

## Dress code for grooms

Smartness and being well-groomed (no pun intended) is really important in the show ring. Recently I have noticed a lack of respect creeping in including people in jeans, unbelievable when you are trying to impress the judge. Grooms should be dressed smartly, matching the driver/rider. Without the correct neat and tidy clothing whilst showing your horse you are introducing a fault.

Traditionally male grooms for drivers, riders or handlers should wear Cavalry twill trousers, polished show boots, either a tweed jacket or a matching team jacket with a matching cap or Bowler, a white or light coloured shirt and a tie (tied up firmly to the collar) to complement the outfit. A button hole in the jacket lapel looks good too. Ladies should wear a similar style of outfit but replace the cap if you wish with a country style of hat, for example a Panama, and dress in light coloured trousers of a style suitable for the show ring.

Certain teams have their own styles, for example the 'undertakers', John Goodwin and Gawin Holmes, who dress in a particular way, but still they look smart. People showing agricultural vehicles or implements tend to wear a more country style of clothing, which better suits their turnouts, but it is still possible to look smart.

(1 & 2) Grooms must be well turned out and conduct themselves correctly during ring appearances. Here David Lawless drives the Waldburg Shires to a Young & Co brewery dray, with Elspeth Ross as groom. (3) Jane Wordsworth and her groom, Becca Putt Jones, look up from the arena at the New Forest Show. (4) People showing agricultural vehicles or implements must be just as tidy. Drivers and grooms often wear country-style clothing, which better suits their turnouts, but it's still possible to look smart. This is Katie Marston, grooming for Emma Scotney driving RSA Fuller's agricultural turnout at the Great Yorkshire Show. (5) Driving an agricultural vehicle from the ground, with the groom by the horse's head, both on the nearside. This is Jane Muntz-Torres with her livestock cart at the Royal Welsh Show. (6) The correct place to stand when showing in-hand or turnout when lined up before the judge. (7) Grooms are allowed to have fun sometimes – John Goodwin's grooms, Erica Macey-Bracken and Julie Jones making the best of it when the wrong music was played at the New Forest Show.



Kevin Wright



Carol Stevens



Denise Badger



Kevin Wright



Kevin Wright



# New shoeing standards for Shire horses

The Shire Horse Society has produced a new set of shoeing standards following a review of its shoeing regulations. The new rules will be in operation at the National Shire Horse Show in March and at all affiliated shows from 2018.

The standards come after increased criticism and concern about some shoeing practices seen in the show ring. They highlight the importance of a well-balanced foot and minimum acceptable shoeing practices for the welfare of Shire horses. They have been drawn up with the help of The Worshipful Company of Farriers, The Farriers Registration Council, the RSPCA, the society's honorary farrier, Stephen Gowing AWCF, and the society's honorary vet, Ben Ryder-Davies BSc BVM&S MRCVS.

At the Spring Show exhibits will have their feet inspected by a farrier, who will watch the horses move away from them in the collecting ring and lift horses' feet if they think it necessary. Any horse not complying with the standards will not be



(1 & 2) Well-shod shoes. (Courtesy Roger Clark) (3, 4, 5) Horses do not have to be shod for showing purposes. A well-balanced un-shod foot is shown here. (Courtesy Roger Clark)



allowed to be exhibited. Horses may also be inspected at affiliated shows.

Only registered farriers, enrolled farriery apprentices, veterinary surgeons and veterinary students may carry out farriery in Great Britain, as set out in the Farriers Registration Act 1975 (amended 2017).

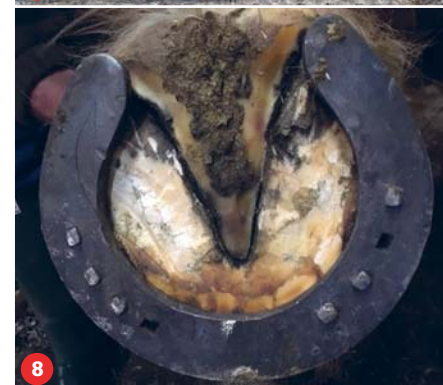
The full document *Minimum Acceptable Shoeing Standards for Shire Horses* can be viewed on the society's website, [www.shire-horse.org.uk](http://www.shire-horse.org.uk). Here are some extracts.



(6-12) Examples of shoeing which demonstrate acceptable shoeing practices (there are other examples, these images are not exhaustive)



(6 & 7) Best Shod Champion, Spring Show 2017. (Courtesy Carol Stevens)





# Windy day for Great All England Match

Rain threatened play for Southern Counties Heavy Horse Association's 45th annual Great All England Horse Ploughing Match at Tim Butler's Hartley Park Farm, near Selborne, Hampshire in October last year. Lorries had to be hauled onto and off the site, but it was dry for the day although exceptionally windy, and an ultimate success for the association.

Jim Elliott triumphed as champion ploughman, taking best crown and best finish and best matched pair. Peter Hayler was reserve, and he also took best turned out and best gelding. John McDermott had the best working team. Best mare was won by Randy Hiscock.

**RESULTS** Judges – Michael Janes, Phil Brown and Nora Willis. **High cut** – 1, Martin Kerswell. **Ride-on** – 1, Robert Sampson; 2, Richard Branscombe. **Long turnfurrow** – 1, Ian Williams; 2, Paul Brook-Nolan; 3, Mike Puxty. **Short turnfurrow** – 1 & ch, Jim Elliott; 2 & res ch, Peter Hayler; 3, John McDermott. **Assisted** – 1, Paul Walsh. **Single horse** – 1, Geoff Amor; 2, Emma Burrell; 3, Roy Greenfield. **Showing classes**. Judge – Rowena McDermott. **Any breed other than Shire/Clydesdale** – 1, Karen Piercy (Percheron); 2, Karen Scipio (Percheron). **Gldng** – 1, Charlie & Skye Bransden's Winston; 2, Charlotte Webb's Dothan Grey Lad; 3, Mike Harry's Brickell King Bear. **Mare** – 1 & ch, Kerri Mack's Shearbrook Nina; 2 & res ch, Karen Scipio's Harbridge Molly; 3, Marvin Messer's West Winds Poppy. **Yrlng/2-y-o** – 1, Kayleigh Stoyle's Augustan Isaac; 2, Kerri Mack's Kemplah Thunderheart; 3, Charlie & Skye Bransden's Louis. **Young handler** – 1, Florence Nichols; 2, Georgia Lacey; 3, Skye Bransden. **Ridden** – 1, West Winds Poppy/Florence Nichols; 2, Harbridge Molly/Karen Scipio; 3, Harbridge Levi/Karen Piercy. **Harness** – =1, Charlotte Webb's Dothan Silver Coin & Mike Harry's Brickell King Bear; 3, Charlie & Skye Bransden's Winston. **Leisure & pleasure** – 1, Karen Scipio's Harbridge Molly & Harbridge Kitty; 2, Charlie & Skye Bransden's Winston.



(1) Overall champion Jim Elliott glimpsed through the harness of his second horse as he completes his plot. (2) Martin Kerswell won the high cut. (3) John McDermott's Percherons were judged the best working team. (4) Ian Williams was the long turnfurrow winner. (5) Paul Brook-Nolan came second in that class. (6) Paul Walsh was first in the assisted class. Photographs: *Diana Zeuner*







Fig 1

**Rob Shorland-Ball takes time out from his interest in railways and industrial and rural heritage to focus on the horses which kept the flour mills rolling**

## Heavy horses, an early railway locomotive and flour millers' wagons

**first had close contact with a heavy horse in 1980 when as director of the Museum of East Anglian Life (MEAL) in Stowmarket, I encouraged the museum's Friends group to help buy Remus, a yearling Suffolk Punch. I learned a lot from Remus, and about heavy horses, and my continuing museum work has often added to my knowledge.**

The engraving of *Arrival of No 1 Engine at Aycliffe*, which I only recently discovered during research on the delivery of 'Locomotion' to the Stockton & Darlington Railway in 1824, reminded me of the skills of 19th century horsemen, and of the heavy horses which they controlled (Fig 1).

I remember growing up in Cambridge in the 1940s/50s seeing one of the last remaining railway shunting horses, Boxer, at work in the extensive sidings around Cambridge Station and subsequently discovering that their work was little known and little published. Railway cartage horses are better known because they were collecting and delivering railway goods so were seen by the public, whereas shunting horses were usually confined to railway property.

After MEAL I moved to York and the National Railway Museum, hence my railway interest, and flour milling is another sector where, especially in the 19th century, heavy horses were a key element of the miller's business. Wheat was brought to the mill, often in local farmers' wagons, and flour sacks left the mill in millers' wagons to customers like big bakeries. Before MEAL I ran Worsbrough Mill, Barnsley, a working

watermill, where I learned milling at first hand and occasionally borrowed or hired wagons and horses for special events.

But I also learned that Worsbrough, a traditional stone mill, was very different from the large roller flour mills that supplanted traditional wind and watermills. The change from millstones to steel rolls – the Roller Flour Milling Revolution – was a technological and social change that is little published but still important to us all today because the flour for our daily bread comes principally from such mills.

A name that many may associate with flour milling is Joseph Rank – and RHM, the Rank Hovis McDougall company – and my continuing research into roller flour milling led me back to heavy horses again. The Roller Flour Milling Revolution in the UK began in the mid- and late-19th century when horses were still the principal power source for road transport. Rank, who began as a wind-miller and then a roller-miller in Hull, used heavy horses

as described in his biography *Through the Mill. The Life of Joseph Rank* (R G Burnett. The Epworth Press 1945):

'Joseph Rank's. . . loved horses, and took pride . . . in the heavy cart-horses used to draw wheat to the mills and flour to the quays or railway stations or to local customers.

Hull and its environs were flat, and the firm used wagons (locally known as rullies) in two sizes; a single horse would pull the 2.5-ton wagon and a double-horse team the 5-ton wagon. Obviously this could be done only by powerful animals in the best of condition. It was a question of elementary necessity, but to Joseph Rank there was more than that. He would have only the best horses, selected after the most scrupulous examination, and once

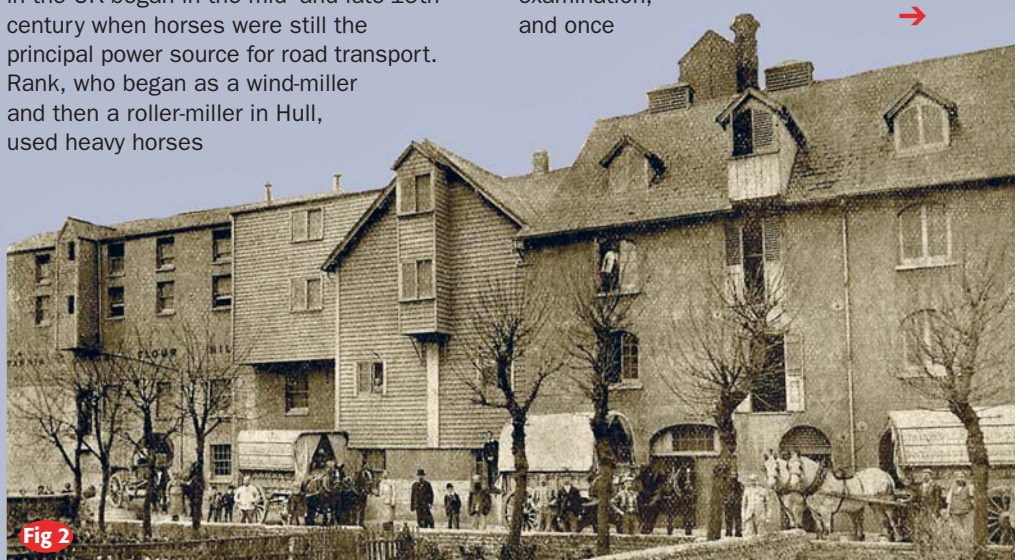


Fig 2





**Rosemary Cooper enjoyed a chat about a team of heavies unique in the UK**

## David Mouland and his Canadian Belgians

David Mouland says his Belgians are the most pleasurable horses he has ever driven. In this photo David is driving his latest acquisition, Ranger, at the Nottinghamshire County Show.

**At the Great Dorset Steam Fair last year, David Mouland gave an impressive display with a six-horse team of Canadian Belgians, during which he explained how he came to drive the only horses of their kind in the country.**

All Belgians are sorrel (chestnut) with flaxen manes, tails and lower legs. They are a very tall clean-legged breed, and are unfortunately docked in Canada, but enough is left for them to grow neat little tails, so they fare better against flies than horses with shaven tails.

David grew up on a farm with horses, and as soon as he was old enough, bought a team of Clydesdales. For years he continued to drive Clydesdales, but in 2006, when he saw a video of Canadian Belgians for sale, he and his then wife, Crystel, went to Canada to see them. They loved the horses but they were seriously expensive, so David stayed with Clydesdales.

In 2009, his best horse, Arran,

developed a brain tumour, and had to be put to sleep on Christmas Eve. In January 2010, David and Crystel travelled to Toronto to find more Clydesdales. After finding some they liked, they went to Manitoba for a holiday with a friend who had Belgians. One freezing winter day, they went out with a team of young Belgians to feed stallions. The team was left to stand, but never moved an inch. On the way back, the

friend asked David if he would like to drive. David's hands were numb with cold, but he never enjoyed a drive more in his life; he treasures the memory of that day.

All the same, he'd agreed to buy more Clydesdales. Then the day after he arrived home, another Clydesdale, Spike, colicked. He appeared to recover, then died of a heart attack. David changed his mind about driving Clydesdales and chose Belgians instead. One Clyde had failed the vet, which made it easy for him to back out of the deal. His remaining Clydesdales went to first-class homes with people who still keep in touch. He bought four Belgians at the end of January, but couldn't take them home until after the Royal Manitoba Winter Fair. The vet wouldn't let them fly the following week, so they missed their flight; then the ash cloud played havoc with his plans.

Finally David was able to take possession of the Belgians, Phantom, Supreme, Dirk and Billy, at the beginning of May, just before the show season. He had to get used to them, and them to him, yet he had a wonderful season, winning at the Royal Highland among other shows. Next year he bought Tito and Russell, two and three-year-olds. In 2012 he bought Cody and three-year-old Benny, and later Mike from Tom Lane (the same seller as before) at the 2016 Royal Manitoba Winter Fair. Tito was sold to a first-class home because at 18hh, he hadn't grown tall enough to fit into a 19hh-tall team. Last December David bought Ranger, so he currently owns nine Belgians.

They have been driven in two-wheeled stud carts from the start, and ridden a little until two seasons ago, when the riding of heavy horses gained status with a class at the Horse of the Year Show. Now David's partner, Emma Collis, rides Ranger in riding classes. David is full of praise for his Belgians. "You wouldn't believe that something so bad could lead to something so good!" he said. "They are the most forward-going and pleasurable horses I've ever driven. I know I'm biased, but to me they are the best horses I could possibly drive!"

