

Knox Morgan & Frank Chandler c. 1904



Provenance unknown

Chosen by Dart Thalman

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Knox Morgan was a Morgan horse stallion that won championship prizes at the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis, MO. At the time, Knox Morgan was owned by Frank G. Chandler of Peacham, VT. The Morgan horse breed originated in the 1790s with a stallion owned by Justin Morgan of Randolph Center, Vermont. The stallion, originally named "Figure," eventually became known by the name of his owner, Justin Morgan. The Morgan breed has become a widely popular horse for its versatility, hardiness, speed, and disposition. It is now the official animal of Vermont.

Foaled in 1891 in Brunswick, Maine, Knox Morgan (seven generations removed from Justin Morgan) was purchased by Frank soon thereafter and brought to the Chandler Farm on Slack Street in Peacham. Having learned that Morgan horses were going to be shown at the 1904 World's Fair and that cash prizes would be awarded, Frank was determined to make his way to St. Louis with Knox where he was sure, "We'd beat them all." Joined by his son John (going as the required "attendant" for the horse), Frank made his way with Knox to St. Louis in August of 1904. In a cover story, the *Inter-State Journal Illustrated* (no date) reported the competition results as follows:

Knox Morgan...owned by F. G. Chandler, Peacham, Vt...won both first and championship prizes at St. Louis, over nine other Morgan stallions, the pick of the world in the Blood. He is of a beautiful dappled mahogany bay color, stands over fifteen hands high, weights 1,100 pounds, and notwithstanding the "coyness" with which he regarded the World's Fair official photographer is of a fine disposition.

Given the time to travel to St. Louis and back, Frank and John were away from their Peacham farm for a month. The work of the farm was left to Frank's wife, Elsie, and their three young daughters, not an easy task given the time of year when haying had to be done. Unfortunately, the prize money did not clear the farm's debts not to mention that the sum itself was reduced by the railway fares for two men and a horse, as well as board for almost a month.

Frank did travel around the region with Knox, collecting the \$15 stud fee from each pairing. Although the details are unclear, in 1915 Knox was acquired by Joseph C. Brunk, a well-known breeder of champion Morgan horses in Illinois and a good friend of Frank. Frank and Joseph along with other Morgan horse enthusiasts from Vermont and beyond, founded the Morgan Horse Club (now the American Morgan Horse Association) at the Vermont State Fair in September 1909 and served together as officers during the Club's early years.

Knox's progeny in Vermont and Illinois include 20 colts and 35 fillies. To this day Morgan breeders, enthusiasts, and historians across the country prefix his name, "Grand Old" Knox Morgan, the only horse to ever carry a title with him for a century past his death.