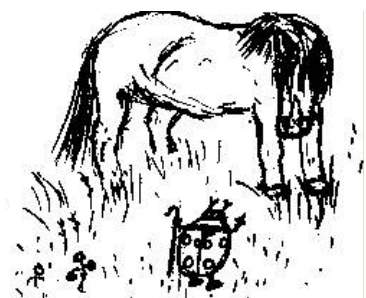


A GUIDE TO THE COUNTRYSIDE: CLYDESDALE HORSES

by Hunter Adair



A young boy holding his Father's Clydesdale horse in the farmyard



Can you help me cross this field?

Clydesdale Horses

There are now many more Clydesdale horses returning to the farms in the north of England and Scotland. Some farmers are buying horses to work, or for breeding, or just to have them as a hobby and for showing.

There are a few farmers, throughout the whole country, who have never changed or mechanised their farms over the last fifty years or so. They have continued to work the land with horses of various breeds. Some farmers still only use horses on their farms, a practice that has been going on for centuries.

Some farmers partly mechanised their farms when the use of tractors spread on British farms during the first World War, when the Fordson played a major part. The story of the tractor started in America in 1889.

Farmers who kept both tractor and horses, either maintained the horses for breeding or for the less heavier jobs on the farm.

It's a glorious site while travelling through the countryside to see a pair of Clydesdale horses ploughing a stubble field followed by scores of sea gulls hunting for mice and worms.

I have many memories helping with the working, feeding and cleaning out of Clydesdale horses and getting to know the temperament of each individual horse on the farm. Like dogs, cattle or sheep, each Clydesdale horse is very different and each have their own characteristics and peculiarities.

A pair of Clydesdale horses should be able to plough about one acre of land a day starting from about 8 o'clock in the morning till about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. This does however depend a great deal on the type of land they are ploughing.

The Clydesdale is a breed of heavy draught horse which is thought to be a native breed of horse from Scotland and derives it's name from the district in which it was founded, and where its type and characteristics were fixed and determined.

The Clydesdale horse was thought to have started in Lanarkshire in Scotland and as the River Clyde flows through Lanarkshire, this is how the name of the horse came about. The modern history of the Clydesdale begins about the middle of the eighteenth century, where a native hard breed of draught horse was found in Lanarkshire.

Probably the story of the Clydesdale horse begins before that. It appears that a Mr John Paterson, of Lochlyoch, in Lanarkshire, had a black Flemish stallion about the year 1715, and it is thought that this stallion was originally brought from England, but there is not much information about the stallion, where it came from and what it cost.

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Coming in for a drink



A horse and farrier made from flowers at the Highland Show



The Dodd family in Langley-on-Tyne in Northumberland

Clydesdale Horses

John Paterson's Lochlyoch stud became quite famous. This Flemish stallion and the mares he bred from the stallion were in great demand for many years to follow. The 6th Duke of Hamilton who acquired the title in 1742, had imported a black Flemish stallion which was used on the mares of his farm tenants free of charge. So although the Clydesdale is reckoned to be a native breed of Scotland the horse seems to have been bred originally from the black Flemish Dutch strain of horse.

The Clydesdale was bred from there on by the farmers in Lanarkshire. The characteristics and the type of horse were improved as a draught horse to meet the demands of the industrial development, when the coalfields in the Lanarkshire area were being developed. The roads also needed to be improved and much of the haulage of the materials was done by the native breed of horse. As the horse power increased it replaced the ox. As the breed of the Clydesdale horse developed it soon gathered a more widespread reputation, during the late eighteenth century and beginning of the nineteenth century. Many young Clydesdale colts and gillies were drafted from fairs held at Lanarkshire, Rutherglen and elsewhere in the country into the Midland counties of England.



At a ploughing match



Trekking in the hills



Stop eating the grass



Can I have a ride on your horse?

A GUIDE TO THE COUNTRYSIDE

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St Mary's Church at Ricall near York



A young Clydesdale horse



Breaking in a young horse

Clydesdale Horses

The system of district hiring of Clydesdale stallions was a feature of Scottish agriculture. There is evidence of this operation as early as the year 1830, and through the system of both hiring and selling of the Clydesdale stallions a number of them were drafted into Galloway, Cumberland, Durham and Northumberland to breed with the mares in these areas. In Northumberland and Durham at that time, the native breed was a small, thick set, dark, hardy breed of horse.

The Clydesdale stallions stamped a similarity of type upon the local breeds of draught horses to the breed that was in Scotland, and by the middle of the nineteenth century the Clydesdale had become a well known breed of draught horse in Scotland.

A stallion show had been held in the Glasgow Cattle Market for years before 1844. In that year a stallion called "Clyde" (155) won first prize at the show and the breed to which he belonged did much to develop the modern Clydesdale horse.

Classes for agricultural horses were held at the Highland and Agricultural Society shows at least as early as 1826, and the horses and mares exhibited there were from the Lanarkshire type and breed of horse.

The first Highland and Agricultural society show was held on Boxing Day in 1822 in Edinburgh, but there is no mention of any horses at the show. The shorthorn oxen were the most prominent breed of cattle at that first show, along with some West Highland, Galloway and Angus cattle.

The first Highland and Agricultural Society show was first proposed by a Mr Rennie of Phantassie, a Society member. He proposed establishing an annual show at Edinburgh for the exhibition of fat cattle.

Mr Rennie recommended that, as many of the members of the society were in town at Christmas it would be a good time to hold the show and the general public would have an opportunity of seeing the excellent stock likely to be produced.

Although no prizes were offered for sheep, a Mr Dickson exhibited eight New Leicester 2 year old sheep. The list of the live stock shown was complete when it included "two beautiful pigs" from Mr Gray's farm at Gorgie Mains near Edinburgh.



Come on get up there!

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Clydesdale Horses

The show attracted a good deal of interest. The entrance fee was on shilling (5 pence) and the sum drawn from admissions was £51.50. The arrangements for classing the different varieties of stock was made by Bailie Gordon of the Cannongate, his Majesty's carpenter, who was professionally employed on his duty, that the cattle could be viewed by a very large company without inconvenience or annoyance. In addition to the animals show in the competition, a Mr Dickson from Dunse exhibited 2 West Highland cattle and a Mr Angus from Edinburgh exhibited an animal of the same breed which weighed 60 stones (381kg). Considerable interest was also shown by the appearance of 2 Shetland heifers names Minna and Brenda which were very fat and were a favourite with the visitors to the show. Mr Rennie who proposed the show was invited to judge at the first show.



A mare and foal having their feet washed at the Highland Show



Putting manure out in heaps which are later spread with a handfork



At Morpeth Show

The Clydesdale horses in the West of Scotland owed much to a stallion called Broomfield Champion (95), which also travelled in Aberdeenshire, where he was known as the Aberdeen Champion. He had a son called Clyde alias Glancer (153), a most impressive sire.

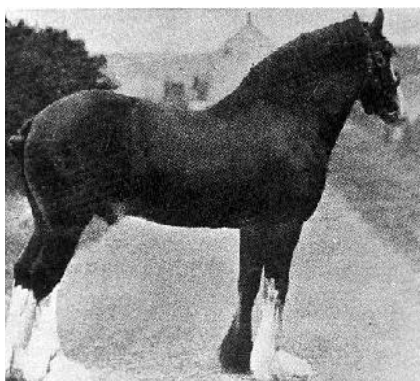
Clyde had seven sons which travelled in districts as far apart as Wigtownshire, Ayrshire, Midlothian, Kintyre and Bute. Around 1840 the Muir family from Sornfallo, moved from Lanarkshire to farm in Galloway and they took some of the most approved Clydesdales with them, the results can be traced through the influence of a stallion called Lochfergs Champion (449) and a stallion called Agnew's Farmer (292), which won first prize at the Highland and Agricultural Society Show at Dumfries in 1830 and was got by a horse called Clydeside.

The links connecting Kintyre Clydesdales and the Lanarkshire stallions can easily be traced as there were some influential historical sires in both areas. The contribution which each made to the characteristics of the local breed of horse was well known.

Stallions from the Midlands of England were in use, both in the north-east of Scotland and in the north of England, along with and prior to the Clydesdale sire arriving in adequate numbers. For seventy years or more the Clydesdale horse was the most dominant breed in these areas. These districts acquired a great reputation for the soundness, weight and type of Clydesdale horses they bred. At the annual fairs and auction sales held at the centres in both the north of England and the north-east of Scotland, many hundreds of the best class of heavy draught geldings changed hands.

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The stallion Baron of Buchlyvie



Bringing in the hay



Washing down a young Clydesdale horse



The Wallace Monument at Burnwell Farm near Ayr in Scotland

Clydesdale Horses

The outstanding characteristics of the Clydesdale horse is the combination of weight, size and exceptional wearing qualities of the feet and legs. These characteristics of the Clydesdale horse is the combination of weight, size and exceptional wearing qualities of the feet and legs. These characteristics have been consistently aimed at all through the history of the breed.

Sometimes there were some variations on the different points of the horse, but amidst all such variations, one main principle was kept in view, the wearing and lasting qualities of the horses feet and legs. Many of the most influential working stallions in the breed had long lives. Dunure Footprint (15203) was twenty-two when he died, Bonnie Buchlyvie (14032) was twenty-one when he died, Auchenflower (12007) died when he was twenty-four and Baron of Buchlyvie (11263), he was only fourteen years old when he died after being kicked by a mare.

The reason I mention Baron of Buchlyvie is because there is a most interesting tale about this stallion which made the horse quite unique, although the horse was an excellent stallion and left some good foals, the owners of the stallion fought a battle in court over the horse which caused quite a stir in 1911 among the Clydesdale breeders.

Baron of Buchlyvie was born on 16th May 1900 and was bred by Mr William M'Keich, Woodend, Buchlyvie, Stirling. Mr James Kilpatrick of Graige Mains Farm Kilmarnock, a very well-known farmer and breeder of Clydesdale horses bought Baron of Buchlyvie as a 2 year old Clydesdale stallion at Aberdeen Highland Show in 19002 for £700.

The stallion was left at Dunure Mains until 1908 when Mr Kilpatrick then asked Mr Dunlop for half the stud fees for the last three seasons. Mr Dunlop replied that he didn't owe him any money for stud fees. Mr Kilpatrick was somewhat annoyed at this and so took him to Court of Session in Scotland where Lord Sherrington at the hearing decreed that Mr James Kilpatrick still owned a half share in the stallion. Mr Dunlop then successfully appealed to the Inner House of the Court of Session. Mr Kilpatrick then decided to take the case to the House of Lords, which overturned the appeal decision and confirmed Lord Sherrington's original verdict.

As they both each owned a half-share in the stallion - It was then decided to put the stallion up for sale. On December 14th 1911, a special sale was arranged at Ayr cattle market. Between 4000 and 5000 farmers and breeders attended the sale from all over the country. Mr Dunlop bought the stallion for a world record price of £9,500. Three years later the stallion was kicked by a mare, his front leg broken and as a result was destroyed. Mr Dunlop buried him in his rose garden. Four years later the stallion's remains were dug up and his skeleton put on display in Glasgow Museum, Kelvingrove Park.



The face of a Clydesdale



A young Clydesdale at the Highland Show



A Clydesdale horse



A young foal being led at a ploughing match

Clydesdale Horses

So what happened to the two men Mr. Kilpatrick and Mr. Dunlop. Many years after the sale of Baron of Buchlyvie, Mr. Dunlop moved down to live in Rugby in England and as he was still interested in Clydesdale affairs, he was invited from time to time to come north to act as a judge at some Scottish shows.

It was on one of Mr. Dunlop's visits north that some old mutual friends of both Mr. Dunlop and Mr. Kilpatrick contrived to bring both men together again. It was the late Mr. Butler, of Dickens & Butler, who brought Mr. Dunlop to meet Mr. Kilpatrick.

Twenty-two years had passed since both men last spoke to each other. Quite a celebration was made of the reconciliation of both men by their mutual friends. Both Mr. Dunlop and Mr. Kilpatrick remained good friends until Mr. Dunlop's death some twelve years later.

One of the most outstanding Clydesdale stallions ever bred was called Dunure Footprint (15203), he was a son of Baron of Buchlyvie. Mr. Dunlop bred Dunure Footprint, the stallion was born on the 19th April, 1908 and died in July 1930. He won many First Prizes and Championships between the years of 1909 and 1913.

Mr. Dunlop experimented to some degree with in-breeding and line-breeding of Clydesdale horses and this was thought to be one of his successful experiments, the breeding of Dunure Footprint and had probably a lot to do with Footprint's phenomenal success as a breeder.

For two seasons the stallion travelled around the farms in Aberdeenshire serving mares, and following this he was the stud horse at Dunure Mains. Dunure Footprint has undoubtedly been the best and most prolific Clydesdale breeder of all times. At the height of his fame, the service fees charged for the use of the stallion was 60 guineas (£63) and 60 guineas when the mare proved to be in foal.

Mr. Dunlop, moreover could also claim any of the colt foals he wanted for £300. According to the records, it would be quite safe in stating the Dunure Footprint left more foals in his lifetime than any other horse that ever lived and made Mr. Dunlop a fortune at the same time.

Some recorded facts about this wonderful stallion maybe of some interest to the readers of this book. Volume 42 of the Clydesdale Stallion Stud Book, contains the registration of 121 foals by Footprint, which were born in the year 1919.

To arrive at some indication of the complete crop of foals got by Dunure Footprint in that year, there must be added to the Stud book, a total percentage of the foals that would die, and an allowance for the foals that weren't entered in the Stud Book. On this basis, it should be acknowledge that Dunure Footprint was a prolific stallion. He was in great demand, even when such high fees were charged for his services.

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Clydesdale Horses: The popularity of the Clydesdales



A horses head carved from a hazel stick



How far are we going today?



Having a ride out with the horses on a crisp morning



Coming home after a day's work in the fields

Clydesdale Horses

Since about 1850, there was a steady export of Clydesdale horses to foreign countries. Exact data of the exports were not available until the founding of the Clydesdale Stud Book in 1878, and after the system of issuing export certificates by the Breed Society when it was formed in 1877.

From about 1850 to 1880 a large number of the best stallions and a few high-class mares were annually exported to Australia and New Zealand.

During the year 1883 a choice shipment of Clydesdale horses was sent out to Queensland, this however was after the foundation of the Clydesdale Stud Book, when exports began to be numbered in hundreds. From around 1899 exports were shipped also to Canada, Russia, the U.S.A., South America and Italy.

One Clydesdale stallion called On Guard was owned by a Mr. Graham, Edengrove, Carlisle in Cumberland and was sold to a Mr. H. J. Allison, a Canadian millionaire. Unfortunately this Clydesdale horse went down with the ill-fated Titanic in 1912.

The export trade of Clydesdale horses in 1914 was interrupted by the outbreak of war and there were fewer exports between the years of 1915 and 1919.

Some of the Clydesdale horse export certificates which were issued by the Breed Society, and the export statistics show how the export trade fluctuated between the years of 1884 and 1937.

1884	500	export certificates issued
1888	1149	export certificates issued
1895	15	export certificates issued
1899	250	export certificates issued
1900	178	export certificates issued
1909	349	export certificates issued
1918	24	export certificates issued
1926	133	export certificates issued
1930	28	export certificates issued
1937	129	export certificates issued

A GUIDE TO THE COUNTRYSIDE

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Clydesdale Horses: Hiring Stallions Part I



A lady with her dogs



Returning from an Agricultural Show



Getting the Clydesdale horses and drill ready for sowing the corn



The young Clydesdale pulling a set of harrows as part of its training

The Scottish system of hiring Clydesdale stallions did more for improving the breed and the type of horse by spreading so many good stallions throughout the country. The records of the hiring societies go back in some cases to 1837. The societies held shows in their own areas where the Clydesdale breeders and owners competed for a cash premium which was anything between £50 and £80.

The premiums were a type of prize, but there were strings attached to them. The owner whose stallion won the premium was under an obligation to travel his stallion in the area covered by that society at the terms which were specified in the society's premium list.

Around 1870 all of these small local premium shows were abandoned, and it was agreed to hold one great Spring Show and Hiring Fair in Glasgow during the third week in February.

The Glasgow Agricultural Society Show also had strings attached to the stallions that won the show. The stipulation was that in return for the labour connected with organising the show, the committee of judges appointed by the Society had first choice of hiring the winning stallions.

This caused quite a bit of confusion. At the Glasgow Agricultural Show in 1882, a stallion called Lord Erskine (1744) was hired to travel the Aberdeen Central Society area in that year. The stallion also won a £100 premium at the Glasgow Show in February 1882. Under the Aberdeen Central Society rules the stallion shouldn't have been entered for the Glasgow Show.

From that date onwards the system of hiring stallions well in advance steadily grew and at the following Glasgow Agricultural Society Spring Shows in February the stallions couldn't be hired for that season. The hiring of the Clydesdale stallions varied each year, earlier this century as tractors became available.



Clydesdale Horses: Hiring Stallions Part 2 continued



I used to see this tall thin man coming up the farm road leading this beautiful black stallion with a white face prancing alongside him. Both the mares and geldings in the opposite fields galloped up to the hedge, and then they kept trotting along the hedge side opposite the stallion, making a racket snorting and grunting.

One thing that sticks in my mind about the stallions, was that they used to have a broad leather belt strapped around their girth, and the groom has his raincoat strapped onto the leather belt. The groom sometimes had a cup of tea before travelling onto the next farm, he also had certain farms where he stayed overnight.

We had four Clydesdale horses at the farm, two geldings and two mares. The mares were kept for both working and breeding and the two geldings were kept for work only. Sometimes the geldings would be worked in pairs when they were cutting corn and ploughing.

I often helped with one of the geldings which was a horse about 16 hands high. He was a dark coloured horse with a fairly good nature and was called Darkie. Sometimes when he was coming in from the fields after a days work I got on his back and had a ride home sitting on top of his harness.

One thing Darkie didn't like was going in and out of the stable door. The stable only had a single door and there were stalls for five horses. When Darkie got his head through the door he used to dash the rest of his body through the door very fast. You had to keep clear of him or you would get hurt. Darkie must have caught his harness in the stable door at sometime.

When I put the harness on Darkie in his stall, I never led him through the stable door. I backed him out of his stall, turned him in the stable and let him go out through the door himself, and when bringing him in from the fields I would lead him up to the stable door and then let him dash through the door himself.

Clydesdale horses have very big feet. You have to be very careful when leading and turning the horse not to get your feet trampled on. It can be a very painful experience, especially if the boots or shoes you are wearing have soft tops.

Some Clydesdales move faster than others and some are very sharp at turning to either side, as their big feet come round, you have to be nippy to get out of their way. When you have a horse weighing nearly a ton turning around fast on you, there is no time to dilly dally. The Clydesdale horse is a super animal to work with, however you do get the odd one that either kicks, bites, or scrubs you against a wall and you have to watch them. Sometimes a farmer would keep a horse like this because it was a good worker. If you were asked to work with a horse like this, the farmer, ploughman, or groom would normally point out the horse's fault before you set to work with it.



Clydesdale Horses: Hiring Stallions Part 3 continued



On some of the big farms they would probably keep anything from a dozen Clydesdale horses or more. There would also be on many farms, a first ploughman, a second ploughman and sometimes there would even be a third ploughman. A custom on some of the big farms was that the second or third ploughman couldn't take their horses out of the stable until the first ploughman had his horses taken out.

The Clydesdale is a very sturdy active horse, the fore legs of the horse must be planted well under the shoulders, and not on the outside of the legs, like the legs of a bulldog. The horse should lift his feet clean off the ground and not be "shuffling along". The metal shoes of the horse should be clearly seen by the person walking behind him.

The Clydesdale horse stands anything between 16 and 17 hands high and will weigh around 16 to 17 cwt (8 63 kg). You will however get some finer boned Clydesdale than others and some horses maybe a little smaller than others. A lot depends on how the horse was bred.

The ideal colour of a Clydesdale horse should either be bay, or brown, with a more or less defined white mark on the face, with dark coloured fore legs and white hind shanks. There are very few chestnut coloured Clydesdales, black or dark coloured horses are now quite common.

The Clydesdale horses were used a lot for street traffic by brewery firms, British Railways, the Council Corporation Cleansing Departments, the Co-operative Wholesale Societies and many other companies used them for their businesses as well as the farmers. Some companies still use the Clydesdale horses for street work and for hauling timber in woods.

The Clydesdale horse is best suited for street traffic when they are between five and six years old and can last for another eight years or so on heavy work. After this they become slower, although they still have a few years work left in them they are then better suited for lighter agricultural work or just to keep as a hobby.

The average weight the Clydesdale horse can pull is between three and four tons, which also includes the cart they are pulling, which can weigh around a ton or more. In some hilly city streets a trace horse had to be used. a trace horse is where one horse is put in front of the other. The distance some city horses travelled daily was anything between 10 and 25 miles.

The diseases with heavy draught horses can be different from the diseases you get with the lighter hunting type of horse. Although the Clydesdales are very strong, sturdy horses, things do go wrong with them from time to time, which can be partly due to bad management, or it can be hereditary within the breed.

Clydesdale horses working on farms, or hauling timber in woods, sometimes develop what is called "Mud Fever", which is quite a similar thing as having chapped hands in humans. The horses get inflammation of the legs and heels, and sometimes a horse will get it along its belly. "Mud Fever" is caused by wet weather and mud. A horse working for long periods at a time in muddy wet conditions and not being properly cleaned might develop "Mud Fever". The cure for "Mud Fever", or the prevention of the disease is to wash the mud off the horses legs and feet at the end of each day with clean water and then let the feet and legs dry. If the legs and heels are inflamed then a lotion from a vet will be advisable.



Clydesdale Horses: Hiring Stallions Part 3 continued



“Grease” is another disease which heavy draught horses get. The Shire horse is more prone to getting this disease than the Clydesdale. “Grease” is when the horse gets cracked heels and the cracks in the heels become filled with a thick foul smelling cheesy type of material, which very often discharges.

“Grease” is caused by dirty stables when the horses are not cleaned out every day and they are trampling around in manure for some time. The treatment for “Grease” is to use a Zinc Chloride lotion on the horses feet and to keep the stables clean.

“Side-Bone” is another disease which can make the horse lame and is a bony formation of either lateral cartilage of the horse’s foot. This disease can keep the horse off work for a few days and is best treated by a vet.

“Monday Morning Complaint” is when the horse’s legs become inflamed, mainly the hind legs, and is caused by the horse standing idle during the weekends. It can be caused also by over feeding, very often the horse will become lame.

This small book is the story about how the Clydesdale breed of horse developed and how some men specialised in the breed and how they bred some famous Clydesdale stallions and mares.