

On May 5th, 1849, there was foaled a colt in Orange county, New York, which was actually recognized, as the inscription on his fifteen foot granite monument at Chester, N. Y., indicates, as "The Progenitor of the American Light Harness Horse." His name was "Hambletonian," and he was raised and used as a breeding stallion by William Rysdyk until the horse died in 1876. In Rysdyk's "Hambletonian's" sire and dam, "Abdallah" and the Charles Kent mare, there was a truly magical genetic combination for the evolution of speed in the somewhat unnatural gaits of trotting and pacing. All the sulky champions, down to the present day, are descendants of "Hambletonian." They include among thousands of good horses of his stock, "Dexter" (1858), 2.17¼, "Goldsmith Maid," 2.14, "George Wilkes," 2.22, "George Patchen," 2.23½, "Rarus," 2.13¼, "Axtell," 2.12, "St. Julien," 2.11¼, "Jay-Eye-See," 2.10, "Maud S.," 2.08¾, "Nancy Hanks," 2.04, "Lou Dillon," 1.58½ and "Peter Manning," 1.56¾ (1922). The much honored gelding, "Peter Manning," the fastest trotter the world ever knew, is now in a stable within the original boundaries of Lancaster county, at Hanover, Pa.

What a curious coincidence in the annals of racing rests in the fact that the running horse, in modern civilization, started at Chester, England; the trotting horse at Chester, N. Y.!

Racing, with a two-wheeled sulky, was at the height of its local popularity in the eighteen nineties, when there were seldom any running races on an afternoon's program. In 1900, there were thirteen half-mile tracks for the trotter and pacer within Lancaster county. To-day the track at the Lancaster fair grounds is the only one remaining.

A MAY DAY IN LANCASTER

By WILLIAM FREDERIC WORNER

The Lancaster Intelligencer and Journal of Tuesday, April 28th, 1840, contained an announcement that Friday, May 1st, would be fittingly observed by the schools of Lancaster city. The scholars were requested to assemble in their respective school buildings at 9 o'clock on the morning of that day. A half-hour later, the pupils from the schools in the eastern ward of the city were to form in procession and proceed from the school room of Trinity Lutheran church down East Vine street to South Queen, up South Queen street to Penn Square, down West King to Prince, and up the latter street to the western school building, at the corner of West Chestnut and North Prince streets. Here they were to be met by the directors and the examining committee, who were to accompany them in their march on West Chestnut to North Queen street, up the latter thoroughfare to Penn Square, down East King to Duke, and down Duke to Trinity Lutheran church.

The Lancaster Intelligencer and Journal of Tuesday, May 5th, 1840, contained the following interesting account of the May Day observance:

"The spectacle of Friday last has left a deep impression, and will long be remembered by our citizens. The pupils in the public schools—amounting to

nearly fifteen hundred children, of all ages—paraded in grand procession, under the charge of their several teachers, a committee of citizens, and the board of common school directors. They left their several school buildings about half past ten in the morning and walked to Trinity Lutheran church, where the ceremonies, as settled upon by the committee of arrangement, took place. The church was filled to suffocation with a dense mass, the mothers and fathers of the children, together with other citizens, occupying the immense galleries,—the children themselves, the board of directors, and the committee of citizens the pews below. It is estimated that four thousand persons,¹ counting children and all, were present within the building, while a dense mass struggled for admission from without. The services consisted of four appropriate hymns by the children; prayers by the Rev. Dallas D. Lore, pastor of the First Methodist Episcopal church, and the Rev. Dr. John C. Baker, pastor of Trinity Lutheran church; and an address² by the Hon. Benjamin Champneys, president judge of the Second Judicial District of Pennsylvania. The singing was excellent and very effective, especially when, at the end, the whole 1500 children joined their voices in one burst of song. He must have had a cold heart who did not feel a thrill at this affecting ceremony pervading every fibre; and whose feelings were not roused at the recollection that the number of scholars before him were from all ranks and conditions of society.

“The address of Judge Champneys was a production of the highest caste. We cannot do justice to it, by any mere expressions of praise. No one who heard it will deny to it the character of being most able, profound and classic, evincing the scholar, the republican, the father and the citizen. We hope to see the effects that must rise from it, manifest themselves soon,—as well in the teachers as in the scholars; in those who direct the operations of the system, as well as in those whose children reap the blessings. . . .

“In the afternoon the procession marched through two of our principal streets, and proceeded to Trinity Lutheran church where they adjourned, after having first repeated, in their beautiful and impressive way, their simply eloquent hymns. The first of May never was more usefully and interestingly spent; and we predict that more than one good effect will spring from the manner in which our citizens joined to give tone to the celebration. We feel that we are in a new era—that our good city is about taking a high stand in favor of the schools that disperse knowledge to all—and that a purer moral tone pervades the community in which we live.”

Not one of those who took part in this interesting ceremony, or who witnessed it, is alive to-day.

¹ This estimate is too high. It is doubtful whether four thousand persons could be admitted into the building.

² Judge Champney's address was published, in pamphlet form, by John W. Forney, editor and publisher of the Lancaster Intelligencer and Journal, a few weeks after it was delivered. A copy of this excellent address was owned by the late Samuel Auxer. Where it is at present is not known.