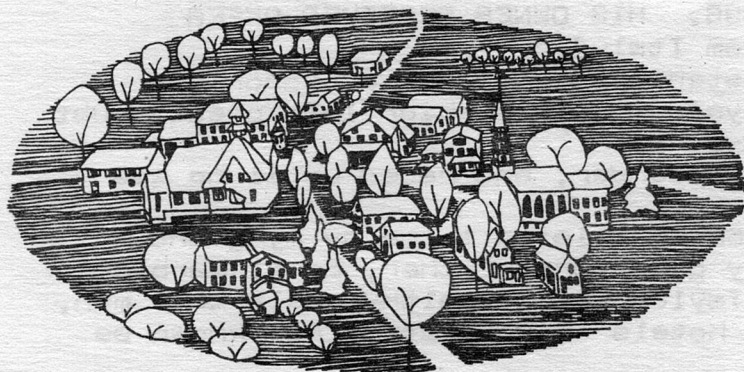


THE SUTTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SUTTON, MASSACHUSETTS



— BULLETIN —

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"BENTON M."

By Ralph Gurney, Jr

Sutton, before the turn of the century, was known to harbor one of New England's finest trotting stallions, owned by my great-grandfather, E.W. Marble

My grandfather related to me many personal and intimate facts in the life of his family, such as the story of the Marble Shuttle factory, the farm, and the race horses which they had bred, raised and later put to rest after his father's death in 1909.

Great-grandfather, a small (160 lbs.) wiry man of very flashy temperament, was born, raised and died in Marble Village on Dudley Road in Sutton. He owned a patent on the Marble Spindle which was in use up until the late 1940's and early 1950's.

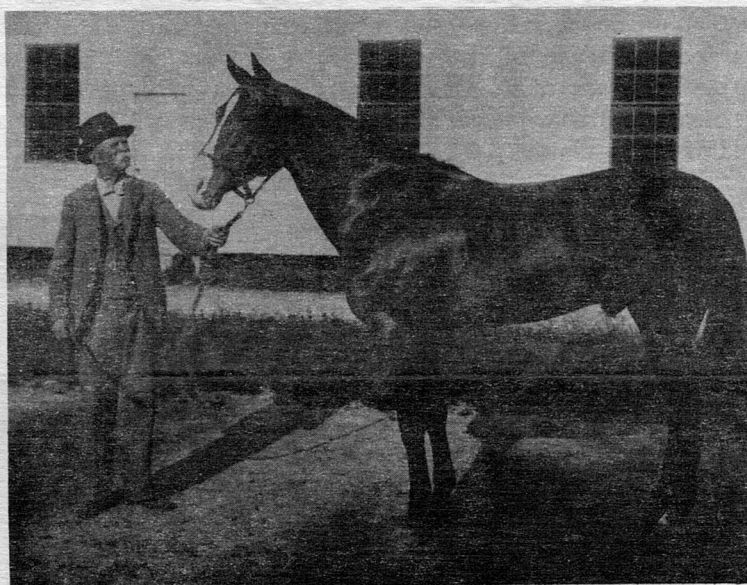
To attest to his fiery temperament, one day while he was working on a trip hammer in the shop, his watch having stopped numerous times, so aggravated him that he stuck it under the trip hammer and the main spring and pieces flew all over the shop.

The other side of his nature revealed a sincere horse-lover and breeder of some valuable stock. He drove in all the races in New England and even went to Canada for ice racing, which his stallion did not find to his liking, so home they came.

During the racing season E. W. always carried five pounds of lead to help his weight, as he would lose rapidly during any three-heat race due to tension.

Each season brought greater headlines regarding his success in New England racing, and I list a few of the headlines from old newspaper clippings which I have recorded in an old scrapbook:

"Portland, Maine: BENTON M. WENT A HOT RACE; LOWERED HIS RECORD 3 TIMES."



Ezra W. Marble with "BENTON" M.

"STAR OF N. E. TURF - BENTON M. SHONE BRILLIANTLY."

"GREAT RECORD OF BENTON M. - BEATS THE GREAT "CEPHAS" AT COMBINATION PARK."

"KNOCKS TRACK RECORD SILLY - 1896."

"BENTON M. MAKES GREATEST RACE EVER SEEN AT MEDFORD PARK."

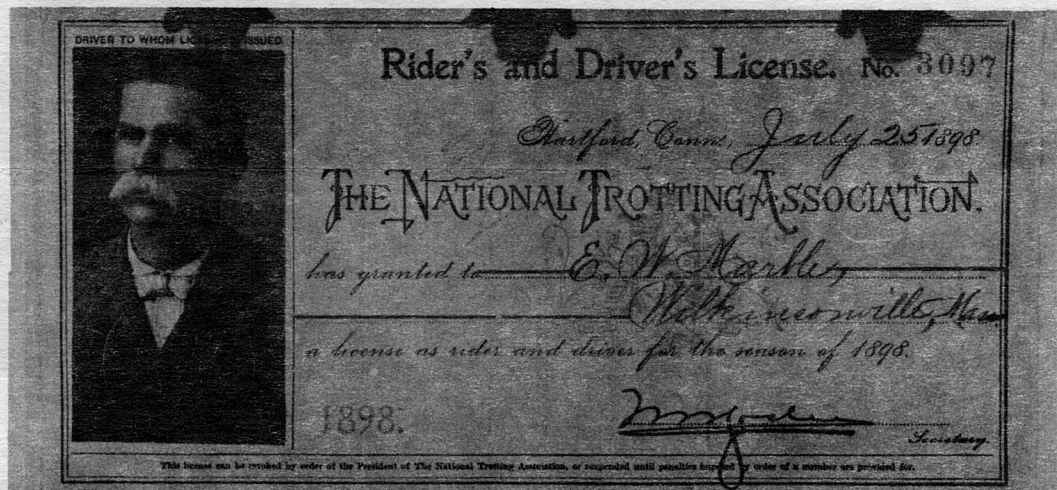
"BENTON M. MAY GO TO ITALY - 1896. HIS OWNER RECEIVED OFFER ABROAD." [I have original letter from Italy].

Benton M. was leased to a Worcester syndicate for a season and during this period sustained some physical damage which left great doubt as to his ever winning again. [1898-1899]

He did return as a very strong contender, and raced until he was fifteen years old.

There is one story of local interest related to me by my grandfather regarding a contest between my great-grandfather, E. W. Marble, and R. C. Taylor of Worcester. Mr. Taylor was a wealthy, self-made man, who owned vast real estate including hotels in Worcester, now known as the R. C. Taylor Trust.

R. C. Taylor and E. W. Marble wagered a little bet between them on a two-horse race at the Worcester Fairgrounds, which was located where Norton Company is today. R. C. Taylor was driving his horse, Peter Patriot, and E. W. Marble was driving his own Benton M., and the wager between them was \$500 to the winner and one bottle of whiskey [Kentucky whiskey, that is].



Facsimile of
E. W. Marble's
Rider's and
Driver's License
issued 1898

As we all know, each side has its own following of men who make their private wagers and cheer their own team. Benton M. was accompanied by many Sutton men who couldn't wait to see him beat Peter Patriot, and at the same time depositing some money in their pockets. My grandfather, E. W. Marble, Jr. told me that his father used the stallion for breeding a mare three days previous to the race, and of course drove Benton M. from Sutton to Worcester the day before the race.

All gathered, made their bets and warmed their insides with a little nectar and watched two of Worcester County's finest, driven by their owners, start down the track. They ran neck and neck to the tune of hooves as the large sulky wheels flashed in the sunlight around the turn of the track. White knuckles, red faces and other factors indicated the tension of the group of people, each hoping for his side to win. Those two noble beasts with a track all to themselves ran side by side, neck and neck, until coming down the home stretch R. C. Taylor's Peter Patriot started to edge out front and opened the distance to a victory for Worcester's own.

READVILLE
TROTTING PARK
PROGRAMME FOURTEENTH Annual Breeders' Meeting \$20,000 STALLION RACE AND OPEN AIR HORSE SHOW
SEPTEMBER 24 to 27 ... 1900 ...

Program
schedule
cover.
1900 Meeting

CHAMPION STALLION RACE.

PURSE \$20,000.

BENTON M. (2.10), ch. h., E. W. Marble, Wilkin-
sonville.
CHARLEY HERR (2.09), b. h., David Cahill, Lex-
ington, Ky.
CRESCCEUS (2.04 $\frac{3}{4}$), ch. h., George H. Ketcham,
Toledo, O.
GRATTAN BOY (2.08), b. h., Roy Miller, Macon,
Ga.

Excerpt From program
listing "BENTON M." in
\$20,000 purse race. Note
entries from four states.
Elite Competition.

The Sutton camp was upset for many reasons, including lost revenue, and glumly watched as E. W. Marble drove a tired, sweating stallion into the paddock area.

After the horses were walked out, washed and bedded down, E. W. Marble promptly went to the Worcester camp and re-challenged R. C. to another race with another \$500 and also another bottle of whiskey. R. C. Taylor basking in the glory of his win, promptly accepted the challenge for the next day. Sutton's camp was now revived by the thought of another chance at not only getting some of their money back, but of restoring their prestige.

The following day all was readied, and two horses and their drivers were warming up in a clockwise direction. They swung the horses around slowly and picked up a steady trot toward the starting line abreast of each other, waiting for the signal that said "GO", and they were off. The drumming of the hooves picked up rapidly as the drivers held steady on the reins rounding the turns. The fever pitch of excitement mounted in both camps as the horses came around the last turn heading for the straight-away and finish. Grandfather said that as he watched the horses coming around the turn he could see the glorious chestnut color of Benton M., sparkling with sweat, pulling a strong lead.

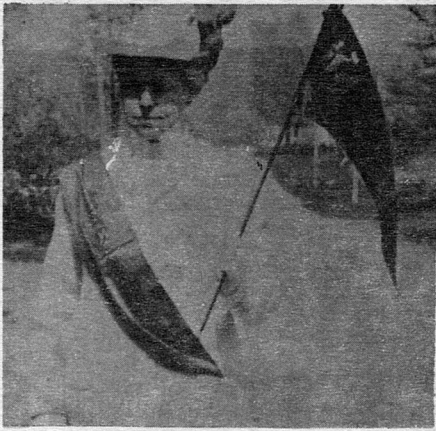
Down the home stretch they came, with Benton's stallion stamina coming forth, steadily opening the breach. Sutton rejoiced, honor was saved, and Benton M., New England's best, had saved the day. This was in the year 1903 [November]

People, horses, and time passed by, and those who shared that moment were all gone except Grandfather. He and I were bringing home a load of hay in 1943, coming down Boston Road near the High School, and we were stopped by Miss Fanny Freeland who lived where John Newton lived recently.

She called out, "Ezra, I've got something that I would like you to have", and she went back into the house as we sat in the wagon waiting. Fanny, with an old-fashioned dress clear to the ground, proceeded toward us with a smile on her face, and handed Gramp two empty bottles with some old tags on them. She said, "These are all that remain of the great day at the Worcester Fairgrounds." All sides had celebrated, and the bottles were brought home by her boyfriend, Fred Fulton, who was also gone, so before she died she wanted Gramp to take them.

People and time are still passing on, but I now have two very old bottles and some beautiful memories.

April 1981



Lucy Waters Phelps

He has donated it to the Society. "L. W. Phelps" is written inside of the oak wooden case. The original instruction book is with the machine along with two extra type wheels.

We are grateful to Mr. Brink in relinquishing this unusual artifact to the custodianship of the Society.

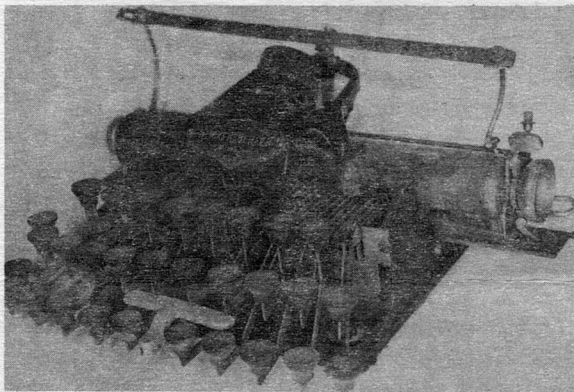
SO, WHATS NEW?

By Rae Johnson

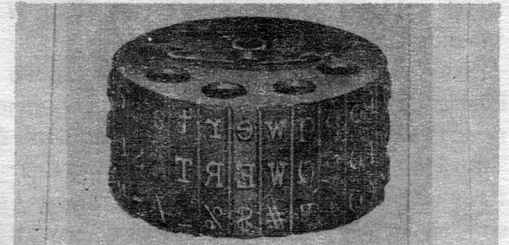
Lucy Waters Phelps is reported to be the first woman to vote in Sutton and perhaps a premier owner of a "wheel type" typewriter whose design is featured in machines of today.

This typewriter did not have separate key bars that imprinted a letter on the page when a key was depressed, but rather by a wheel with alpha-numerical characters on its circumference. This was positioned to strike the desired letter when a key was activated by finger tip.

The typewriter of 1905 vintage was located in a cellar corner of Henry P. Brink's home.



Blickensderfer
Typewriter



Interchangeable "type wheel"

APRIL MEETING NOTICE .

Joyce Hill, consultant and researcher for the Museum of American Folk Art will discuss area portrait painters of the early nineteenth century at the April 7 meeting at the Society's Manchaug Baptist Church, 8 PM. Slides will illustrate her talk. Members and guests may bring in paintings of this era for commentary by Mrs. Hill.

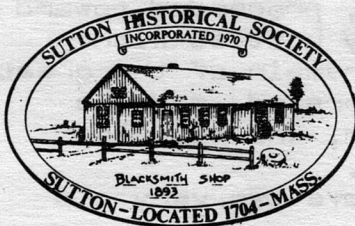
1981 - JANUARY, FEBRUARY and MARCH - WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Irene C. Armenti	Carl & Elinor Hutchinson
Albert & Mathilda Bruno	Joseph & Kristine Harkins, Jr.
Elaine Budzyna	Ronald & Sigrid Johnson
Lester & Lorraine Davis	Duncan & Sheila Putnam
Victor Faltanavic	Dr. Franklin & Irmeli Smith
Barbara E. Weaver	

IN MEMORIAM .

Mrs. Amy Curran and Mrs. Vivian Whittier

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