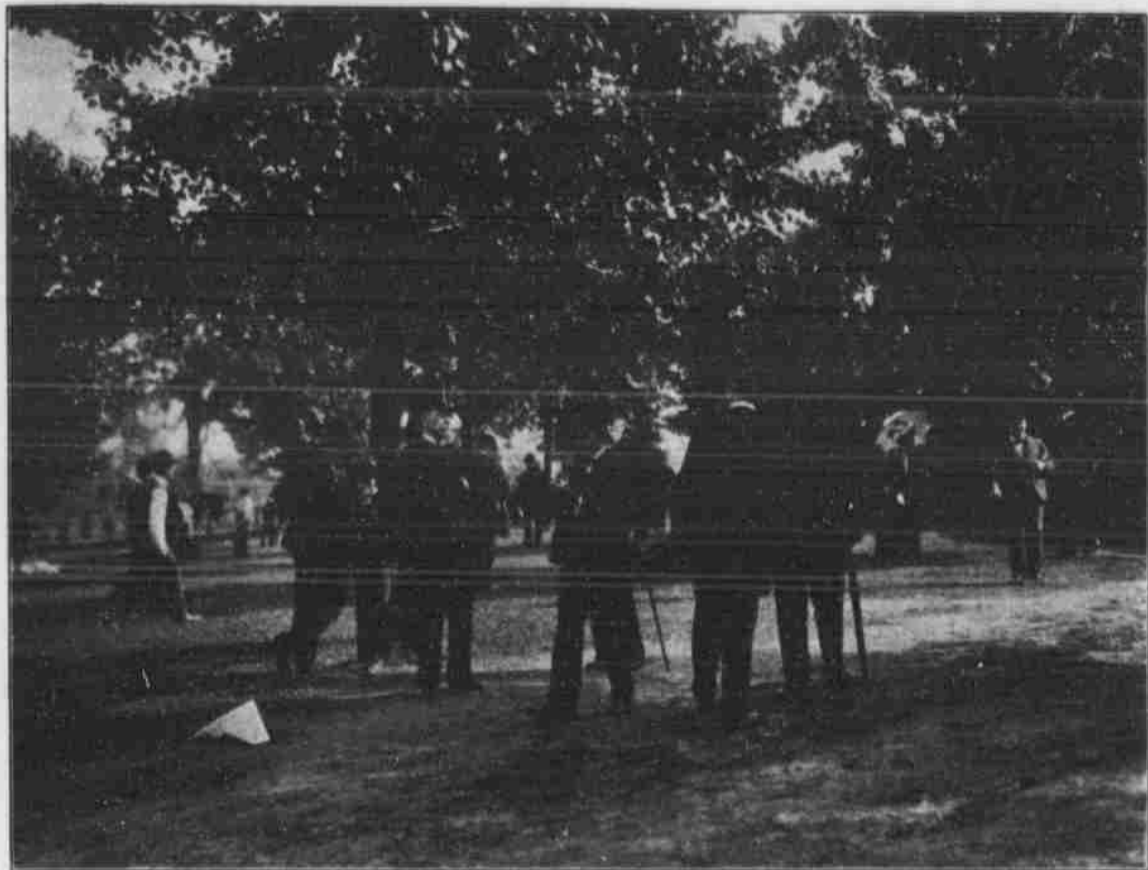
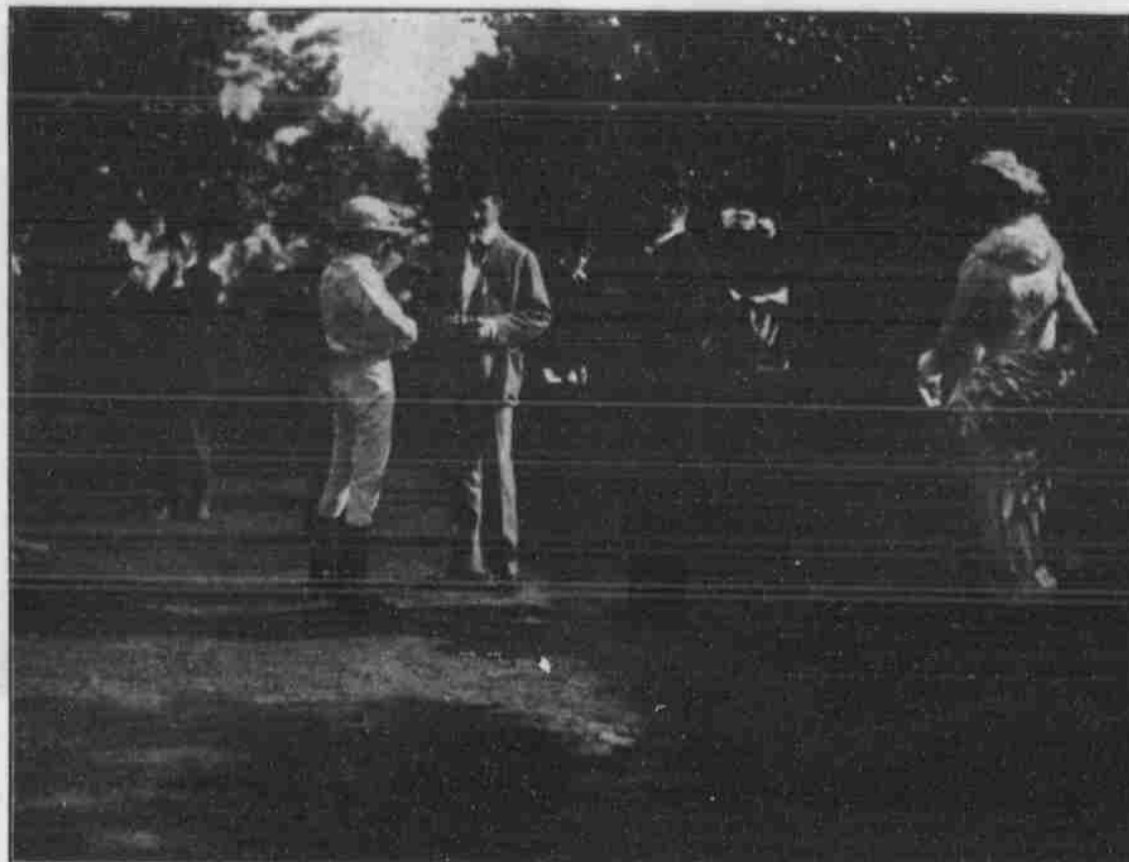


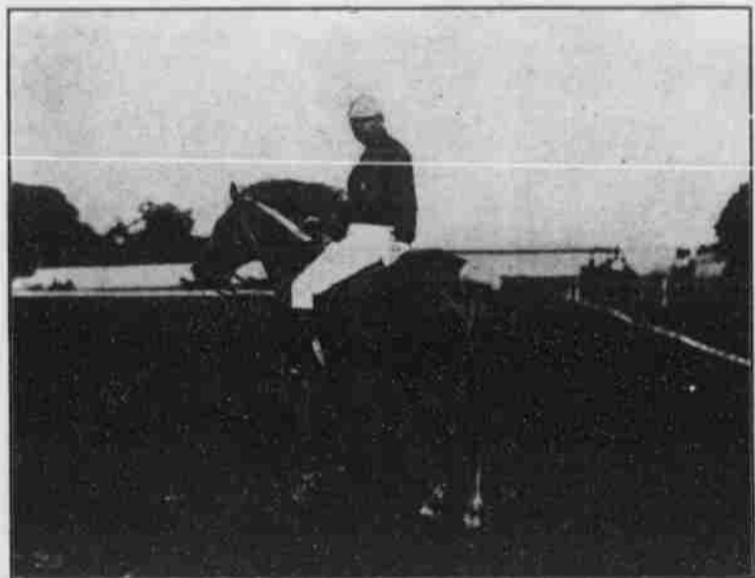
# American Croesuses and the Race Track



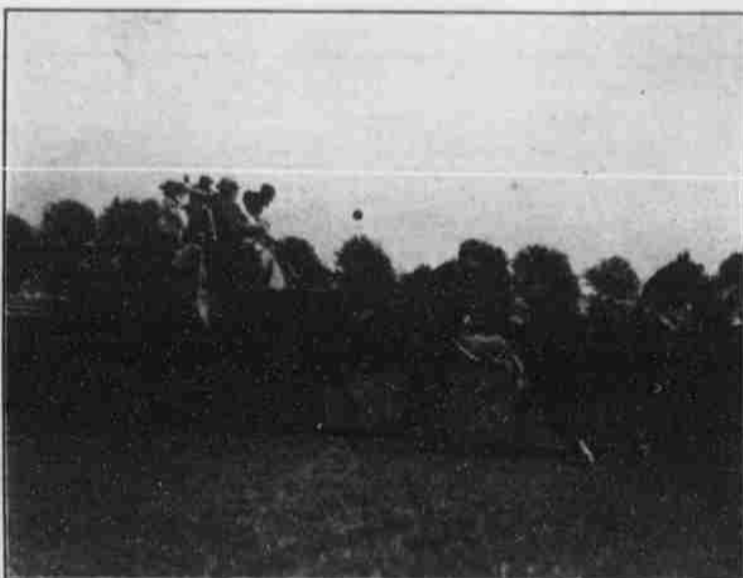
JAMES R. KEENE RECEIVING CONGRATULATIONS ON WINNING A RACE.



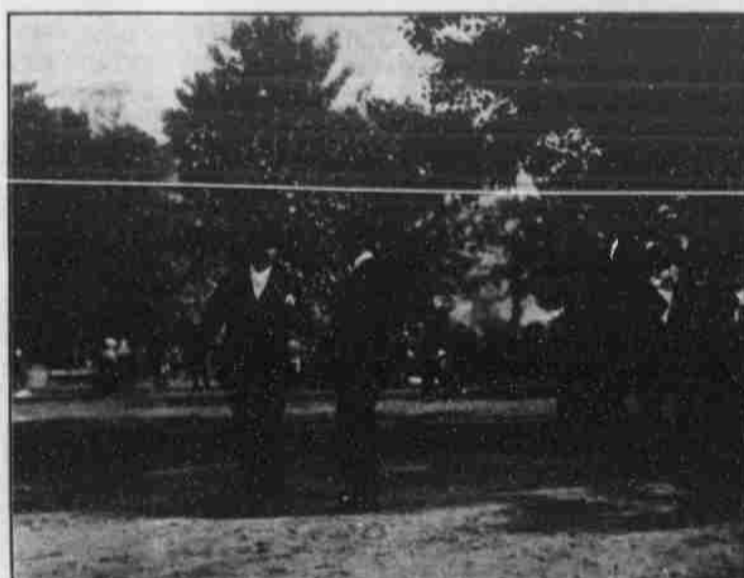
R. T. WILSON, JR., INSTRUCTING HIS JOCKEY.



THOMAS HITCHCOCK, JR.



WILLIAM C. WHITNEY AND PARTY GOING TO THE TRACKS.



SIDNEY PAGET, W. C. WHITNEY'S RACING PARTNER.

**I**T IS predicted that a larger number of those Croesuses who live chiefly to promote high-class racing in the United States will be present at the opening of the new Saratoga race track tomorrow than have ever before been in evidence on the opening day of a race meeting. For the beginning of the Saratoga season this year is really the formal launching of a new dispensation in American turf matters, the aim of the Saratoga association, as voiced oft and again by its president, William C. Whitney, being to place horse racing in this country on a higher level than ever before. To this end Mr. Whitney and his associates have taken an immense amount of personal pains, beside laying out a sum of money closely approximating \$350,000. In rejuvenating the track and all that appertains thereto. They have risked heavily on the willingness and ability of their fellow citizens to support a great race track hundreds of miles distant from any of the great centers of population, and failure, should it come, will not be due to the absence of any of the promoters of the send-off, if they can possibly be present. Thus tomorrow will be a great day for the visitor to Saratoga not already acquainted with the personal peculiarities of the various kings of the turf.

James R. Keene, tall, spare, wearing a shining silk hat, and immaculately but quietly clad, will be one of the most interesting figures in sight. He is not an officer of the association, but he is intensely interested in its success, and has promised to be on hand. His picturesque prominence in the public prints for a score of years or more make him the observed of many observers wherever his presence is known and he will be pointed out and gossiped over by thousands before the day is over.

#### James R. Keene's Eye.

Among the jockeys and the trainers, the stable boys, the bookmen and all the other racetrack professionals Mr. Keene stands very near to the top of the list. This is largely because of his eye. It is keen, alert and all-seeing. There is no devotee of racing on either side of the water who goes into the sport in a more businesslike manner than he. Before every race in which he is interested he spends as long a time in the paddock as he can, paying strict attention to his own horses. He watches the saddling as intently as if millions depended upon the operation. Nothing escapes him, and his silent scrutiny—he never speaks unless something goes wrong—keeps his employees keyed up to the keenest tension.

If by any chance he detects anything amiss there is something doing at once. Keene never speaks to the jockey, or the stable boy, or the groom who may be at fault, though. It is to the trainer only that

this racing magnate addresses himself, and no matter how severe may be the opinion or criticism he has to express, his vocabulary, though forceful, is always well in hand, and there are few, indeed, who have ever heard him swear.

When the race is ready to be run Mr. Keene hies himself to the most available location for the watching of the contest. At Sheepshead Bay this is the upper veranda of the clubhouse, and upon it he stands, with set face, strong glasses glued to his eyes from the beginning to the end of the race and immovable as a statue. He risks heavily at times, of course, but is rarely or never seen in the betting ring, employing a "commissioner," a big and burly Briton, to place his bets. Sometimes this man is kept exceedingly busy running back and forth between the ring and wherever Keene may happen to be. The commissioner often takes his part in the betting far more seriously than Keene does himself. The master never turns a hair, no matter whether he wins or loses, receiving congratulations and condolences alike with stoicism, but his commissioner frequently becomes quite wrought up over an unexpected loss.

#### Nerve of Millionaire Bettors.

The underlings of the racetrack are as much enamored of Keene because he's a good loser as they are because of his eagle eye, but nerve in losing racing bets is an attribute possessed by nearly all the millionaire turfmen. You'd have hard work to tell from his face whether Whitney, or John Sanford, or Clarence Mackay, or August Belmont, or any of the rest of them were to the good or the bad, but this isn't surprising, seeing that the largest sum they are likely to win or to lose is not sufficient to change their bank accounts perceptibly. It's the man who risks all he has on a race that has need of nerve when he bets.

"Keene has this sort of nerve in quantities, even if he doesn't have to exercise it when betting on a race," says a man who has known him in his flushest as well as in his most stringent periods.

"There was one day, long ago," says this man, "when Jim Keene had to borrow the railroad fare from Cedarhurst on Long Island to New York before he could get to town to try and make a raise. Well, on that day he appeared the same cool, shrewd, nervy chap that he seems today; just as neat in his dress, though his clothes weren't so new, and quite as aloof from the common herd. Nobody on earth would have thought him short of cash. Another thing: James R. Keene is well fixed now—I wish I had half his money—and might well afford a spacious country house and a palatial city residence, but he has neither. When he is in New York he puts up at the Waldorf Astoria, and when he is at Cedarhurst he lives in the same wooden cottage—I don't believe it

cost a cent more than \$5,000—that he called home in the days of his hardest luck. There was a time then when the ceiling of the porch of this house showed a great scar where the plaster had fallen off. That scar was healed long ago, and the house and lawn are now a good deal neater in appearance than they were, but otherwise the house is practically unchanged."

#### William K. Vanderbilt, Bettor.

Of all the Croesus bettors on the turf William K. Vanderbilt is the most interesting, perhaps. He goes into the ring just like any ordinary bettor, and he makes as big a show of his emotions as he would if his fortune depended upon success. He looks anxious, uncertain, uplifted or cast down according to his luck. Sometimes he "breefs" when he loses, and often he gets so wrought up that his eyes stick out of his head like the eyes of a boy playing an exciting game of marbles. It isn't because he cares for the money, when things go the wrong way, that he stirs up the turf so, say his friends, but because he gets so wrapped up in the game. That's one of the reasons he is so popular with the professionals about the racetracks. He won't be at Saratoga on the opening day, more's the pity, for the sake of entertainment, being otherwise engaged in France at this time.

Like James R. Keene, Mr. Whitney never goes into the betting ring personally, his bets being placed for him by his son-in-law's brother, Sidney Paget. It is through Paget, indeed, that Whitney transacts most of his racing business, and that's a good thing alike for Paget, Whitney and the turf in general. Paget, being English, was born to the turf, so to speak, and naturally knows a good deal more about racing than most folk. Whitney has the enthusiasm and the money necessary to make a great racing factor of himself, but among experts he's considered too easily carried away by his enthusiasm. Thus, more than once Mr. Whitney has paid a fabulous sum for some horse that has done one big stunt, only to find later that the price paid was altogether too high. Since Paget has been a full racing partner of the former naval secretary such Whitney purchases have been less conspicuous, and the horses in the Whitney stable have been much better selected.

#### Handsome R. T. Wilson, Jr.

In his way almost as interesting on the track as either Keene or Whitney, or W. K. Vanderbilt, is R. T. Wilson, Jr. Like Keene, young Wilson is seldom seen personally in the betting ring, generally delegating the placing of bets to Harry Vingut, a personage not very well known the country over, but thoroughly typical of New York and the race courses near-by, and well known among the habitués thereof.

There is a rumor that he has done very well at his wagerings this year so far, and his advice is just so much the more valuable to his friends who may ask him to place their bets.

Young Wilson, by the by, is almost as handsome for a young man as his father is for an old one, and that is saying a good deal, since next to the late Collis P. Huntington, R. T. Wilson the elder is one of the best looking men of years that ever stepped foot in New York. More than that, he has aristocratic bearing and manners, too, and the young man shares both these characteristics, as befits one whose sisters are married to a British ambassador, a Goelet and a Vanderbilt. It is not certain whether any of the sisters will be present on Saratoga's opening day or not, but probably one or more of them will be, and if so, both their celebrity and their striking personal appearance will make them the focus of as many eyes as any of the turf celebrities. The oldest of the Wilson sisters, wife of Ambassador Herbert, who will come to America with her husband soon, is quite as handsome as her sisters, Mrs. Ogden Goelet and Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt, but not so striking in appearance, for they are both blonde, while her hair is a quiet shade of brown. Young Wilson is one of the best losers in the country.

#### Power in the Club.

Nearly all the turf celebrities who will be prominent at Saratoga represent wads, and heaps, and piles and chunks of money, but none of the others will represent nearly as much, both directly and indirectly, as the quiet-looking, middle-sized, middle-tinted, middle-aged man whom some of his intimates term "Augie." This is August Belmont, the present head of the banking house of Belmont, and personal representative in America of the multi-millioned Rothschilds. Mr. Belmont's name is not listed among the officers of the Saratoga association, but he's a power in the organization, and he fills the place for so many years held by his father as the mainstay of American high-class racing.

It goes without saying that he knows the ways of the turf thoroughly, and it may be added that he is a better horseman personally than most millionaire patrons of the tracks. Both his brothers—Perry, who married Mrs. Sloane, and who was once, but is not now, a power in politics, and Oliver H. P., who married Mrs. William K. Vanderbilt—are likely to be on the grounds tomorrow. Perry is a director of the association. Both he and Oliver P. H. dabble somewhat in racing, but not at all in the degree that their brother August does. August is the most popular of the three among their associates. None of

them is communicative to reporters, where-in they differ from Mr. Whitney and most high-grade turfmen.

There are only a few of the racing celebrities certain to be on view at Saratoga tomorrow, and there is hardly room on this newspaper page to pay a compliment to each of them. But surely no mention of Saratoga's opening would be complete that did not include Thomas Hitchcock, Jr., and John Sanford of Amsterdam, jolly, good-natured and popular, and prone to be photographed with his hands on the ribbons. Mr. Sanford is one of the best liked of all the eastern turfmen, nor is his fame confined to racing circles, for was he not elected to the house of representatives a few years ago from his up-state district? And was he not then the youngest congressman who ever served? Sanford, like most of them, has a nerve of steel when it comes to lose, and so has Thomas Hitchcock, Jr.

The biggest "event" at Saratoga this year will be the Saratoga special, a sweepstakes, with entrance fee of \$1,000 and a forfeiture of half that sum. This race will be worth more to the winner than either the Suburban or the Brooklyn Handicap, the amount being \$22,000. Besides a gold cup worth \$1,500 will be put up. The stakes of this race are gradually to be increased till they count up to \$50,000.

One of the things about which there will be some grumbling at Saratoga will be the price of grandstand seats—\$3—just a dollar more than at other tracks. This will be offset, however, by the general admission being put at 50 cents, 25 cents less than general admission to most tracks.

#### Too Busy

Chicago Tribune: "Can't I sell you a clock?" asked the man at the kitchen door. "No, you can't," replied the woman of the house, red and flustered. "Hain't got time to wind it."

"But this is an eight day clock. You don't have to wind it oftener than once a week."

"Hain't got any time to wind eight day clocks. We had one in the house twelve years. I wound it regular every Monday morning. It always took me a minute to wind both sides of it. One day I got to countin' how much time I'd spent on it. There's fifty-two weeks in a year. Twelve times fifty-two is 624. Six hundred and twenty-four minutes is ten hours and twenty-four minutes. In them twelve years I'd put in a whole workin' day and more, too, windin' that dratted clock. I put it up in the garret and hain't touched it since. Don't need a clock, anyway. We can go by the whistles. I've got a bilin' on the stove, and I've throwed away two minutes talkin' to you. Good mornin'."

And she shut the door in his face.