

JAMES H. MINNICK

Nationally known polo player, friend of Will Rogers and AQHA's first inspector describes only one man: James H. Minnick.



In 1905, Minnick started trading horses for a living at his ranch near Crowell, Texas. He soon became interested in polo and realized his horses were capable of excelling in the sport.

Eventually, with a sound reputation as a horseman and his ties to Will Rogers and Tom Mix, Minnick caught the attention of AQHA. The Association hired him as its first inspector and judge.

A horse was not registered in the early

days without Minnick's approval. Good conformation was a must before Minnick allowed it into the registry. At the same time, Minnick was shrewd and knew the Association needed the revenue from the registrations to stay alive.

During the early years, AQHA directors and executive committee members argued over allowing Thoroughbred blood into the registry. From his polo days, Minnick valued Thoroughbred blood in Quarter Horses. So he went out and registered Quarter Horses that were quarter, half and three-quarter Thoroughbred. He never registered a horse that did not deserve it, though.

Minnick's passion for horses began in the late 1880s. Born in 1881, he watched the last of the cattle drives from his roof in Crowell, Texas. He did not pay attention to the cowboys or cattle; he watched the horses.

Minnick started breaking horses as a child and headed west as a teenager. He worked for the Slaughter Long S Ranch for several years. He went back home and bought a ranch with his savings. Soon after, Minnick was buying and selling horses to avid polo players in Oklahoma.

In 1947, Minnick died at 66. He was inducted into the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame in 1984.

INDUCTED INTO THE AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE

*Hall of
Fame*

1984