

A complete history of the Missouri Foxtrotter.

OF ROYAL BLOOD...THE MISSOURI FOXTROTTER

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**OF ROYAL BLOOD**  
**THE MISSOURI FOXTROTTER**



## PREFACE



***Blue Papered Missouri Foxtrotter***

Though the Missouri Fox Trotter has been bred in the Ozarks for well over 150 years their traceable heritage is centuries long! There is very little information about these wonderful horses available in print. What tidbits are available are generally either unsubstantiated gossip, unreliable rumor, or incorrect assumptions.

A breed with so much to offer the equine world, with a population slowly growing and expanding into the world market, is surely worthy of a true and accurate history being recorded and made available to the knowledge-seeking public!

The history of the Missouri Fox Trotter is not only interesting but amazingly rich. The horses that went into the development of the breed were incredibly gifted animals of notable and historical significance.

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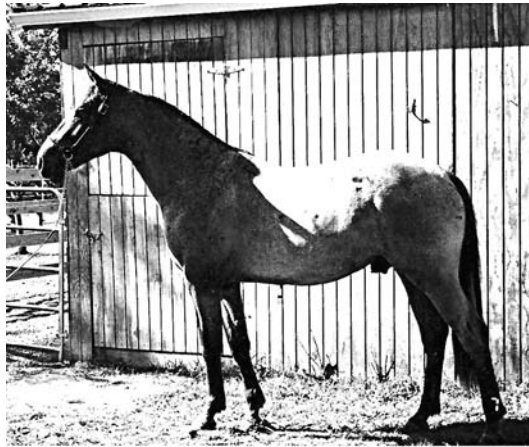
Through eleven years of research for this book, the history and saga of this remarkable breed became addicting and riveting. Each new discovery only whetted the appetite for the ferreting out of another.

The final chapter is yet to be written in that the breed continues to evolve through the selective breeding process. But the blending of genes gleaned from a multitude of sources comes together in the Missouri Foxtrotter in a manner unique and individual unto only this breed.

This book focuses on the origin of the breed, not one specific faction. Come along and see why the Missouri Foxtrotter is indeed,

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## FORWARD



**FOXVANGEN'S TOY BOY**

*At two years of age this Blue Papered Missouri Foxtrotter has conformational features drawn from many different types of ancestors. The Spanish Barb influence is clearly evident however his under line and shoulder assembly is more similar to the Turk.*

At face value the average person may be led to believe the Missouri Fox Trotter is just a crossbred type of horse bordering upon being some sort of mutt. One might even hear rumors that the Missouri Foxtrotter is simply a “*poor man’s Tennessee Walking Horse!*” If one were to give much credibility to the few writings on the subject of heritage for the breed a more specific type of crossbred analogy might be conjured. None of these notions however, come close to describing the delicately balanced genetic pool from which the Missouri Fox Trotter is coined.

Every new “*breed*” or type of horse in the world comes from the evolution of, or the crossing of different strains. In that respect the Missouri Fox Trotter is no different from the masses. Just how that

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process was conducted in this instance is not only interesting but explains why these horses have so much incredible potential.

The Missouri Fox Trotter is actually a horse stemming from not only a number of different types of horse, but also a breed of horse that traces to many of the best and foremost horses the world has ever known. Were a person to pay a bit of attention to the history of this breed, or delve beyond the meager few generations readily to hand on registration pedigrees, it would soon become apparent that the Missouri Fox Trotter has the potential to become one of the most highly prized and bred horses in the world.

The total number of living horses within the breed is very small compared to that of most other breeds or registries. Among the number of living horses there were fewer than 4,000 breeding mares in use as of 2005. When one considers who and what these mares are it soon becomes very obvious all of them stem from a relatively similar gene pool. One mare may have horses in her pedigree that another mare lacks but nearly all the mares share at least some common ancestry fairly close up.

For those who have not had the pleasure of meeting this breed of horse be advised you are in for a rare treat. Because for so many decades the Missouri Foxtrotter was tucked away in the Ozark Mountains of Missouri, Arkansas and some immediately adjacent areas it has only recently been brought out into the general mainstream of equine America and the world. That does not by any means indicate the breed is “*new*” or a latecomer. Far the opposite. The Missouri Foxtrotter developed from gaited stocks of various mixes and body styles nearly simultaneous to the gaited breeds of Saddlebred and Tennessee Walking Horse. What is more, they developed from identical stocks. Only the balance of genes is different as you will soon see.

What sets the Missouri Foxtrotter apart from the average gaited horse of today is it’s amazingly cooperative and naturally gentle nature, it’s

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intelligent willingness to please, it's extraordinary athletic ability and it's wonderful, well-balanced, natural intermediate gait...the foxtrot.

Because the breed stems from so many different sources that have blended and melded into a semi-standardized group it is possible to find conformational styles to suit any preference. The horses range in size from 14 hands to 16 hands or more with the largest majority of them being between 14.2 hands and 15.2.

Missouri Foxtrotters make great family horses and love attention. They are generally not nervy sorts and have more patience than most breeds. They tend to be curious and playful and love human contact. Generally very sure footed and well balanced, they are not commonly reactionary or spooky by nature.

Missouri Foxtrotters usually have very good bone and feet and large joints. They tend to mature slowly and live a long serviceable life with modest care. (*It is not uncommon to find a Missouri Foxtrotter still growing taller after age four.*) The majority of Missouri Foxtrotters tend to be easy keeping animals thriving on less feed than many contemporary breeds.

Most Missouri Foxtrotters are multi-gaited but are expected to perform a natural foxtrot gait. (*The gait is described in another section of this book.*) Within the breed there is a range of style to the way the horses move however most will move with fluid action and a bit of animation by way of a pronounced head nod and a bob to the tail when performing the foxtrot.

There is far more to the breed than the less than 2% of the horses involved with the show ring. While these horses are frequently the first Foxtrotters newcomers to the breed get to see, show horses are by far not the only, nor necessarily the best representatives of the breed overall.

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Within the breed it is possible to find horses that excel at any number of equine athletic endeavours from cow penning to gaming, from jumping to flat racing, from competitive trail to endurance as well as some that make great for parade horses or proficient at general ranch work. Many of the breed have natural “*cow sense*” with terrific focus and attention spans. Missouri Foxtrotters are also trail horses extraordinaire!

Though docile and obedient, the Missouri Foxtrotter is no dead head or lazy bones! Quite the contrary. Foxtrotters tend to enjoy working and like to travel with energy! Their energy is more controlled than that of hot blooded horses, yet every bit as enduring.

Many 20-year-old Missouri Foxtrotters can rival younger horses of other breeds when it comes to getting down the trail! It is not unusual for these horses to remain healthy and serviceable well into their twenties.

The Missouri Foxtrotter is an efficient mover and can cover vast numbers of miles in a day without tiring. For this reason the United States Forestry Department maintains more than a thousand of them because the Missouri Foxtrotter can cover twice the number of miles in a day, without tiring or wearing the rider out, than can other breeds!

Loyal and stalwart the Missouri Foxtrotter likes to bond to its master and become part of the family. They tend to be inquisitive and often display a sense of humor! They are so quiet in the brain that most people unfamiliar with the breed do not even realize the horses are learning until they demonstrate they have accomplished the lesson. Most Foxtrotters learn without a lot of repetition and maintain extremely well. They have long attention spans and are willing students.

Most Missouri Foxtrotters can canter and hard trot on command as well as perform various intermediate gaits. Some will also pace



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although pace is not a desired trait to encourage. For those interested in colorful horses, the Missouri Foxtrotter breed has a full array of colors to offer!

Since most of the readily available information on the breed centers around show horses or horses who have won titles in the show ring, this book centers around the Missouri Foxtrotter with particular attention to the original using type Foxtrotter. Though all styles of Foxtrotter have their value and merit, there are few avenues for a person to explore the population among the breed that are required to do more than simply display the gait in a show ring or a trail ride.

As the Missouri Foxtrotter breed branches out to the world at large, it is encountering a buying public geared to using their horses in a varied array of athletic sport. Those markets are prime for the Missouri Foxtrotter and the Foxtrotter has the athletic ability to excel at these sports. The older style of Foxtrotters were using horses par excellence. That style remains among the breed today and as such needs an avenue in which to put themselves forth to the public.

The breed motto is "*To ride one is to own one*" but it might better be "*To own one is to want more!*" because to own a Missouri Foxtrotter is to fall in love with the breed!

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