

Emanuel Demus

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Places: Maddoxtown, Fayette County,
Kentucky; Lexington, Fayette County,
Kentucky

Birth: January 22, 1922

Death: April 15, 1995

Professions: Groom



Birth and Family

Emanuel Demus, born in 1922, was one of nine children of George Elijah and Laura Payne Demus. His parents gave him the same first name shared by his great-grandfather and grandfather. The family lived in Maddoxtown, an African American community in Fayette County, Kentucky.¹ Demus married twice and was the father of many children.²

Family Memories

Demus' niece, Erica James, shared memories of her uncle. She said that he was the most amazing, funny guy. He would eat an onion the way others would eat an apple. He would cook and burn the bacon. He said it tasted better that way. He would tell the corniest jokes and laugh as if it was the funniest joke ever told.³

Family Work

Demus left school to follow the career path taken by others in his family. His grandfather, Emanuel, was a groom of racehorses.⁴ His great uncle, William, was a horse trainer.⁵ His great-grandfather, Emanuel, was a farm laborer. It is likely that he, too, worked with horses.⁶

By the age of twenty, Demus was employed as a groom at Walmac Farm. It was located on the Fayette and Bourbon County line in Kentucky. Demus, as other young men, served in the Army during World War II from 1942 to 1946.⁷ At the age of twenty-four, he returned from service and resumed working with horses.

Lifetime Groom

Demus groomed Thoroughbreds for over fifty-years. He traveled with horses to California, Florida and Illinois, but spent most of his time in Kentucky.⁸

Demus' work is documented through photos taken with winning horses. In 1979, he groomed Saren, owned by Edward Ways of Sared Racing Stable. The two-year old horse won at Latonia that year.

In the early 1990s, Demus, already in his late 60s, kept busy. He groomed Thoroughbreds for the D & J Stables owned by Marian, Kathi and Horace Davis. Their horses were All Flash No Cash, Bradford Bay, and Simply Something. They won racing events at Churchill Downs, Turfway Park, and Keeneland.⁹

Family Tribute and Legacy

Demus died in 1995 at seventy-three years of age. He was buried with military honors at Camp Nelson Cemetery, Jessamine County, Kentucky.¹⁰

Demus' niece wrote that the family was truly blessed to have had someone like him in their lives and as part of the family. Even when he had been diagnosed with a heart condition, he continued to do what he loved, caring for horses.

Demus devoted his life to the welfare of horses. He is recognized and honored as a true horseman by all who knew him.¹¹

Sources

James, Erica. 2019. "Emanuel Demus." Written narrative and donated items/photos.

Tenth Census of the United States, 1880. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration.¹⁸⁸⁰

Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration.¹⁹¹⁰

Fifteenth United States Census. 1930. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration. 1930.

World War II Registration Cards for Kentucky, 10/16/1940 - 03/31/1947. Records of the Selective Service System, 1926-1975; Box:171. Record Group 147. National Archives and Records Administration, St. Louis, Missouri. Manuel Demus June 19, 1942.

Beneficiary Identification Records Locator Subsystem Death File. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Emanuel Demus. April 15, 1995.

"Emanuel Demus (1922-1995) Grave Memorial." accessed February 1, 2021.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/574054/emanuel-demus>

Footnotes

¹Eleventh Census of the United States, 1880. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration. 1880

²James, Erica. 2019. donated items

³James

⁴Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration. 1930

⁵Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration. 1910

⁶Tenth Census of the United States, 1880. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration. 1880

⁷World War II Draft Registration Cards for Kentucky, 10/16/1940 - 03/31/1947. Records of Selective Service System, 1926-1975; Box 171. Record Group 147. National Archives and Records Administration, St. Louis, Missouri

⁸James

⁹James

¹⁰Emanuel Demus Grave Memorial

¹¹James