

*RODA 886

For thousands of years the scenic isle of Roda has influenced the course of history in Egypt because of its strategic position amidst the River Nile. The island was called Roda, or gardens, because it was laid out in gardens and was at one time inhabited only by gardeners. A.O. Lamplough wrote in 1909 after visiting "this jewel with myriad glancing facets" that "only a Princess can have reigned over this garden." And he remarks all the garden is an echo of "once upon a time. The flower beds are one great community of changing tint and perfume. And even the water...changes to gold, rose, or crimson as the strong flush of the failing sun passes over it. It had not hopes nor fears for the day, nor does it refuse the night. It is content to enhance the inherited knowledge of a land so deeply resigned to the reality of Nature."

Such was the site which HRH Prince Mohamed Ali chose for his magnificent Manial Palace. Against this background of oriental splendor he created some of the most beautiful Arabians bred in Egypt. Little wonder that one of the loveliest Arabian mares he ever bred should be named, Roda, in honor of this island paradise.

Few would quarrel with the saying that beauty is its own excuse for being. *Roda was a classic beauty. Her loveliness was acclaimed both in Egypt and America, and even by today's highly competitive standards she was a masterpiece. Classic beauty captures the imagination throughout the centuries:

Nefertiti suffers not by comparison to Elizabeth Taylor.

Prince Mohamed Ali was an artist, and beauty and elegance were his guiding principles in breeding his horses. He brought the Kuhaylan Jellabi strain to new heights at Manial, and the family through Negma and Mahroussa became world famous.

Among the admirers of this strain was W.R. Brown of Maynesboro Stud, Berlin, New Hampshire. He was particularly enamoured with Mahroussa, a half-sister to *Roda. When he learned Prince Mohamed Ali would consider selling some of his choicest stock, he sent his emissary, Mr. Jack Humphreys, to Egypt to select the horses. Mr. Humphreys kept his employer informed by letter in regard to the arrivals he had chosen to date. On March 4, 1932, he wrote to Mr. Brown from Cairo advising that:

"*Roda is just a baby but to me represents the best thing you are getting as a combination of individual





Arab character (at this time) plus the blood that has produced their true Arab quality. The first day I saw them they did not know that I spoke French and their only criticism of this filly among themselves was a slight heaviness in the bone of the lower jaw coming from the blood of Farhan. If their theory is right that these bones refine with age, this is a fault which will later disappear. Roda is by Mansour out of Negma. She thus combines all three of the key horses."

Negma, sired by Dahman El Azrak and out of Bint Yamama was highly prized by Prince Mohamed Ali. Her produce were acclaimed for their excellence, and she also held the distinction of being the mare that produced Prince Mohamed Ali's black "dream" Arabian. After several unfruitful attempts, Negma, bred to Ibn Rabdan, much to the delight of the prince, produced a lovely black foal. This particular bloodline continues to occasionally produce black animals.

Mansour, sire of *Roda, was a very bold and masculine grey stallion of the Kuhaylan Mimreh strain. Foaled on April 19, 1921, at the Royal Agricultural Society's Bahtim Stables, he was sired by Gamil Manial (Jamil III) and out of the mare Nafaa El Saghira. Mansour sired many exceptional individuals including the most influential sires Nazeer and Sheik El Arab. Mr. Humphreys described him as having a beautiful head

"almost perfect according to their ideal," and being sound and well built.

At the time of importation, *Roda was only a yearling, but her stamina must have been equal to her beauty. Within a year she entered the show ring and walked away with honors. *Roda was chosen Reserve Champion Mare at the National Arabian Show in 1933, as a two year old, and in a class of twelve entries! She was defeated only by *Rifala, the well-known dam of *Raffles. Other awards won by *Roda included second prize in Columbia, Tennessee, in 1936 and first place in Franklin, Tennessee.

Shortly after Mr. Brown imported the aforementioned Arabian horses, the Maynesboro Stud was discontinued and the horses sold. At this time *Roda was purchased by J.M. Dickinson, Travelers Rest Stud, Franklin, Tennessee, and it was under this ownership that *Roda received her show ring honors.

One of our long time Arabian breeders, Lorane Musser, saw *Roda at Dickinson's and recollects: "She was my choice of the Egyptian mares. While [in my opinion] she did not have the classic beauty of Aziza or Hamama, she was still of classic beauty and was of good balance—well put together. I was looking for a good horse first, then a good Arabian all around. She was the one! We wanted to buy her but at that time Col. Dickinson would not sell her.

While at Travelers Rest, where she remained until 1937, she produced Hallany Mistanny, 1315 sired by *Zarife, 885 and foaled on April 21, 1937. Her next foal Rodasr, 1591 is listed as bred by J.M. Dickinson, however *Roda was sold at approximately this time to L.V. Simons, Allendale, South Carolina so Rodasr, by *Nasr, 889 is assumed to have been foaled at the Simons farm with foaling date listed as April 26, 1938. These two stallions were the only straight Egyptian produce of *Roda.

Under the ownership of Mr. Simons, *Roda produced Apollo, 1687 in 1939, Rodetta, 1972

in 1940, Shemma, 2150 in 1941 and Weda, 2734 in 1943. Each of these foals was sired by Agwe, 1287.

Mr. Simons was also very fond of *Roda was a riding mount and often hunted quail with her. *Roda enjoyed the hunting trips, and would stand quietly while Mr. Simons shot from the saddle.

In the meantime, several miles away in Asheville, North Carolina, Margaret Shuey of Sunny Acres Arabians continued to dream that one day *Roda would grace her stables. For eight long years she had attempted to purchase *Roda, but Mr. Simons had always refused to price her. Then one spring day in 1944 came the unexpected but ever-awaited phone call—*Roda was for sale! Margaret quickly concluded the purchase and was also fortunate to obtain her daughter Rodetta. Wasting no time, she hastened to pick them both up the same day she received the call!

At the time of purchase *Roda was once again in foal to Agwe with the resultant foal being born at Sunny Acres in 1945. This stallion was Jaspre, 3190 and like many of *Roda's foals he has done much to preserve this breeding and beauty.

*Roda lived up to all Margaret Shuey's expectations and more! Her personality stood out among all the horses. She was the favorite of all who came to visit. She also established herself as head mare in the pasture, and though never a bully, always protected the young foals. Mrs. Shuey fondly recalls, "When her foaling time got close, *Roda preferred to have someone sleep in the stall with her. If the person in attendance dozed off, *Roda would gently nuzzle them when the time arrived, looking at them as if to say the time has come, look after me."

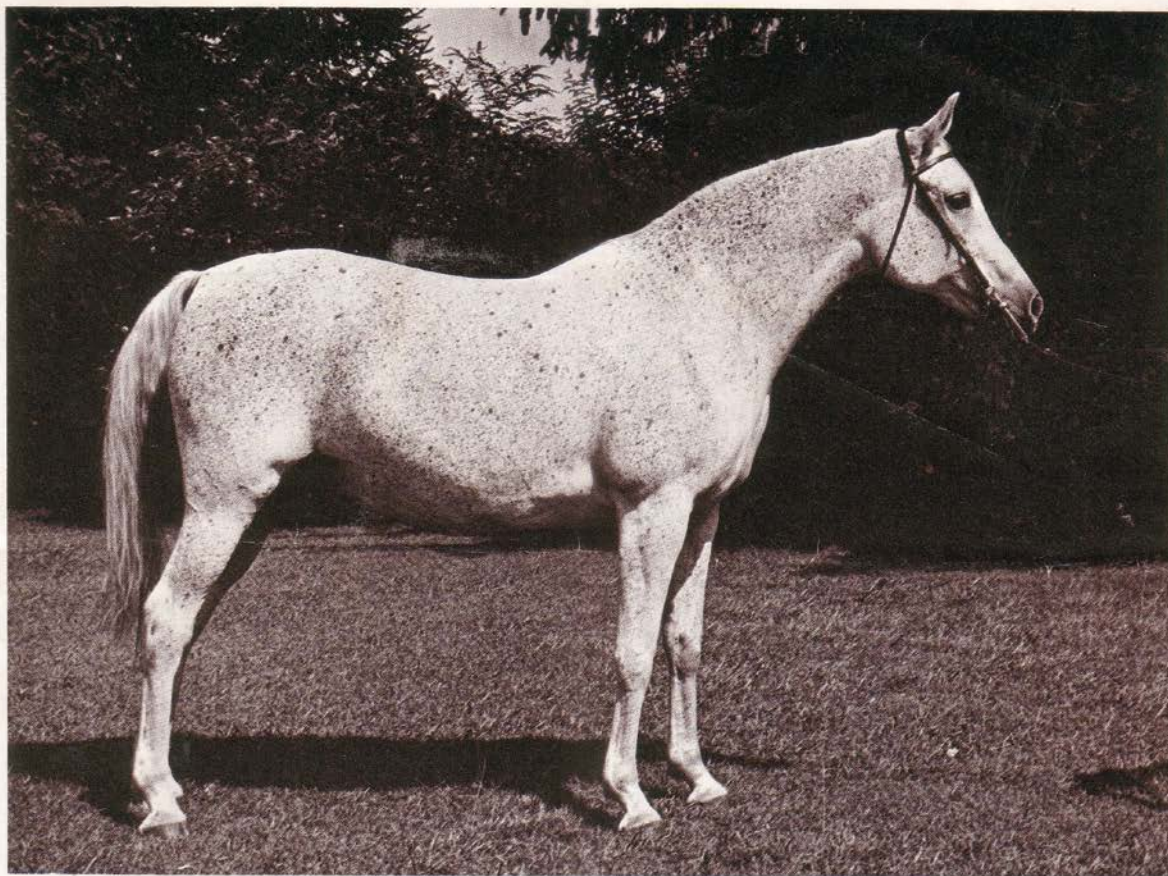
*Roda was ridden by Margaret Shuey nearly every day until the mare suffered from forage poisoning (through fault of no one) at 18 years of age. The mare hovered near death for many days, but her strong will to live

pulled her through. She was the type of mare that anyone could approach in the pasture, catch and ride anywhere. Even with all of her travels, changes and experiences she remained sound until the day she died. *Roda was supposed to have been involved in an accident when quite young, and some records indicate permanent wounds, but at 13 years of age there remained no evidence of any serious injuries.

*Roda stood 14.3 hands, weighed 900 pounds, had flat bones, pasterns of good length, and extremely good action. The old records indicate that *Roda had to her credit several first placings, in open showing, in the old Walk-Trot classes. Among *Roda's other admirable qualities she had a good shoulder, level croup and a long neck. Her neck was inclined to be a little cresty, and some people faulted her for this, but her throat latch was well defined. Her head was a breeder's dream, short, broad between the eyes and having an extreme muzzle. Col. Dickinson mentioned in his catalog: "The head of *Roda has been described by one of the most distinguished breeders of Arabs in the United States as perfectly representative of the classic type."

While at Sunny Acres, *Roda produced three foals by *Raffles, 952: Tut Ankh Amen, 3830 in 1946, Star of Egypt, 4167 in 1947 and Joye 4803 in 1948. She was then bred to Ibn Hanad, 4165 and in the next two years produced two foals sired by him: Sunny





Acres Katydid, 9142 in 1954 and Sunny Acres Fantasy, 9886 in 1955.

In 1960, at the age of 29, the grand old matriarch passed away. She was in foal to Shalimar Teke, 11221 at the time of her death.

Although *Roda no longer graces the pastures of Sunny Acres, the descendents of this memorable mare are numerous there. Sixteen head of Arabians at this farm carry her blood, most of them grand-daughters, as the last daughter of *Roda, Sunny Acres Fantasy, was killed by lightning in 1974.

The show ring is filled with Arabians that descend from *Roda. With such fine produce as Hallany Mistanny, Tut Ankh Amen, Star of Egypt, Jaspre and many others, *Roda's beauty will continue to be remembered from generation to generation.



Contributing Author: Dixie Ryan
 Editor: Judith Forbis
 Published by The Pyramid Society
 Rt. 4, Box 900
 Lufkin, Texas 75901

Copyright 1976 - All rights reserved

Ref. No. 1

