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University of Nevada, Reno

**A War Born Sport: the Evolution of Horse Show Jumping**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of

Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology and the Honors Program

by

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We recommend that the thesis  
prepared under our supervision by

**Arielle Krause**

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**A War Born Sport: the Evolution of Horse Show Jumping**

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requirements for the degree of

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## **Abstract**

Horse show jumping is largely a sport without a known history. There is not an official written history of the sport, but some riders were taught aspects of oral history about the sport. The lack of knowledge about show jumping's history has inspired this project. This project will use written records and oral history to prove that the evolution of the sport of show jumping had its genesis in cavalry training for war, specifically that the Prussian cavalry's training methods in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century were the catalyst that led to the development of horse show jumping, the establishment of the sport in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, and the development of the modern sport in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The project also includes a discussion of the contemporary sport and the sport's future in the words of twelve participants in the sport.

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## Preface

I have been in love with horses for longer than I can remember. My love first manifested itself when I was two years old. My mom loves to tell the story about that day. She says that it was a sunny day. Two year old me and a couple of other children were playing in the backyard under my mom's supervision. She averted her attention from us for just a moment, but when she turned back, I had crawled into the corral in our backyard, was under the belly of one of the two tamed mustangs that lived there, and was scratching its stomach. My mom says that she will never forget first of all her panic – beneath the stomach of a horse is a very dangerous place to be – but secondly, how the mustang splayed its legs, had its head stuck between its front legs and was staring down at me. She claims that the mustang did not move an inch until I was safely out from underneath it.

Strangely, it was not until I was nine years old that I first took a horseback riding lesson. I remember that it felt like a dream come true for me to be on the back of a horse. My young mind had not thought beyond simply being on a horse. However, I happened to begin lessons at a horse show jumping barn whose owner and trainer is nationally renowned. Once I had jumped my first jump, there was no going back. I have now been involved competitively in show jumping for over a decade.

From the time I was nine until I was nineteen, I do not recall ever once questioning my sport or its practices. It never occurred to me that, logically, getting on a 1,000 pound animal and jumping fences was an odd thing to do. Not to mention all of the practices and traditions in the sport. For example, one of the first things you learn when you begin working around horses is that you do most everything from the left side of the

horse. You put a halter on from the horse's left, lead them from the left, saddle them from the left, tighten the girth from the left, bridle them from the left, and mount from the left. The left side of the horse is even called the "near side" of the horse and the right side the "off side." I was never given an explanation for these strange practices, and never thought to ask for one.

It was not until early 2010 that my ignorance about my passion was revealed to me by a woman named Melanie Smith Taylor. Melanie was a member of the first United States Olympic team to win a team gold medal in 1984 and was both an American Grandprix Association Lady Rider of the Year and overall Rider of the Year in 1974. She started a program called the Emerging Athletes Program, or EAP, in 2009 to discover and foster young talent in show jumping in the United States. A significant part of her program revolved around educating the participants about the history of show jumping, because most competitors in my generation know nothing about the history of the sport. Individuals in older generations than mine were taught elements of our sport's history orally. For whatever reason, oral history is not taught as often as it was. If there were a written history of jumping horses, then an oral history would not be necessary, but the written histories that I have found have not satisfied my desire for knowledge about the history of show jumping.

Due to my own lack of knowledge, the lack of knowledge of my peers, and a lack of a written history that satisfied me, I perceived a gap in knowledge in the history of show jumping, and leapt at a chance to write about my passion for my senior thesis. However, I found a larger gap than I thought I would, and this project has expanded to fit the gap that I perceive.

The gap that I perceived that I did not initially plan to fill was the lack of literature about show jumping's importance to the individuals who participate in it. However, as I researched the history of show jumping, I decided that it was necessary to address the importance of the sport and the sport's history to the section of society that is involved in it because if the sport and the history of the sport were not seen as important by participants in the sport, this project would be pointless. The following is all that I have discovered both from written records and from individuals in modern show jumping about the sport and its history.

## Introduction

### Overview

At present, show jumping is largely a sport without a known history, and its global community is like a culture that has forgotten its past, but that has not always been the case and there are exceptions today. Although there is not a written history of the sport, some members of older generations of riders were taught an oral history of the sport. The younger generations of riders lack knowledge about the sport's history because oral histories are no longer passed down and no written history exists that discusses prior to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. For example, in 2010, I participated in the Emerging Athletes Program, a program that develops talented young riders in the United States. Twenty-four riders under the age of twenty-one were selected to participate from California and Nevada. Out of twenty-four, not a single one of us knew who invented the forward riding seat that every show jumping rider uses today. The lack of knowledge about show jumping's history among its participants and in written works has inspired this project. This project uses written records and oral history to establish that the evolution of the sport of show jumping had its genesis in the Prussian cavalry's training methods and then developed into a contemporary sport in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

Horse show jumping is a relatively young sport. It has been an internationally recognized sport for approximately 100 years (Mallon 15). Little research exists on how the sport developed. The written historical record of jumping horses is cursory. Horses were probably used to traverse obstacles long before the practice of jumping horses was mentioned in writing, and there are gaps in the written record regarding the use of jumping horses. A more consistent written record begins in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century when

Frederick the Great transformed the Prussian cavalry into a highly trained and maneuverable branch of the military and used them successfully in battle (Schmidt 12).

Show jumping became a recognized sport when it was introduced into the Olympics at the 1912 Stockholm Games (Mallon 15). However, the act of jumping horses is mentioned in writing as early as the fourth century BCE in a horse training manual by Xenophon (Xenophon 45-50). During the Middle Ages, horses were jumped by cavalries in Europe as exercise, but were rarely jumped in battle because a horse had to carry the weight of a fully armored man along with its own armor (Duarte 24).

Frederick II, or Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, revolutionized the training of cavalry in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. Cavalries at the time varied in strength, but very few contained well trained horsemen and horses. Poorly trained horses and horsemen are often cited as the cause of a lost battle (Balck 3-4). Frederick the Great insisted on rigorous training and discipline for his cavalry which included traversing obstacles, or “leaping,” and navigating difficult terrain (Faucitt and Frederick; Balck 3-4; Schmidt 31). His new use of horses as a tactical advantage led other countries, particularly Italy, France, Britain and the United States, to eventually lighten and retrain their own cavalries by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century (Balck 3-4; *Calvary Tactics in Three Parts* 42; United States Cavalry Association, vol. 11-12 341; Hoyt xxxiv and 58; Peters 178-184; Schmidt 12). The rush to lighten and retrain cavalries birthed theories about how to ride a horse effectively over difficult terrain. It is likely that these theories evolved into contemporary show jumping. However, research had not yet verified or demonstrated show jumping’s roots in the cavalry prior to this project. This project utilizes primary and secondary

works and oral history to piece together how the use of jumping horses in the cavalry, particularly by the Prussians in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, led to contemporary show jumping.

### **Literature Review**

Very little scholarly work has been conducted on the history of horse show jumping. However, scholarly sources about the history of horsemanship in general do exist and were consulted, such as “Marginalia: How to Sit on a Horse” by Keith Thomson, which was published in 1987. Scholarly sources about the history of horsemanship in general were consulted to give context to the development of jumping because the different disciplines of riding mutually influenced each other as they evolved. For example, show jumping is a discipline of riding that is distinct from cross country jumping; the style of riding, or equitation, and the physical expectations of the horse are different, but the equitation used for both disciplines has co-evolved.

The literature used for this project consists of primary sources. Primary sources included in this project are *On Horsemanship* by Xenophon originally written in 360 BCE and translated by Henry Graham in 2004, *The Royal Book of Jousting, Horsemanship and Royal Combat* by the 15<sup>th</sup> century King of Portugal, Dom Duarte translated by Antonio Preto and Steven Muhlberger in 2005, *The Caprilli Papers* by Federico Caprilli and Piero Santini published in 1967, and *Le Manège Royal* by Antoine de Pluvinel originally published in 1623 and published in English in 1988. Primary sources that were published for military purposes were of significant importance, such as *Regulations for the Prussian Cavalry* by Frederick II published in 1757 and translated into English by William Faucitt, *Military Commission to Europe 1855-1856* by Major

Alfred Mordecai, *Journal of the United States Cavalry Association* by the United States Cavalry Association volumes seven, eleven, twelve and twenty-four published in 1894, 1898 and 1913-1914, *Remarks on Cavalry* by Charles Emmanuel de Warnery published in 1798, *Cavalry: its history, management and uses in war* by Jean Roemer published in 1863, *Tactics, Volume 2* by William Balck published in 1914, and *The French Cavalry in 1870: with its Tactical Results* by Jean Jacques Theophile Bonie published in 1873.

Additional primary military sources were utilized. Secondary sources were used to give context to primary sources.

## **Methodology**

### *Written History*

The exploration of the sources listed above first describe the historical uses of jumping horses and the state of Western European cavalries prior to Frederick the Great. Next, the research establishes that Frederick the Great trained his cavalry in a way that was significantly different than how the rest of the European nations were training their cavalries. Specifically, Frederick the Great made traversing difficult terrain and obstacles a part of training the Prussian cavalry. Next, sources written by cavalry officers in areas other than Prussia demonstrate how Frederick the Great's ideas about how to properly train cavalry units spread geographically. Records from early horse shows are used to discuss the evolution of the early sport and to demonstrate the shift of show jumping from the military to the civilian sphere.

Secondary sources, such as *Horses and Horsemanship through the Ages* by Luigi Gianoli and Mario Monti (1969), give context to the history of show jumping by

explaining the history of horsemanship. Secondary sources, such as *The Anatomy of Victory: Battle Tactics, 1689-1763* by Brent Nosworthy (1990), and *The Wars of Frederick the Great* by Dennis Showalter (1996), provide context about war and the cavalry's importance to successful militaries in 17<sup>th</sup> century through 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe. Secondary sources, such as *The 1900 Olympic Games* by Bill Mallon (1998) give context to primary sources about the early Olympic Games.

### *Oral History*

This project also includes an oral history component. The results of the interviews comprise the second part of this project. Therefore, the second part of this project has a different structure and style than the first part of the project that is done in the style of historical research. The second part of this project seeks to tell the oral histories that the participants in the study learned and allow each individual's voice to come through in the work, rather than analyze the oral histories collected.

The interviews aim to learn how current participants in the sport understand its history and the contemporary sport. There is not an official, written history of the sport that discusses the use of jumping horses prior to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century; therefore, participants in the sport relied on oral history as a means to understand the basis of the sport until recently. Traditions practiced in the contemporary sport are integrally rooted in military history yet participants of the younger generations in the sport do not know the sport's relationship to the military, and practice the traditions without question. For example, today's riders do everything from leading to mounting from the left of the horse, a tradition that developed to avoid hitting the horse with the sword on the soldier's left hip.

The oral history component of this project required a particular type of subject. Specifically, the subjects needed to be adult participants in show jumping who knew some oral history of show jumping. Not all participants in the sport learn oral history of the sport, and therefore, I limited the study to individuals who knew aspects of oral history to focus the research on collecting oral histories to compare to the written history of show jumping. I began my sample with contacts I had in the sport that I believed knew aspects of oral history of show jumping. I originally contacted ten participants in the sport by phone, email or text depending on my relationship with the individual. Through snowball sampling, I eventually contacted twenty participants by phone, email or text depending on the individual's preferred form of communication. Of the twenty contacted, twelve felt that they were taught aspects of oral history. The interviewees include local professionals, local adult non-professionals, nationally renowned judges, and Olympic medal winners.

Seven of the interviews were conducted in person. Two of the interviews were conducted over the phone. Three were conducted as written questionnaires. The interviews in person and over the phone were structured interviews that lasted approximately twenty minutes. All of the interviews and written questionnaires consisted of the same eleven questions. The questions are attached in the form of the written questionnaire in Appendix A. The eleven questions investigate the oral history that the individuals learned including how the sport began and how an oral history has helped him or her to understand the sport. The interviews also seek to fill a gap I perceive in the literature about the sport: the role that show jumping plays in the lives of those who

participate in it. Therefore, the interviews also discuss what place the sport has in each interviewee's life, and what the individual thinks about the future of the sport.

### **Anticipated Results and Significance**

The objective of this project is to prove that the military's use of horses evolved into the contemporary sport of show jumping. The research demonstrates a link from Frederick the Great's cavalry regulation changes to the expansion of his ideas throughout Europe that influenced the cavalries of Italy, France, Britain and the United States. The research demonstrates a link between the expansion of Frederick the Great's theories throughout Europe to the beginnings of the sport in Paris, France in 1866 when, according to experts in the sport, the first jumping class was held (Williams 15). The research demonstrates a link between the cavalry's practice of the sport and the eventual civilian practice of the sport. Lastly, the research demonstrates that even though today's riders do not have an official written history of the sport to consult, many have been taught aspects of oral history that firmly root show jumping in military history.

A record of jumping horses from its earliest mentions to the present will be of use to anthropologists and historians researching the impact of horses on human culture, the horse's role in warfare, and the cavalry's importance to successful army's from the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The oral history section of this project will be of use to historians and anthropologists researching the role and use of oral history in contemporary sports.

## **Outline**

The thesis is divided into two parts. Part One contains four chapters, and traces the evolution of the practice of jumping horses from its first mention in writing in 360 BCE to the contemporary sport of show jumping. The first chapter discusses the use of the jumping ability of horses from its earliest mention in writing, through the Middle Ages, and ends discussing the state of Western European cavalries in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. The second chapter discusses Frederick the Great's reforms to the Prussian cavalry, particularly the training reforms that he implemented. The third chapter traces the geographic spread of Frederick the Great's cavalry reforms, particularly in Italy, France, Britain and the United States. The fourth chapter discusses the first shows that included show jumping, the sport's introduction into the Olympics, the shift of the sport from a military sport to a civilian sport, and the sport's evolution into the contemporary sport.

Part Two of the project demonstrates a significant shift in style. It contains the oral histories collected in the interviews and is divided into two chapters. The first chapter of Part Two, or chapter five, includes a section on each of the twelve individuals interviewed for the project and will tell what the individuals learned about the history of the sport and the role of the sport in the individuals' lives in his or her own words. The second chapter of Part Two, or chapter six, explores the sport's projected place in the future. The project concludes with a review of the connections between show jumping's past, present and future.

**Part One:**

**The History of Horse Show Jumping**

## **Chapter One:**

### **A Historical Look at Jumping Horses**

The first chapter of this project discusses the earliest mentions of humans jumping horses to demonstrate the antiquity of the practice of jumping horses in Europe. The chapter then describes the evolution of riding style, or equitation, in 15<sup>th</sup> century through 17<sup>th</sup> century Europe. Lastly, the chapter explores the state of Western European cavalries in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. This chapter provides a historical foundation for the discussions in the later chapters about the practice of jumping horses in the cavalry and its development into a sport.

#### **Ancient Times**

Humans have been utilizing the leaping ability of horses since at least 360 BCE when Xenophon, a Greek philosopher, wrote *Hippike*, or *On Horsemanship* (Hope 19). However, there are no ancient representations in art, Greek or otherwise, of horses jumping, which implies to many scholars that the act was “unspectacular” and unremarkable, and was probably practiced far earlier than Xenophon’s time (Xenophon and Anderson 106).

Xenophon suggested that when a man is riding a horse that he is interested in purchasing, that he make sure the horse willingly navigates difficult terrain and traverses obstacles before buying the horse (Xenophon 45). Xenophon taught that “there will be many occasions when the horse will have to run down-hill and up-hill and along a slope as well as to take a leap across or out of something and to jump down” (Xenophon 45).

He felt that horse and rider would be more useful to one another if both were capable of these feats (Xenophon 45). Xenophon implies that a horse unwilling to obey its rider is akin to “a disobedient servant,” which he calls “a useless thing” (Xenophon 24).

However, Xenophon insists that “a disobedient horse is not only useless, but he often plays the part of a very traitor” because the disobedience of a single horse can lose a battle (Xenophon 24). Xenophon suggested that men hunt on horseback to practice traversing terrain and obstacles that the prey led them through as practice for war (Xenophon 48)

The ideal gentleman in Xenophon’s philosophy imitates in his riding “as far as possible the conditions of active service and avoiding neither rough ground nor obstacles, provided that he can do so without injuring his horse” (Xenophon and Anderson 102). A good horseman, in ancient Greece, was a good soldier, and neither a good horseman nor a good soldier would avoid an obstacle if the quickest way to his duty was to traverse the obstacle (Xenophon and Anderson 109). However, an obedient horse in ancient Greece would not have needed to be the bold jumper necessary to traverse artificial obstacles, such as fences. In Greece, “the ditches are the most important obstacles” because the Greek country side was never fenced like many western European countries (Xenophon and Anderson 105). In ancient Greece, there is no evidence that any type of jumping competition or race existed in ancient times (Xenophon and Anderson 105). Therefore, Xenophon’s aim was not to create good sportsmen or horses for sport; rather, he aimed to produce “a horse that will carry its master across country safely,” a horse that will aid a soldier in war time (Xenophon and Anderson 106). Therefore, “the horse must not refuse

obstacles, as speed will be important in warfare” (Xenophon and Anderson 106).

Xenophon died in 355 BCE.

### **Middle Ages**

For the 1,700 years after Xenophon, there is no historical record of change in European horsemanship. There are relatively few written works that have survived from the Middle Ages. Some scholars assert that nothing was written about equitation during this time (Hope 23). They acknowledge that there certainly were works written in the Middle Ages about horses, but they focus on the horse’s appearance, caring for horses and stable management, not on riding and training horses (Hope 24). In the Middle Ages, most cultures relied more on oral tradition than the written word because creating a written document was expensive and most individuals were illiterate (Ramsey iv and vii). Therefore, most written works created during the Middle Ages were written for and paid for by nobility and few copies were made (Hull Taylor). It was not until the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century that written works became more numerous with the invention of the printing press (Hull Taylor).

There are very few manuscripts that pre-date the printing press that are in print today, are translated into English, and that deal with horsemanship. The most renowned is *The Royal Book of Horsemanship, Jousting and Knightly Combat* written by the 15<sup>th</sup> century king of Portugal, King Dom Duarte. King Duarte’s manual demonstrates the lack of change in horsemanship since Xenophon. King Duarte mentions the act of a soldier “to gallop normally and to make reasonable jumps” as an act a soldier should be capable of performing (57). By King Duarte’s time, “artificial obstacles” were a concern; he describes how the rider must allow the horse to gallop right up to the obstacle and how to

encourage the horse to leap the obstacle rather than stop abruptly (133). King Duarte seems to echo Xenophon's beliefs in that he wrote that a good horseman should be at ease "galloping up and down hill, hunting, [and] maneuvering" and that all of these should be practiced by those wishing to become at ease while mounted (70-71). King Duarte emphasizes the importance of a horseman's complete comfort while mounted. Before firearms, cavalry engagements tended to become "a series of single combats" (Sidney et al. 254). Therefore, Duarte asserts that it is easy to understand "the great advantage that the skilled horsemen have when at war compared to others less qualified in the art of riding, even if they have identical abilities in the other necessary arts" (6). King Duarte implies that an individual who is a good horseman and a highly trained horse are more likely to survive a battle because they are not fighting each other, only the enemy (6). Therefore, it is logical to assume that an entire army of good horsemen on highly trained horses are more likely to win a battle. King Duarte is the first to connect being a virtuous man with being a good horseman. He laments of his cavalrymen that "it would be enough that, when riding beasts, they behave like men and not like beasts" (13).

## **Post-Middle Ages**

### *16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Century Cavalry Training*

Even though European generals and strategists knew that well trained men and well trained horses were the combination most likely to be successful on the battlefield, by the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, most Western European cavalries were abysmally trained. In the late 16<sup>th</sup> century and early 17<sup>th</sup> century, a Western European colonel owned his own regiment. If his regiment could not earn him money, a colonel at least did not want

his regiment to become a financial drain. Therefore, a colonel limited his regiment's expenses. Thorough, practical training was expensive so it was not emphasized and was often the first expense to be cut (Nosworthy 13). Scholars know from the many journals left by troops in Western European cavalries that many troops were assigned to mounted duty and required to drill with the other soldiers before they were trained on horseback. The issue of inadequate training of troops plagued many of the Western European cavalries (Nosworthy 201). An Austrian cavalry officer commented in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century that the "Austrian cavalry could not gallop 50 yards without 25 per cent of the horses becoming disordered" (Nosworthy 217). Most scholars agree that galloping 50 yards was an unattainable feat for any European cavalry in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Nosworthy 17).

### *The Art of War and Manège Equitation*

In the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, cavalry training reflected the importance of the "art of war" (Nosworthy 201). War and its many components, from use of weapons to riding to high level battle strategy, were contemplated in literature and implemented in practice as an art form. Knowledge about aspects of warfare were "widely disseminated and argued over in... military literature" (Tallett 39). For example, forty texts in their first edition about equitation and training were published in Italian, English, French and Spanish between 1550 and 1661 (Tucker 143). Writings about the art of war appeared in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, and became a flood in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century that continued through the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Tallett 39). The study of war as an art by officers affected the training of troops and horses. The study of the art of war led to emphasis being placed "on what

appeared smart on the reviewing field, rather than what would truly be best in time of war” (Nosworthy 204).

From the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century to the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century, a social shift occurred in western European culture. Societal respect migrated from the knight figure to the courtier figure (Tucker 1). The social shift is important to this project because a particular type of equitation called *manège*, played an intricate role in the societal evolution and was seen as the means of creating a courtier out of the noble male youth. *Manège* equitation is the creation of an art form out of horseback riding. It was probably the first form of riding to be practiced indoors and was the foundation of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century riding schools (Tucker 1). *Manège* focuses on the extreme collection of a horse’s movements, and the shift of a horse’s center of balance from just behind its shoulders back to its hind legs. The rider’s position in *manège* is a position of control. The rider’s stirrups or irons are long, the rider’s knee is almost straight and the rider sits on the vertical. Which means that the line of the rider’s back is perpendicular to the line of the horse’s back. This is the position of most control for a rider because their legs can wrap around the horse and their upper body sits behind the horse’s center of balance, pushing the horse forward in front of the rider. *Manège* is still practiced today, most famously by the Spanish Riding School of Vienna.

Federico Grisone is considered the founder of *manège* equitation and is said to have begun “an equestrian revolution” because he was the first to publish on the subject in his 1550 work *Gli ordini di cavalcare*, or *Orders to Ride* (Hope 26). Grisone founded the riding school in Naples in 1532 which became the prototype for the riding schools that followed (Tucker 113-114). Therefore, Italy can be considered the birthplace of

*manège*. Cesar Fiaschi was a contemporary of Grisone's in Italy. He published his work *Trattato dell'imbrigliare, maneggiare, et ferrare cavalli*, or *Treaty of Harnessing, Handling and Shoeing Horses*, in 1556, which discussed full care of the horse as well as *manège*. Fiaschi taught another Italian, Giovanni Pignatelli, who in turn trained the Frenchmen Antoine de Pluvinel and Salomon de la Broue. Pluvinel and la Broue brought *manège* equitation to France (Tucker 116).

In the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, correspondence from la Broue to various recipients mourned that French nobility was traveling to Italy to learn to ride (Tucker 118). Prior to the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Italy was the choice destination for horsemanship; nobles from all over western Europe traveled to Italy to "learn the new riding style" (Tucker 117). In 1594, Pluvinel and la Broue opened "The French School" or "The School of Versailles" (Tucker 116-117). By the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the reputation of French riding masters surpassed that of Italian riding masters. Western European nobles began attending French riding schools rather than Italian riding schools (Tucker 122).

By the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century, there were six French riding schools (Tucker 123). In 1684, Germain Brice, a Frenchman, wrote that the French academies were "filled with the most illustrious youth of France and Germany, who come here to learn all the things that render a gentleman accomplished and capable of acquiring a reputation in society" (Tucker 123). A riding academy education was seen as "part of the noble ideal" (Tucker 124). The French began to believe that riding was intrinsically linked to the virtue necessary for a courtier because the elegance and strength necessary for *manège* were seen as necessary attributes of a well-educated noble (Tucker 128-129). Pluvinel's curriculum contained a significant amount of horseback riding. Pluvinel wrote that six

days a week from seven in the morning until noon “would be employed for *manège* work” (Tucker 139 and 142). The afternoons were dedicated to other lessons such as mathematics, art, dancing, music and etiquette (Tucker 139).

Pluvinel was and is considered the first French *manège* master, and he was the personal riding instructor of King Louis XIII. The new type of riding that Pluvinel learned in Italy was a shift “from the battlefield to the *manège*,” or riding school (Tucker 148). Pluvinel and other *manège* masters almost exclusively trained horses and troops in riding halls, much like an indoor arena today. For example, in Pluvinel’s curriculum for his riding school, although students rode from seven in the morning until noon six days a week in the riding school, only one day a month was “devoted to military instruction of a more hands-on nature,” which could be in armor, mounted games such as jousting, or out into the countryside to practice a wide variety of military exercises either on horseback or on foot (Tucker 137-138).

In Pluvinel’s work, *Le Manège Royale*, the King asks Pluvinel to demonstrate “the skill and elegance of both horseman and the horse” in the countryside away from the riding school, and Pluvinel conveniently never answers (Pluvinel 102). In Pluvinel’s time, horses were trained for elegance in a parade, not for practicality in battle. Horses trained almost exclusively in a ring were then and are today nearly unmanageable in wide open spaces, especially by a rider trained almost exclusively in a ring. A horse and rider pair that are solely trained in a ring are ill-equipped to navigate open countryside.

Although the French Riding School and Pluvinel taught *manège*, la Broue had a unique view on jumping horses that diverged from *manège*. *Manège* equitation taught the “standing leaps.” Standing leaps are jumps performed by the horse at the rider’s

command from a stand still. The horse is not leaping over an obstacle, and the leap is done for the sake of the leap itself. *Manège* did not teach what la Broue calls the “flying leap.” The flying leap is the act of a horse leaping an obstacle in order to get to the other side. The latter is what this project focuses on. La Broue wrote about and taught a method of teaching horses to perform the flying leap that encouraged “a horse to extend and stretch itself for jumping hedges and ditches... [a] lesson necessary for a war horse and a hunter” (Hope 30). These methods allowed for some freedom for the horse that *manège* did not practice.

### *16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Century European Cavalries*

By the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, European cavalries consisted of three major types of cavalry, *cuirassiers*, *mounted arquebusiers* and *dragoons*. *Cuirassiers* and *mounted arquebusiers* were armed and armored heavily for battle. *Dragoons* were “a type of mounted infantry” that could be quickly deployed where needed whether on the battlefield or to harass a traveling army (Nosworthy 10). Until the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, specifically the 1740s, a unit’s ability to be cohesive and its weight, the physical size of the men and the horses and the amount of armor they carried, were considered far more important than the unit’s maneuverability or its speed. Western European cavalries selected large cavalrymen because they thought that a physically large cavalry would be more likely to psychologically intimidate their adversary (Nosworthy 165). The emphasis placed on “weight” led to physically enormous men and horses in European cavalries.

Today, scholars consider the Turkish cavalry to have been the finest cavalry of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Turks proved to be a difficult adversary for European armies.

The Turkish steeds were not large, but they were agile and obedient to their riders. The Turkish cavalry did not attack in formation, but relied on sheer numbers. When Europeans first met the Turkish cavalry in battle, they relied on their heavy armor, but that was not enough to protect them from the agility of the Turkish cavalry. As Europeans lightened their armor, they had to rely on superior training and formations to defeat enemies such as the Turkish (Nosworthy 36-37).

Gustavus Adolphus, a Swedish king, was one of the first in Europe to lighten the armor of a segment of his cavalry, as well as choose smaller men and horses for that segment. He reformed the Swedish cavalry from 1621-1629 during the Polish War. The Polish were still heavily armored with big horses and men. The Swedish had smaller horses and men. From a strictly physical stand point, the Polish over powered the Swedish because the Swedish were smaller. Adolphus lightened his cavalry's armor so that they were more maneuverable than the Polish. They could gallop while the Polish could only trot. By 1630, the Swedish were efficient enough to win notable triumphs, such as the battle at Breitenfeld (Nosworthy 22-23).

The last quarter of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, a true light cavalry was introduced to Western Europe, the Hungarian *hussars*. The Hungarian *hussars* confused western European military strategists because they "fought in an irregular fashion" (Nosworthy 134). The French Colonel de la Colonie wrote: "the hussars are, properly speaking, nothing but bandits on horseback, who carry on an irregular warfare, it is impossible to fight them formally" (quoted in Nosworthy 134). The light cavalry so confounded the Western Europeans because they could turn and manage their horses more readily than European heavy cavalry. Furthermore, the *hussars* were "always able to escape the pursuit of the

heavy cavalry, its horses being much faster” (Nosworthy 135). The *hussars* became known for their hardiness, the “swiftness of their horses and the skill of the horsemen who rode them” (Nosworthy 134).

### *The Prussian Cavalry prior to Frederick the Great*

Cavalrymen in Prussia prior to Frederick the Great were, on average, the largest of cavalrymen in Europe and were referred to as “giants” (Nosworthy 164). Frederick the Great described the cavalry as “giants on elephants who could neither ride nor fight” (Showalter 71). When mounted, the horses could barely sustain a trot, so they charged at a fast walk. The men and their armor were so heavy that they “did not dare walk on bad pavement or move on uneven ground” for fear of injuring their horses (Nosworthy 164). A cavalry unable to battle on less than optimal footing was a very weak cavalry.

Scholars believe that the Prussian cavalry at this time was “probably not much worse than some of the cavalry in other armies” (Nosworthy 164). However, the training standard for horsemanship within the Prussian cavalry “was abysmally low, the worst for a major army in Europe” (Nosworthy 166). At this time, the Prussian cavalry “knew just enough about horses to be dangerous and nothing at all about cavalry service” (Showalter 72). Frederick the Great himself wrote that he had inherited “bad cavalry, in which there was hardly an officer who knew his profession” (quoted in Nosworthy 164). He explained that the horses and men were huge with no practical training for the battlefield. What training they did receive, he claims, was “applicable only to the parade ground” (Nosworthy 164).

Untrained horses could be just as problematic as untrained troops. During war, “an ever increasing number of remounts become necessary,” but generally remounts, horses to replace the horses killed in battle, were far less trained than the original mounts (Nosworthy 123). Poorly trained remounts were catastrophic because “cavalry engagements... sometimes were lost because of the confusion caused by a single new horse” (Nosworthy 124).

### **Conclusion**

The analysis of the historical record of humans jumping horses is complicated by the lack of written records about the topic. The practice developed before Xenophon wrote about it in 360 BCE, and certainly continued between Xenophon’s work and King Dom Duarte’s work in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century with the development of *manège*, equitation became fashionable. The more fashionable that equitation became, the more it was written about. However, *manège* along with the financial expense of the cavalry led to the poorly trained and inefficient cavalries of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century. It was in this state that Frederick the Great found western European cavalries and horsemanship when he was crowned king of Prussia in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century.

## **Chapter Two:**

### **Frederick the Great**

The second chapter of this project discusses Frederick the Great's role in the development of the practice of jumping horses. Specifically, I argue that Frederick the Great was the first to focus on the importance of men being capable of jumping horses safely and efficiently. The chapter will discuss Frederick's first battles and his experiences of the Prussian cavalry during those battles. It will explain Frederick's findings about his cavalry and how he altered his cavalry's training to create a branch of his military that became the most successful cavalry of the time.

#### **Frederick's Succession and the Wars for Silesia**

Frederick II, or Frederick the Great as he was later known, was crowned on the first of June in 1740 (Showalter 33). The cavalry he inherited contained twenty-four regiments (Fraser 123; Showalter 34). Each regiment contained five squadrons and each squadron contained eight hundred seventy men and officers (Showalter 34). Thirteen were heavy *cuirassiers* and eleven lighter *dragoons*. Distinct from the main body of cavalry were nine squadrons of *hussars* of the Hungarian type (Fraser 123; Showalter 34). The *hussars* were "mostly foreigners with evil reputations as undisciplined marauders" (Showalter 34).

Frederick inherited an economically weak and geographically vulnerable Prussia (Showalter 29). Therefore, when the emperor of Austria, Charles VI, died in October of 1740 leaving his daughter, Maria Theresa, his sole heir, Frederick's interest turned to Austria's lands (Showalter 41-42; Fraser 99). Austria's political instability was

Frederick's opportunity to expand Prussia's territory. He had his eye set on Silesia, an economically strong region in the southern portion of Austria's territory that was generally ignored by Austria's ruling family (Showalter 41). The thirteenth of December 1740, Frederick traveled south to meet twenty-seven thousand troops and they began their trek into Silesia (Showalter 41).

Austria was a weak country in 1740 when Maria Theresa was crowned. She wrote in 1749-1750 in *Political Testament*: "I found myself in this situation, without money, without credit, without army, without experience and knowledge of my own and finally, also without any counsel... This was my position when I was attacked by the King of Prussia." (Hapsburg 3). Although Prussia was relatively weak, Austria was far weaker. However, Maria Theresa could not allow Prussia to take any land in exchange for peace. Allowing any other nation to take Austrian land violated the Pragmatic Sanction created by Maria Theresa's father, Charles VI, which allowed for female inheritance of the Austrian throne. Prior to Maria Theresa, by law the Austrian throne could only be inherited by a male heir. The Pragmatic Sanction allowed for female inheritance of the Austrian throne as long as the female successor followed certain rules, such as not surrendering any land or allowing any land to be taken by an enemy (Showalter 43). Because Austria did not have a full army to face Prussia, Austria used its strongest weapon, its *hussars*, to slow their enemy's progress and give Austria more time to muster an army. Austrian *hussars* harassed the traveling Prussian army with raiding parties. The Prussian army "exhausted their horses and themselves in vain pursuit" of the quicker Austrian *hussars* (Showalter 44-45).

### **The Failure of the Prussian Cavalry**

During the trek with his inherited army into Silesia while fending off Austrian *hussars*, Frederick discovered the first issue with the Prussian cavalry's training. On December eighteenth, the weather turned poor. Neither the men nor the horses were used to climatic adversity because cavalry practice, known as "maneuvers," was regularly canceled during less than ideal weather to save "uniforms and equipment" (Showalter 42).

The Prussian cavalry's issues became all the more clear during battle. Frederick's first battlefield experience with the cavalry was that of "a shattered Prussian cavalry at Mollwitz" (Fraser 123). The near disaster at Mollwitz was caused by a poorly trained cavalry. The Austrian cavalry struck the Prussian cavalry on the right side of the Prussian army and sent that whole side, or flank, into chaos. Frederick happened to be stationed on the right side of the army among the cavalry. For fear that the battle was lost; Frederick was rushed from the battlefield astride a grey horse that became known as the Mollwitz Grey (Fraser 91). The Prussians were victorious at Mollwitz. It was apparent to Frederick that "the [Prussian] army had survived the battle with honour because of the high quality of the infantry" and Austrian poor coordination despite its cavalry's mistakes (Fraser 94; Showalter 50). After Mollwitz, Frederick was determined to improve the Prussian cavalry.

Frederick was disappointed in cavalries in general. Although the Prussian cavalry showed poorly at Mollwitz and several other battles for Silesia, the "enemy's cavalry had, on the whole, shown little better than his own" (Fraser 124). Mollwitz could have been a decisive victory for Prussia by "an efficient Prussian cavalry... with one well-

timed charge,” but the cavalry’s commander “had no particular confidence in the horsemen” so did not order the charge (Showalter 49). After Mollwitz, Frederick “reckoned that his cavalry were of poor quality with mediocre officers” (Fraser 94). However, later, Frederick also blamed the near catastrophe on “his generals and himself for mechanical adherence to regulations, as opposed to common sense” (Showalter 49).

Frederick reasoned that his money was currently being wasted. Cavalry was far more expensive than infantry because “each horse represented a considerable investment of time and training” (Nosworthy 219). It was figured by the 1632 *surintendant de finances*, or superintendent of finances, of France that the unit cost of a cavalryman was twice that of an infantryman (Tallet 30). Therefore, because cavalry was less expendable, Frederick felt that he needed to spend money wisely and protect his investment in the cavalry (Fraser 123 and 211; Nosworthy 219). Protecting his cavalry meant that “they should be handled with care... preserved fresh for the true opportunity when the infantry and artillery had prepared the way... [and] they must be well trained” (Fraser 211).

### **Improving the Prussian Cavalry**

Frederick wished to “restore... cavalry to their proper place on the battlefield” (Fraser 124). His chief complaints about his cavalry were “that officers did not know their jobs; that troopers were afraid of their horses, and the troops were seldom put through mounted exercise” (Fraser 123). Frederick immediately put his army “to an intensive schedule of training, devised, ordered and supervised by himself” (Fraser 94). He felt that discipline was as necessary for the cavalry as for the infantry trained by his father, but he knew that training for the cavalry should be even more “laborious” because

“a trooper was brave in proportion to his confidence in his mount” (Fraser 123).

Frederick lamented the lack of common sense in his cavalry, for example, the entire right flank of the cavalry panicking after a single enemy charge at Mollwitz. Because of this lack of common sense, he declared his cavalry as “damnably awful” and complained that “none of our officers can do a thing with it” (quoted in Showalter 51). To remedy the lack of common sense in his cavalry, he vowed to train his cavalry as he proposed for them to fight and “sought the attainable rather than the ideal” (Showalter 105 and 95). The foundation of Frederick’s training was “discipline and practical versus ceremonial training” (Nosworthy 145). Frederick was the first to implement such training in a Western European cavalry. The new training and its increased emphasis on training “ultimately produced riders capable enough to perform increasingly complex tactics and maneuvers” (Nosworthy 144 and 164). Arguably, without the reformed training, “none of the tactical development that occurred over the next several years would have been possible” (Nosworthy 167).

### **The Prussian Cavalry’s Success**

Frederick created an incredibly successful cavalry. The cavalry was different from other 18<sup>th</sup> century European cavalries because it was a “highly mobile and maneuverable cavalry” that was “capable of taking to the most uneven, broken terrain, and charging the enemy” because of its intense training (Gianoli and Monti 118).

Generally the army with terrain advantages won, such as a system of trenches or rough terrain protecting one of their flanks. Similarly, the numerically superior army also usually won. At the battle of Rossbach in November 1757, the French expected victory

because they had significant terrain advantages and they outnumbered the Prussians fifty-two squadrons to thirty-eight squadrons (Gianoli and Monti 118). However, the Prussian cavalry won the battle in minutes, traversing the terrain and re-organizing more quickly than the French. Due to the cavalry's efficiency, Rossbach is famous to this day because it is one of the only 18<sup>th</sup> century battles in which the winning army lost one man for every ten men the losing army lost (Fraser 367; Gianoli and Monti 118; Showalter 190-191).

### **Frederick's Training Program**

Between 1740 and 1757, Frederick changed the Prussian cavalry beyond recognition. He achieved this tremendous leap in skill by emphasizing individual horsemanship (Showalter 72). For the first time in Western Europe, "a very systematic approach was taken to cultivate the trooper's riding capabilities" (Nosworthy 167). Frederick ordered that the "men must be exercised in riding every day in the week, during both the summer and the winter" so that an unfit cavalry was never again nearly the cause of a lost campaign (Faucitt and Frederick 58). All recruits were first "exercised on foot" (Faucitt and Frederick 57). After the recruits were "perfected in marching on foot" they were taught to ride without stirrups (Faucitt and Frederick 57). When the recruits were "able to manage their horses at pleasure" at the "trot and gallop," then they were trained bareback in order to become "complete horsemen" (Faucitt and Frederick 57). Lastly all Prussian cavalry were "taught to jump ditches and other obstacles singly and in groups" and "drilled to charge across ditches, [and] to leap hedges" (Nosworthy 167; Denison 264). The cavalry needed to be capable of these feats because obstacles were common on

the battlefield. For example, at the battle of Lowositz, the Prussian cavalry leapt a ten foot wide ditch to attack the Austrian infantry (Towers 475).

General Friedrich Seydlitz, the commander of the cavalry, and General Hans Ziethen, the commander of the *hussars*, “bestowed great attention to the instruction of the cavalry” and were responsible for much of the Prussian cavalry’s success (Denison 263-264). General Seydlitz and General Ziethen introduced a different seat than what was commonly used at the time in the cavalry. The majority of western European cavalries rode in the seat taught in *manège*: longer stirrups and upper body on the vertical. Although this position allows greater control for the rider, it is control gained at the expense of the horse’s control over its own body. Frederick himself and his cavalry are said to have ridden in “a natural seat” (Sidney et al. 123). A natural seat means that the Prussians rode with shorter irons with their upper body slightly ahead of the vertical so that they were directly over the horse’s center of balance. A natural seat sacrifices some of the rider’s control over the horse. However, it allows the horse the freedom it needs to balance itself over uneven terrain and over obstacles.

After the men were trained in the riding schools, General Seydlitz and General Ziethen were known for taking the cavalry across country for exercise (Nolan, *Cavalry Its History and Tactics* 33). Seydlitz “manoeuvred [cavalry] in large masses over rough ground to prepare them for service” (Denison 263-264). He was known for exercising “his regiment at full speed over very broken ground, and men were often killed” (Denison 263-264). When Frederick confronted General Seydlitz about the deaths, Seydlitz answered “if you make such a fuss about a few broken necks, your majesty will

never have the bold horsemen you require for the field” (Denison 264; quoted in Nolan, *Cavalry Its History and Tactics* 33). Frederick relented.

The training of the cavalry went beyond mounted skills. Frederick witnessed the poor care of the Prussian cavalry’s horses on the trek to Silesia. He felt that poor care was partially responsible for the “pandemic of equine ailments” that the cavalry battled while on campaign (Showalter 42). Frederick’s *Regulations for the Prussian Cavalry* states that “it is his Majesty’s principal intention that the men should imbibe a strong affection for their horses” so “that they take great care of them, and are instructed in the knowledge of everything, which may attend to their preservation” (Faucitt and Frederick 59). Troops were expected to take full care of their mounts, including shoeing their horses, feeding their horses, mending their tack, etc. (Faucitt and Frederick 59). However, Frederick knew that the training of the troops lay in the hands of the officers. The *Regulations for the Prussian Cavalry* also reads that “His Majesty strictly charges all officers commanding Regiments of Horse, to employ themselves totally in the training up” of their men (Faucitt and Frederick 27). Frederick expected every horseman in his cavalry to be “as expert and agile on horseback as the Hussars” even if they were a heavily armored and armed *cuirassier* on the battlefield (Faucitt and Frederick 27).

All of the aforementioned training was implemented for one reason, to give the Prussian army the advantage in battle. To give the army the best chance at dominating every conflict, Frederick devised a plan for “cavalry shock... to break the enemy before the melee could begin” (Showalter 73). Prior to 1740, cavalries charged at a trot because “conventional wisdom” was that “greater speed led to loss of control” (Nosworthy 125; Fraser 124). Conventional wisdom was correct. Prior to 1740, there was not a single

Western European cavalry that could gallop more than a couple strides before breaking line and becoming disordered. The ideal charge would be quick and the troopers would maintain their formation. However, because this was impossible with the level of mounted training Western European cavalries received prior to Frederick the Great; cavalry commanders put solidarity over speed when charging. They believed that more damage would be done to the enemy, both physically and psychologically, with a slow, solid wall of cavalry descending upon them, rather than a quick broken one. Frederick strongly believed that a charge at the gallop was possible as long as cavalry training “continued to stress horsemanship and horse mastership (Showalter 114). He knew that a successful galloping charge “depended on horses in top-flight condition ridden by men as familiar with their mounts as with the regulations prescribing their use” (Showalter 114). Frederick was determined to see the galloping charge successfully performed because he believed “that the quality of an army’s cavalry set the pace of a campaign” (Fraser 124). He was correct. By 1744, the Prussian cavalry was charging at a gallop while remaining cohesive. No other cavalry could. Other nations attempted but none “managed to achieve the same standards of training as the Prussian’s cavalry” (Nosworthy 347). By 1748, the standard mounted attack for the Prussian cavalry was seven hundred yards with the last four hundred yards ridden at the gallop. By 1755 the standard mounted attack for the Prussian cavalry was one thousand eight hundred yards with the last six hundred yards ridden at the gallop (Showalter 114). In the early 1750s “the standard of horsemanship among the Prussians had surpassed anything previously known in Western Europe” (Nosworthy 170). Due to the training regimen constructed and implemented by

Frederick, he “can be rightly considered the founder of the Prussian cavalry as a first-class fighting force” (Nosworthy 163).

### **Prussian *Hussars***

Prussian *hussars* were not widely respected prior to Frederick the Great and General Ziethen. Prussia’s “hussars recruits were not the kind of good horsemen and bold adventurers” that were found in other *hussar* regiments, such as the Austrians, that “rode rings around them” (Showalter 52). Prussian *hussars* tended to be young men who wanted to prove their toughness and challenge regulations (Showalter 52). *Hussars* in all countries were principally used “for patrol duty, advance guards, outposts, [and] forays” (Fraser 211). However, in Prussia, since all cavalry were taught to charge at the gallop and *hussars* were master horsemen, Frederick accepted that *hussars* could be valuable on the battlefield (Fraser 211; Nosworthy 145). By 1756, the Prussian hussars were utilized as significant battlefield instruments (Showalter 115). A troop of hussars even saved Frederick the Great at the battle at Kunersdorf in 1759 when the king was wounded (Fraser 418-419).

### **Conclusion**

Frederick the Great rescued the cavalry. Prior to Frederick, Western European cavalries had become often useless and more often a liability to the infantries they fought alongside. The cavalry training that Frederick implemented was revolutionary. Frederick created a cavalry that was so well trained that it could traverse nearly any terrain and any obstacle. Frederick’s improved cavalry demanded almost instantaneous notice from

military strategists in other nations. In the following century many Western European countries adopted Frederick's training methods.

### Chapter 3:

#### The Geographical Spread of Frederick the Great's Ideology

This chapter analyzes the shift begun by Frederick the Great in military tactics and training. Due to cavalry's new role in startling the enemy with speed or shock assault, *manège* came to be seen as unnecessary in the cavalry. Frederick was primarily responsible for this change (Hope 31). It was Frederick in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century who "had the finest cavalry in his day" because he created "the custom of having the best riders on the best horses" (United States Cavalry Association, Vol. 11-12 318). This custom created Frederick an arm of the military that won him his most important victories (Sidney et al. 255). Significantly, Frederick's cavalymen are said to have "sat as he did himself, on a natural seat, and rode well" (Sidney et al. 123). This chapter will discuss the geographical spread of Frederick's ideology, specifically in Italy, France, Great Britain, and America. The following discussion about the spread of Frederick's ideology demonstrates the growing and evolving importance placed on a highly trained cavalry, and that training included instruction in jumping or leaping obstacles.

In the late-18<sup>th</sup> century, Charles Emmanuel de Warnery, the Prussian Major General of Hussars, wrote of the Prussian cavalry training tactics initiated by Frederick in detail. His work was translated into other languages, including English, in 1798. Warnery wrote that a trooper "must be able to raise himself 4 inches above the saddle" in order to be capable of "walking, trotting, and full gallop, and even in leaping over a bar" (Warnery and Koehler 34). He also specified that a squadron should leap a ditch or fence in successive ranks when it approaches an obstacle that can be leapt (Warnery and Koehler 34). Warnery also reiterates Frederick's insistence that "a squadron ought to be

often exercised without saddles, and manoeuvre every day at least half an hour” (Warnery and Koehler 33).

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Western Europe and America saw a “refinement of military riding and the expansion of cross country riding” (Hope 31). By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the “heavy cavalry horse had fallen out of favor... [in] response to change in military tactics to a lighter, more mobile and agile ‘hot-blooded’ horse” (Fillis v). In short, new military tactics favored horses more naturally physically capable of crossing country.

From the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century “until the age of mechanization,” the ultimate goal “of all equitation was to produce a cavalryman” (Hope 31). Producing cavalrymen was not a simple feat. As late as 1901, Great Britain reported that, on average, it took European nations three to four year to create an efficient cavalryman (*The Parliamentary Debates* dcxciii). However, military commanders considered the investment worth the years of training because the importance of highly trained cavalrymen and cavalry horses was common knowledge once more, as it had been in Xenophon’s time (Balck 1). Cavalry officers knew that an army could fail because of a cavalry’s failure, and that a cavalry could fail because of a single poorly trained cavalryman or mount (Balck 1). Cavalries were used in pursuit and retreat. One of their most important roles was to hunt down dispersed enemy over questionable terrain to make a victory decisive (Balck 101). Hunting down retreating enemy often took cavalry outside of ground scouted before the battle, and the probability of a disastrous chase decreased with the amount of training of the cavalrymen and their mounts (Balck 141).

The increase in mounted training throughout Europe and America led to an abundance of riding styles. In the 1830’s, cavalry officers complained that “almost every

country, and indeed every town,” taught a different style of riding and training horses towards the same end: to make the horse “not only more useful, but also a further pleasure to mankind” (Peters 24). The different styles of riding can be categorized into two overarching types. The first was the courtly and military riding, or high schooling equitation, which emphasized riding for style. The second was the country riding which emphasized efficiency, and was similar to the natural seat used by Frederick the Great’s cavalry (Thomson 70). The country riding style was used for hunting, and “hunting had been popular for centuries, particularly in France and England, but the jumping over obstacles it entailed was incidental, little thought was given to it” (Müseler 160). The United States cavalry wrote that “throughout the younger grades of the British, French, and Italian cavalry, there exists a veritable passion for riding over obstacles” (Mounted Services School U.S. 274). However, “it is with jumping that we see the problems of a divergence between theory and practice,” between the high schooling style and the country riding style that is not fully explored until the late 18<sup>th</sup> century (Thomson 70).

## **Italy**

Italian riding masters were the founders of *manège*, or high schooling, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Perhaps for this reason, *manège* lasted longer in Italy than other countries. Up until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, reports made by emissaries for the United States of America stated that the emissary did not favorably rank the Italian cavalry’s training and efficiency in comparison to other European cavalries (Military Service Institution of the United States 462). Furthermore, on average, it took three to four years of training for a

cavalryman to be well trained and efficient. Italian cavalryman served for only two years (Military Service Institution of the United States 462).

One aspect of the Italian cavalry did impress other nations. The Italian cavalry were famous for descending vertical hillsides. An emissary to Italy from Great Britain wrote of the Italian cavalry's feats as: "their perilous climbing and leaping down the hillsides that some have doubted whether such things could actually be accomplished" (*Navy & Army Illustrated* 583). Scaling and descending hills was included in the Italian cavalry's training because Italy is a hilly country. In order for cavalry to quickly cross Italian countryside, they had to be capable of traversing the hills (United States Cavalry Association, Vol. 7 340-341).

As of 1867, Italy suffered from the same lack of "unity of orientation" in style as other countries. Although "there were some rules and some styles" there was "no nucleus of masters capable of teaching and passing on a definite style" (Gianoli and Monti 154). The master that emerged was Captain Federico Caprilli. He will be discussed in the next chapter.

## **France**

The Prussian cavalry's most decisive and astounding victory was at Rossbach where they defeated the French in 1757. Perhaps due to this overwhelming defeat, the French slowly began shifting the French riding style. The French training regulations matched Frederick the Great's training by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Recruits were drilled on foot, then on foot with their arms. Once drilling on foot was completed, the recruit was "introduced to his other self," his horse (United States Cavalry Association, Vol. 11-12

336). Mounted training was taught in five stages: “to sit his horse; to guide it; to act with it as an individual unit; to use his arms on horseback; and, finally, to maneuver as one of a troop” (United States Cavalry Association, Vol. 11-12 336). By the end of his training, “a man is supposed to be entirely at home on his horse” and do everything possible whether bareback, inside, outside, sunny, rainy, with irons, or without irons (United States Cavalry Association, Vol. 11-12 336). Furthermore, in 1838 the French “developed work in the open and jumping over obstacles,” similar to the work developed by Frederick the Great (Gianoli and Monti 177).

In the 1830s, Francois Baucher began publishing works on equitation and revitalized *manège*. His works and theories are controversial even today because he combined the courtly riding style with elements of the country style of riding. Although, Baucher teaches *manège*, his method of teaching is unusual for the high schooling style. He teaches the same movements for horse and rider, but he does not teach the time consuming, extreme discipline that earlier *manège* practiced. Baucher was given forty inexperienced horses with inexperienced riders to experiment with from the Municipal Guard of Paris (Baucher 19). He demonstrated that his methods brought the horse and rider pairs further in their training in fifteen days than they would have been in six months under the current system (Baucher 19). Baucher’s system was favored because it could put new horses into the ranks promptly, it preserved and developed the horses more efficiently, and it increased the harmony between the horse and rider (Baucher 25). Baucher’s system was deemed “a great benefit, an indisputable improvement for cavalry” and revitalized a less stringent form of *manège* in France (Baucher 26). Furthermore, earlier *manège*, excluding Salomon la Broue, does not discuss leaping obstacles,

specifically the bar and ditch. Baucher discusses leaping obstacles several times in his work (Baucher 182 and 186). Baucher also discusses obstacles that may be encountered in battle, such as the bank of a ditch. He suggests that “if it lie in your way, and you are pretty sure of its character, either take it on faith and go at it, or don’t attempt it at all” (Herbert and Baucher 284). He also discusses leaping taller than normal obstacles, galloping long distances between leaps and water leaps (Herbert and Baucher 283). Leaping obstacles in the field was not mentioned in earlier work on *manège*.

In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, fully natural riding arrived in France with Antoine d’Aure. Fully natural riding can most easily be understood as the extreme form of Frederick’s riding style that taught riders to give their mounts the freedom they needed to safely cross uneven ground and obstacles. However, D’Aure took natural riding and the natural seat further. He taught that “the horse was to be used in the field as nature had made him” (Gianoli and Monti 153). D’Aure wrote of “a simpler and freer style of riding [that] had developed apace with school equitation and was shown in point-to-point meetings, the hunt, and other such riding for sport” to be superior to the riding style of “stiff cavalry officers” (Gianoli and Monti 153). D’Aure’s more natural riding style was used by the French Revolution Cavalry “to be more maneuverable and expeditious than the regiments of veteran cavalymen trained under the old systems” (Gianoli and Monti 153). However, by 1870, French cavalry officers again complained of the “abuse of the drillground” that “restricts our freedom of action and habituates us to work in a confined manner, whilst really the cavalry soldier is destined to work over a large tract of country” (Bonie 122). Although French training had moved toward Frederick’s training in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, by 1870 their training was migrating back toward training on the drill

ground, rather than out in the country. However, because the French officers had witnessed the effectiveness of Frederick's training in earlier years, they lamented the French army's return to the drill grounds.

## **Britain**

As early as 1799, the British recognized the value of Frederick the Great's training modifications. British military representatives recognized Frederick "whom even posterity will recognize as one of the ablest generals and statesmen of his age," and the importance of his contributions to cavalry training (*The British Military Library* 2). The military representatives claim that Prussian dominance was due to "uncommon skill which his troops had acquired in the mechanical part of the art of war, by the implicit obedience and rigorous discipline which prevailed in his armies" (*The British Military Library* 24). Other British works on horsemanship admire "the superior endurance of the Prussian troop-horses as compared with our own" (Sidney et al. 124).

Therefore, it is not surprising that Great Britain, like the French, adopted training regulations formatted like the Prussian cavalry training regulations. The recruits were drilled on foot first (Neville 1). After they were drilled on foot, they were then taken to the riding school and taught to ride. However, Great Britain had more specific instructions for mounted training that included lessons on a long lead line, called a longe line, before the recruit was allowed to steer the horse himself in "the square," like an arena today (Neville 5-9). Only after these mounted lessons were the recruits considered fit to drill with their regiment (Neville 9). The British also taught all basics, such as care of the horse and tacking up the horse, before the recruit was considered fully trained. It

was considered “essential” to ride “on unequal ground; indeed on all kinds of ground” (Peters 178). After the horse and rider were schooled outside and over unequal ground, they were introduced to the leaping bar. Significantly, horses and riders were introduced to the leaping bar outside of the riding house in Britain (Peters 181-184). Due to the British cavalry’s willingness to adopt a more natural style of riding, high schooling was extinct by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in the cavalry (Sidney et al. 255).

Hunting played an integral role in British horsemanship. While hunting, all the riders “wanted of their horses was that they should carry them safely and fast across country” (Hope, 30). Many British cavalry officers “graduated as masters of fox-hounds,” or leaders of a fox-hunt, during their time as enlisted officers (Sidney et al. 273). Hunting and country riding in Great Britain was generally over flat terrain until the 18<sup>th</sup> century when the open fields of the countryside were enclosed with fences. Due to the “the advent of more hedges and fences and the development of hunting as a...sporting occupation, jumping came more into focus” in Britain and at an earlier time than in other countries (Thomson, 70).

Great Britain’s earlier focus on the importance of jumping led British officers to write of the British cavalry as superior in feats of jumping than cavalries of other nations.

For example, Captain Lewis Edward Nolan wrote in 1852 that:

All foreign cavalry practise at the leaping bar, yet their officers when they meet with a wall or a gate are *pounded*. I remember a very amusing instance of this. During some manoeuvres in Italy an Austrian General with his Staff got amongst some enclosures and not wishing to ride back sent some of his aide camps to look for an outlet. They peered over the stone wall rode about but could find no opening. An Englishman in the Imperial Service mounted on a good English horse formed part of the Staff and the General turning to him said “Mr W k kindly see if you can find the way out of this place.” Mr W k, a Yorkshireman and a good rider, went straight at the wall cleared it and whilst doing so turned in his

saddle and touching his cap said “this way sir!” (Nolan, *The Training of Cavalry Remount Horses* 36).

Other British authors have written that “our soldiers since 1850 have been taught to ride in a manner which enables them to do anything and go anywhere” (Sidney et al, 255). Since 1852, the British have considered “the Riding School... a bad place to teach a young horse to leap” (Nolan, *The Training of Cavalry Remount Horses* 36). The British cavalry officers strongly felt that the bar was frightening for a young horse. They preferred a young horse’s leaping experiences to be in a field with low fences and small ditches. They were directed not go over the same obstacle several times like when training over the leaping bar, but were instructed to ride “over what obstacles are in their way” (Nolan, *The Training of Cavalry Remount Horses* 36).

Leaping was not restricted to the cavalry. Many British writers believed that “every man, woman, or child, who learns to ride should learn to leap, whether intending to hunt or not; because no one can be said to have a secure seat who has not practiced the balance required when a horse bounds in the air” (Sidney et al, 299). Therefore, many recruits were better prepared for mounted training than recruits in nations where riding was not as innate of a part of the culture as in Great Britain. The United States Cavalry Association wrote that:

The fact that the British horse soldier does as a matter of course what the German the Frenchman and the Italian has to be specially trained to do is a very significant one. One reason for this superiority doubtless is that the British soldier is in one sense a volunteer while the Continental man is not. Granted health and stature the man who enlists in the British army chooses his regiment and can become a light or a heavy cavalymen an infantryman or a gunner. But the Continental conscript has not this choice. He must serve his time and he must be what the authorities make him” (United States Cavalry Association, Vol. 11-12 341).

## **United States**

Frederick the Great's ideology was put to use in the United States Cavalry as well. The United States War Department wrote in 1864 that from summer to October, "whenever it is practicable," regiments should be taken "into the country, in order to accustom it to pass over all kinds of ground" (19). Furthermore, the United States War Department asserted that "individual instruction" of recruits was the "basis of the instruction of squadrons," and, therefore, the basis of the instruction of regiments (18). They warned that "the classes of recruits should be watched with the greatest care" (United States War Department 18). All recruits were first taught all care of their horse before they began their lessons. Next, they had to complete and perfect all the lessons on foot (United States War Department 21). One of the last lessons is "to leap the ditch and the bar" (United States War Department 212-213). First the recruits leap without reins so that they will not accidentally pull on the horse's mouth in the air. Then they are allowed to leap with reins, and, lastly, with their saber drawn (United States War Department 212-213). As early as 1813, Brigade Major and Inspector in the Militia of Massachusetts, Epaphras Hoyt, wrote that all recruits were "taught the method of leaping their horses over fences, hedges, ditches, etc. which they will have to perform in almost every engagement and petty skirmish" (58). Only after mastering all of the above was a recruit deemed fit to drill with his squadron. However, there was still further training. In the United States, cavalrymen were also taught to leap the ditch and the bar in twos, fours and platoons because they did expect to meet obstacles in groups during war and prepared for it (United States War Department 271).

The United States cavalry also followed Frederick's ideology about training the horses. Young horses were meticulously trained with four groups of lessons to learn, just like the men. One of the lessons of the fourth group, like for human recruits, was the "manner of accustoming the horses to leap the ditch and the bar" (United States Department of War 42-43). Remounts were held to the same standards as original mounts. They should:

Be gentle to mount, should march on a straight line and circular line at all paces, should back, make a few side steps to the right and to the left, suffer pressure in the ranks... and should not be alarmed at the noise of arms and drums, or the waving of standards and the flags of lances" (United States War Department 37).

Remounts were expected to be capable of all of this as well as being capable of leaping the ditch and bar.

The United States Cavalry Association explains that "out West the American almost lives on horseback and of course he has the old Anglo Saxon affection for horseflesh in his blood" to explain the American cavalry's relatively advanced horsemanship (Vol. 11-12 342). Although Americans had "the old Anglo Saxon affection for horseflesh" in their blood, they had to be capable of fighting a different kind of warfare than the European nations were currently fighting (United States Cavalry Association, Vol. 11-12, 342). Although "the training of the horse soldier in the United States regular army is just as careful and thorough as it is in any other army...the great training schools...of these cavalrymen have been found in the Indian wars" (United States Cavalry Association, Vol. 11-12 343). The Americans were not battling European armies, so the evolution of equitation in the United States toward a natural seat occurred more rapidly. The American cavalry was fighting Native Americans, who, similar to the

*hussars* in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, were found to fight in an irregular fashion compared to the Western European nations. In order to defeat Native Americans, the United States Cavalry had to match their comfort on horseback and maneuverability to the Native Americans (United States Cavalry Association, Vol. 11-12 343).

## **Conclusion**

Frederick the Great began the homogenization of international equitation. Prior to his cavalry reforms, although the evolution of equitation in each country influenced the evolution of equitation in other countries, each country had a unique style. Frederick can also be said to be the first to popularize the natural seat, a seat that, until Frederick's time, was used exclusively by civilians. Frederick's training regulations were acknowledged as an improvement of the old training system because Frederick's ideology spread geographically in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, particularly to Italy, France, Great Britain and the United States. Italy, although the home land of *manège*, eventually adopted Frederick's training regulations, and, as we will see in the next chapter, also became the home for the most recent revolution in equitation. France also adopted Frederick's ideology because they were so easily defeated by a cavalry trained in Frederick's manner at Rossbach in 1757. However, toward the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, France reverted to some of their old training methods. Great Britain is unique because another element significantly affected equitation in the country, namely, hunting. Hunting was so popular that by the 19<sup>th</sup> century courtly riding was extinct, and the military adopted the natural seat. However, Great Britain also adopted Frederick's training regulations. Lastly, the United States, although an ocean away, also adopted Frederick's ideology in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Because

of the United States' relationship with Great Britain, hunting was also popular in the United States, so hunting affected equitation in the United States as well. The youth of the United States as a country and its use of the natural seat from hunting made it an ideal place for the adoption and further development of the next revolution in equitation from Italy.

## **Chapter 4:**

### **From the Cavalry to the Modern Olympics: the Development of Show Jumping**

Thus far, this project has explored the basis of show jumping in the military and hunting. This chapter outlines the development and evolution of the sport of show jumping from a military sport for the improvement of the cavalry up to the contemporary sport. The first show in which jumping was held will be explored, as well as other early horse shows that included show jumping. Show jumping's beginning years in the early modern Olympics and the complications around deciding when the equestrian events were first included in the Olympics will be explained. Italy's most recent contribution to equitation, Captain Federico Caprilli's founding of the forward seat, an extension of the natural seat, will also be discussed. The spread of Caprilli's theories and their impact on show jumping are explored in this chapter. Lastly, the early international shows of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century are discussed as well as the modern development of show jumping in Britain and America.

#### **The Early Sport**

It is generally assumed that the first show jumping class was held at a horse show in Paris in 1866 (Williams 15). However, the competitors paraded around the arena, then left the ring to compete over jumps across country, so the sport did not excite the spectators (Williams 15). Show jumping in varying forms was probably practiced "in various European countries during the remainder of the nineteenth century, chiefly as an exercise or sport for cavalry regiments" (Williams 15). By 1883, show jumping competitions were well established in the United States (Martin 30). The shows in

America practiced the “‘civilian’ jumping” form (Martin 32). Civilian jumping evolved from hunting and utilized a more natural seat than European show jumping (Martin 32). After the arrival of the international, or European, form of the sport to American shows in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, “‘military’ jumping” classes began in America (Martin 33).

Show jumping was recognized as a competitive sport in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It may have been held in the 1900 Olympic Games in Paris. The next section will discuss the complications involved in deciding in which Olympic Games equestrian events were first held. It was not until June of 1907 that show jumping was practiced as it is today in an arena. In June of 1907, there are records of a show that included “leaping” or show jumping with 72 horse and rider combinations entered. This show is the first show on record in which the jumps were closer together than previously seen in Britain and contained in an arena, presumably, so that the sport could be enjoyed by spectators (Williams 15).

### **Show Jumping and the Early Modern Olympics**

Baron Pierre de Coubertin of France reestablished the Olympic Games in 1894 (Mallon 16; Bryant 101-102). The first modern Olympics were held in 1896 in Athens because Greece felt that the country “held the right to the first Olympics” (Mallon 16). The second Olympics were held in Paris in 1900. Many scholars consider the 1900 Olympic Games “not worthy to be considered an Olympic Games” because of their “dismal organization” (Mallon 19). What is considered the Olympics of 1900 ran from the 14 of May to the 28 of October, but that varies depending on which sports the scholar is counting as Olympic sports because there was no opening or closing ceremony. There

is no decisive source on this Olympics, and different sources list different events (Mallon 21). Further confusing the records of the 1900 Olympics is the fact that there was no mention or designation of certain sports held in 1900 in Paris as Olympic (Mallon 21). The criteria created in 1896 by the International Olympic Committee used for deciphering what sports were considered Olympic are that the sport was international in scope, the sport was not an event in which any entries were assigned disadvantages or a handicap sport, entries were open to all competitors, the sport was not based on motor vehicles, and the sport was restricted to amateurs (Mallon 24). Equestrian events held in Paris in 1900 that meet these criteria were show jumping, the high jump, the long jump, hacks and hunter combined, four-in-hand coach, and polo (Mallon 27). The uncertainty of the 1900 Olympics leads most scholars to consider the 1912 Stockholm games as the first Olympics in which the equestrian events were officially included (Gianoli and Monti 191; Bryant 76-79). In the 1920 Antwerp Games, the three modern equestrian Olympic events, show jumping, three day eventing, and dressage, were held and a “definite program for the events” was created that is still in place today (Gianoli and Monti 191; Bryant 115-117).

It is not surprising that the events included in the Olympics were “English-riding disciplines with roots in classical horsemanship, fox hunting, and test of cavalry skills” given the modern Olympics’ roots in both Europe and the military (Bryant 121-123).

When the equestrian events were first admitted into the Olympics

The best riders were those in uniform. So strong were the ties between topflight horsemanship and the military that, when the International Olympic Committee voted to institute equestrian competition, the rules of Olympic horse sports permitted only military officers and military-owned or affiliated mounts to compete (Bryant 1002-1004).

The exclusively military nature of the sport led to a consistent lack of interest among the general public in the equestrian sports (Bryant 110-111). However, the equestrian sports were still highly respected in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century because “riding’s military connections were evident, and riding was regarded as just as much of an activity as other sports” (Bryant 236-237).

### **Captain Federico Caprilli and the Forward Seat**

The Italian Captain, Federico Caprilli, created the equitation that every show jumping rider uses today called the forward seat. The forward seat is an extreme version of the natural seat used by Frederick the Great’s cavalry. Caprilli’s theories were adopted in Italy in 1905. His theories did not become well known outside of Italy until the 1920s.

Caprilli was born in 1868 in Leghorn, Italy. In 1886 he was accepted into the military school in Modena as a cavalry officer (Gianoli and Monti 157-158). In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, “equitation in the continental armies had become very artificial” (Hope 32). The cavalry still utilized a seat similar to *manège* with long irons and the rider’s torso on the vertical. Furthermore, the prevalent theory on jumping until the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was actually “entirely unsuited for jumping” (Hope 32). Equitation experts believed that a horse’s front legs were too fragile for the horse to land on, so the riders were taught to maintain a firm hold on their mount’s mouth and to encourage their mount to land a leap on their hind legs by pulling on the horse’s mouth at the height of its jump. The research for this project did not reveal any sources that mentioned whether riders were successful in making horses land on their hind legs, but it is a riding style that

survived in strength until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Caprilli acknowledged the artificiality and inefficiency of military equitation, and, in 1892 at the Italian Cavalry School in Tor di Quinto, he began studying the “horse’s body and weight displacement during a jump” (Gianoli and Monti 157-158). Caprilli treated riding and training a horse as “matters of science” (Thomson 68).

The military variety of horsemanship in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century was similar to *manège* in that it was “based on the extreme collection” of the horse in all ways (Caprilli and Santini 13-14). The horse’s center of balance was shifted back from just behind its shoulder to its hind legs so that the rider could collect all of the horse’s gaits. Caprilli’s developing theory leaned towards the polar opposite: the horse’s “unfettered extension” (Caprilli and Santini 13-14). Caprilli did not teach the collection of the horse’s gaits, he emphasized the horse’s complete freedom to balance and collect itself when necessary because the horse knew its body and its balance better than the rider. Caprilli desired “a means of getting cavalry across a country with the least possible strain on both men and horses” (Caprilli and Santini 14). Caprilli emphasized cross country riding. He aimed “to train both horses and men to adapt themselves promptly to the sudden variations of balance that such riding entails” (Caprilli and Santini 17). Caprilli did not teach jumping as “an end unto itself” but as a means to develop “confidence and instinctive adaptation of one’s natural balance to the horse’s brusquer movements” (Caprilli and Santini 26). Caprilli felt that, by jumping, the horse “learns to overcome, with the slightest possible effort, obstacles which cannot otherwise be negotiated” (Caprilli and Santini 34). He firmly believed that “if horse and rider do not know how to jump, they’ll never do much of anything” (quoted by Gianoli and Monti, 154).

In 1904, Caprilli was given a cavalry squadron with which to test his theories. Four months later, the group assigned to review the squadron's progress saw a difference despite the traditional high schooling bias rampant in Italy. By 1905, Caprilli's system was in official use by the entire Italian cavalry. Just two years later, in 1907, Caprilli suddenly became dizzy while riding and fell from his horse. Although he died almost immediately, his method continued (Gianoli and Monti 158). It took nine years to solidify Caprilli's system "despite patent evidence of a real clear-cut advance to be gained by equitation...through adoption of a method based on principles of balance, forward movement and support" (Gianoli and Monti 153). In this nine year period, other countries acknowledged the decline of Italian high schooling and "development of a modern, more courageous, and far more useful style of horsemanship" (*Navy & Army Illustrated* 583).

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was common for cavalry officers to travel to other countries to perfect their equitation and horsemanship because "the officers were expected to be experts, and they received formal equitation training throughout their careers" (Bryant 986-987). Therefore, Caprilli's method spread rapidly. For example, in early 20<sup>th</sup> century America, "the horse was a lifestyle" for United States Cavalrymen (Bryant 992-995). The United States Army's "selectivity and intensive training produced what at that time were the nation's finest horsemen" (Bryant 998-1000). Furthermore, United States cavalrymen were able to study abroad, and such abroad education is where "US cavalry officers learn[ed] the revolutionary forward-seat jumping style pioneered by Captain Federico Caprilli" (Bryant 998-1001). A notable American cavalryman to study abroad was United States Army Major General Guy Vernor Henry Jr. Major General Henry Jr. was educated at Saumur in France, and then reported back to Fort Riley in 1907

to work at the Mounted Services School as the senior instructor of equitation. He was responsible for developing a training system for the United States cavalry officers (Bryant 1251-1253). One of the most famous American cavalymen to study abroad was Colonel Harry Chamberlin. Col. Chamberlin studied at the French school in Saumur and the Italian school in Tor di Quinto. He brought Caprilli's concepts back to the United States where he trained the United States Army Equestrian Team in the 1930s and 1940s and wrote the Fort Riley cavalry manual (Cronin 7; Martin 34). Caprilli's effect has been long lasting, for "today the majority of [all] horsemen sit more or less in accordance with Caprilli's principles" (Gianoli and Monti 181).

### **The Early International Shows**

Prior to 1906, international equestrian competition was sparse (Bryant 396-375). By 1908, a large international event was held at Tor di Quitno, the Italian Army riding center. and in 1909, the National Horse Show in New York City was inaugurated (Bryant 396-375). From then on, show jumping became very popular very quickly. By 1912, major show jumping competitions were being held in Italy, Great Britain, France and the United States (Mounted Services School 276 and 176). However, already by this time, the amount of military influence on the show depended on the show's location. In Italy, a show was an "almost wholly military affair" (Mounted Services School 276). In Rome there was an "elaborate military competition every year" to encourage riding in the army (Mounted Services School 276). Recall that in Great Britain, hunting had a larger impact on show jumping than in other countries. Therefore, it makes sense that at the London show, the "civilian element [was] all important, the military features, in comparison,

insignificant” (Mounted Services School 276). The Paris show was once “more of a military event” than it was by 1912, but all of the best riders were still cavalymen or ex-cavalymen (Mounted Services School 276). Lastly, by 1912, the United States was holding both civilian and military jumping competitions (Mounted Services School 161). By 1913, the “international jumping at the national [horse show in New York] was firmly established as a military team competition” (Martin 34). There was a division in classes. The National Horse Show in New York held civilian jumper divisions as a “key complement” to the military divisions (Martin 34). Furthermore, by 1913, the United States Army Equestrian Team was traveling abroad to compete. The United States Cavalry Association published a journal article about the importance of sending only the best of the army to compete abroad at the International Horse Show in Olympia, France, because the competitors chosen to compete there were representatives of the army as a whole (Vol. 24 337).

### **Development of the Contemporary Sport in Great Britain and the United States**

In 1921, the last element of the sport was added by the British Show Jumping Association. The association introduced a time limit to the first round of competition and a timed second round, or jump off, in which the fastest time with the least amount of faults, jumps knocked down or refusals, won the competition. The association added the time element to make the sport more exciting for spectators (Williams 20). Therefore, the sport has had its general form since the 1920s.

In the 1930s, international show jumping was “almost entirely confined to military riders” (Williams 19). British and United States participants for the Olympics

“were drawn exclusively from cavalry schools” (Martin 34). William Steinkraus was the first United States competitor in show jumping to win an individual gold medal in the Olympics. Recently, he was nominated for induction into the Olympics Hall of Fame. Yet, he nearly never participated in show jumping. He states that: “I didn’t aspire to being an Olympic rider since I was aware, quite early on, that only serving officers could compete internationally” (Bryant 35-36). However, luckily for United States show jumping, Steinkraus did join the cavalry, and completed his basic mounted training in 1948 (Bryant 43-46). He was one of last cavalymen to go through the Army’s basic training on horseback (Bryant 2231-2233). Steinkraus traveled to London to watch the United States Army Equestrian Team in the 1948 Olympics. He remembers that he was surprised “to find an occasional scarlet coat among all the uniforms” (Bryant 46-51). The dress code for the Olympics at the time was “‘undressed’ uniform for military officers; black or ‘pink’ (scarlet) coats...for civilian competitors” (Bryant 2097-2098). He explained that “since our Olympic representation was then and had always been exclusively military,” he was shocked that there were civilians competing for other nations, specifically, one civilian from France (Bryant 46-51). Steinkraus recalls that “it was not in my wildest dreams that four years later I would be riding in the Helsinki Olympics myself” (Bryant 46-51).

The 1948 London Games marked the end of an era for show jumping. After 1948, “army riders were officially, completely and irrevocably dismounted” (Martin 38). Up until 1948, “the US Cavalry [had] furnished and subsidized America’s equestrian teams in international competition” so, quite suddenly, “there was no organization to oversee equestrian team selection and competition” in the United States (Bryant 445-451). In

1949, a group of supporters, both military and civilian, met to create a means to “select and obtain for the United States the most competent amateur representation possible for international equestrian competitions” (Bryant 445-451). In June of 1950, the United States Equestrian Team (USET) was formed to fill the gap (Martin 38-39; Bryant 445-451). The end of military control over international equestrian competition led to significant opportunities and difficulties. It allowed for civilians to be eligible to compete, which caused the pool of possible competitors to explode in growth, but it left the sport with no capable coaches and no means to select United States team members from the new, larger pool of candidates (Bryant 477-479). Almost immediately, the USET hired Bertalan de Nemethy, a cavalry officer from Hungary, to train the United States Equestrian Team (Martin 38-39). De Nemethy “brought his European cavalry tradition to a country that was largely unfamiliar” with the European high schooling that was called dressage (Bryant 2169-2173). De Nemethy had a profound impact on the sport. The first United States Olympic team to win the individual gold medal and the team gold medal at the same Games was the 1984 team. All of the riders on the 1984 team were de Nemethy protégés (Bryant 2173).

The end of military control over show jumping also allowed for women to compete in equestrian sports. The 1956 Melbourne Games was the “first time a lady rider was permitted by the rules to ride in the Olympic show jumping event,” and that was Pat Smythe who rode for Great Britain (Williams 24). Since the 1950s, women have competed in all of the equestrian events with great success. Equestrian events are unique, because they are one of the only sports in the Olympic Games “in which men and women regularly compete against one another and on equal terms” (Bryant 238-240). Up until

1974, separate World Championships were held for men and women, but since 1975, the World Championships have been combined (Clayton and Steinkraus 12). Show jumping is also unique in the Olympics because the “equestrian events are the only ones in which an animal is part of the competition” (Bryant 229-230).

### **Contemporary Show Jumping in the United States**

George Morris is arguably the individual who has influenced the contemporary sport of show jumping in the United States the most. He is considered the refiner of Caprilli’s riding style in the United States, called the American forward riding system. Conrad Homfeld, one of Morris’ former students who won the individual silver medal and team gold medal in the 1984 Olympics, calls Morris the “father of it all” (Morris, xix). George Morris was the youngest rider ever at fourteen years of age to win two of the most competitive national finals for individuals under 18 years of age in the United States in the same year. Between 1958 and 1960, he rode on the gold medal winning PanAmerican Games United States team, eight winning nation’s cup teams, and on the 1960 Rome Olympics United States Silver Medal team. Students trained by Morris won Olympic medals in 1984, 1992, 1996 and 2004. Lastly, he was officially named the coach, or *chef d’equipe*, of the United States Equestrian Team in 2005 and served in that role until 2012 (United States Equestrian Federation). Morris discussed the evolution of a “universal style” in international show jumping (Bryant 2491). He feels that “it’s not quite as interesting” as “when the flowing Italian jumping style differed from the disciplined German, elegant French, and classical American styles” (Bryant 2491). However, Morris asserts that “everything’s come to the common denominator of

excellence and continued improvement” with the “more homogenized” international riding style and training methods (Bryant 2491).

Although the accepted position for jumping seems to have changed over time, most notably with Caprilli, the seat we use today is reminiscent of the natural seat utilized by the Prussian cavalry in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. Furthermore, the training for a horse and rider has not changed noticeably since Frederick the Great’s revolution in training. Instructions for teaching a rider and a horse have the same structure as the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century cavalry manuals, but they afford more details. Good examples of training the horse and rider for contemporary show jumping are *Riding Logic* by Wilhelm Müseler first published in 1933, *Hunter Seat Equitation* by George Morris first published in 1971, *Show Jumping* by Michael Clayton and William Steinkraus published in 1975, *Schooling and Riding the Sport Horse* by Paul Cronin published in 2004, and the *USHJA Trainer Certification Manual and Study Guide* by the United States Hunter Jumper Association Trainer Certification Program first published in 2009. All of these follow the basic structure of training first implemented by Frederick the Great in the Prussian cavalry and then implemented in other cavalries in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For example, a new rider is taught basic care of the horse and tack, then taught to tack up the horse, then to mount the horse, then they are taught to walk, trot and canter on a longe line, often without reins first, then with reins, then they are taught to steer, then taught to walk, trot and canter in an arena. Only after becoming relatively competent at all of the aforementioned is a rider taught to jump.

Show jumping is an unusual sport. It is “steeped in tradition,” most symbolically in the attire that is “primarily [from] the military and foxhunting” (Bryant 3296). To this

day, the Olympic equestrian events are “affected by military traditions” (Sidney et al. 253). For example, “we are all taught to mount and dismount exclusively on the left or ‘near side’ of the horse” just as military horsemen did because they held their weapon in their right hand (Sidney et al. 253-254). Just as riding was “traditionally the pastime of the landed gentry,” similarly, the riders from economically profitable nations, such as the United States, Great Britain, the Western European countries, Australia, and New Zealand usually occupy the medal podiums at international competitions (Bryant 354-356). Show jumping is “an old, proud sport with...practical military origins [that] has met modern times” (Bryant 2008-2009).

Despite the similarities, show jumping has evolved. The face of show jumping has changed drastically during its short life time from “a military preserve” in “prewar days” to “its far wider appeal today” (Clayton and Steinkraus 11). The “obstacles have evolved from brush and wood,” replicating obstacles that a horse and rider would encounter in the field, to the “brightly colored, shallow-cupped jumps that test the carefulness and scope of today’s jumpers” (Bryant 281-282). There are other types of jumping competition as well. Show jumping is the only Olympic sport of the jumping competitions, but there are two other types of jumping competition today that are only practiced in the United States. One is called hunters, and is more directly derived from hunting. In a hunter competition, the judge is judging the horse against the ideal horse to ride across the countryside in a hunt. For example, a hunter should look easy to ride, it should be smooth so that the rider is not uncomfortable during their hunt, it should also appear to be a calm horse because hunters were ridden out in the country side, a rider would not have wanted to be fighting an easily excited horse during a hunt. Secondly, there are competitions called equitation

and medal classes. Equitation and medal classes judge the rider's position and the rider's effectiveness over a course of jumps. Therefore, equitation and hunters are subjective, because the riders and horses are judged against to the judge's ideal rider or horse.

Show jumping has also become a professional occupation. In 1975, only 43 individuals had taken out professional licenses in show jumping, and they were all citizens of Great Britain. The United States quickly followed suit with professionals of its own. However, in the 1970s, show jumping was still an amateur sport internationally, so professionals were ineligible to compete in the Olympics. Therefore, nations without professionals were still able to send out their best while Britain and the United States had to exclude some of their best riders (Clayton and Steinkraus 11-12). Today, professionals as well as non-professional adults, or amateurs, and individuals under 18 year of age, or juniors, can compete internationally. Generally, in the Olympics and World Championships, professionals dominate the competition, because they are the individuals who devote their lives to riding, while amateurs who are professionals in other areas do not have the time to devote to honing their skills.

## **Conclusion**

Although show jumping is a young sport, its history is rich. The sport's evolution has occurred rapidly. It is incredible to think that horses have been jumped at least since 360 BCE yet it took until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century CE for jumping horses to become a sport. Since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, show jumping has already evolved significantly. I believe that show jumping is approaching its first full cycle of evolution. For example, in 1975 professional trainers were rare in show jumping, and professionals were banned from

international competition, to 2012, where being professional is commonplace. Yet, professional riders are having a more and more difficult time finding wealthy owners that wish to buy horses for a professional to ride. Most wealthy owners would prefer to ride the horse themselves or purchase a horse for their child to ride in advanced competition, than pay for an international class horse to be ridden by a professional. The sport appears to be swaying back towards non-professional riders competing internationally, but only time will reveal the future of show jumping.

**Part Two:**  
**Show Jumping Today**

## **Chapter Five:**

### **Living History: Show Jumping Past and Present**

At the time that this research was conducted, there was not a comprehensive, complete and accessible history of the sport of show jumping, and not a history that would be considered “scholarly.” In the absence of an accessible, written history of the sport, what have individuals thought or been taught about the history of their sport? What has been taught within the sport about where show jumping came from or why it began? As a participant in show jumping, I have wondered the aforementioned myself. I set out to collect information about the oral histories that are taught in the sport. My research indicates that riders who are taught an oral history are taught references to the military origins of the sport. For many riders, the military roots of show jumping inform the way that they understand and relate to show jumping.

However, show jumping is a personal experience. It holds a primary and often sacred role in the lives of individuals who practice it. I perceived a gap in show jumping literature about the role of show jumping in riders’ lives, so I wished to expose that element of show jumping, even if only briefly, because an entire project much larger in scope than this one probably could not encompass the diverse and profound role that show jumping plays in the lives of its participants.

Show jumping is still an evolving sport. In the words of Benedetto Croce, “all history is contemporary history,” meaning that the twelve individuals interviewed for this project, along with all other participants in show jumping, are actively creating the history of show jumping every day (Hull Taylor). Just as it is important to know the

history of show jumping to understand where the sport is today, it is essential to know the role of the sport today to understand its history.

This chapter contains the results of twelve interviews done for this project. The interviewees are all adults, and are women and men between the ages of approximately twenty-eight and approximately sixty-five. They are both non-professionals and professionals and their length of participation in show jumping ranges from a couple of years to over fifty years.

As noted in the introduction, many participants in the sport are not taught any oral history of the sport. I originally contacted ten individuals about the project that I believed knew aspects of oral history about show jumping by phone, email or text depending on my relationship to the individual. Through snowball sampling, I eventually contacted twenty individuals by phone, email or text depending on the individual's preferred method of communication. I interviewed the individuals of the twenty who felt that they had been taught some amount of oral history because one of the aims of this project is to draw connections between the history of the sport from written records to the oral histories taught in the sport today. Interviews were mainly conducted in person, but three were done as a written questionnaire, and two were done over the phone. The interviews were twenty minute, structured interviews that consisted of eleven questions. The eleven questions are attached as Appendix A in the form of the written questionnaire used by three of the interviewees. The interviews explore aspects of oral history that are taught in the sport. However, they also introduce the particular role that show jumping plays in the lives of those who practice it.

Throughout the following sections, the twelve interviewees discuss oral history pertaining to the military and fox hunting and their impact on the equestrian sports. The sections on each individual are organized by themes: show jumping, the cavalry and fox hunting, the use of show jumping's history today, the role of show jumping in the individual's life, and show jumping and society. Not all of the interviewees discussed all of the themes. Most of the individuals feel that the history of show jumping impacts their present view and practice of the sport. Furthermore, all of the individuals explain the unique role that show jumping plays in his or her life. For many, it is a lifestyle, and the structure of their life is dependent upon the sport.



Illustrations 1 and 2, provided by Chrysann Collatos

**Chrysann Collatos**

Chrysann Collatos declared her intention to be a vet when she was only seven years old. In 1988, she received her Veterinary Degree with Honors from the University Of Pennsylvania School Of Veterinary Medicine. At the University of Georgia, Chrysann completed her internship, residency and PhD. After her schooling was completed,

Chrysann worked as an assistant professor and then a veterinary specialist in a large animal hospital. In 1996, she decided to open her own practice, High Desert Equine, and, as of 2012, still runs that practice in the Reno, Nevada area (High Desert Equine).

### *Show Jumping and the Cavalry*

Chrysann has been involved in show jumping since 1978 when she took a break from college and went to South Carolina to train and show in jumping. The main connection that Chrysann has to the history of the sport was that her “first instructor was in the cavalry, so, right from the get go, I had the military connection, not specifically with show jumping because, at that point, I was just learning how to ride, but the connection between the military and equestrian sports in general.” Chrysann believes that show jumping was “related to allowing horses and officers to operate more efficiently on the battlefield. Jumping was something that had to be done in order to allow horses and officers to maneuver more effectively in battle.” She thinks that show jumping “came about when all the military guys were sitting around doing nothing, so they figured out how they could take what they do in real life and turn it into a game and a competition, it’s always a competition. I think that was the origin of show jumping.” Furthermore, Chrysann was taught that all of the traditional practices in the sport, such as leading a horse from the left, mounting from the left, etc. originated because “most soldiers were right handed and carried their sword on the left. They mounted from the left because they couldn’t swing their sword over the horse.”

### *The Use of Show Jumping’s History Today*

Chrysann feels that the history of the sport has helped her to understand show jumping better because “show jumping is more of a technical sport, and you understand

the technical aspect of it because it comes from the military... Show jumping comes from a functional thing, it was important for survival, so if your horse couldn't accurately accomplish the task that you set before them, you could die on the battlefield. In that respect, I think the two are related." However, Chrysann does not feel that the history of the sport plays a role in her every day practice sport, "at least not consciously. The only way it might take a role is through discipline. Again, that whole thought of it being a technical sport, discipline is important."

#### *Show Jumping in Chrysann's Life*

Show jumping "plays a huge role" in Chrysann's life "both professionally and as an avocation, because I'm an equine veterinarian. So, for me, I get tremendous satisfaction from treating performance horses because I think I have a really good in depth understanding of what being a performance horse is about because I'm deeply involved in show jumping as a non-professional as well." For Chrysann as a vet and a competitor in show jumping, it is "exciting... to create an entire athlete. It makes it that much more interesting to me. Also, riding plays a huge role in my life as therapy."

Chrysann immediately named George Morris when I asked her what individuals were most influential on show jumping. Bert de Nemethy has also been a significant influence on show jumping for Chrysann, particularly in the area of jump and course setting. However, as a young woman in a historically male dominated sport, Chrysann says that her "idol was Katie Monahan [Prudent]. I grew up idolizing her because of the way she rode, the fact that she was not a big person, and she didn't have a classic rider's build." Katie, despite not having "a classic rider's build" has been a major force in the show jumping world for nearly four decades. She won the two most prestigious

equitation finals in the United States when she was a junior, and went on to a successful career. In 1986 she was the United States “Rider of the Year,” and, in 2004, she was inducted into the hunter Hall of Fame.

### *Show Jumping and Society*

Chrysann calls show jumping

‘An interesting sport’ because, at the higher levels, it’s definitely an elitist sport, but at the same time there’s an entire culture that revolves around horse show jumping when you look at all the people, all the veterinarians, the farriers, the grooms, the vendors, the people who make tack. There’s definitely an economy and a culture that revolves around horse show jumping. I don’t know the figures, but I think it’s an important economic unit in our culture, and I think as far as interacting with animals is concerned, you know, when you play tennis, you’re playing with an inanimate object, there aren’t that many sports in which, whether it’s show jumping or any other equestrian sport, interaction with the sport is alive. I think that’s very important socially because it helps us evolve in our relationships with animals.



Illustration 3, provided by Carol Dean-Porter

### **Carol Dean-Porter**

Carol Dean-Porter is a professional rider and trainer. She has won the GTE High Jump three times. One of those times is shown in the above picture when she won the GTE High Jump aboard Flemming 4 by jumping 6’9”. She is a USEF recognized and licensed hunter/jumper, hunt seat equitation, and hunter breeding judge. Carol runs Carol

Dean-Porter Equestrian services in Rolling Hills Estates, California (Carol Dean-Porter website).

*Show Jumping, the Cavalry, and Fox Hunting*

Carol has been involved in show jumping since the late 1950s. Like many who become professionals in the sport, Carol's mother was a trainer who worked "in Kansas City, MO in the late 30's and early 40's." Carol remembers her mother as "a wonderful horsewoman whose words I still remember today like 'there is one good kick in every horse, make sure you don't get it!' She knew how the horses thought and was the first to use positive reinforcement for good performance. She carried a sugar cube bag with her everywhere." Carol said that she learned the history of show jumping from her Pony Club District Commissioner, Colonel John Kimball Brown, a cavalry officer. She recalls that "he had been stationed in Italy during the war and had the good fortune of meeting some of the Italian riding masters and learning from them. When he came back home to Southern California, he taught us those principals. He was very gruff and I was pretty scared of him."

Carol learned more than most do about the history of show jumping after joining Pony Club at the age of eight. She was taught that horses were originally used "of course as war animals and took knights into battle centuries ago. They were work animals and transportation animals to help man work the fields and get from place to place." She recalls learning that "show jumping had its beginnings in the hunt field in the UK" because "horses who followed the foxes cross country had to jump solid obstacles like gates and walls." She remembers being taught that "they started having competitions in an enclosed ring for high and long jumps" in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. She learned that "the

technique at the time was to lean back and literally try to get the horse to land on his hind feet in the concern that he might break his legs landing on the thin forelegs.” Carol learned that “just before the turn of the century, Captain Federico Caprilli of Italy started promoting the use of the forward seat. His ideas were thought outrageous and he was banished, but eventually his theory proved right. It was this technique which gave the Italians great success.” Carol was even taught that “show jumping in its current format was introduced to the Olympic Games in 1912.” Carol was also taught about the cavalry’s importance to show jumping. Similar to Chrysann, she recalls learning that “cavalry officers carried their swords on the left side so they could unsheathe the sword with the right and swing it in battle. With the sword hanging off the left side, it made sense to walk to the horse’s left and lead with the right hand, plus mount and dismount from the left.”

#### *The Use of Show Jumping’s History Today*

Similar to Chrysann, Carol feels that the history of the sport helps her to understand show jumping. However, Carol also feels that the history of show jumping plays a role in her every day practice of the sport. She asserts that: “The opportunity to talk with and listen to some of the historic figures [in show jumping] adds to my understanding of the history. If we understand where and why we have the traditions and habits, we can improve upon the sport and grow. If we don’t know why or how, we get stuck in a rut!”

#### *Show Jumping in Carol’s Life*

For Carol, “horses, show jumping, horse show judging, horse transportation and horse shows of all kinds ARE my life!” Some of the “historic figures” that have had a

significant impact on the sport for Carol “were the stars of the 1960’s: Kathy Kusner, I just was honored to speak to her yesterday, Bill Steinkraus, Jimmy Williams, Barbara Worth Oakford, Mary Chapot” because “these people were great evidence that hard work and great technique are the keys to success.” She explains that she “talks daily with other industry professionals and compare their current practices, good and bad, to the past with the hope for improvements in the future” for the sport.



Illustrations 4 and 5, provided by Scott Hettrick

### **Joe Fargis**

Joe Fargis won the individual Gold Medal as well as the team Gold Medal in show jumping at the 1984 Olympics, which made him only the second American rider to win an individual Gold Medal in Olympic show jumping. Joe also led the United States Olympic team to a team Silver Medal in 1988. Today, Joe travels the country giving clinics. He is also a licensed judge and has judged the largest national medal finals.

*Show Jumping, the Cavalry and Fox Hunting*

Joe has been involved with horses for fifty-six years and began competing in show jumping forty-two years ago. Joe said that he was “totally interested and immersed in the history of show jumping, I soaked up all of the knowledge available to me. I loved the whole thing. I had a wonderful riding teacher in the beginning that encouraged us to learn about everything.” Joe remembers that he learned a lot “from word of mouth. I was always around intelligent people that told us things about the sport. I was very lucky to be exposed to the people that I was exposed to. People like Bert de Nemethy, Captain Vladimir Littauer... They were very intellectual about the sport... and Bill Steinkraus.”

Similar to Chrysann and Carol, when I asked Joe about the history of the sport, he bluntly stated that “it all came from war. Why we mount from the left, lead a horse from the left. I think it all came from experiences people had in war... It all had beginnings that made sense.” Although there were other influences on show jumping, such as fox hunting, Joe believes that

the cavalry refined show jumping. There was a horse show in Middleburg, Virginia where I live that began in 1863, and I believe they were hunting type shows, but I think the cavalry did refine it to show jumping. It was the cavalry that moved away from natural obstacles, and said ‘let’s make it a little higher and a little wider.’

Joe was taught that “the history of show jumping isn’t nearly as long as the history of riding horses, the sport is a relatively new thing. In the late 1800s there were horse shows and people jumped horses, but I think they did it in an awkward manner until Caprilli came along, and then it became more refined and sophisticated.” For Joe, the history of show jumping seems to be getting farther and farther away. He does not feel that “anyone knows about the history anymore.” Joe is philosophical about the sport, and greatly

respects the equine participants in the sport because “horses are creatures that have been wonderful servants for humans... at least horses aren’t in war anymore...”

*Show Jumping in Joe’s Life*

Show jumping has been vital to Joe’s life. He feels that “show jumping has made my life. I don’t exist because of it, but I love horses and I love animals... the sport has made me a happy person... it’s found me a way to be outdoors with animals all of the time... it has allowed me to enjoy life to the fullest.”

*Show Jumping and Society*

Joe regrets that show jumping plays the role of an “elite” sport in society because it costs so much money. Joe believes that

The expense makes it not for everyone. A lot of people can afford a baseball bat or a tennis racket, but when you get into horses, you have to be more than a man of ordinary income. I think it’s a shame that it’s become that way. It’s always been a little bit elitist in the states. In Europe, a lot of people have horses, it’s more affordable there... it doesn’t cost an arm and a leg to go to a horse show there like it does here.

For this reason, show jumping plays a different role in European society than in American society. Furthermore, show jumping “is more a part of European tradition, we’re a young country compared to Europe. Over there horses were in war, they pulled plows, not that they haven’t here, but they’ve done it forever over there... over there, the general population is very interested in horses.”



Illustration 6, provided by Spring Down Equestrian Center

**Nick Karazissis**

Nick Karazissis is considered one of the best trainers on the west coast by the show jumping community in the western United States. He has been a trainer for thirty years. Due to the consistent success of his students, he has become a sought after judge and clinician. In 1992, Nick was elected by his peers to receive the California Professional Horsemen Association's "Horseman of the Year" award. He is the national representative for California and Nevada to the national governing body of show jumping in the United States. Nick, his brother Kosta, and his sister-in-law Jenny run Far West Farms in Calabasas, California (Far West Farms).

*Show Jumping and the Cavalry*

Nick has been involved in show jumping for fifty-three years. When I asked Nick about the history of the sport, in essence, his response was similar to Joe's, but Nick's response was also unique because he related learning about the history of show jumping to folklore. He responded: "as everything else, it is like folklore. You are young and listen to the elders talk and speak of the heroes, like Gods, and the interesting stories of

what they did. Each person had their roots, but none went back further than their lifetime.” Nick was taught that “horses were used for transportation, war, farming and pleasure. It wasn’t until the people, especially the rich, began to compete with others on who had the best horses etc. From match races to group racing and also the events which led to horse showing. From there to all other competitions organized from people with diversified interests.”

#### *The Use of Show Jumping’s History Today*

Nick believes that knowing the history of the sport is important because “in order to do anything well, especially to be able to be a trainer, rider, teacher, judge, or coach, you need to understand the why of what you are doing or you are not going to be very good at it; especially if you want people to do as you ask so they can be successful.” Nick explains that he relies on the history of show jumping daily because “being a sheep and just following whatever anyone says just because they say it, does not make it right. Having an understanding of history, where we came from and understanding the changes we have made since then, gives us the freedom to choose what and how we do things, and a course of action we can stand behind.”

#### *Show Jumping in Nick’s Life*

Nick explains that show jumping “is my life [because] I get paid to do the thing that I love and spend time with the kindest most forgiving, healing animals I know. A sport which your partner is four legged.” Nick believes that show jumping plays a role in society as a sport because “sport provides for mental and physical health.”



Illustration 7, provided by Devin Sizemore Photography  
**Amy Lambiase**

Amy Lambiase is a non-professional rider. Amy and her two daughters compete in show jumping. Amy became “more seriously... involved in show jumping in 2009” but she learned to ride when she “was younger, around eight to twelve years old... I started having regular lessons when I was ten years old.” Amy remembers that she rode in “local shows.” She said “yes I was jumping, but not like I am now.”

#### *Show Jumping and Fox Hunting*

Amy and her childhood friend were very interested in the attire for show jumping. She remembers them learning about “why the shirt was called a rat catcher” and making their own show jackets based on the jackets used by fox hunters. Amy recalls being taught that show jumping came from “Europe, more specifically England” and that the act of jumping a horse came from being out on the hunt in the field, “but that was about it.” She feels that there is a stronger historical connection in the hunters because still today “hunter courses have more natural obstacles” than do show jumping courses. Amy believes that show jumping developed “for sport, for contest, how horse racing began, like, ‘hey, can you jump over all of those and not knock them down?’ Maybe there was

even betting involved.” Amy tries to let show jumping’s historical development of a more natural seat guide how she rides and trains. To her, the equitation for show jumping

Comes from a real natural form of riding. Even though people think the Western style of riding looks natural, it teaches that chair seat that affects the horse’s balance. Show jumping equitation moves with the horse, the horse is free to move and even though we learn to collect, it isn’t an extreme collection like you see in other equestrian disciplines... Because we ride in this natural seat, I know that if I feel something funny on the approach to a jump, I realize that I’m not allowing the horse to come to the jump on the natural angle of the jump or I’ve done something funny in the corner so now we’re unbalanced when we get to the jump. I relate everything back to my balance, because of course my horse is going to lean to the right if I’m leaning to the right, of course he’s going to be off balance if I’m leaning. It’s just relating how horses naturally move to the best position I can have to not inhibit my horse.

### *Show Jumping in Amy’s Life*

The role that show jumping plays in Amy’s life, she “really can’t describe. It’s a personal challenge.” She relates it to running a triathlon because you’re running and really working on your athletic ability. However, Amy feels that “show jumping is a step beyond that, a step toward more of a fantasy world because you’re doing all of those things but you’re communicating with a giant animal. You’re working as a team to be athletes together... To me, it’s like a childhood fantasy... it’s like a part of me never grows up because I have that, that relationship with another animal.”

As a kid, Amy and her friend were very “impressed by Melanie Smith Taylor.” She recalls that they “were looking for women grand prix riders. Show jumping still seemed more dominated by men when we were kids. When Melanie was an Olympian, she was definitely an influential person for us. Now, as an adult riding in her clinics, I still find her influential.”

### *Show Jumping and Society*

Amy, like Chrysann, Carol and Joe, acknowledges that many people think of show jumping as “an elitist sport” and agrees that it is because “it’s very expensive, and you can’t be on top unless you hock everything you have and work ninety million jobs or just have a lot of money. It takes a lot of money, and that’s just how it is.” Amy wishes show jumping

Would play a bigger role in society because people don’t understand it. My kids talk to people about riding and they say ‘well, anyone can do that, I could get on a horse and run around and jump a 2’6” course or a 2’9” course’ and I think ‘really? You could?’ which, of course, they couldn’t. Well, they might be able to stay on, but it wouldn’t be pretty. I think that show jumping is certainly within the circle of society, but it’s kind of at the edge of it.



Illustration 8, provided by Jessica Lanski

### **Jessica Lanski**

Jessica Lanski started riding when she was four years old. She began competing in show jumping when she was nine years old. Jessica was a professional for a couple of years when she was younger, but, today, she is a non-professional. Jessica is the reason that I am involved in show jumping, and she has shaped who I am as a rider because she

was my first trainer. She currently is not riding because she has a young family, but is hoping to start riding again in the future.

### *Show Jumping, the Cavalry and Fox Hunting*

Jessica rode, trained and showed for twenty years. Jessica explained that even from her trainers, she did not learn a lot about the history of the sport. Jessica remembers thinking that show jumping started with fox hunting, but also vaguely remembers a connection between the cavalry and show jumping. She thinks that show jumping evolving from the cavalry makes sense because the cavalry would need to be “technical” and well trained to be successful, similar to Chrysann’s thoughts about the technicality of show jumping. Similar to Amy, Jessica thinks that show jumping developed as a sport because “people need sports, they need something to be entertained, and it’s entertaining to watch a horse jump over a huge fence.” Jessica honestly stated that she has never really thought about the history of show jumping, she just enjoyed the sport and the “adrenaline rush” that it can give its participants.

### *Show Jumping in Jessica’s Life*

When I asked Jessica about the sport’s role in her life, she paused for a moment, and her voice became softer as she said

It was a big part of my life. I wish I would have had a little more encouragement later because I think I still would have been riding. My mom was really trying to let me make my own decisions, but every decision I made led me farther away from riding. I was in love with the sport. I loved it. But I don’t think I loved it then the way I love it now. Looking back I think now that I have a much deeper appreciation for riding... when I look at it now, I know that if I started riding again, I would be in love with it more. I think I did it more back then because I was good at it. I was good at it and my parents were paying for it. I loved being good at it and I strove to be the best at it.

Jessica explains that “one of the most influential parts of riding on my life was training and teaching.” Teaching played a significant role in Jessica’s life. She explains that

I only had two students, but they really changed my life and my view on the sport. Even then, my passion for the sport changed because I had one particular very talented and intelligent little girl that loved to ride. I made mistakes as a trainer, like putting her on this big, huge thoroughbred, Junior, who didn’t even know how to walk [because he had been a race horse], and he took off running with her and it scared me to death. That student was Ari. You learn. When you’re a trainer, you have to have foreseeability, you have to foresee those things happening so that you can avoid problems like that, but that really changed me. Now, when I think about riding, I think about teaching. I’ve always liked teaching, I think that teaching helps you to understand yourself better.

### *Show Jumping and Society*

Jessica believes that show jumping probably does not play much of a role in general society because “it’s not like football, or baseball, or basketball, I don’t think. I think it’s a society itself, it’s really its own world.” However, she suggests that the larger shows that last a month or more have an economic impact on the societies that house them because of the number of people that flock to the area and spend money.



Illustration 9, provided by Leone Equestrian

### **Rudy Leone**

Rudy Leone opened Leone Equestrian in 1974 in Sacramento, California when he moved to the United States from Switzerland. Leone Equestrian trains horses and riders, and is also a sale barn where riders can send their horses to be sold or go to find a horse to buy. He is well respected as both a trainer of riders and horses because pupils of Rudy's, both human and equine, have competed at the international level (Leone Equestrian).

#### *Show Jumping and the Cavalry*

Rudy has been involved in show jumping for fifty-two years. He is “a horsemaster out of Europe.” In Europe, in order to be a professional in the horse world, one has to earn a four year degree as a horsemaster, a system not yet mandatory in the United States. Rudy's experience in Europe was very different from his experience in the United States. He feels that “it's fun, because I grew up and lived the old-fashioned way, and moved to the new fashioned way of riding... I was very old school when I came to this country in 1974.” For Rudy,

the old-fashioned people were very set in their ways. They had rules about how things were supposed to be done. They didn't really have an open mind. The example I like to use is if you rode poorly in Europe, they told you that you rode like a cowboy. For me, in this day and age, my horsemanship improves by getting to know 'cowboys...' I learned a lot from those guys like Jimmy Williams that were cowboys before they were jumping horse trainers. I learned from those guys, I had an open mind. I didn't say 'they're cowboys so they're bad...' All I ever did was try to combine the old-fashioned way with the cowboy's way.

Similar to most of the interviews, especially Chrysann, Rudy learned that show jumping goes back to

the very disciplined European armies. Discipline is where all the riding originally came from in Europe. It was all related to armies. If you look at old pictures whether they were Swiss riders or Italian riders or French riders or Irish riders, they all rode in uniform because they came out of the army. That's where this whole thing came from. It's safe to say that the army had more discipline than anybody else had. They didn't just have tidy uniforms and shiny boots. They were taught to ride in beautiful style, that's what you call equitation to this day. The army had more time to practice than everybody else had. If you look back to the Olympics in the 40s, it was basically all army related. Just go back and look at an old book like that, and you see all these old guys and everyone you see is riding in uniform... I'm old enough that I lived through that and with that. Those people were my idols, now, here I am, I'm the old fart now, right?

### *The Use of Show Jumping's History Today*

Show jumping is like "any sport," for Rudy. He believes that the history of a sport is important, because "records are broken every year... they knew half as much forty years ago as we do now. I think there are more knowledgeable people now that learned from the old guys." Similar to Nick, Rudy believes that only with individuals in show jumping that are knowledgeable of the sport's history, can the sport build upon its foundations and take strides forward.

The history of show jumping does play a role in Rudy's everyday practice of the sport because show jumping "is what I do on a daily basis, and, I think, in the history there has been a lot of trainers that got stuck in their old-fashioned way, and they were

not able to realize the evolution. I think the secret is that you need to live the evolution.” Rudy believes that you must “stay on top of the game and follow the evolution on a daily basis to stay competitive... It’s incredible, phenomenal, how far it’s come... If you look at anything, jumps, footing, all of the evolution that the business has had, just in the last forty years, it’s unbelievable. You would have to live it in order to know it.”

The lack of a certification program in the United States, like Europe’s horsemaster degree, is a source of worry for Rudy. He feels that “65% of trainers, shouldn’t be trainers. It’s too easy here for you to come to my place, take two lessons, hang out for a while, and then call yourself a trainer. You can make your living doing that, and represent yourself as a horse trainer, but, in many cases, that representation is a misrepresentation. They should not be trainers... Is that good or bad?”

### *Show Jumping in Rudy’s Life*

Show jumping, for Rudy,

is my livelihood. It’s been my livelihood ever since I was sixteen years old. It’s my income. It’s the roof over my head. Needless to say, it also fulfills a dream that I had to make a living with it. I’m very diversified, I do it in many different ways. I have a riding school where I teach the beginners to the people riding at the Olympic level... I import good horses from Europe and that’s a business that still goes on to this day. I’m also a producer of horse shows... So every way you want to look at my life, it’s influenced by the sport.

Bert de Nemethy was very influential on show jumping for Rudy. He explained that Bert

came from the Hungarian army, needless to say, he was an incredible horseman, plus, he taught someone like George Morris. George has been incredibly influential. I think George’s strength was to be able to put his system into a book, he put it into words. So was Bert influential? Yes. Was George amazingly influential? For sure. He managed to take Bert’s words and turn them into a book, into a system, that is an incredible system. American success shows that.

*Show Jumping and Society*

Similar to Amy, Rudy laments the lack of knowledge about show jumping in the general population. Rudy specifies that show jumping's role in America "does not compare to its role in Europe. In Europe, it's a national pastime... There are show jumping stars in Europe like you have football stars, or baseball stars here." Rudy acknowledges that, in America, "it's a little bit more difficult because there are so many sports to choose from, you dilute the national interest with all of the choices in America. In Europe, your number one sport is soccer, your number two sport is horses. It's a little different than America." But Rudy does believe that show jumping plays a role in society in America. He said that he

would tell the parent of a kid that wants to ride, that loves it, even though it's pricey and costly and what have you, that growing up in that environment... I don't think you could trade it with any other sport because you have to love the horses and other people. If you can afford a horsemanship education for a kid, I think it makes good people out of them. It keeps a kid off of the streets and from doing drugs. Instead they're riding a horse. So, if you can afford it, I think it can better society that way.



Illustration 10, provided by Denise Montagne  
**Denise Montagne**

Denise Montagne has been around horses since 1994. She has been involved in show jumping since 2003. Denise is a licensed human and animal physical therapist. Her passion is working on equine athletes and their riders to address the issues each has that affect the other and the pair's overall performance. Her work helps to muscularly develop horses and riders so that they are more capable athletes separately and as a team.

*Show Jumping and the Cavalry*

Similar to many of the other interviewees, Denise was taught that the Olympic equestrian events “came from the cavalry where they had to learn to jump things in the field while they were battling.” Denise was also taught that “we mount from the left because the soldiers carried their swords on their left hip, so they mounted from the left so that the sword wouldn't interfere when they mounted.”

### *Show Jumping in Denise's Life*

The role of show jumping in Denise's life is unique because, even though she participates in the sport for pleasure, many of her patients, both equine and human, compete in show jumping. Denise explains that "for me, it's a great outlet for physical activity, interacting with my horse, and being with other like-minded people. I love watching the beauty of it... I'd like to go to more events or see it more on television. I think, for me personally, it's just the most fun thing I do. I just love it. I wish I could ride every day. Jump every day."

### *Show Jumping and Society*

Denise sees show jumping as

...a prestigious sport. I think it's for elite athletes, both horses and riders. It's tied with a lot of money, so it's commercially a sport where people can make money. It's also a sport where people spend a lot of money. I think it's a really good athletic endeavor because it involves an animal and a human together. It's a beautiful sport, it's an athletic sport. It's a sport that you can do, technically, for a pretty large life span, you can start pretty young, and I know one man that still rides the show circuit in Florida and he's seventy-four... There are a lot of challenges to it. I think it offers a lot for a wide variety of people, not just show jumping, all of the equestrian sports.

Similar to Nick, Amy, Jessica and Rudy, Denise believes that the sport provides positive development for kids and even adults who participate in it. She says that "one of the things I like about the sport is that it teaches you a lot of responsibility, so it's a good thing for kids to learn, to be around horses, not that everyone is going to love it, but it would be nice if it was more affordable because it's a good activity for kids."

Physical therapy for animals from an athletic perspective is a recent development. Many in show jumping and the other equestrian sports do not realize its value to both riders and horses. Denise explains that,

As a horse physical therapist, I think it would be great if people could learn more about care of the horse when you're not riding a horse, like the massage therapy. Not just for the horse but for humans to be better about taking care of their own bodies, whether it's injury prevention or just making yourself be more athletic and in better physical condition when you're riding a horse. Yes, riding a horse is a physical activity, so the better shape you're in before you ride the horse, the better you are on the horse. Similarly, the better the horse is without a rider on its back, the better they are together.



Illustrations 11 and 12, provided by Meadow View Farms

### **Lynn Mullins**

Lynn Mullins has been an avid competitor in show jumping since she was young. She showed in the hunters, jumpers and equitation as a junior and began training horses as a junior as well. After taking a break from riding to go to college and start a family, she began her professional career. She has now been a professional in show jumping for over twenty years. Lynn and her daughter, Sarah Mullins, run Meadow View Farms in Reno, Nevada.

#### *Show Jumping, the Cavalry, and Fox Hunting*

Lynn has been involved in show jumping for forty-one years. She recalls beginning to learn some of the history of show jumping when she was eight to ten years old and continued to learn through her teen years. Lynn said that she heard that

Hunters began with the Enclosure Acts in Europe. They had always hunted in Europe, the properties were all open so the riders could cross from property to property. But the Enclosure Act allowed the land owners to start fencing their properties, so then, in order to get from property to property, the horses had to jump. That's how it started. I think they wanted to make it more of a spectator sport so they put it into a venue that allowed spectators.

As far as how the sport developed, Lynn is not sure because “now, even in Europe, I don't think they do a lot of the hunting competitions, that's more in this country. I'm not sure how we adopted it and they lost it over there. And I've often wondered how show jumping became an Olympic sport, because I think it's the only Olympic sport where there's an animal involved.” Lynn shares that she has “often wondered about the history of the sport, but I wasn't sure where to look, I assume you could find something on Wikipedia and read their version of how it became an Olympic sport, but I don't know where you could find the facts.”

Lynn remembers “hearing when I was little from Jimmy Williams that show jumpers were called ‘leapers.’ There were ‘wide leapers’ and ‘high leapers.’ I don't know how show jumping started or why. I think just as a sport, probably just like any other sport. It was something to do.” The first historical knowledge that Lynn has about the sport she accredits to Jimmy Williams, a rider and trainer who was inducted into the Show Jumping Hall of Fame. She recalls going with her dad and her sister to their very first lesson with Jimmy. Her dad and Jimmy had been friends and had ridden western together fifteen years before. Since then, Jimmy had switched to show jumping. Lynn remembers Jimmy talking about the “leapers” during their first trip to Jimmy's barn. Laughing, Lynn recalls that “I thought it was funny. I was eight years old, and thought we were going to ride ‘leapers.’”

Similar to many of the above individuals, Lynn was taught that “we mount from the left because, in the military, they wore swords on the left so they faced the back of the horse and swung their right leg up and over so they wouldn’t hit the horse with their sword... I’ve been taught that’s why we do most everything from the left.” Lynn thinks that “the clothing that we show in has been very traditional since the hunt clubs. We’ve kept it mostly traditional.”

*The Use of Show Jumping’s History Today*

Similar to many of the interviewees, Lynn believes the history of show jumping is helpful. She feels that “knowledge of any kind helps you to have a better understanding of the sport,” but she cannot recall direct, significant experiences in which the knowledge she has of the history has helped her to better understand the sport. In fact, she remembers purposefully breaking tradition, “I’ve had horses in the barn that have been prone to back soreness, so I’ve taught riders to mount from the off side [the right side] so that the horse’s back and shoulders aren’t consistently being pulled to the left as the rider mounts.” Lynn feels that the history has helped her to “appreciate the sport and enjoy it more.” For Lynn, knowing that the sport “comes from a long tradition and wanting to carry on the tradition for future generations” causes the history of show jumping to play a role in her every day practice of the sport.

*Show Jumping in Lynn’s Life*

I wish I could capture in words the astounded look that Lynn gave me when I asked her what role the sport plays in her life. After a laugh, she replies “it consumes my life. It takes up twelve to sixteen hours of my day, but in a good way... It is my life. It’s

my passion, it's what I do for a living, but it's also what I love to do. It could have been other things, but I chose to do this."

### *Show Jumping and Society*

Similar to many of the above individuals, Lynn sees show jumping as operating at an individual scale in society, like other sports, because

anything that's done at a high level requires a lot of hard work and builds character. From my perspective, the kids getting involved may never be trainers, maybe once they grow up they won't be involved with horses, but it helps kids become better adults and more responsible and have a lot of character and teaches them to have perseverance.

Lynn thinks that, "economy wise, it's big. We heard that, during Thermal [the largest show on the west coast], twenty-six million dollars were spent in a six week period in an area that's otherwise remote." Lynn explained that "maybe it's just clear in my mind because we were just down at Thermal, but it was so obvious. Across the street from the horse show was a tire shop and all these buildings that were completely falling down and inside the fence were super wealthy people but they were spending a lot of money in that area that will hopefully provide good things for the people that live there." Lynn strongly feels that "any athletic sport is good for society, because kids are getting involved, doing things that keep them focused, directed, working hard, and developing their character in ways they couldn't do at home. Plus, the kids who do really well in athletics do really well in school and vice versa. It gives them a good solid foundation."



Illustrations 13 and 14, provided by Meadow View Farms

### **Sarah Mullins**

Sarah Mullins was born into a horse family. She has been involved in show jumping for twenty-three years. Sarah competed successfully as both a junior and an amateur with many championships in hunters and medals. She declared herself a professional in 2008. Now she runs Meadow View Farms with her mom, Lynn Mullins, in Reno, Nevada.

#### *Show Jumping and Fox Hunting*

Sarah explains that “no one ever sat down and talked to me” about the history of show jumping, but that she remembers picking up pieces of information at various times. She remembers individuals just mentioning to her “this is why we do it this way. This is how this originated, even though it seems weird, this is why they did it and it makes sense.” Similar to Amy and Lynn, the earliest that Sarah remembers hearing about the history of show jumping, was that show jumping began with “fox hunting in England when the government passed a law that allowed people to fence off their properties and that’s how jumping originated. But spectators couldn’t follow them around the

countryside for competition so that's why they started putting jumps into an arena so that it could become a spectator sport." Sarah remembers being taught unique folkloric facts, such as, that there is an extra strap on a saddle so that if one of the straps you needed broke in the field, you could use the spare strap. Also that part of the attire for hunting was a stock tie, a long piece of fabric tied in a ruffle around the rider's neck, that could be used as a bandage if the rider or their mount was injured out in the field.

### *Show Jumping in Sarah's Life*

For Sarah, show jumping is "my job, so it's how I make my living." She recalls that "there was a time when I thought that I didn't want to make my money with this because I wanted to love it forever." She remembers thinking since she was little "that going to a horse show was a different world than the real world. Even now, kids can all hang out together and run around. They don't need their parents to watch them." It's a world where "everyone still helps each other out." Sarah feels like the show jumping world has "always had a little bit of magic in it for me." She explains that she has "always loved the horses, they make it feel like everything is going to be ok." She loves the sport because "it allows me to make money and have a living, but it's definitely made me who I am" it also means "a lot to my family. How many kids get to be raised in a family all doing the same thing and loving the same thing?"

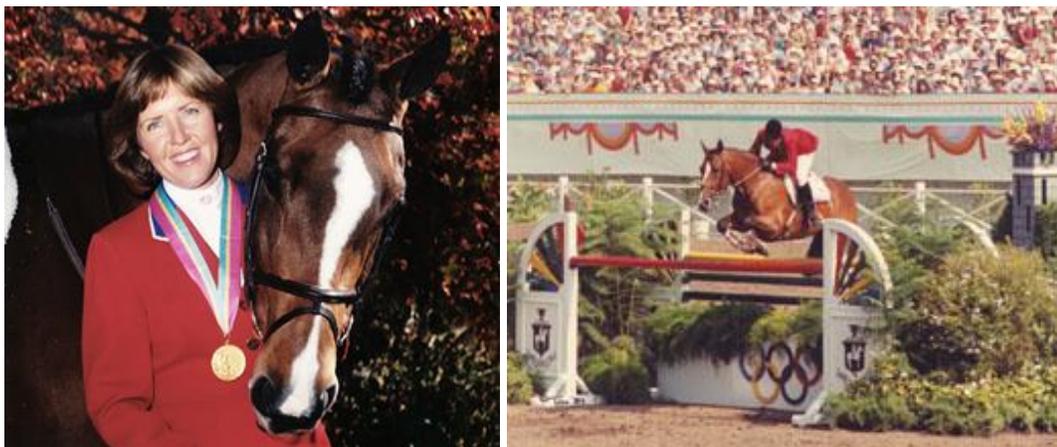
The most influential people on the sport for Sarah are George Morris and John French. She feels that "George Morris has such an influence on our riding system and I know he didn't start the forward riding system, but I think he made it important to the United States" Sarah believes that John French is important to show jumping in the United States because hunters are becoming very popular in this country. She feels that

“John French had a huge impact on the hunter world” because in many ways he defined “the riding style for the hunters.”

### *Show Jumping and Society*

Sarah does not know if show jumping necessarily affects the parts of society that are not involved in the sport because “there are a lot of people who just assume that I race horses.” She believes that,

For people that are in the sport and connected, it definitely shapes who you are. Having a horse that you have to learn to work as a team with, then have compassion and be able to look outside of yourself to an animal that you can’t communicate with in words. It teaches you that it isn’t all about you. My mom always told me that you need to do what the horse needs first. Like, if you’re thirsty after you ride, you have to take care of the horse first and then you can get a drink. It teaches you to have compassion, how to be mature and think about your actions and how they affect other people. Even though it isn’t a team sport, it teaches you how to support other people and cheer for your teammates.



Illustrations 15 and 16, provided by TaylorMade Horsemanhip  
**Melanie Smith Taylor**

Melanie Smith Taylor had a successful competitive career in show jumping that included being named the American Grand Prix Association Lady Rider of the Year award in 1974, she was also named the American Grand Prix Association’s overall Rider of the Year the same year, convincing the United States to discontinue the Lady Rider’s

award because Melanie proved that women could compete on the same level as men. She is one of only two women to have won the Triple Crown of Show Jumping. Her career culminated in winning the team gold medal for the United States Equestrian Team in 1984 with her mount Calypso (A Legacy of Legends). Now she is a recognized hunter/jumper, hunt seat equitation and hunter breeding judge, runs Wildwood Farm in Germantown, Tennessee, and travels the United States teaching clinics. She has devoted her life to teaching the next generation of riders in her clinics and programs. She created the Emerging Athletes Program to develop talented riders under the age of twenty-one and guide them towards international competition. She ran the program for its first three years. In 2012, Melanie has begun a new adventure with a new program called TaylorMade Horsemanship. TaylorMade focuses on introducing show jumping riders to the benefits of working with their horses on the ground as well as on their horses' backs (TaylorMade Horsemanship).

### *Show Jumping and the Cavalry*

Melanie has been involved in the sport since she was a kid. She remembers “being taught about how important horses were during the wars.” However, she does not “remember being taught about the history of show jumping specifically.” She does remember being taught that three day eventing was the original Olympic equestrian sport and that it was originally called the Military. Three day eventing is one of the contemporary equestrian sports. Each horse and rider combination has to be capable of completing relatively advanced feats in dressage, cross country jumping and show jumping. This event was created as the ultimate test for military horses that had to be capable of all of the included feats and fit enough to complete them all within three days.

Melanie recalls that what history she did learn orally was taught to her at Pony Club around the age of twelve. The rest of the information she has collected over the years she collected herself. However, Melanie was taught a unique connection between the cavalry and British society. She recalls “being taught that the British drive on the ‘wrong’ side of the road because when horses were used for transportation, they passed right hand to right hand as that was the hand holding the sword in case they needed to defend themselves.”

*Show Jumping in Melanie’s Life*

Melanie bluntly states that: “show jumping has been my passion, career and business.” She believes that “horses create opportunities through connections, contacts and experiences with others [and that] horses have a way of shaping our lives physically, emotionally and spiritually.” An important individual in show jumping for Melanie is William Steinkraus. She recalled that “Steinkraus winning the first individual Gold Medal in Show Jumping in the 1968 Mexico City Olympics made a huge impact on me. I dreamed of winning a Gold Medal too.”



Illustrations 17 and 18, provided by Maplewood Stables

### **Julie Winkel**

Julie Winkel is a United States Hunter Jumper Association certified trainer, a talent scout for the Emerging Athletes Program, a successful hunter and jumper rider, and a sought after judge. She has been a recognized judge since 1984 and has judged some of the most prestigious shows in the United States. Julie runs Maplewood Stables in Reno, Nevada (Maplewood Stables).

#### *Show Jumping, the Cavalry, and Fox Hunting*

Julie has been involved in show jumping since she was ten years old. Julie, similar to Amy, Jessica, Lynn and Sarah, was taught that “the sport goes back to the fox hunting and that era in England, especially the hunter sport.” Show jumping, however, she is sure came about “in Europe from wars, training horses to be warriors.” The history of show jumping is something that has interested Julie. Even though she does not feel that she was taught a lot orally about the sport, she has investigated the history herself.

#### *The Use of Show Jumping’s History Today*

Julie feels that the history does help her in the every-day practice of the sport, particularly when judging hunter shows. She explains that when judging a hunter class

“I’m looking for that horse that has manners to be out in the hunt field with a bunch of horses and has ability to cope with the demands of that sport, so, sure, you’re working on pace, form, balance, and manners in the training of a hunter horse.” Show jumping, again, is a different story. Julie explains that “in the early 1900s, the jumps were big and wide, it was not technical,” meaning that the course was not mentally challenging, it was a sport based on the physical challenge of clearing a formidably large obstacle. Julie explains that technicality in courses “has all evolved, and that has really evolved through the Bert de Nemethy years. He was the first one that really got the world thinking about technical rather than big and wide to get the horses more trained, more educated, more schooled, so that they could negotiate more complicated courses, not just big and wide courses.”

#### *Show Jumping in Julie’s Life*

Julie feels that she was lucky because she was raised by “great horsemen, my mom and my dad were around horses their whole lives and their parents were around horses their whole lives.” Julie accredits the generations of horsemen in her family for teaching her “how horses think.” Julie believes that “to this day, the greatest teachers are going to be the horses.” For Julie, show jumping “is everything, it means everything to me, it’s been my whole life. I really appreciate knowing where it came from and I’m certainly always interested in learning more.” For Julie, the most influential people on the sport were her parents “and then later... Bill Steinkraus and George Morris who were my mentors.” She explains that “to this day, George is still my mentor, the guru of our sport in every way. Not just in the United States, but all over the world. He is the pinnacle of an educator and a mentor.”

## Conclusion

The oral histories of show jumping mirror the written history discussed in Part One of this project: eleven out of twelve interviewees cited the military in their oral history. However, even the interviewee who did not cite the military, Amy, did discuss the evolution of the natural or forward seat and its importance to the successful practice of show jumping. Therefore, Amy does indirectly cite the military's importance to show jumping by citing the military's most recent contribution to jumping, which was Caprilli's founding of the forward seat.

Half of the interviews either cited fox hunting as the source of show jumping or an influence on show jumping. As demonstrated by Xenophon in *On Horsemanship*, hunting was recommended as ideal practice for the cavalry in 360 BCE. Therefore, there is good reason to believe that hunting also influenced the sport of show jumping, particularly in countries like Great Britain and the United States in which hunting played an important role in society, as explained in chapter three. However, the written history of show jumping more strongly emphasizes the cavalry as the source of show jumping. Hunting is the source for another type of jumping competition that is explained in chapter four, the hunters.

The majority of the interviewees stated that the history of show jumping helps them to understand the sport or felt that the history of the sport plays a role in their everyday practice of the sport. So much of the daily practices in show jumping are tied to the history of the sport. Every time a rider puts a halter on a horse from the left and proceeds to lead the horse from the left, he or she is honoring the military history of the sport. Furthermore, traditions in the sport today also honor fox hunting. The attire used

for shows has not changed since the hunt clubs in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Britain. Riders wear knee high black boots, tan pants called breeches, a long sleeved cotton under shirt with a collar called a rat catcher, and a blazer type jacket called a hunt coat.

In order to understand where the sport has come from, one must understand where the sport is today. For example, one must understand that today when mounting a horse, one mounts the horse only from the left. If one does not know the aforementioned tradition in the sport today, then he or she will not understand the significance of the fact that since at least 360 BCE, humans have been mounting horses exclusively from the left. Furthermore, all sports are intrinsically linked to the societies they exist within. For example, recall Pluvinel's riding schools in France and their role in creating noble men out of boys and later the military takeover of equitation in Europe when the nobility were waning economically in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. All of the interviewees mentioned show jumping's connection to society. All of the interviewees felt that show jumping does or could influence society in a positive way. Specifically, interviewees mentioned show jumping as a positive economic influence and a positive personal influence. A few interviewees cited the positive economic impact of horse show jumping shows. Specifically, Lynn Mullins said that twenty-six million dollars were spent during the six week show in Thermal, California in an otherwise desolate area. Many of the interviewees cited the positive personal development that show jumping demands of its participants, similar to King Duarte's desire for equitation to improve the morality of his men in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and Pluvinel's riding schools in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Riders, such as Nick, Amy, Rudy, Lynn and Sarah, see show jumping as a means to instilling traits such as discipline, patience, compassion and determination in kids. These beliefs are similar to

Pluvinel in the 17<sup>th</sup> century who saw *manège* equitation as the most reliable means to instilling the virtues of a noble in young men. Melanie shared her belief that horses shape the lives the humans who work with them “physically, emotionally and spiritually.” Similarly, Joe reflected that show jumping and horses made him a happier person and enabled him to fully live life. Perhaps because of the emotional development that show jumping creates, individuals in this study revealed that they feel that their entire lives revolve around show jumping and horses, similar to the United States cavalrymen who were said to have lived on horseback. For example, Nick said that show jumping is his life, Amy said that show jumping is a personal challenge that she cannot describe, Jessica said that show jumping changed her life, Lynn said that show jumping consumes her life, Rudy said that any way you want to look at his life it is influenced by show jumping, Sarah said that show jumping made her who she is, Carol said that all aspects of the show jumping world are her life, and Julie said that show jumping is everything to her.

## **Chapter 6:**

### **The Future of Show Jumping**

The sixth chapter of this project will discuss what the future holds for equestrian events, particularly show jumping. First, literature about the future of the equestrian events in the Olympics will be discussed. The rest of the chapter contains the future of the sport from the perspective of the twelve interviews done for the project, and is organized by the themes that the interviewees discussed. In the interviews, riders mentioned economic concerns, concerns about the role of the professional, concerns about the choice of horses trained for show jumping, as well as concerns about honor and integrity in the sport. However, many of the interviewees have positive views on the future, specifically confidence in show jumping's ability to evolve as the practice of jumping horses has evolved from Xenophon in 360 BCE to today, as explored in Part One of this project.

#### **Literature and the Olympic Equestrian Events**

The future of the equestrian events in the Olympics is uncertain. Dressage, or contemporary high schooling, is probably in the most trouble because it is consistently dominated by Germany. A sport dominated by one country is in danger of elimination from the Olympics because domination by one country implies that other countries are not practicing the sport. The Olympics can only contain a certain number of events, so sports that are dominated by a single country are eliminated to make room for more internationally competitive sports. However, equestrian journalist and historian Max Ammann does not foresee future danger for show jumping or three day eventing in the

Olympics because there is always stiff competition between the countries for medals, and new countries make the medal podium often (Bryant 3261). Participants in show jumping hope that the sport “will survive because it is keenly, internationally competitive” (Williams 27). However, equestrian events are expensive, so the current economic troubles have hurt equestrian sports more than others. Only time will tell if show jumping can thrive regardless of the economy.

### **Riders on the Economy and Expense of Show Jumping**

The expense of show jumping and the effect of the economy on show jumping were significantly discussed topics in the interviews. Chrysann hopes

that some way or another, it becomes more accessible to people with less money. It is really difficult without serious finances to compete at a level that really allows the rider to understand what the sport is about. Kids can ride in the little local shows, and that’s great, but they cannot compete enough at the level that allows the kids to really understand the sport... it’s too expensive.

Joe is very concerned about the future of show jumping. He thinks that “we’re in a little bit of trouble because it’s becoming more and more expensive, and it’s out of the ordinary American’s reach, even if they wanted to do it. The future of the sport is dim to me as far as show jumping... I don’t know what’s going to happen.”

Nick is concerned about the future of the sport because of its expense and reliance on a good economy. He simply stated: “I hope the economy gets better.” Similarly, Julie is concerned that show jumping will become “more and more expensive” as land becomes “less and less available. Horses will have less space to live as they did in nature. It will become more expensive to house top horses or any horses. The reality is that it will

become harder for the average person to own a horse and compete. Unfortunately, I really feel like that's the downside of it."

Amy thinks "it would be cool if show jumping became more main stream, if it could get to more people, and more people could see the value of the sport." More importantly, with a laugh, she adds "maybe, somehow, it could be less expensive, but I don't know if that's ever going to happen. Since day one that people had horses, if you had more money, you could get a better horse." She admits that the correlation between money and success in the sport may not change but "I would like to see it more broadly introduced. I'm not going to dream and say that public schools that can't even afford a PE teacher right now could afford horseback riding, but why don't private schools have riding as part of their program, or part of their team sports?"

Rudy said that the future of show jumping is like anything else; it is suffering because of the poor global and United States economy. He feels that

It's interesting if you study the economy and you compare it to the success in the show ring. When America had a really strong economy, they had all of the best sportsmen in the world and they were the best competitors in the world at the time. Now, the economy is stronger in Europe, so, therefore, they are more successful in sport. It's sad to say, but at the end of the day, it is a money sport. Talent alone isn't going to get you to the Olympics. It's talent and money, and that's sad, but it's true.

Rudy has a famous saying among his students that demonstrates show jumping's relationship and, perhaps its dependence on a good economy:

'A horse without a rider is still a horse. On the other hand, a rider without a horse is a pedestrian.' The right horse is what gives you success if you're a good rider. Being a good rider alone is not good enough... Without money, there's no show jumping. You can't do it without a good breeding program [that provides good horses] and without good teachers... In America, we suffer, because it isn't a popular spectator sport. In Europe, it's very much a spectator sport, so it gets more television and more sponsors. In America we don't have that.

Denise also worries about the economy's effect on show jumping. She said "I would ask is show jumping going to survive? Because our country has had a hard time economically, I know show jumping is worldwide, but our country has had a harder time economically for a while." The future of the sport is also worrisome for Sarah. She explains that "so many people talk about going to Europe for the summer because it's so much cheaper there" so she is concerned about American show jumping and believes that the sport will need to evolve to suit the current economy.

Lynn believes "that there are things that need to change to make show jumping more affordable, more profitable for the people putting on the shows and the trainers making their livelihood from it." She discussed how the show circuit has exploded in growth. Lynn remembers that there used to be "thirty shows every year, and you went to all of them. Now, there's a show every single weekend, so people have to pick what shows to go to" and that's causing problems for the shows that fewer people go to. Because numbers keep dwindling the quality of shows has decreased as well. Lynn thinks that something needs to be done about the issue, specifically "less shows and higher quality shows." Lynn thinks "it needs to be consolidated and reeled back because there's too much and too many options," especially for the time of economic hardship that the United States is experiencing.

### **Riders on the Role of the Professional in Show Jumping**

The role of the professionals is also a concern for some of the interviewees. Recall from chapter five that prior to 1975, there were no professionals in show jumping.

Today, there is not an organization that tracks the number of professionals in the United States, therefore, anyone can become a professional. The United States Hunter Jumper Association is attempting to professionalize the process of becoming a trainer with a certification program called The Trainer Certification Program. According to the United States Hunter Jumper Association, there are approximately three hundred certified trainers in the United States. Certified trainers are the minority in the United States. There are probably closer to thousands on trainers in the United States alone.

Carol is concerned about the evolving role of the professional in show jumping. She thinks that “the future is geared more towards riders performing themselves and horses being purchased for those riders rather than an owner purchasing a high level horse for a professional to ride.” She believes that “this is good because it introduces more people to the sport and to appreciate the majesty and generosity of these animals.” However, she also acknowledges that it is also “not so good because the professionals have trouble scraping together the finances for the purchase of a high level horse.” The consequence of this shift is that the best riders are unable to attain mounts for international competition, leaving those spots to be filled by non-professional riders who, arguably, are not as skilled as the professionals.

When I asked Joe about the role of the professional in show jumping, he agrees that it is changing. Wealthy horse owners now prefer to “mount their children on the expensive horses, rather than professionals. The days of mounting professionals are waning, going away, stopping. But that’s perfectly legitimate. It’s a normal thought to want to mount your kid on a nice horse. It’s not wrong or right, it’s just what’s happening.”

### **Riders on the Training of Horses for Show Jumping**

Carol is concerned about the contemporary choice of horses to be trained for show jumping. She explained that she is concerned because “we have become a ‘consumer’ nation, purchasing the goods and services we need, and yes, a horse is a ‘good.’” We prefer to buy an already trained horse rather than a horse that needs to be trained or re-trained. Carol believes that “we need to return to our roots of developing and training our own animals” because “horses like ‘Touch of Class’ and ‘Snowbound,’ former unsuccessful race horses, would have a hard time getting a chance today!” Touch of Class was ridden by Joe Fargis to an individual and team Gold Medal in show jumping in the 1984 Olympics, and Snowbound was ridden by William Steinkraus to the first United States individual Gold Medal in show jumping in 1968. American show jumping would not have been as successful and internationally recognized without horses like Touch of Class and Snowbound.

### **Riders on Honor and Integrity in Show Jumping**

Although most of the interviewees did not directly mention the moral issues in the sport, there were undertones of the moral issues in the interviews. In particular, these were concerns about the honor of those participating in the sport, for example, the drugging of horses to make them more competitive, respectful business relationships between human participants in the sport, and, most importantly, the respect of the equine participants in show jumping. Show jumping is highly regulated by regional, national and international governing bodies, yet, some rules are still violated and often.

Lynn admitted that she may “have blinders on,” because she has not really contemplated the sport not continuing. However, she agreed with Sarah who stated “I think the most important thing is that we always have the good of the horses as our primary concern.” Similarly, Denise desires a better future for the equine athletes in show jumping. She doesn’t know where show jumping will go from its present state, and she does not feel that she knows enough about the history to recognize any cyclical trends. Denise stated that she does not know if

Show jumping has the capability to push athletes to do more and do better and better, but I know there’s probably better knowledge out there about caring for a performance animal, like doing body work, doing the necessary things to keep a horse healthy. Maybe we could have the potential for horses lasting longer in the sport.

Melanie asserted brusquely that the future of the sport is “endless as long as honor and integrity of those in the sport is maintained.”

### **Riders’ Confidence in Show Jumping’s Ability to Evolve**

Despite the worries and wishes for the future, there were positives as well. Joe pointed out that the increasing number of competitors competing at the lower levels of show jumping, and concluded that “so, in a diluted way, the sport is growing.” And although the future of the sport is unclear to Jessica, she thinks

That it is one of those sports that will keep turning over and changing because it has changed so much since I’ve been in it. Things are way different than when I was there, so different that it kind of blows my mind. I think things are going to take loops. The technical aspects of the sport will always change a little bit, change for the times, the sport will keep challenging people more. I just hope it doesn’t get to where it’s bad, where it’s pushed so far that you have to ask ‘where do we go from here?’ I see a circle, kind of like fashion, it all comes back.

Lynn agrees with Jessica. She has witnessed evolution within the sport in her years involved with show jumping and is sure that show jumping will continue to evolve.

Julie expressed what she felt was the downside of the sport, namely the increasing expense, but she also feels that there is an upside, “the upside is that I think people will always be interested in our sport because it brings them back to nature and back to tradition and back to history and it’s exciting, it’s an awesome sport.” Furthermore, Julie believes that both the hunters and the jumpers “are linked to kings and queens” by society, so “the elite part of society is very into this as a sport, not only to participate in but to watch, to go and be spectators” and will continue to be. Lastly, Julie is confident that the sport will “continue to get better and better.”

Although Sarah expressed her worries about the sport, particularly the sport’s state in the United States, she agrees with Julie that,

There will always be people with money, they don’t call it the sport of kings for nothing, so I’m sure it will always be around. There are definitely some aspects of it that I don’t like that I hope they work on changing and improving, but I think we have a really good foundation with our system. I like that we have the hunters and the equitation as a way to solidify the foundation of good equitation in riders... When you watch our Olympic riders who have won some of the national equitation finals, you can tell they are an American rider. There are a lot of things that we’re doing right. There are some things we need help with. But worldwide, I can’t think of a better sport. So I think it’s going to stick around and hopefully keep evolving for the better.

## **Conclusion**

Although experts in show jumping believe that show jumping’s place in the Olympic Games is safe, participants in the sport have other concerns relevant to show jumping’s future. The most common concern that was discussed in the interviewees was the expense of show jumping and the economy. The expense of show jumping limits

potential participants significantly to those who can afford it. However, this is nothing new. Show jumping's expense is historically rooted in the expense of a horse itself. In the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century cavalries were poorly trained because of their expense, and that the average expense of a cavalryman and his mount was twice that of an infantryman. Rudy, in particular, discussed the relationship between the economy and a country's success in show jumping. Rudy believes that the most economically profitable and stable nations are the nations that will be most internationally competitive because horses are expensive, and through this project we have seen that they have always been expensive. Furthermore, this project has demonstrated that, just as the countries today that are most economically profitable are the most internationally competitive in sport, similarly, the nations throughout history that have put money into training a cavalry well have been the most successful on the battlefield. For example, Frederick the Great was willing to dedicate the funds and time to training his cavalry well and his cavalry became the most respected cavalry of his time and beyond.

The role of the professional is another source of concern for riders today. Owners of international quality horses are becoming less likely to pay for a professional rider to show their horse. Instead, the owner is riding the horse or the owner is buying the horse for his or her child. There are fewer owners funding professionals who cannot afford an international quality horse with their own funds. Show jumping may be experiencing its first evolutionary cycle. Prior to 1975, only non-professionals were allowed to ride in international competition. Non-professionals were the individuals who could afford international quality horses. Today, although professionals generally dominate international competition, more non-professionals are earning places on the podium

because they have the money to purchase the best horses. For example, for the first time in United States show jumping history, a junior rider of seventeen years of age won the United States Show Jumping Championships. Her name is Reed Kessler. Ten years ago, a seventeen year old would not have ridden in the United States Show Jumping Championships. Ten years ago, Reed's family would have hired a professional to ride the horse, Cylana, in the championships, not mounted their teen age daughter for the championships.

Riders are concerned about which horses are selected to be trained for show jumping. The majority of riders desire the expensive horse that is already trained and winning. Most riders do not want to put the time and effort into training a horse. The most popular example is former Thoroughbred racehorses. Retraining a former racehorse is time consuming and difficult. But some of the best horses in United States show jumping history were former race horses like, Touch of Class and Snowbound. Some riders worry that show jumping is letting talented horses fall through the cracks because riders and trainers are hesitant to re-train a horse for show jumping. Furthermore, that leads to more former racehorses without homes.

Although the moral concerns about show jumping were rarely blatantly discussed in the interviews, there were undertones of worry in some of the interviews. Some of the interviewees have doubts about the honor and integrity of those participating in show jumping due to certain incidents in the sport. The simplest incident to describe is the drugging of horses. Riders, trainers or owners are known to drug horses, especially in the hunters, to make the horse appear more calm and easy to ride.

Despite their concerns, many of the interviewees were confident in show jumping's ability to transform into whatever its participants need it to be. This project has demonstrated show jumping's ability to evolve to suit the needs of its participants. Perhaps show jumping's ability to evolve is what has kept the practice alive since its first mentions in writing in 360 BCE. The interviewees hope that show jumping's ability to evolve will keep the sport thriving for many years to come.

## Conclusion

This project has shown the evolution of equitation, specifically equitation geared towards jumping, since its earliest mention in writing. Although Xenophon in 360 BCE was not the first human to jump a horse over an obstacle, he can be considered the father of equitation for jumping as far as written records are concerned. Xenophon's *On Horsemanship* reveals that humans have been leading horses from the left, mounting them from the left, leaping them, and riding them in a natural seat for at least two thousand three hundred and seventy-two years.

King Duarte's work in the 15<sup>th</sup> century shows consistency with Xenophon's theories on equitation, but also introduces the role that equitation can play in personal development that was reiterated by Pluvinel in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Riding for personal development abounds today, as demonstrated by the interviews. Rudy Leone said

I would tell the parent of a kid who wants to ride, that even though it's pricey and costly and what have you, I don't think you could trade growing up in that environment with any other sport because you have to love the horses and other people. If you can afford a horsemanship education for a kid, I think it makes good people out of them. It keeps a kid off of the streets and from doing drugs. Instead they're riding a horse.

Lynn Mullins explained

anything that's done at a high level requires a lot of hard work and builds character. From my perspective, the kids getting involved may never be trainers, maybe once they grow up they won't be involved with horses, but it helps kids become better adults and more responsible and have a lot of character and teaches them to have perseverance.

Sarah Mullins believes that,

It teaches you to have compassion, how to be mature and think about your actions and how they affect the horses and other people. Even though it isn't a team sport, it teaches you how to support other people and cheer for your teammates.

The revolutionary cavalry training that Frederick the Great created in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century included detailed training of both the horse and rider, and the last and most difficult skill that a horse and rider learned was to leap obstacles. Leaping obstacles on horseback was taught to all of the Prussian cavalry and all cavalymen were taught to ride in a natural seat, a seat that hampered the horse's balance and freedom less than the more commonly used *manège* seat. Frederick's training regimen spread from Prussia to Italy, France, Great Britain and the United States by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The order in which Frederick's training system introduced horses and riders to new skills is still used today as demonstrated by books about show jumping and training riders and horses for show jumping, for example *The Complete Book of Show Jumping* by Michael Clayton and William Steinkraus published in 1995. The countries that adopted Frederick's training were also the first countries to hold horse shows with prototype show jumping classes called "leaping" classes. For example, the earliest show was held in 1866 in Paris, France and by 1900 there were major shows in Italy, France, Britain and the United States.

From the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, Captain Federico Caprilli created and perfected his theories about equitation. Caprilli promoted the forward seat, a style that can most easily be understood as an extreme variation of the natural seat used by Xenophon and Frederick the Great. In the forward seat, the rider's goal is to interfere with the horse's balance as little as possible. His theories were in complete opposition to the cavalry riding style of the time that was based on the rider's complete control over the horse's balance. By 1905, Caprilli's system was the official system of the Italian cavalry, and by the 1920s and 1930s it was being taught in other countries, such as the United

States by Major General Henry Jr. and Colonel Chamberlin. Today, every show jumping rider rides more or less in Caprilli's style.

Show jumping is not static, even now. For example, the training methods that have survived from the cavalry are now being challenged. A form of horsemanship that practices ground work is making an appearance in show jumping. Ground work emphasizes training a horse from the ground to improve the horse's health and performance while being ridden. This type of horsemanship is most often associated with western riding, cowboys and horse whisperers. However, Melanie Smith Taylor is exposing the show jumping world to ground work methods along with a well-known ground worker, Mindy Bower. TaylorMade Horsemanship is a program that teaches riders and horses on the ground, as well as mounted to better the pair's performance in the show ring.

Even without knowing the complex history of show jumping, riders who know elements of the sport's history have confidence that it will continue. Jessica and Lynn said that they have witnessed the evolution of the sport and feel that the sport will continue to change to fit the times. Similarly, Sarah and Julie expressed that they are confident that the sport will always be around and confident in the United States show jumping system.

This project shows that jumping horses has been practiced for thousands of years and its importance has evolved. It was important to the cavalry for survival. The ability to leap an obstacle could have meant the difference between life and death. Today, it is important for other reasons, for example, as a profession, as a lifestyle, as therapy and as a means for personal growth. Although the reasons for its importance have evolved, the

fact that it is important has not. Show jumping's record of evolving to suit the needs of the individuals practicing it gives me every reason to believe that the sport will continue.

### **Afterward**

This project has been a journey, both through history and through my own passion for show jumping. The painstaking research involved in constructing the history of show jumping in written documents was rewarding. I enjoy knowing the why's behind the many traditions in the sport that are nonsensical today. In fact, the entire sport seems ridiculous today, so knowing that show jumping has origins that made sense historically makes me appreciate the sport more. I greatly enjoyed interviewing individuals in the sport. All of the interviews inspired and touched me. All of the interviewees demonstrated an intense passion for the sport that I share.

My journey through the history of show jumping began with my experiences in Melanie Smith Taylor's program, the Emerging Athletes Program. I feel that it is fitting to end with Melanie as well because Melanie stated that show jumping's future is "endless as long as honor and integrity of those in the sport is maintained." I hope that Melanie is correct, that the sport will continue as long as honor is maintained in the sport. I hope that the participants in the sport who are honorable are numerous enough for show jumping to continue despite the participants in the sport who are not honorable. I hope that the participants who are honorable can maintain the sport so that the future of the sport is, indeed, endless.

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## Appendix A

1. How long have you been involved in show jumping?
2. Where you taught aspects of an oral history of show jumping, and, if so, what were you taught? For example, were you taught when and where the sport began? Or why the sport began? Or important figures in the history of the sport?
3. Were you taught any historical reasons for the traditions in our sport? For example, why we lead horses from the left and mount from the left? Why we prefer the mane to be on the right? Or any others you can think of...
4. How old were you?
5. Who taught you about the history of the sport?
6. How has the history of the sport helped you to understand the sport, or has it not?

7. What role, if any, does the history of the sport play in your everyday practice of the sport?
  
8. For you, what individuals were/are most influential on the sport and why?
  
9. What role does the sport play in your life?
  
10. What role do you think the sport plays in society, if any?
  
11. What do you think the future of the sport is?