



**GORDON CHARTERIS HIRE MILLER**  
**1925-1992**

**by Marjory Miller and Anne Veira**

Gordon Charteris Hire Miller was born in Kingston, Jamaica. He attended Jamaica College where he became Head-Boy of Fifth Form. Until he was in his mid-teens, he spent most of his school holidays with relatives in Brown's Town and Christiana. As an adult, he never lost his appreciation of the simple country life but he lived in Kingston to pursue his profession.

On leaving school, he worked as a draughtsman at the Survey Department until his eighteenth birthday when he was apprenticed to the Surveyor General. However, six months later he applied for an army commission and was sent as a Cadet Officer to the Canadian "Irish Fusiliers" at Up Park Camp. He was subsequently commissioned a Lieutenant in the British Army Land Forces. After attending a Motor Transport Course in Canada, he was appointed Transport Officer in the Jamaica Battalion and served until 1947. In 1962 Gordon and his elder brother, Paul, helped to form what is now the Jamaica Defence Force's Reserve Battalion. Gordon served as a Captain in charge of Transport until 1964.

In 1947 Gordon resumed his apprenticeship in surveying, and was commissioned as a Land Surveyor for Jamaica in 1950. He served his articleship doing Harbour

Topographical and Cadastral Surveys, and the extension of the Triangulation Survey of Jamaica. He was lent to the University of the West Indies to assist in setting up the control and layout for the construction of the university.

He practised successfully on his own for many years and then formed a partnership with Trevor Carnegie and the brothers Richard and Ronald Haddad.

Gordon's most interesting jobs over the years were Land Acquisition Surveys for Reynolds Jamaica Mines and Kaiser Aluminum, and surveying hotel sites in the Leeward and Windward Islands. He was commissioned as a Land Surveyor for Antigua in 1960. He was also appointed Land Surveyor to the British War Office and Admiralty in Jamaica. Land surveys conducted included that of Port Royal when Great Britain withdrew her forces from Jamaica in 1962.

Gordon was very interested in agriculture. He learned about farming on his family's farm in Manchester when he was a boy. He was Chairman of the Board of Bowden Estates Limited in St. Thomas for many years.

Gordon had a great love for sports. By his own admission he was no athlete but he did play as a fullback on Kingston Cricket Club's soccer team. He was nicknamed "The Bonecrusher" by his team-mates. He was a follower of Test cricket, an enthusiastic deep sea fisherman, and he enjoyed the occasional shoot. His favourite sport was thoroughbred horseracing. He attended his first race meeting when he was nine years old with his grandfather, R.J. "Bobby" Miller, and that was the beginning of his lifelong love of the track. Racing ran in his blood. Hugh Miller, his grandfather's cousin, and Harry Jackson, his grandmother's cousin, were prominent racing men in their time. Both were promoters of meetings as well as owners.

Gordon's marriage to Marjory Elizabeth Stiebel Jackson in 1947 brought him into another well-known racing family. He became interested in thoroughbred breeding and with his brother-in-law, Richard G.S. Jackson, managed the Bowden Estates racing string during its most successful years. Gordon bought the mare, "Swinging", from Sir George Seymour Seymour and resold her to Bowden Estates. The best of her progeny were "Acrobat" and the Derby winner, "Rumpelstiltskin". Other good horses bred at Bowden during this period were "Projector", "Paramount" and "Charles II". "Thumbelina" and "Lullaby" were the winners of the 1966 and 1973 yearling shows, respectively.

Gordon's three daughters, Anne, Rose Mary and Katharine, shared his love of horses, and often accompanied him to the track and racing stables. Katharine, who predeceased Gordon in 1979, bred a winner, "Hocus Pocus", out of her riding mare by "Rumplestiltskin".

Gordon served as a race track Steward, then became a Steward of the Jockey Club in 1968. He was the first Chairman of Racing Promotions Limited from 1975 to 1976. On the racetrack he was known as "The Peacemaker".

Gordon was appointed a Justice of the Peace for Kingston, and sat at Petty Sessions regularly. He felt that his civic duties were an important part of his citizenship.

In 1976, Gordon and his family moved to Canada. Gordon worked for Black Shoemaker Robinson & Donaldson Limited in Guelph as Survey Planner and Party Chief. He attended the Erindale Campus of the University of Toronto at night, and was commissioned as an Ontario Land Surveyor in 1979.

Shortly after qualifying, he moved to Toronto to become Project Coordinator at J.D. Barnes Ltd. In 1982, he was commissioned as a Canada Lands Surveyor. Two years later, Gordon joined the Survey and Mapping Section of the Public Works Department in the City of Toronto. He was the Senior Titles Surveyor when he retired at age sixty-five, in 1990.

Gordon continued to follow racing in Canada, Jamaica, the United Kingdom and the USA. He often went to Woodbine Race Track near Toronto for the Canadian classic races.

Gordon became an avid gardener, a competent cook, and was well informed on the Ballet, Music, and Theatre. He had a highly developed sense of humour and was a raconteur who delighted family and friends with stories of his youth in Jamaica. He was proud of the part both his and his wife's ancestors had played in the development of Jamaica, and he began writing family history for his grandson, Sean Veira.

Happiest when he was busy, Gordon was working for Northway Map Technology Limited, when he became ill with cancer. He died shortly thereafter, in January 1992.

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