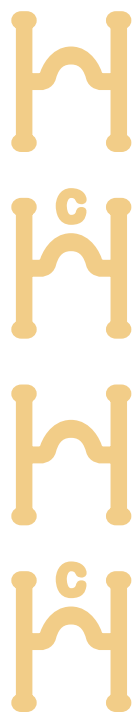


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# The Bocado Line

by Terry Waechter

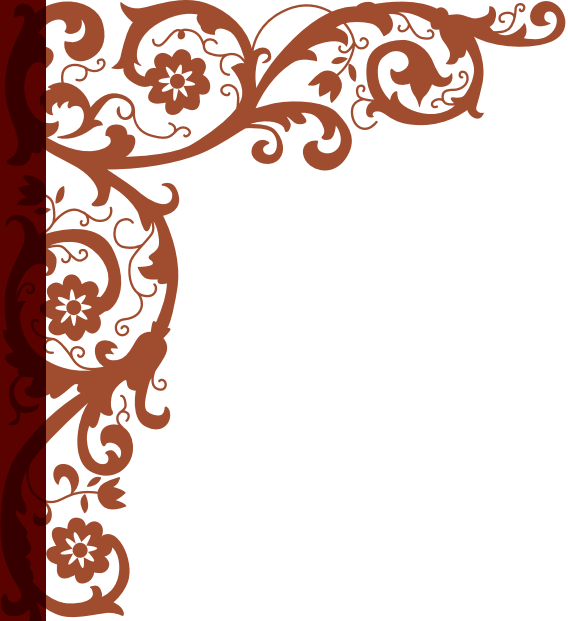


What if you were put on the spot and asked to describe the Pure Spanish Horse in twenty-five words or less...what would you say? My response would include words like mythic beauty, black, bay or silver coat, flowing mane, arched crest, strong short back, rounded croup, active hocks, low set tail, sculpted head, large triangular eye, intelligent, playful expression, responsive personality and powerful movement. Well, it is easy to see I can't count...I'm at 34 words and still haven't captured the essence.

On the other hand, if I simply said, "Imagine a prancing white stallion of the Bocado line with his eyes on you". The mind's eye of each aficionado could easily conjure up an appropriate vision that would cause a thrill to travel through the body and the eye to lock with his.

Thankfully the magic that IS the Bocado horse is not simply a vision, but hundreds of years of dedication to an ideal; the continuous effort of focused Spaniards over decades of challenging history.





### ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BOCADO LINE

Beginning in 1567 when King Phillip of Spain established the Royal Stables in Cordoba and initiated the development of the Pure Spanish Horse breed, a fascinating saga ensued to define and preserve the wonderful horse we enjoy today. A very important part of this process is the development of the Bocado line. The word 'Bocado', means bit and refers to the distinct brand in the shape of a curb (bit) that has become synonymous with these horses.



In his book, *La Yeguada Del Bocado*, Juan Carlos Altamirano has provided the world with a detailed, research-based book on the development of the Bocado Stud Farm. On Pages 360-361, he presents a Genealogia de la Yeguada Del Bocado (genealogy of the bocado stud farm) that traces this process from 1719-2005. In summary, this diagram gives us a synopsis of the important breeders and brands that are responsible for the Bocado Horse. Historically, a reliable source document for this information has been the annual breeding reports completed by breeders for many decades that name animals born, purchased, sold, bred, expired etc. and the brands they carried.

### THE ZAPATA FAMILY

Because the very earliest recollections of the Bocado or Carthusian Horse are shrouded in myth and legend, I have chosen to coincide the beginning of my article with the documented use of the Bocado Brand (curb bit) by the Zapata family in the early 1800's. The Zapata family retained influence on the Bocado horse for several decades as their stud farm prospered in the hands of family members through inheritance and marriage. A practice still alive today is the use of the term "Zapata or Zapatero Horse" to identify an animal reminiscent of the extraordinary specimens bred by this family.

This dynasty began when the Coronado and Zapata families were joined by marriage in approximately 1750 and continued until the sale of Zapata stock to Vicente Romero who was using the Bocado brand (curb bit) with a "C" added by the middle 1850's. He placed this brand next to the plain curb bit brand on his animals.

### VICENTE ROMERO GARCIA (1812-1911)

If the horses bred by the Zapata family are a primary contributor to the development of the Bocado Line, the next most significant torchbearer arguably was Vicente Romero Garcia.



Altamirano gives us a view into the way Vicente Romero managed his stud. He tested his mares on the threshing floor. Only those that performed could become brood mares. Like his father before him, he improved his stock through carefully selection, culling, and out-crossing. He avoided in breeding and sought to enrich his herd with the best stallions he could find and was a source other breeders used to buy breeding stallions for themselves. He developed a very successful product that excelled at the horse shows. He was a breeder of renown in his own time.

His most famous stallion was Solo and his best mares were daughters of Solo. At age 87, he remained a force to reckon with, still bringing winners to the local horse shows. Altamirano points out one of life's ironies, "Vicente Romero died childless and at the peak of his breeding career." Anticipating his end, he began to liquidate his stock. When he died he was remembered as the breeder who sold the highest number of stallions to other breeders of the late 19th and early 20th Century and therefore spread the influence of the Bocado horse.

Today it is very easy to trace back modern day horses of Bocado extraction and find the Bocado brand with a "C" noted in their ancestry. For example, you will find in the pedigree of the "Lion of Spain", Indiano XVII a heavy infusion of Vicente Romero blood several generations back.

#### **BORNIO, DOMINGUEZ, NAVARRO, DOMECCQ**

These breeders need to be noted, not in passing but briefly, due to the restrictions of research time and space. Delving deeper into their individual and important contributions is very possible with the availability of today's research materials and may be touched on in future writings.

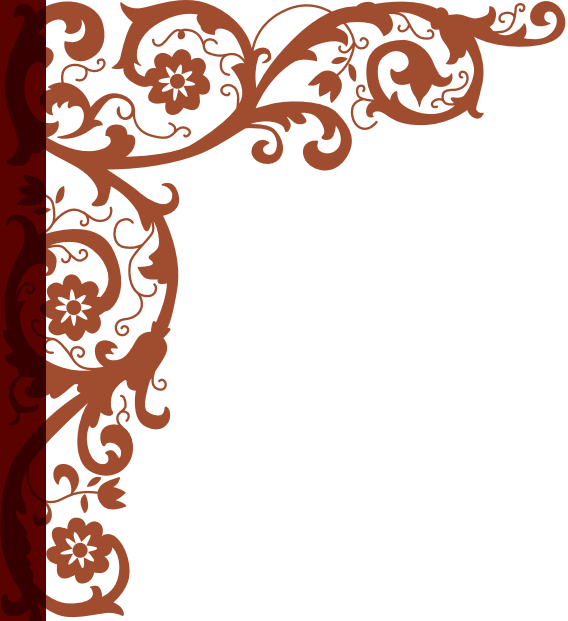
#### **ROBERTO OSBORNE VASQUEZ (1899-1986)**

On March 19, 1937 Roberto Osborne Vasquez bought the "Bocado" brand with the "C" from Domecq Diez along with the horses from his stud. This purchase occurred in the midst of the Spanish Civil War, a tenuous time in Spanish history. Novato, owned by Robert Osborne and showed by his daughter, Maria fathered Descarado II, a stallion of great impact to the history of this bloodline. Other notable horses he contributed to the P.R.E. race were Estepeno, Garboso VIII, and Ambicioso.

Altamirano notes in his book that "Osborne was possibly one of the most important breeders of the purebred Spanish horse in history...he favored

*Vicente Romero Garcia  
atop his famous stallion Solo*





the creation of new stud farms and the continuation of the breed during one of the most sensitive moments of its history during the post-war period.”

*The Duchess of Alba and Jacqueline Kennedy riding Nevado & Descarado II from the Isabel Merello, Viuda de Terry Breeding Stables.*



### FERNANDO A. & ISABEL MERELLO TERRY (1949-81)

During the mid 20th century, this family gathered together a fabulous group of Bocado bred horses from Osborne, Navarro, Chica, Pallares and others. In 1948 Fernando C. de Terry came into possession of the clean “Bocado” brand and in 1949, the “Bocado” brand with the “C”. In addition, he had his own original brand.

As a result of these purchases, the Terry family became one of most recognizable and influential breeders of the Spanish Horse in history. “Descarado II” became a household name across Spain not only because of his winning ways in horse shows but his presence in television advertising for the Terry wineries. “Poseido IV” and “Bilbaino III” are two more very famous products of the Terry breeding program. Actually the list of both famous stallions bred by Terry and important modern-day breeders who Terry supplied with foundation stock is very long indeed.

The best way to understand the Terry influence is to review at random the pedigrees of current P.R.E. champions. There you will often see the Terry family brand. Our horse also received enormous additional attention from the public through use of the media by the Terry family to advertise their wine.

### YEGUADA DEL HIERRO DEL BOCADO

In 1983 the Spanish state took charge of the vineyard & livestock assets belonging to the Terry family, and in 1985 the livestock was separated from the other assets belonging to the vineyard. In 1990, Patrimonio del Estado incorporated the stud farm into the public sector company EXPASA Agricultura y Ganadería, S. A. Yeguada del Hierro del Bocado is currently located southwest of Jerez de la Frontera and brands their stock with the original Bocado brand (plain curb bit).

### OTHER NOTEWORTHY BREEDERS

No discussion of the influence of the Bocado horse would be complete



without mentioning several other illustrious twentieth century stud farms such as Guardiola, Cardenas, Salvatierra, Urquijo, and Pallares among others who incorporated this bloodline to create their own unique renditions of the P.R.E.

### BOCADO BY ANY OTHER NAME

In the modern vernacular, there are a number of words associated with the Bocado Line. The next time you hear the words Cartujano, Carthusian, Zapata, Terry, or Romero Benitez associated with a horse, think Bocado. Another reference that is good to understand is the phrase “closed Bocado” or “closed Bocado line”. This refers to a horse that has at least 75% Bocado blood. Look at its pedigree and be prepared to see the brands of the breeders we have been discussing sprinkled generously or even exclusively through the generations.

While pure Bocado horses are rare today, most of our finest stock carries a portion of Bocado blood. In the past, the mixture of Bocado and Militar has proved to be potent indeed, and this cross is also obvious to the modern day pedigree scholar.



On one of our gusty, rainy North American spring days, curl up with your computer, log onto one of the excellent pedigree search websites such as <http://www.librogenealogico.com> or <http://www.caballospre.com> and research the pedigree of your favorite P.R.E. See if you can find some of the famous Bocado brands in its lineage. If you are lucky surfing the web will reveal photographs of your horse's Carthusian ancestors and you will see where the silver coat, fabulous face and elegant trot came from.

*Next article: The P.R.E. Comes To The Western Hemisphere*

