hockey Sticks, 35c Skate Sharpeners, 25c
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The Winchester Store

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The Under Dog in the Fight

I know that world, that great, big world,
From the peasant up to the king.
Has a different tale from the tale I tell
And a different song to sing.

But for me – I care not a fig
If they say I am wrong or am right
I shall always go for the weaker dog,
The under dog in the fight

I know that the world, that the great big
world,
Will never a moment stop
To see which dog may be in the fault,
But will shout for the dog on top.

But for me, I never shall pause to ask
Which dog may be in the right,
For my heart will beat, while it beats at
all,
For the under dog in the fight.

Perchance what I've said I had better
not said,
Or 'twere better I had said it incog.,
But with heart and glass filled chock to
the brim,
Here's health to the bottom dog.

Piscataquis Observer (May, 1852)

From the Observer (1859)

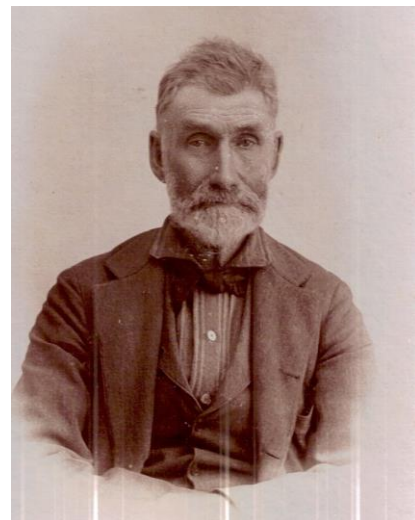
A man made his last will and testament in words few but significant: - "I have nothing, I owe nothing, and I give the rest to the poor."

Why is a fool in a high station like a man in a balloon?
Because everybody appears little to him, and he appears little to everybody.

A monkey and a goat quarreled about etiquette, when a jackass, as usual, was called in to settle the controversy.

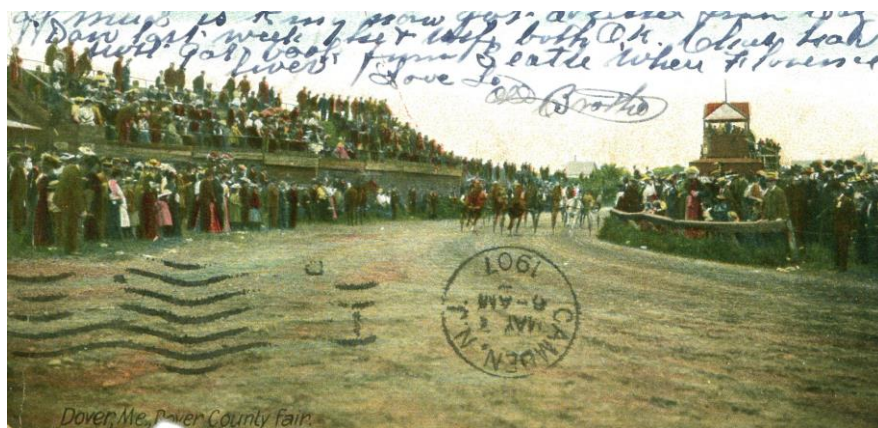
(Emma B 2.22., continued from page 1)

The Jefferds were married on October 27, 1852. Mr. Jefferds was a farmer and Civil War veteran, having served a short time with the famous Company B of the Twentieth Maine. The leader of that Company was Walter G. Morrill, a Medal of Honor winner, a horseman who lived in nearby Dexter. Shortly after returning to Maine, Jefferds served a three year term (1865 - 67) on the Maine Board of Agriculture. In 1867 he presented a paper to the Board which was simply entitled "Raising Horses". (Note: It still makes good reading for breeders of the Standardbred horse.) According to a 1870 census of Foxcroft located at the Thompson Free Library, the Jefferds had attained the age of 43 thus giving them a birthdate in the year 1827. Also listed was an Edward Jefferds age 15. The Jefferds' farm, sometimes referred to as the "Boston Farm", consisted of 70 acres and was located on the north side of the road leading from Guilford to Sebec on Lot 15 in Range 5. Today, the road leading to the farm has been discontinued. Not far away is located "The Blacksmith Shop Museum" maintained by the Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society which Jefferds may have frequented.



Phineus Jefferds

Emma B was not a big mare, standing under fifteen hands and weighing about 900 pounds, according to Editor Thompson who saw her in August of 1880 at Beacon Park or Mystic Park near Boston. She was sired by a Kentucky bred stallion called "Bayard". According to a stallion ad placed in "The Maine Farmer" (6/3/71), Bayard, foaled 1863, was bred by R. A. Alexander of Woodburn Farm in Lexington, got by Pilot Jr. The ad explained that Bayard had been "purchased the first of May by a Boston party" who intended to use him for private breeding purposes but would also offer him to a limited book of outside mares. According to a note in "Turf, Field and Farm" published in "the Monthly," April 1882, Bayard was purchased by F. M. Wetherbee of Boston. It stated that while in Maine he sired 13 foals, five with records from 2.22 to 2.35. (Note: the small number of foals would further suggest that Bayard stood for stallion service only one year in Maine.) The ad further listed Jefferds' stallion "Abdallah" for service.



The Piscataquis Trotting Park

(hereinafter the "Observer"), later corrected, Bayard with Elmer Thompson up showed a quarter in 35 seconds which was said to have been "worth the price of admission".

Jefferds raced Abdallah and other home bred at the local trotting park in Foxcroft. The Piscataquis Central Trotting Park first opened in 1866 according to author Louis E. Stevens who published (1995) a history of Dover-Foxcroft. In early June of 1871 Bayard was shown under 'saddle between trots at the local track. According to the report filed with the *Piscataquis Observer*

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(Emma B 2.22, continued from page 3)

Emma B's dam is unknown to the author, however, Editor Thompson's article noted that her dam was sired by Brown Harry then owned by S. D. Cushman of Dexter. This Morgan stallion was formerly owned by Jefferds and was described in Thompson's *Noted Maine Horses Vol. 1* (1874) as a "very elegant horse" whose offspring were "stylish" and often fast. The early years of Emma B's development are a bit of a mystery. A search for her in the pages of the "Observer" failed to produce results. It could be that she had a different name while in Maine as it was common for a new owner to change the name of a horse once it left Maine. It is worth noting that the "Observer" reported on 6/8/76 that a trotter by the name of "Lady Bayard" prevailed over Jefferds gray mare "Belle Brandon" in the race for four year old trotters at the Piscataquis Park races. Either trotter might have been Emma B. Thompson noted that she trotted several races in 1878 taking a record of 2.38. A search of the pages of the "Boston Globe" (hereinafter "the Globe") shows that she raced at Narragansett Park near Providence in early September. At that time she was driven by Dan Bigley Jr, of Boston. However, she was not entered to trot later that month at either Mystic Park or Beacon Park. The fall trotting schedule for the Eastern Circuit through Plainfield, Ct., Hartford, and Providence also fails to find Emma B entered to trot.



Meanwhile, the "Local News" (8/22/78) from the "Observer" noted that P. M. Jefferds intended to sell his farm and move to Illinois. A "For Sale" ad placed in the "Observer" by Jefferds offered "pasture and wood lands for sale" along with a five year old mare, new buggy, sleighs and harnesses. The September 26 issue of the "Observer" reported that the Jefferds had departed for Illinois, and that "they have the best wishes of all our citizens". (Note: A local history of old Foxcroft by Mary Chandler Lowell published in 1935 states that he died there.) Interestingly, Walter G. Morrill had just completed managing a two day, split (Foxcroft and Dexter) trotting meet. One wonders whether this trotting man with an eye for a coming prospect made an offer on Emma B before she was shipped out of state.

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(Emma B 2.22, continued from page 4)

The trotting season of 1879 was a busy one for Emma B. At Hartford on June 25 she won a race lowering her record to 2.25. At Plainville on July 2 she won again. The "Boston Globe" reported on July 16 that the "lovers of horse-trotting" turned out in force the previous day at Mystic Park to watch a couple of races including the 2.25 Class where Emma B was entered to trot. It took six heats to determine an eventual winner, as both Emma B and Lady Foxie showed on top in two heats after a dead heat in the fifth heat. The sixth heat was described in part as follows:

The word was given at the first trial, and they went off with the chestnut at the gray's wheel. At the turn the gray was ahead, but all the way around the horses would be first one and then the other ahead until the upper turn was reached, | when the gray forged to the front and won the heat by two lengths. |

The summary of the race showed that Emma B was now owned by Jim Keenan of Boston. A week later she won in three straight heats at Providence. Three days later on July 25 at the same track she won the free-for-all in five heats, taking the last three heats. Her best time was 2.23. After trotting 14 heats in ten days, she was shipped to Buffalo where on August 6 she won again in five heats with her best time being 2.22 4. Her season apparently concluded at Point Breeze Park in Philadelphia on October 2 where she trotted for a purse of \$600 in the 2.22 Class. Again she prevailed, this time in three heats taking her record (2.22) in the first heat. The summary printed in "the Monthly" shows she was still in the hands of Jim Keenan. This "Boston sportsman" also had interests in rowing and boxing according to an internet article (9/02), "Fred Plaisted - Professional Sculler", by Bill Miller. He managed the Maine oarsman Fred Plaisted who later (1890) coached at Bowdoin. He also managed the Boston boxer John L. Sullivan. It seems that his chief interest was wagering on the outcome of these contests which might explain why he also owned a trotting horse.

It had been a remarkable year for the trotting mare from Foxcroft. One wonders whether the Jefferds, now in Illinois, were following her career through the pages of "the Monthly". (Note: Editor Thompson would often publish letters from his subscribers outside Maine who wanted to keep up with the doings of Maine's trotters.) Emma B had ~ gained so much respect that she was selected by Currier and Ives to be the subject of a lithograph.



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(Emma B 2.22, Continued from page 5)

This first small folio showed her hooked to a high wheel sulky with a record of 2.22 ½ . Emma B continued to race in 1880. A brief note in the June issue of “the Monthly” stated that she was shipping to the mid-west under the care of James Dustin. Dustin was a native of Winslow who once worked with the trotters of Thomas S. Lang in North Vassalboro. He was a familiar figure on the Eastern Circuit who, according to Thompson, “had a large and varied experience with trotters, among those he has driven, some of them to their fastest records”. This list included the trotter Camors 2.19 ½ by Lang’s Gen. Knox. Dustin was taking over for Dan Bigley Jr. who “could not leave his engagements” on the Eastern Circuit. A later note in “the Monthly” showed her winning arace at Toledo, Ohio. (Note: Her tour of the mid-west must have been short as Editor Thompson saw her back in Boston during his trip there in August).

Trotting on the Eastern Circuit for 1881 got underway in June. On May 1 “the Globe” reported on the trainers stabled at the two Boston area tracks, Mystic Park and Beacon Park. Included among the 200 horses stabled at Beacon Park was Emma B. The article stated in part: “Dan Bigley (Jr.) has the renowned gray mare by Bayard, Emma B., 2.22, who is as handsome as a picture this spring”. Unfortunately, her many fans would have to wait a spell to see her on the track as she was entered but did not trot during the spring meets at Mystic and Beacon Parks. She was entered to trot at Charter Oak Park in Hartford the end of June, but again she did not appear. On July 10 “the Globe” reported that “Emma B has come to herself again. Danny drove her in 2.27 Wednesday, and will send her this morning again. She is a great favorite in Boston”. Finally, on July 23 she | trotted in the Free-For-All Class at Mystic Park finishing third in the summary behind a | Knox trotter called “Victor” teamed by the veteran Hiram Woodruff. A month later she trotted in the 2.21 Class at Hartford for a purse of \$2000. The summary had her losing to the fast Edwin Thorne, her best effort a fourth place finish in the third heat. On September 7 at Mystic Park she was run into while on a break and distanced thereby eliminating her from the contest. Still not in top form, she trotted a week later at Beacon Park in the 2.21 Class finishing ahead of only “Noontide.” (Note: Noontide would become famous for helping to establish a foundation family of trotters. This family is named after her dam, Midnight, who was then at Recluse Farm in South Hiram, the property of James Edgecomb.)

Emma B bounced back to win her next two trots against the stallion Mambrino Dudley at Hartford and Mystic with James Dustin guiding her. According to “the Globe” there had been “not a little talk over the respective merits of the above equines, the owners of each claiming superiority.” This may account for the large print ad in “the Globe” announcing that Emma B would trot October 21 at Mystic Park in Medford. (Note: the only trotter whose name appeared in bold type was Emma B.) This apparently closed out the season for Emma B, and while she did not lower her record, she did finish the year fifth on the list of fastest Maine bred trotters behind Hopeful, Lady of Maud, Camors and Independence, the last three sired by Gen. Knox. The April 1882 issue of “the Monthly” announced to its readers that Emma B had been sold to Richard K. Fox. Fox was a self made millionaire from Ireland who bought a down and out newspaper, the “Police Gazette,” and turned it into an internationally famous weekly. About this time Currier and Ives published a second lithograph of Emma B. which noted that Fox had purchased the gray mare from Jim Keenan for the sum of \$10,000 and changed her name to “Police Gazette”. An interesting internet article by Edward Van Emery entitled “The Sins of New York As Exposed By The Police Gazette” suggests that Fox intended to use her to promote his newspaper.

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Fox did not come from a trotting background but realized that many of his readers (and potential readers) followed the trotting sport. If he could support baseball teams and sponsor various “champion belts” for boxers like John R. Sullivan, he could own a trotter made famous by Currier and Ives. Later in 1882 Currier and Ives published their last lithograph of Emma B, a large folio showing her to harness with a record of 2.22. This must have pleased Mr. Fox, but one wonders if he really appreciated her stature given her humble beginnings. One that did was Editor Thompson who published a large illustration of James Dustin in his August issue with the subheading “Driver of Richard K. Fox’s Police Gazette, Formerly Emma B.” Emma B was not the first nor would she be the last Maine bred trotter to be made famous by Currier and Ives. However, she must have been one of the better looking ones and certainly the only one from Foxcroft, Maine



The Memorial to Emma B 2.22

On a fine October day in 2008, Mary Annis and other members of the Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society welcomed Clark Thompson (the author of the above article) to the Blacksmith Shop museum in Dover-Foxcroft to dedicate a fine stone donated by Mr. Thompson. It commemorates Emma B 2.22 (AKA Police Gazette). Featured speaker at the event was Lou Stevens who gave a history of Emma B’s breeders, Phineas and Clara Jeffords. Their Farm in Gray Valley, which no longer exists, was near the site of the Blacksmith Shop. Emma might even have been shod there!.

The memorial stone near the Blacksmith Shop door. Donated by Clark Thompson and the Friends of the Standardbred Horse.



Mary Annis
Dave Lockwood
Steve Rainsford
Lou Stevens
Jack Clukey
Jim Annis

(Photos by Nancy Battick)



Lewis H. Dow

October 6, 1929 – November 3, 2019

The Dover-Foxcroft recently lost a wonderful friend and very loyal member. Lew, although a world traveler, was born in East Dover and died just a few miles away. He loved his home of East Dover and shared it with all when her made a replica village and brought it to life in an exhibit at the Observer Building museum. Lew was nearly blind and with the help of his wife, Leona, and daughter Judy and daughter-in-law, Deb, each building was cut out and lovingly painted as he remembered it. Last year Lew decided what he had done needed a little tweek, so he began to make these buildings three-dimensional. Well, in the process of sawing the new buildings he cut the ends off of three of fingers! Well, being a crusty old Yankee, he healed and kept right on going. Now that is perseverance!

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(Lew Dow, Continued from Page 8)

Lew's funeral was held at the Dover-Foxcroft Congregational Church and the pews were filled. Many memories were shared that day, we even heard Lew sing "My Way" accompanied by his grandson. It brought tears to many an eye.

Last year, Lew's sister, Luella, visited from Connecticut. She is 103! Of course, that visit meant a trip down to the museum to see Lew's village. What a memorable visit that was. Luella is amazing – her memory is sharp and there were so many memories shared between her and Lew.

Come down any Thursday and check out his display. Lew was so proud of it and we are too. We say goodbye to an old friend, he will be missed.



Lew



Lew, Luella and Leona

Annual Dues

Many thanks to all those who have sent in their Historical Society dues for 2019. We really appreciate having you as a member. If you haven't sent in your dues yet, please do so now so you can continue to enjoy all of the benefits of membership in the Historical Society, including receiving copies of the *Conserver*.

The Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society – Membership Application Form

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Street: _____ City/State/Zip _____

E-Mail: _____

Annual dues are \$10 per person and \$7.00 for senior memberships. Please make checks payable to: Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society, 874 West Main Street, Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426. Dues cover January to December. If you are giving a gift membership, please include the name and address and we'll gladly notify the recipient of your gift.

Before 1900, when horses ruled the roads, Winter presented its own challenges. There was a continuing debate as to whether the roads should be plowed (or scraped) as they are today, or "rolled".

Once the snows came, most people changed out the wheels on their carriages and wagons for runners. Travel on sleighs was much easier in packed snow, so most towns, like Dover and Foxcroft, used snow rollers. These were large wooden drums filled with rocks. They packed the snow down making reasonably good footing for the horses and excellent running for the sleighs.



Eugene Foss rolling snow on South Street
(about 1920)

Message from Mary -

Winter has arrived. We've had our first snow and it's sticking around. This is our "slow time" that will give us time to do a little catch up with cataloging and thinking about a new display in the museum for next year. We try to have at least one new exhibit so people will be anxious to come back and see what we have to offer in our collection.

A new roof is going on to the Observer Building. It was quite expensive – about \$35,000 – but it will be a 50 year roof! Most of our membership will not have to think of another in their lifetime. We had a nice donation from a member and Ruth French remembered us in her will last year, so we had the dollars to tackle this. A building over 150 years old is always in need of something!

I wish you all the happiest of holidays - I remember as a kid how long it was between holidays, now they come so quickly!

Our Corporate Sponsors

A grateful thank you to the following businesses whose funds support the Society and its efforts to preserve our history. When you shop or see these folks, please tell them 'thank you' for their support!

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Thank you all!

Items Available

Glass Christmas ornaments: \$6.00 each (add \$4.00 for shipping)

2008 – Blacksmith Shop
2009 – Observer Building
2010 – Central Hall
2011 – Thompson Free Library
2012 – Foxcroft Academy
2013 – The Blethen House
2014 – Pleasant Street School
2015 – Mayo's Mill
2016 – Piscataquis County Court House
2017 – Brown Mills
2018 – (Old) Mayo Hospital
2019 – The Opera House

DVD's : Glimpses of Dover and Foxcroft - \$10.00 (add \$3.00 for shipping)

Memories of Central Hall/Lou Stevens - \$15.00 (add \$3.00 for shipping)

Dover-Foxcroft throws: \$40.00 (add \$8.00 for shipping)

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