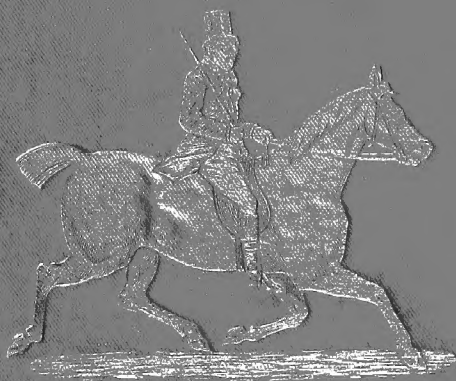


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# HORSES—BREEDING TO COLOUR

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BY SIR WALTER GILBEY, BART.

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*J. F. HERRING, Scnr., 1834*

**FULWAR CRAVEN, Esq.,** on his Norfolk Hackney, passing the 4-mile Stables, on the Cambridge road to Newmarket, to the Beacon Winning-post



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BY SIR WALTER GILBEY, BART.

*Author of*

HORSES FOR THE ARMY; THE GREAT HORSE OR WAR HORSE; SMALL HORSES IN WARFARE; HORSE-BREEDING IN ENGLAND AND ARMY HORSES ABROAD; HORSES PAST AND PRESENT; YOUNG RACE-HORSES; THE HARNESS HORSE; THOROUGHBRED AND OTHER PONIES; HUNTER SIRES; EARLY CARRIAGES AND ROADS, &c.

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## PREFACE

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*An attempt is made in the following pages to explain the different colours in Horses and the reason for the increasing frequency of some colours and the decrease of others*

*Also suggestions are offered as to how horses may be bred to colour*

*Elsenham Hall, Essex  
June, 1907*





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# BREEDING TO COLOUR

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## THOROUGHBREDS

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### THE TERM "THOROUGHBRED"

Before proceeding to discuss the matter of colours in our race-horses, it may be well to observe that the term "Thoroughbred" is, comparatively speaking, of recent origin. The word does not occur in the early volumes of the *Racing Calendar*, nor in old works relating to the Turf.

The term would seem to have come into use during the first few years of the last century. It does not occur in the *Sporting Magazine* of 1805, wherein we read of the shipment to Russia of "stallions of the first breed and celebrity." We do, however, find it in the *Sporting Magazine* of August, 1806, among the remarks under the heading "Mares sent to Stallions." Here it is stated of some stallions that they "covered thoroughbred mares," the term being employed to distinguish these from "hunting" and "country" mares. Clearly, the word "Thoroughbred" had not at this time come into general use, as the reports of the services rendered by other stallions refer to "blood," "hunting" and "country" mares.

The first explanation of the meaning of the term I have been able to trace occurs about the same period in that well-known work, *The History and Delineation of the Horse*, written by Laurence in 1807, and published two

years later. It is evident from the tenor of this author's remarks that the term was then a new one.

Laurence says:—

“All horses intended for this purpose [racing] . . . must be THOROUGHBRED; in plain terms, both their sires and dams must be of the purest Asiatic or African [Barb] coursers exclusively, and this must be attested in an authentic pedigree throughout whatever number of English descendants.”

There is evidence in Laurence's own pages that the term had not, in 1807, obtained what may be called general currency. On more than one occasion we find him using the expression “full or thorough blood,” which indicates that the word “Thoroughbred” would not be familiar to all readers at that date.

If further proof be needed that the term did not become recognised as an English word till a comparatively modern time, we obtain it from the standard dictionaries of much later dates than Laurence's *History and Delineation of the Horse*.

The edition of Dr. Johnson's Dictionary published in 1827 does not give the word. The earliest dictionary to give “Thoroughbred” and its correct meaning is the edition of Walker published in 1836; and it seems worth pointing out the fact that when William Youatt wrote his work *The Horse*, in 1831, he thought it necessary to allude to the “Thoroughbred or Turf Horse.” Thus, in 1831, the first authority of the time thought it necessary to explain the word.

## PARENT STOCK OF THE THOROUGHBRED

Eastern sires had been imported into this country and crossed upon native mares from a very early period;



but Arabs and Barbs were not imported into England in any number until the Restoration, in 1660. James I. (1603-1625) had procured such horses, and Charles I. (1625-1649) followed his example.

Oliver Cromwell, opposed though he was to sport—as witness his various proclamations forbidding race meetings—was far too shrewd a man to allow prejudice to weigh against national interests. He might regard racing and its accompaniments of wagering and cock-fighting with all the Puritan's disapproval, but he could not fail to see that the horse-breeding industry was so intimately associated with racing that one could hardly exist without the other.

The war had gone far to denude the country of horses, and Cromwell, as a statesman and a soldier, took measures to repair the injury by importing the best stock money could procure, even though the proceeding meant encouragement of the horse-racing repugnant to puritanical views.

It had been intended to break up and disperse the Royal Stud Charles I. had maintained at Tutbury, in Staffordshire. A list of the horses was actually made with this object by the Commissioners who were sent for the purpose, as soon as Cromwell came into power.

Cromwell, however, afterwards decided that the Stud should be preserved as public property, in order to breed horses for the nation, and very soon after we find him sending his own Stud-master, Mr. Place, abroad to purchase Eastern horses, of which Place's White Turk is the most famous.

It was Charles II. (1660-1685), who imported Arab, Barb, and Turkish stallions and mares in quantity that made a real impression upon our native stock. The importation of Eastern mares—"Royal mares," as they

were called—as well as stallions, had for its principal result the foundation of the breed which, a hundred and fifty years later, came to be called “Thoroughbred”—the term, as already said, denoting horses which traced their descent from Arabs and Barbs and the “Royal mares” imported by Charles II.

I have reviewed at some length elsewhere\* the importations of stallions and Royal mares during the period above referred to, and the influence of these on the horse-breeding industry of the time. It is, therefore, unnecessary to go farther into the matter here.

The earlier numbers of the *Racing Calendar* contain much information concerning the stallions then serving. This is to be found in the advertisements of covering sires, which set out particulars of the horse's pedigree, racing record, height, colour, &c., &c. These describe horses serving in nearly all parts of England, Ireland, and Scotland.

## ORIGINAL COLOUR OF RACE-HORSES

The following has been compiled from notes made in course of recent researches into the colour question, in so far as it relates to race-horses. Bearing in mind the all-important fact that horses, like other animals and like birds in the natural state, transmit their distinctive colours to their progeny, and that the colour or colours of any given species remain “constant” from generation to generation (with occasional “freaks” or “sports,” which are peculiar to the individual), it will be well first to review what is known of this subject.

The original wild horse was, without doubt, of a

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\* *Thoroughbred and other Ponies* (pp. 120 and seq.) By SIR WALTER GILBEY, Bart. Vinton & Co., London. 1903.

“fixed colour”—that is to say, the species did not vary, showing some individuals white, some grey, bay, brown or black.

What was the original colour of the horse has been a matter of discussion by many able writers; and the fact that the only wild horse now in existence—Prejvalsky’s—is bay seems to confirm the views of those authorities who maintain that bay was the “original” colour of the horse. This, however, is a matter into which we need not enter, our interest lying in the colours of the horses from which the modern Thoroughbred traces his descent. Arab tradition maintains that the horse was created *Koummite*, red mixed with black—that is to say, dark brown. General Daumas,\* who spent sixteen years in Northern Africa in close contact with the Arab chiefs and people, says it is beyond all question that these colours are preferred to all others by the Arabs of the Sahara, and he adds, “If I might be allowed to quote my own personal experience, I should have no hesitation in saying that, if there be any prejudice in the matter, I share it with them.”

The variety of colour exhibited by our race-horses would seem to be less in our own day than it was a century or more ago. The first volume of the *General Stud Book*, the early volumes of the *Racing Calendar*, and Sharkey’s *Irish Racing Calendar* contain mention of very variously coloured winners of important races—greys, bays, chestnuts, blacks, and horses of mixed colours.

It is easy to understand why the race-horses of an earlier age showed greater variety of colour than do the race-horses of modern times. The variety is explained by the

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\* The Horses of the Sahara.

different colours of the horses from which they were so much more recently descended.

The Arabs, Barbs, and Turks imported into England from James I.'s time onwards,\* were very variously coloured. The names of the horses frequently include indication of their colour; and from this we discover—Grey (16), Bay (11), Chestnut (8), Black (4), Dun or Yellow (3), White (2), Brown (2), Roan (2), Piebald or Parti-coloured (2),† Bay Roan (1).

This list only accounts for under one-third the total number of horses enumerated by Mr. Osborne; and, could we carry investigation farther, no doubt we should find that the undescribed horses included a very large proportion of bays. A most important instance is the Godolphin Arabian (imported 1724), elsewhere described as “a brown bay with some white on off hind heel.” This famous horse, the bay Darley Arabian (imported 1706) and the black Byerly Turk (imported 1689) are, as is well-known, the three great “foundation sires” whose blood is found in the pedigrees of all our modern race-horses.

## GREY RACE-HORSES

In former days, grey horses were very strongly represented on every racecourse. During the earlier part of the eighteenth century greys were the most successful horses on the Turf, and the latter part of the same period, 1760-1800, saw some of the best grey horses that ever ran. More detailed reference may be made to some of the more famous grey horses.

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\* See the List of Importations in *The Horse-Breeders' Hand-Book*. By JOS. OSBORNE.

† The Bloody-shouldered Arabian and Bloody Buttocks Arabian.





*From a Painting by J. N. SARTORIUS*

**GREY DIOMED**, the property of the Duke of Bedford

Bred by Sir Ohas. Bunbury, Bart.—got by Diomed, the winner of the first Derby in 1780

Gimcrack, a grey, foaled in 1760, bred by Gideon Elliot, Esq., in Hampshire, stood under 14 hands 2 inches; winner of 27 races on the English Turf, value £5,480; was sent to France to run a match against time for £1,000, which he also won.

The old Gimcrack Club of York takes its name from this famous horse. There are in existence three large-size oil paintings of Gimcrack by George Stubbs, the celebrated animal painter—one in the Durdans collection, one in the Elsenham collection and the other at the Jockey Club, Newmarket.

Mambrino, a grey, bred in 1768 by John Atkinson, Esq., of Scholes, in Yorkshire, and sold after his decease to Lord Grosvenor, was the winner of many races in the years 1773-1779.

It may be of interest to know that Mambrino, after his racing career, was sold in 1779 by Lord Grosvenor to go to America, where he laid the foundation of a breed of the finest coach horses ever produced, and, united with the blood of "Jary's Bellfounder," who was imported to America in 1823, laid the foundation of the American Trotter.

The winner of the first Derby, in 1780, was Diomed, a chestnut horse. From him the celebrated Grey Diomed was bred at Great Barton, Bury St. Edmunds, by Sir Charles Bunbury, Bart., one of the leading racing men of his time.

The Derby has been only once won by a grey horse—namely, Gustavus. He was by Election, a bay horse, out of the grey mare Lady Grey in 1821. Hollandaise, by Matchem, who won the St. Leger of 1778, was a grey, as also was Symmetry, by Delpini, who won the same race in 1798.

Turning to the Irish records,\* we find several notable grey horses. Kildare, winner of a 3-year-old Plate at the Curragh, a King's Plate for 5-year-olds in 1788, for 6-year-olds in 1789, and several matches, is one of these. Kildare is described as a "beautiful dapple grey, 6 years old, full 15 hands, master of high weight and of good sinew and bone."

In more recent records, the search for greys becomes less and less productive of result. Among the few may be cited Chanticleer, foaled in 1843 (By Birdcatcher—Whim, by Drone), and Strathconan. And, coming down to our own day, the only grey Thoroughbred sire we have is Grey Leg, who derives his colour from a line of ancestors whose predominating colour was grey—namely, Pepper-and-Salt, Oxford Mixture, Scot Guard, Grey Friar (by Hermit) and his son Friary; all of them greys.

The colour of Strathconan—to take one among the examples given above—has been traced by the painstaking writer of a very able article on this subject† through fourteen generations to the Alcock Arabian, otherwise known as "Mr. Pelham's Grey Arab," imported early in the eighteenth century. In Strathconan's "colour pedigree" the grey sire occurs five times, and the grey dam nine times. Equally noteworthy is the colour pedigree of the King Tom mare Euxine, who also derived her grey colour, through sire or dam, from the same original source—the Alcock Arabian or "Mr. Pelham's Grey Arab."

These examples bear out my own fifty years of experience and that of other breeders, which establishes

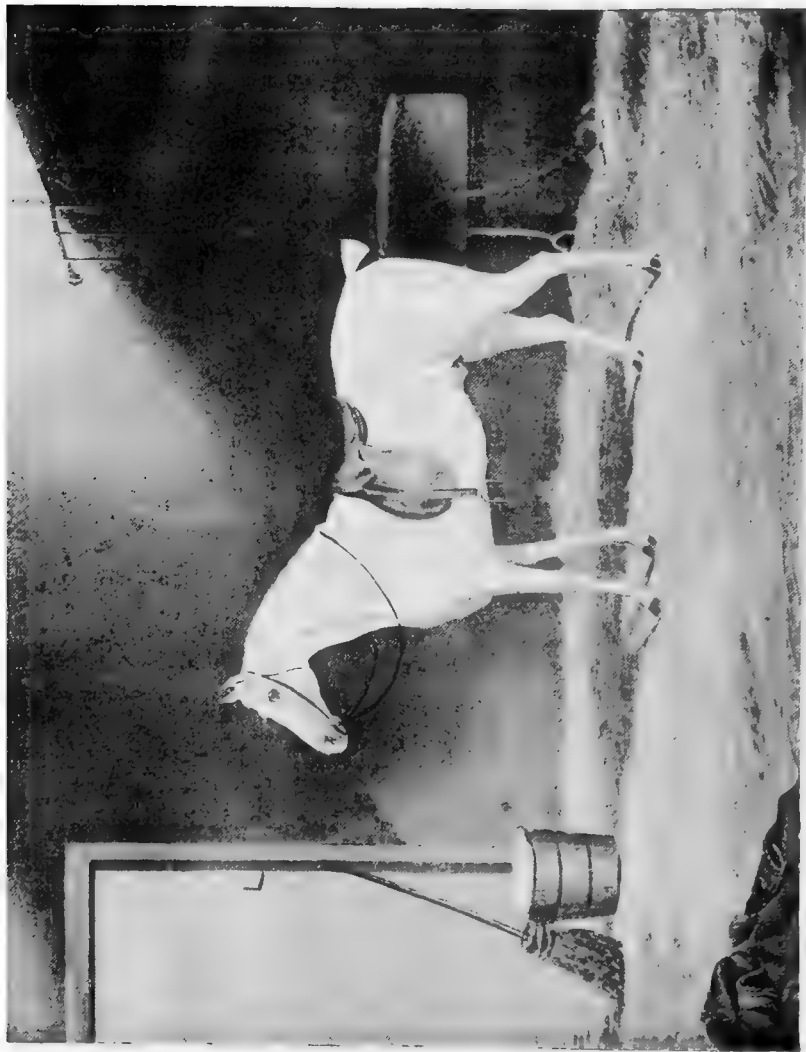
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\* SHARKEY'S *Irish Racing Calendar*.

† *Baily's Magazine*, March, 1905.







**MASTER HENRY**

The property of R. D. Cockburn, Esq., 1828

the fact that to breed a grey horse it is absolutely necessary that either sire or dam shall be a grey. Lord Middleton, who breeds, at Birdsall, all the horses required for his hunt, has found this rule hold good ; he has ample scope for testing the stability of this fact, for he has no fewer than 16 stallions at Birdsall, and these, in 1904, covered 1,180 mares.

Why have greys ceased to be common among our race-horses, though formerly so numerous ? The answer, I think, may be found from examination of the lists of fashionable sires during the last fifty or sixty years. As we all know, the three great strains of blood trace back to Eclipse (chestnut), Matchem (bay) and Herod (bay). The prepotency of these great sires included the faculty of perpetuating their colour as well as their other qualities through their descendants ; and, as the tendency of breeders has always been to use these strains, grey has gradually been eliminated.

Now and again we find that the prepotency of the mare—so far as colour is concerned—was greater than that of the sire. A striking instance of this occurs in the pedigree of Strathconan. His maternal ancestress, the grey Virago (1764), threw the grey filly Speranza (1778) to Eclipse.

In the pedigree of the grey mare Griselda (1878) by Strathconan, we find the strain on both sides. Her maternal ancestress, Grey Starling (1745), threw the grey filly Tuberoze (1772) to Herod. The prepotency of these mares—as regards colour—was such that the grey coat was perpetuated through their descendants, male or female, for a hundred years.

One curious and mysterious fact deserves mention before we leave this part of our subject—that is the regularity with which some grey mares throw grey foals

to one sire of colour other than grey and not to another. The mare Whim furnishes an instance of this; herself a grey, the daughter of a remarkably prepotent grey sire, Drone, she threw grey foals to the chestnut Birdcatcher and to no other horse.

There is, in France, a family of grey Thoroughbreds which has been established in that country since about the year 1881, when Baron Schickler purchased Gem of Gems for his French stud. This mare was a grey, got by Strathconan out of Pointsettia; she was put by her purchaser to the chestnut son of Thormanby, Atlantic, who won the Two Thousand Guineas in 1874. Baron Schickler also bought him to take to France.

The produce of Atlantic and Gem of Gems was the grey Le Sancy. Le Sancy proved to be one of the best race-horses ever bred in France; and his success at the stud when his racing career was finished has not been less remarkable. He got a large number of horses of the highest class, all greys; the two whose names are perhaps best known in this country are Palmiste, who won the French Derby of 1897, and would in all human probability have won also the Grand Prix had he not broken down at the last moment; and Semendria, who won the French Oaks and Grand Prix de Paris in the Exhibition year (1900).

Palmiste, in his turn, was sent to the stud, and has proved the prepotency of his family colour by getting many grey horses of the best class. Le Sancy is the sire of several other successful race-horses, nearly all of which are greys. Holocauste, who broke down in the Derby of 1899, was one of the fastest horses on the Turf.

It is simply an illustration of the adage that "nothing succeeds like success." Grey horses have succeeded on the French Turf; therefore they are sent to the stud to





FLAMBEAU

reproduce their kind; consequently grey horses increase and multiply in France.

Thus it is that a grey horse is not the rarity in France it is on an English racecourse. No decrease in the number of greys is observable in that country; on the contrary, their numbers continue to increase year by year, for the simple reason that if a grey horse gets a grey foal and the latter turns out well he is sent to the stud and perpetuates his colour.

Perhaps we may regard this circumstance as another illustration of the wise and broadminded system of breeding that prevails among our French neighbours. In breeding horses for working purposes they display no undue prejudice in favour of blood sires simply because they *are* blood sires; but, in choosing a stallion, they attach far more importance to make and shape than they do to his breeding.

May it not be that the frequency of grey race-horses is due to the same wise policy—that if a grey race-horse achieves success on the Turf he receives, when sent to the stud, the preference of breeders, who regard his performances as sufficient warranty of merit, even though he may not come of the most fashionable English strains?

Having regard to the part the Thoroughbred plays in breeding hunters and other horses of luxury, we may find other reasons for the rarity of grey sires to perpetuate their colour. Grey horses are disliked by many people because the coat shows stains so easily, and because the hair which comes off shows conspicuously on the clothes. The grey horse turns *white* as he gets old and thus shows his age.

Moreover, as Captain Hayes has remarked, coachmen and grooms dislike greys, as being more troublesome to

clean and keep clean than horses of dark colours. These are trifling objections in themselves, but, in the absence of special reason for choosing a grey, they suffice to ensure preference for bay or brown; hence the disinclination to put to the stud a grey, which may bestow his colour on the foal of his begetting.

## CHESTNUT THOROUGHBREDS

One of the most interesting points in connection with the subject of colour in our Thoroughbreds is the certainty with which the chestnut has gradually crept and asserted itself, to the exclusion of the grey. In the first volumes of the *General Stud Book* (originated in 1791 by Mr. Weatherby and published in 1808) greys and bays were almost universal, the chestnut horse being comparatively rare. Those there are, with very few exceptions, are sons and daughters of Eclipse.

In the list of imported sires, classified according to colour, on page 6, the horses described as chestnuts are eight in number; no doubt there were many more chestnuts among the horses whose colour has not been recorded; but we need not seek reason for the gradual

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\* Eclipse was foaled in the year 1764, won his first race, at Epsom, in 1769, and continued his unbeaten career as a race-horse until 1771, when he was withdrawn from the Turf. During the two years of his active career he won eleven Royal Plates, one more than the number won by any other horse, and in ten of these he carried twelve stone. His finest performance was under the light weight—for those days—of 8 st. 7 lbs., with which he, on 23rd August, 1770, won the Subscription Purse at Guildford. He went away with the lead, and at the two-mile post was more than a distance (240 yards) ahead of his competitors, Tortoise and Bellario. In 1771 Eclipse went to the stud and stood for service at Clay Hills, Epsom. Mr. Whyte (*History of the British Turf*; 2 vols.; 1840) gives a table of the successes gained by his progeny, from which we find that during the twenty-three years 1774-1796 his produce included 344 winners of £158,047 12s., with other races in which the prize did not take the form of cash.



increase in the number of Thoroughbreds of this colour—it proclaims itself. Eclipse, the greatest of the old sires, was, as before stated, a dark chestnut, with white off hind leg and a white blaze. Marske, the sire of Eclipse, was a brown, and of the four grandparents of Eclipse, we know the colour of only one—namely, that of his grandsire, Squirt, a chestnut. Squirt traces back, through his granddam, Betty Leedes, to the D'Arcy Yellow Turk, who, from his descriptive name, was probably a light chestnut.

In the matter of colour pedigree, however, we need not look beyond Eclipse and his grandsire. I believe it is correct to say that there is not now on the Turf a horse in whose pedigree the name of Eclipse does not occur with greater or less frequency. “From a Stud point of view,” says Mr. Richardson in *The English Turf*, “Eclipse got two great sons, Pot-8-os and King Fergus.” Both of these were chestnuts. From the former comes the Sir Hercules (black) or Birdcatcher (chestnut) “line of Eclipse.” Of Birdcatcher it may be observed that though his sire Sir Hercules was black, his dam Guiccioli was a chestnut, by the chestnut Bob Booty, out of the chestnut Flight, and that the sire of Bob Booty and of Flight was a chestnut in either case. The colours of their dams are not recorded.

There are two other lines of the Eclipse family which figure conspicuously in the pedigrees—that generally known as the Touchstone-Newminster line, through Camel, and the line of Blacklock. The Hermit (chestnut) family is one of the chief representatives of the Touchstone branch, and The Galopin-St. Simon family represents Blacklock. There is also a third line—that of Tramp (bay).

It would seem as though the “Eclipse colour” had

been transmitted principally through the Birdcatcher family, Hermit having, as it were, “recovered” the colour after it had missed some generations.

Birdcatcher’s chestnut son, the Baron, got both Stockwell and Rataplan from the bay Pocahontas, a mare full of Eclipse blood. St. Albans was by Stockwell, out of the chestnut Bribery, who inherited Eclipse blood through his brown sire, The Libel. Blair Athol inherited it through his brown dam, Blink Bonny, through her bay dam, Queen Mary, as well as from his chestnut sire, Stockwell. Doncaster, another son of Stockwell, was out of the chestnut Marigold, by the chestnut Teddington, who traces back to Whalebone ; and thus we might trace the influence of Eclipse through the pedigrees of all the horses named.

Hermit furnishes an example of a great chestnut sire who, though his more immediate ancestors—Newminster and Touchstone, on the sire’s side, and Tadmor and Ton, on his dam’s—were bays, derived his colour, in all probability, from his great granddam, the chestnut Palmyra, and through his great grandsire, the black Camel, both of whom trace their pedigrees (Palmyra through her dam Hester, by Camel) through Whalebone to Eclipse. The prepotency of the Eclipse blood, as shown by the colour, makes the case of Hermit particularly noteworthy. Many of his best sons and daughters inherited the rich whole-coloured chestnut from him—Peter, Timothy and Ascetic, for example.

A horse named Aurelius was one of the first Eclipse sires who inherited the chestnut coat. This stallion is advertised in the *Irish Racing Calendar* of 1791 as standing to cover at the Curragh in the following terms:—

“The only son of Eclipse, out of a Blank mare, he is very like Eclipse, being the same size, shape, growth, colour,

marks, &c. He is 15 hands 1 inch high, and undoubtedly was the best 3-year-old in England. . . . In the Second Spring Meeting, 1788, he won the Prince's Stakes of 100 Guineas, beating Grey Diomed, Amatis, &c.; the following Saturday he won the Prince's Stakes of 200 Guineas, beating again Grey Diomed and Fenoor, giving them 3 lbs. Going from Newmarket to Epsom to run for the Derby he was taken ill; notwithstanding, he was second to Sir Thomas and more than nine horses\* in the race."

Grey Diomed, it will be remembered, was a son of the chestnut Diomed, winner of the first Derby in 1780.

The name of Aurelius is not prominent in the pedigrees, however. The Eclipse colour occurs in many good sires of later dates, in addition to those already mentioned. Harkaway's name will occur to everyone. Then there are St. Albans, Blair Athol, Bend Or, Amphion, Bonavista, Kendal, Carnage, Gallinule and Cyllene. In addition to these, we might recall the names of at least seventeen other chestnuts, including Sainfoin, Sir Hugo, Saraband, Prism, Yardarm, Bumptious and Brag. All these trace their descent from Eclipse.

Although, as mentioned in the first paragraph of this chapter, chestnut has gradually crept in and asserted itself in our Thoroughbred 'stock, it is a somewhat uncertain colour in its appearance. It may lie dormant for a generation or two (as in the case of Hermit) and then reappear, proving the prepotency of a chestnut ancestor.

Mr. C. C. Hurst collected some very interesting figures bearing on this point and embodied them in a paper read before the Royal Society in December, 1905. In the *General Stud Book* he found that bay or brown sires, both

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\* There were eleven starters.

of whose parents were bay or brown, begat, of chestnut mares, bay or brown foals in 370 cases. On the other hand, bay or brown sires one only of whose parents were chestnut begat 355 bay or brown foals and 347 chestnut foals, of chestnut mares. Chestnut sires put to chestnut dams produced chestnut foals in over a thousand cases.

The Derby has been won on thirty-three occasions by a chestnut. Perhaps it may be convenient to give a list of the names of the horses here:—

Diomed .. .. 1780	St Giles .. 1832	Hermit .. .. 1867
Sir Thomas .. 1788	Dangerous .. 1833	Favonius .. 1871
John Bull .. 1792	Plenipotentiary 1834	Doncaster .. 1873
Election.. .. 1807	Mundig .. .. 1835	George Frederick 1874
Pan .. .. 1808	Pyrrhus the First 1846	Bend Or .. 1880
Azor .. .. 1817	Cossack .. .. 1847	Shotover .. 1882
Sam .. .. 1818	Teddington .. 1851	St. Blaise .. 1883
Sailor .. .. 1820	Daniel O'Rourke 1852	Sainfoin .. 1890
Moses .. .. 1822	Thormanby .. 1860	Sir Hugo .. 1892
Cedric .. .. 1824	Kettledrum .. 1861	Jeddah .. .. 1898
Middleton .. 1825	Blair Athol .. 1864	Cicero .. .. 1905

No chestnut with four white legs has ever won the Derby. The horse that makes the nearest approach to this description was Blair Athol who had two white fetlocks and a blaze.

Glancing over the foregoing list, the point that will suggest itself to the reader is that few of these Derby winners are among those chestnuts which have made a name at the stud; Blair Athol, Doncaster, Bend Or and Hermit single themselves out. Nevertheless, if we divide the history of the race roughly into three periods of about 40 years each, we find that the number of chestnut winners in each period shows an increase on that preceding it:—

From 1780 to 1820	there were	8	chestnut winners.
„ 1821 „ 1860	„	12	„ „
„ 1861 „ 1900	„	14	„ „

We need not attach too much weight to these figures ; but they recall the often repeated assertion that the Eclipse blood is asserting its greater vitality over the other main strains, and perhaps go to confirm its accuracy.

## BAY AND BROWN THOROUGHBREDS

At the present time bay race-horses are, as for many years past they have been, in the majority. The three great lines from which our best Thoroughbreds have sprung are the Eclipse (chestnut), with which we dealt in the last chapter, the Herod (bay), and the Matchem (bay), all three of which blend in the pedigree of Blacklock (bay, 1814), whence we trace Voltaire, Bay Middleton, Voltigeur, Vedette, down to Galopin, St. Simon, and Persimmon—all bays or browns, with a tendency to produce bays among their progeny. This is markedly the case with Galopin and St. Simon, neither of which horses, it is said, have ever begotten a chestnut.

Before going further, it may be well to say that it is proposed to treat bay and brown as varieties of the same colour. It goes without saying that we have bays in plenty which cannot possibly be mistaken for browns, and that we have browns which cannot be mistaken for bays ; but, as we all know, horses frequently occur of which the colour is so doubtful that they are described in the Stud Book and elsewhere as “ bay or brown.”

Mr. Wilfrid Scawen Blunt,\* writing of the horses seen among the Anazeh tribes of Arabia, says :—

“ There is, among English people, a general idea that grey—especially fleabitten grey—is the commonest Arabian colour. But this is not so among the Anazeh. Bays are still more

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\* *The Bedouin Tribes of the Euphrates.*

common. . . . Perhaps, out of a hundred mares among the Anazeh, one would see thirty-five bay, thirty grey, fifteen chestnut, and the rest brown or black. . . . The bays often have black points and generally a white foot, or two or three white feet, and a snip or blaze down the face. . . . With very few exceptions, all the handsomest mares we saw were bay, which is, without doubt, by far the best colour in Arabia, as it is in England. . . . In choosing Arabians, I should take none but bays, and, if possible, bays with black points.’

Mr. Blunt’s views as to the superiority, both in quality and numbers, of the bay Arab are confirmed by two such capable and independent observers as Major Upton\* and General Tweedie.† We may, therefore, take it as fact that the bay is the commonest colour among the Arabs, and that the best Arabs are usually bays.

Though we have been able to identify only thirteen bay horses among those enumerated by Osborne (page 6), it is not to be supposed for a moment that these exhaust the list of bays. On the contrary, bay being the commonest colour among Arabs, it is only reasonable to think that the name given the horse would, as a rule, not refer to his colour unless it were something a little out of the ordinary. When a horse was described as somebody’s “bay Arabian,” it is probable that the colour was recorded to distinguish the horse from another of different colour belonging to the same owner.

The predominance of bays among our race-horses for many generations justifies the belief that they are descended, for the most part, from bay ancestors. Of one hundred and twenty-seven Derbys (1780-1906), no

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\* *Gleanings from the Desert of Arabia.* 1881.

† *The Arabian Horse : his Country and People.* 1894.

fewer than sixty-five have been won by bays, twenty-four by brown horses, and one by a "bay or brown," Volodyovski, 1901:—

## BAYS

Young Eclipse .. 1781	Frederick .. 1829	Cremorne .. 1872
Assassin .. 1782	Priam .. .. 1830	Galopin .. .. 1875
Sergeant .. 1784	Spaniel .. .. 1831	Kisber .. .. 1876
Ainwell .. .. 1785	Bay Middleton.. 1836	Silvio .. .. 1877
Skyscraper .. 1789	Phosphorus .. 1837	Sefton .. .. 1878
Waxy .. .. 1793	Bloomsbury .. 1839	Iroquois .. .. 1881
Spread Eagle .. 1795	Little Wonder .. 1840	St. Gatien * .. 1884
Didelot .. .. 1796	Coronation .. 1841	Melton .. .. 1885
Champion .. .. 1800	Cotherstone .. 1843	Ormonde .. .. 1886
Eleanor .. .. 1801	Orlando .. .. 1844	Merry Hampton 1887
Tyrant .. .. 1802	Merry Monarch 1845	Ayrshire .. .. 1888
Tyrant .. .. 1803	Surplice .. .. 1848	Donovan .. .. 1889
Hannibal .. .. 1804	Flying Dutchman 1850	Isinglass .. .. 1893
Cardinal Beaufort 1805	West Australian 1853	Ladas .. .. 1894
Paris .. .. 1806	Andover .. .. 1854	Sir Visto .. .. 1895
Pope .. .. 1809	Wild Dayrell .. 1855	Persimmon .. .. 1896
Phantom .. .. 1811	Caractacus .. .. 1856	Galtee More .. 1897
Blucher .. .. 1814	Macaroni .. .. 1863	Flying Fox .. .. 1899
Whisker .. .. 1815	Gladiateur .. .. 1865	Diamond Jubilee 1900
Prince Leopold 1816	Lord Lyon .. .. 1866	Volodyovski † .. 1901
Papdog .. .. 1826	Blue Gown .. .. 1868	St. Amant .. .. 1904
Mameluke .. .. 1827	Kingcraft .. .. 1870	Spearmint .. .. 1906

\* Dead Heat with Harvester.

† "Bay or Brown."

## BROWNS

Saltram .. .. 1783	Octavius .. .. 1812	Musjid .. .. 1859
Sir Peter Teazle 1787	Tiresaus .. .. 1819	Pretender .. .. 1869
Rhadamanthus.. 1790	Cadland .. .. 1828	Sir Bevys .. .. 1879
Eager .. .. 1791	Amato .. .. 1838	Harvester * .. 1884
Dædalus .. .. 1794	Attila .. .. 1842	Common .. .. 1891
Colt by Fidget .. 1797	Voltigeur .. .. 1850	Ard Patrick .. .. 1902
Sir Harry .. .. 1798	Ellington .. .. 1856	Rock Sand .. .. 1903
Archduke .. .. 1799	Blink Bonny .. 1857	
Whalebone .. .. 1810	Beadsman .. .. 1858	

\* Dead heat with St. Gatien.

Since 1890, moreover, the St. Leger has been won nine times by a bay—viz., Isinglass, Throstle, Sir Visto, Persimmon, Galtee More, Flying Fox, Diamond Jubilee, Doricles and Sceptre.

If comparatively few of the names in the list of chestnut winners of the Derby are those of horses who made a name at the stud after their racing career was done, the same cannot be said of the list of bays and browns. We have Waxy, bay (1793); Whalebone, brown (1810); Priam, bay (1830); Bay Middleton (1836); Flying Dutchman, bay (1849); Voltigeur, brown (1850); West Australian, bay (1853); Beadsman, brown (1858); Galopin, bay (1875); Ormonde, bay (1886); Merry Hampton, bay (1887); Ayrshire, bay (1888); Donovan, bay (1889); Isinglass, bay (1893); Ladas, bay (1894); Persimmon, bay (1896); Galtee More, bay (1897); and Kisber (1876), who did such valuable service in Hungary.

In reviewing the bays and browns which have won fame as stallions we must look beyond the roll of Derby winners. Orville (1799) got Emilius, who got Priam and Plenipotentiary. Tramp (1810) got Lottery, who got Sheet Anchor, from whom, in the direct male line, came Rosicrucian and the Palmer, through Weatherbit and Beadsman. Blacklock (1814) was the sire of numerous winners and ancestors of winners. Bluebeard, Brutandorf, Velocipede and Voltaire were among his sons. Galopin and Hagioscope were among his descendants in the male line, and Hermit, Bend Or and Petrarch are conspicuous among those in the female line. Touchstone, brown (1831), recalls the names of a long roll of good horses. Among these, two of his sons, Cotherstone and Orlando, won the Derby, and two won the St. Leger—viz., Blue Bonnet and Newminster. Surplice, another son, won both those races. Mendicant, his daughter, out of Lady Moore Carew, won the Oaks. Melbourne, brown (1834), enriched the Turf as the sire of West Australian, Blink Bonny, Canezou, Marchioness, Sir Tatton Sykes and Young Melbourne. Musket, who did so much to



raise the average of Australian horses, comes of the Melbourne strain. All the horses named were bay or brown; a chestnut of true Melbourne descent is seldom found.

Orville, Tramp, Blacklock, Touchstone (brown) and Melbourne all come from the Godolphin Arabian; and the Darley Arabian's name occurs frequently in the pedigrees of Orville and Touchstone. Melbourne, who was "held in great regard by breeders as having more of the blood of the Godolphin Arabian in his veins than any horse of his time bar Harkaway,"\* furnishes an example of the uncertainty with which colour is reproduced. His sire, Humphrey Clinker, was a bay. Humphrey Clinker's sire, Comus, was a chestnut, and his dam, Clinkerina, was a brown. Comus was by the black Sorcerer, out of the bay Houghton Lass; and Clinkerina was by the brown Clinker, out of the bay Pewet. Among Melbourne's eight paternal great-great-grandparents was one black (Trumpator); two bays, Young Giantess and Tandem; a brown, Sir Peter Teazle (twice); two chestnuts, Hyall and Alexina; and one undescribed, Termagant. Melbourne's dam (unnamed) was a bay by the bay Cervantes, out of a bay mare (unnamed). Cervantes was by the chestnut Don Quixote, out of the brown Evelina; and the bay dam was by the bay Golumpus, out of a brown mare (unnamed). Among Melbourne's eight maternal great-great-grandparents was one chestnut, Eclipse; two undescribed mares, Grecian Princess and Termagant; four bays, Highflyer, Gohanna, Catherine and Sister to Zodiac; and one brown, Paynator. Thus, among his sixteen great-great-grandparents, are six bays to three browns (one occurring twice). Eclipse bestowed his

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\* Osborne.

own colour on Don Quixote, but it went no farther in Melbourne's pedigree.

Arbitrator and Barcaldine, both bays, are among the best descendants of Melbourne. Horses of the Melbourne blood are famed for size and power—most valuable in these days, when so many horses are bred solely with an eye to speed.

It is to be noticed that there has not, within living memory, been a bay Derby winner with four white legs. The nearest approach is General Peel, who ran second to Blair Athol in 1864, and won the Two Thousand; and the Earl, who was second.

### BLACK THOROUGHBREDS

Black cannot be regarded as a common colour among race-horses. When it does occur, its appearance in a pedigree is noteworthy, first, for the certainty with which it indicates descent from the Byerly Turk, and, secondly, for the manner in which it vanishes for a generation or two and reappears in an individual horse, who may or may not bequeath it to his progeny.

The black Trumpator (1782) furnishes a case in point. This horse derived his colour from the Byerly Turk, whose name occurs so frequently on both sides of his pedigree. There are no black horses among his immediate ancestors, so far as the record shows (the colour of his granddam, daughter of the brown Snap, is not given). His sire was the chestnut Conductor, by the bay Matchem, and his dam the brown Brunette, by the bay Squirrel, out of the bay Dove.

Trumpator got from the bay Young Giantess the

black Sorcerer. Two of Sorcerer's best sons, Soothsayer\* (out of the chestnut Goldenlocks) and Comus (out of the bay Houghton Lass), were chestnuts. Smolensko, another son, was a black, thus repeating the colour in the third generation. Trumpator got the bay Penelope out of the bay Prunella; and Penelope's brown son Whalebone (1807) begat the black Camel. Whalebone also got the black Sir Hercules (1826); but Sir Hercules' descendants in the male line, down to Stockwell and Rataplan, were chestnuts. Sir Hercules also got the black Clarinda (1834) out of Mustard, and Clarinda threw the black Nightingale (1857) to Mountain Deer. Trumpator's name also occurs in Clarinda's pedigree on the dam's side.

We find the colour of the Byerly Turk in his descendant Black Susan (1762), and this is not surprising, as the great sire's name appears on both sides of the pedigree of the brown Snap (1750), the sire of Black Susan. It is very curious to observe how the colour reappears after lying dormant through several generations. A noteworthy case is that of the black Curfew (1887), by Barcaldine-Carillon. There is not a black horse or mare in his pedigree till we reach the generation fifth above himself; then we find the Byerly Turk colour in Curfew's ancestors, Camel and Sir Hercules, on both sides.

Turning back, for a moment, to a comparatively unknown horse, we find Sweeper, by Saltram, advertised in the *Racing Calendar* of 1801 as "a most beautiful black horse, near 15 hands and a half, winner of many races." His pedigree follows. The Darley Arabian, Godolphin Arabian, and Byerly Turk blood is very strong in

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\* Soothsayer was sold to go to Russia before his worth as a stallion had been discovered in this country. His stock proved very successful on the Russian Turf.

Saltram's pedigree. From the last-named Sweeper inherited his colour.

Whenever we find a black horse we are certain to trace its pedigree, on one side or the other—sometimes both—to the Byerly Turk, generally through Trumpator. The pedigrees of Voltaire (1826), Jet (1842), Peggy (1840), Ambrose (1849), Delhi, also described as a chestnut (1838), Echidna, also described as a brown, Ethelbert (1850), and Morglay (1886) may be examined as examples.

The offspring of the black sire or dam would seem to be most usually a chestnut—a point which bears out Captain Hayes' remark\* that "black appears to be a much less persistent hereditary colour than chestnut or bay, because, in the produce of black dams and black sires, red pigment has a strong tendency to manifest itself."

Smolensko, the son of Sorcerer, mentioned above, is the only black horse that has won the Derby (1813). Sir Bevys, who won in 1879, was called a black; but there was always a suspicion of chestnut or brown about him, and he is described as a brown in the *Racing Calendar*; it is, however, only proper to mention that he traced his descent on both sides from Trumpator. Probably the best race-horse whose colour most nearly approached black was the Flying Dutchman, a descendant of Sorcerer. Very few of his stock were darker than brown; his best son, Dollar, was a dark brown. Dollar was sent to France, where he proved a most valuable sire, his stock being proverbial stayers.

These cases of doubtful colour are worth citing as evidence of the partial reproduction of the black coat in some of the Byerly Turk's descendants.

The same influence can be traced in the pedigrees of

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\* *Points of the Horse.*

a few good black horses on the Turf at the present time—Black Arrow (also described as a brown), Slieve Gallion (brown or black), and Prince William, for example.

### PIEBALD AND ROAN THOROUGHBREDS

I have not been able to discover a parti-coloured horse such as piebald among those which have made any mark on the Turf; and this is not remarkable, since horses of such colours are quite the exception among the Eastern breeds. "Roans, piebalds, duns and yellows," says Mr. Blunt, "are not found among the pure-bred Arabians, though the last two are, occasionally, among Barbs."

This rule has its exceptions. Greys with large and conspicuous bay or chestnut markings were among the original importations of Eastern stock; such were the Oxford Bloody-shouldered Arabian, the Bloody Buttocks Arabian and the Grey Bloody Buttocks (mare). The name of D'Arcy's Black-legged Royal Mare suggests that she was peculiarly coloured, as does that of the Lowther White-legged Barb. Other unusual colours were represented among the original imported stock by the Halifax Roan Barb and the Gower Dun Barb. There is, in the Elsenham collection, a portrait of a "Bloody-shouldered Arabian," painted by George Stubbs, R.A. This horse could not have been the "Oxford Bloody-shouldered Arabian" which is starred in Mr. Osborne's list as one of the twenty-four imported in Queen Anne's reign (1702-1714). Stubbs was born in 1724, and the horse whose portrait he executed must have been a later importation.

As regards roan horses, the late Earl of Glasgow, some fifty years ago, possessed some roans, but the colour

seems to have died out completely among Thoroughbreds. The mare Mrs. Ridgeway (1849), who threw to Voltigeur Vedette, sire of Galopin, is described in Osborne's *Handbook* as a roan in some pedigrees and as a bay in others. There is nothing in her ancestry on either side to explain her exceptional colour, if it be correctly recorded as roan.

The blue roan colour is not common among horses of any breed, but horsemen will agree that they have never known a blue roan that was not a good one.

## HACKNEYS

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### ORIGIN OF THE HACKNEY

A few words concerning the history of this breed are necessary before we consider the variations of colour.

The Hackney, like the Thoroughbred, traces its descent from the horses of Eastern blood (Arabs and Barbs), more especially from the Darley Arabian, imported into England in the reign of Queen Anne. It is now more than two hundred years since the Darley Arabian was brought to this country and stood at Buttercramb, near York, where his owner, Mr. Darley, had a small stud of mares. To the Darley Arabian, some years after his arrival, Mr. Childers sent his favourite mare Betty Leedes; and she, in 1715, threw Flying Childers, the speediest horse on the Turf of his day. Flying Childers became the sire of Blaze, also famous for his speed. Blaze (foaled 1733) went to the stud in Norfolk, and Norfolk owes its subsequent fame as the home of the Hackney to the blood of Blaze.

In this regard, it must be remembered that there was then, and had been for long past, peculiarly good native stock in Norfolk, admirably adapted to make the best roadsters when crossed with such a horse as Blaze. As I have shown elsewhere,\* Norfolk Trotters were valued

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\* *The Harness Horse*, 4th Edition. By SIR WALTER GILBEY, Bart. Vinton & Co., London. 1905.

over 400 years ago. Marshall\* says that before Queen Anne's reign (1702-1714) the farmers of the county used an active breed of horses which could not only trot but gallop; and the curious team races this writer describes prove that the Norfolk breed of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was surefooted as well as active.

The Darley Arabian was a bay, but examination of the volumes of the Hackney Stud Book shows that this colour is not the most common among the best bred Hackneys of the present day. There is not much to choose between the chestnuts, bays and browns in point of number.

### GREY HACKNEYS

Grey was never a common colour among Hackneys—greys were always much fewer in number than chestnuts, bays or browns—but they were more numerous a few years ago than they are now, for reasons that will be suggested. In the first sixteen volumes of the Stud Book, the names of 116 greys occur among the 6,942 stallions therein registered—about two in every 300. Yet in the last seven volumes, covering the period 1900-1906, the names of only eight greys occur among the 2,573 stallions registered, or about two in every 650. In other words, there are not nearly half as many greys as there used to be. A noteworthy point in connection with these eight grey stallions is that all the foals got by them have been chestnuts.

The small number of greys is to be accounted for in many ways. In the first place, the demand for Hackneys of this colour is less than that for Hackneys of any other colour, and by consequence breeders do not attempt to

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† *Rural Economy of Norfolk*. By WM. MARSHALL. 1795.







DANEGETT

produce greys. Ability to do so, within certain limits, lies in their power. Two greys mated produce a foal the colour of which, in all probability, will be grey; and it is a well-established fact that to produce a grey foal one parent must be a grey. Thus, by avoiding the use of a grey parent, the chance of a grey foal is avoided. This policy, having been pursued for many years, has, as its natural result, the gradual disappearance of greys from the Stud Book.

### CHESTNUT HACKNEYS

Chestnut is a very common colour among horses of this breed, and is steadily becoming more so. This is easily explained when we glance at the "colour pedigree" of the best modern Hackney stallions. Danegelt (foaled 1879), a most successful sire, was a whole-coloured dark chestnut; his sire Denmark (foaled 1862) and his grandsire Sir Charles (foaled 1843) were both chestnuts. Performer (foaled 1840), the sire of Sir Charles, was a brown; the chestnut may be said to have lain dormant for a few generations, as Performer traces back to Jenkinson's Fireaway, whose sire Driver and grandsire The Original Shales were both chestnuts.

The success of chestnut Hackneys at the most important shows held during recent years is a matter of common knowledge; it has been noteworthy ever since the date of the establishment of the Hackney Horse Society in 1884.

As a natural consequence, the services of these chestnuts have been in great demand by breeders, and the colour has been inherited, with other characteristics, by their progeny. There can be no doubt but that chestnut is an *impressive* colour; in other words, that it has strong

tendency to reproduce itself. A chestnut mare, put to a stallion of the same colour, will almost certainly throw a chestnut foal. To illustrate the truth of this, it may be mentioned that during the fifteen years 1891 to 1906 considerably more than one hundred chestnut foals were bred at the Elsenham stud by mating mares of this colour with Danegelt and his son Royal Danegelt, both of which were chestnuts.

Professor C. J. Davies, writing in the *Live-Stock Journal Almanac*, 1907, says he has never known a yellow dun colt to be born when one parent was bay, brown or chestnut and the other parent dun. He cites one case in which a dun mare with dark points and dorsal stripe threw three chestnut foals in succession to the chestnut Hackney stallion Troubador. This seems to indicate that chestnut is a more prepotent colour than dun.

### BAY AND BROWN HACKNEYS

It is proposed to treat bay and brown as varieties of the same colour. There are numbers of bays which cannot possibly be mistaken for any other colour; but, on the other hand, there are many horses registered in the Stud Books of the various breeds whose colour is so indeterminate that they are described as "bay or brown."

Of the bays little need be said. Bay retains its popularity with horse owners, as we may see any day in the London streets. Probably the great majority of good harness horses—single, pairs and teams—are bays.

Brown horses are described in one of two ways—either as "brown" or "dark brown." Horses of the former line are sometimes called "dark bays"; this is a mistake—the deeper colour is not bay at all, but brown. A "dark brown" resembles the hue of old mahogany.

Examination of the pedigrees of brown stallions now alive shows clearly that they inherit their colour from Performer\* (foaled 1840), whose sire Phenomenon (foaled 1835) was also a brown; or, if the brown horses do not trace their descent to Performer, they trace it to the brown Atlas (foaled 1840). These three horses are known to have been the most successful stock-getters in their time.

Lord Derby II. (foaled 1871) was full of the blood of both the Performer and Atlas strains; he was a beautiful dark brown, and having been the winner of many prizes in the show ring, his services were much in request. He bestowed his colour freely on his stock.

The Hackney Stud Book contains the names of many famous bay sires—Wildfire (foaled 1827) and Norfolk Cob (foaled 1819) among the number. These two horses trace their descent, through the brown race-horse Flying Childers, to the bay "foundation sire" the Darley Arabian (foaled 1702).

During the last twenty-five years Lord Derby II. mares have been eagerly sought for the purpose of mating with stallions of the Danegelt strain. Unfortunately the mares got by Lord Derby II. were comparatively few in number, and as the number decreased exceptionally high prices were paid for such mares, both privately and at public auctions. In many cases a thousand guineas has been paid for a Lord Derby II. mare.

Brown Hackneys have enjoyed peculiar favour in France for a long period. Norfolk Hackneys were

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\* Performer greatly influenced the Hackney horse stock of his day. Trotting matches under saddle were then much in vogue, and Performer was allowed to be one of the finest trotters in England; he covered three miles in nine minutes. Such an achievement would naturally give a stallion the prestige that now attaches to success in the showyard.

imported into that country about the year 1800; there is in existence a picture of such a stallion, a brown, foaled 1819, which was named by his French purchaser Jagger.

Soon after 1830, Mr. H. R. Phillips\* began to supply the French Government with Norfolk Hackneys, and continued to do so for many years. The preference of our neighbours, when the business developed, was for brown stallions of the Performer and Phenomenon strain; both of these horses, as already mentioned, were brown.

It was through the sires thus purchased by Mr. Phillips that the Hackney blood was diffused over the horse-breeding districts of France, Germany, Italy and Russia. Everywhere their value has long been well established; and in some regions these horses have made very marked impression upon the local stock. Oldenburg, in Germany, since Oliver Cromwell's time, and, no doubt, from a much earlier date, had been famed for the horses bred there. The Oldenburg breeders, by judicious selection of brown mares to mate with the imported Norfolk Hackney sires, have established a remarkably fine breed of dark brown harness horses, ranging in height from 15.2 to 16.3.

The best-looking horses of the Oldenburg breed have for many years past found ready sale in London for carriage work. I have known single horses of this strain to be sold for 200 guineas, and pairs at from 300 to 600 guineas.

Since the termination of the Franco-Prussian War, in 1871, France has been our best customer for horses—more particularly for light horses. Animals of the heavy

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\* Mr. Phillips was an eminent London horse-dealer who, for fifty years, had almost a monopoly of the work of supplying the Governments of European countries with breeding-stock.

breeds, of the Shire, Clydesdale and Suffolk types, are not in demand. When the war came to an end one of the first matters to which the French Government devoted attention was the improvement of the public breeding studs; and, in pursuance of the wise policy of supplying the military needs of the Republic, great endeavours were made to secure a sufficient number of stallions capable of begetting stock suitable for military purposes.

The French demand for Hackney stallions had been steady for very many years prior to the war; but the decision to gradually increase the breeding-stock soon made its effect felt in this country. As I have shown elsewhere,\* there has been an increasing demand for Hackney blood for the public studs. In 1874 the total number of stallions standing at the national studs was 1,087; in 1905 the number had been increased to 3,267, or within 173 of the full strength sanctioned by the law.

Professor Davies, in the article previously referred to, mentions a case in which a dun mare threw bay foals to bay or brown stallions, suggesting the greater prepotence of bay and brown over dun.

## ROAN HACKNEYS

Blue roans and red roans are more commonly seen among Hackneys than any other breed of horses; though, as in the case of the greys, the pages of the more recent volumes of the Stud Book contain the names of fewer roans than did the earlier volumes.

Perhaps the most celebrated Hackney sire ever known was the roan Norfolk Phenomenon (foaled 1835), regarded

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\* "*Horse-Breeding in England and India and Army Horses Abroad.*"  
By SIR WALTER GILBEY, Bart. Vinton & Co., London.

by Mr. H. R. Phillips as "the best stallion in England" when three years old. About 1838 Mr. Phillips bought Phenomenon to go to Yorkshire, where he did invaluable service in improving the local stock. Later, he was sent to Scotland, and died in Edinburgh when thirty years old. Phenomenon was not less remarkable for his symmetry than for his action, which Mr. Phillips described to me as "wonderfully all-round true." When over twenty years old this horse made the astonishing trotting record of two miles in six minutes.

Another famous horse, in his day, was Baxter's red roan Performer (foaled 1850). "The Druid" mentions\* this Performer as one of the "four or five very good Hackney sires" to be found in Norfolk at the time he wrote—about 1856.

It is difficult to suggest any satisfactory reason for the decrease in the number of roan Hackneys. The colour, whether of the red or blue variety, is not unpopular, and either can be produced with some degree of certainty; a roan mare which has been mated with a roan stallion throws a roan foal in the majority of cases.

The colour of the foal depending so largely on the prepotency of one parent or the other, it is never possible, without previous knowledge of the prepotency of both parents, to predict with any approach to certainty what colour will be bestowed on the foal of a mixed mating—mixed as regards colour; but a roan mare, mated with a stallion of other colour, may throw a roan foal, but with much less certainty than she would do to a roan sire.

The roan foal is so frequent a result of roan and roan mating that, in course of years, a strain of roans could, without doubt, be established. The process would entail

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\* *Post and Paddock*. By "THE DRUID" (H. H. DIXON). Vinton & Co., London.



a good deal of close inbreeding; but inbreeding, even incestuous breeding, is not unnatural in the horse, and there is evidence in the *General Stud Book* to prove that incestuous breeding may be highly successful.

It may be added that roans are not necessarily the produce of roan parents or of one roan parent. To illustrate the possibility of producing the colour from a mixed mating, we may take the case of blue grey, sometimes called "blue roan" cattle. There is a great demand for beasts of this colour, but the colour is not peculiar to any breed or family; it is obtained by mating a black Polled Angus cow with a white Shorthorn bull. It is at least probable that the same result would follow the mating of a grey stallion and a black mare.

# SHIRE HORSES

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## HISTORY OF THE BREED

The "Great Horse" or "War Horse" from which our modern Shires trace their descent is a very ancient breed. These heavy and powerful animals were produced in England by crossing stallions brought from the Continent with home-bred mares. Such importations took place in the year 1160, and probably at an even earlier date.

These "Great Horses" were required to carry men in heavy armour, and as the light chain mail of the Norman period was gradually discarded in favour of plate armour, which was far heavier, so did the demand increase for the only horses capable of carrying the enormous weight. Hence for centuries the Great Horse was by far the most valuable animal, and its breeding was the constant care of our Sovereigns.

The efficiency of mounted men depended, in those days, upon the strength of the horses, which might be required to carry as much as 4 cwt. (32 stone); and, throughout the long period during which plate armour was worn, neither pains nor money were spared to maintain and keep in the country the "Great Horses" which were indispensable for the men who wore it.

The importance of the Great Horse as a factor in the scheme of national defence began to decline about the

end of the sixteenth century, when hand fire-arms began to come into use. As the new weapon became more generally employed, the plate armour, which furnished no sufficient defence against the bullet, was discarded; and with its disappearance the necessity for using such powerful chargers disappeared also. Horses of lighter and more active stamp replaced them for military purposes, and the Great Horse found a new sphere of utility as a draught horse, not only for cart but carriage work, the wretched tracks which served as roads demanding the use of heavy horses for the passenger vehicles of those times.

As the roads of the country were improved and passenger carriages became lighter, the Great or Shire Horse was displaced again by animals of a lighter stamp, and, since the later years of the eighteenth century, has been appropriated to heavy draught work in country and in town.

I have sketched the history of the Great Horse elsewhere\*; and the foregoing brief summary perhaps suffices for the present purpose.

## GREY SHIRE HORSES

It is worth noticing that two of the earliest pictures of Shire Horses represent greys. These are a painting by Albert Durer, executed in 1505, which shows an animal of excellent conformation, tended by a man-at-arms, suggestive of the use made of the breed at that period, and a picture by Paul Potter, dated 1652. It need hardly be said that the Great Horses of those times varied in colour as they do now.

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\* *The Great Horse or Shire Horse.* 2nd Edition. By SIR WALTER GILBEY, Bart. Vinton & Co., London. 1889.

Examination of the Shire Horse Stud Books show us that grey is gradually disappearing in this breed as in others. The first four volumes of the Stud Book, covering the period 1800 to 1882, contain the names of 2,962 stallions, of which no fewer than 298, or more than ten in every hundred, were greys. The volume (No. 27) last published gives the names of 934 stallions, and of these only 19, or about two in every hundred, are greys. Hence we must conclude that grey is dying out more rapidly among Shires than among Hackneys.

It is not difficult to account for this. The very interesting list of "winning strains" given in Volume 27 of the Stud Book contains the names of 111 winners of prizes at the Society's Shows from 1884 to 1906 inclusive, with those of their sires and grandsires.

Sixteen grandsires are named, and one only—Lincolnshire Lad II. (1365)—is a grey. This horse was one of the most celebrated sires in the Stud Book; no fewer than seven of his sons occur in the prize lists, and these seven have sired among them, so far, twelve prize-winners. It is a curious fact that of these seven sons only one—Paxton (4604)—was a grey, and he unfortunately, begat no prize-winners. Paxton's dam was the chestnut mare Pink. The other six are the brown Carbon (3523), the bay Ercall Wynn (14620), the brown Harold (3703), the roan Lincolnshire Boy (3188) and the bays Potentate (12086) and Pride of Hatfield (13103). Harold has been by far the most successful of Lincolnshire Lad II.'s sons as a getter of prize-winners, no fewer than seven of the twelve grandsons being by this horse, and among these twelve there is not a single grey.

In regard to colour, therefore, Lincolnshire Lad II., grand horse as he is acknowledged to have been, was not prepotent. In the single case of Paxton, thrown by the



LINCOLNSHIRE LAD II.



chestnut Pink, he bestowed his colour; and Paxton, as already said, got no prize-winners.

Lincolnshire Lad II. did not come of grey stock, so far as his ancestry can be traced. His sire, Lincolnshire Lad (1196), was a brown bay, and Lincolnshire Lad's sire was Lincoln (1345), a bay horse. We discover the source of Lincolnshire Lad II.'s colour on his dam's side; his dam, Madam, an unregistered mare, was by the grey Matchless (1506).

The absence of grey stallions among the prize-winners at the Society's shows sufficiently accounts for the rapidly increasing rarity of pedigree shires of this colour. There is not one grey horse among the one hundred and eleven prize-winners in the list.

### CHESTNUT SHIRE HORSES

Chestnut is not a very common colour among Shires—a somewhat curious thing when we remember how closely this hue is allied to the black which was once a distinguishing characteristic of a famous breed. Reference will be made to black horses in another chapter. Glancing over our list of sixteen "foundation grandsires," we do not find a chestnut among them. Among their sons there is only one—namely, Hitchin Duke (9586), by the bay Bar None (2388). The dam of Hitchin Duke was the chestnut mare Brock (2183). The only one of Hitchin Duke's sons to gain a place in the prize lists was Wyn Hitchin Duke (14782), a bay horse.

Looking further back in the Stud Book, we find a chestnut, Honest Tom (1062), among the ancestors of Blythwood Conqueror (14997); but I observe that the revised edition of the volume which contains this horse's name gives it as "Honest Tom" without the number,

there being a doubt whether Derbyshire (577) was got by the Honest Tom registered as No. 1062.

## BAY AND BROWN SHIRE HORSES

Bay and brown may be treated as varieties of the same colour; the latter is often so dark as to render it doubtful whether the horse should be described as brown or black, while, on the other hand, it is sometimes so bright that it is impossible to determine whether the colour should be registered as brown or bay.

Bay and brown stallions are, as among other breeds, in the majority. Of the sixteen "foundation grandsires," nine are bays—namely, Potentate (12086), Hitchin Conqueror (4458), Premier (2646), Ringleader II. (8099), Bar None (2388), Prince William (3956), Duke of Worsley (13002), Honest Tom (5123) and Lincoln (1350)—and two are browns—namely, Harold (3703) and William the Conqueror (2343).

The two brown sires, it is worth noticing, have been, next to the grey Lincolnshire Lad II., the most successful "foundation grandsires" as getters of prize-winners, who, in their turn, have begotten prize-winners. The brown Harold (3703), got by Lincolnshire Lad II. out of the black Flower, has, among his sons, twelve prize-winners, of which only two are browns—namely, Calwich Blend (17226) and Conquering Harold (15558). The remaining ten comprise eight bays, one blue roan, and one black. Reappearance of the brown coat in this family is uncertain. Neither Calwich Blend (17226) nor Conquering Harold (15558) is credited with a prize-winning son; but Harold's (3703) brown coat occurs in the descendants of some of his other sons. Thus his bay son Regent II. (6316) begot Knottingly Regent (18130), and his bay son



Rokeby Friar (14827) begot Childwick Majestic (17254) and Sergeant VI. (16389), all three of them browns; while his black son Prince Harold (14228), out of the bay mare Hale Lofty, begot the black Hendre Baronet (16714), who begot the brown Hendre Spark (18795).

The other brown "foundation grandsire," William the Conqueror (2343), had three bay prize-winning sons among his progeny, of whom Hitchin Conqueror (4458) has been the most successful getter of prize-winners. Hitchin Conqueror (4458) has seven prize-winning sons at his credit, and only one brown, Cœur de Lion IV. (11233), among them, the other six being bays. Cœur de Lion IV. (11233) begat a brown prize-winning son in Nailstone Cœur de Lion (16269), and Hitchin Conqueror's colour appears also in his grandson Eckington Conqueror (19579), by the bay Blaisdon Conqueror, and in his grandson Rampton Conqueror (19044), by the bay Blythwood Conqueror (14997).

Browns have won their share of the Challenge Cups. Staunton Hero (2918) won the Elsenham Cup in 1886, Harold (3703) in 1887, Rokeby Harold (15313) in 1893, 1895 and 1896, and Girton Charmer (20515) in 1905.

There would seem to be as little certainty in the production, by a bay sire, of a bay as opposed to brown son as there is in the production by a brown sire of a brown as opposed to a bay son. Thus the bay Potentate (12086) sired the brown Moor's Zealot (15731), who sired the bay Dunsmore Jameson (17972). The bay Premier (2646) sired the three bays, Calwich Heirloom (14547), Pride of Blagdon (6272) and Salisbury (5324). Only one of these three sired a prize-winner—namely, Salisbury, who got Statesman V. (13615), a brown. The bay Prince William (3956) sired the brown Royal William II. (12207), and the two prize-winning sons of the latter, Mintwell

(18930) and The Forest Chief (17021), are bays. The bay Lincoln (1350) got the bay Monk (2629) and the brown Prince Victor (5287). Monk got the bay Monaco (11879), and Prince Victor got the black Bury Victor Chief (11105), out of the brown Daisy.

It would seem that the general tendency of both bay and brown sires is towards bay progeny. The colours of the sires got by Harold, William the Conqueror and Hitchin Conqueror are fair examples of this.

### BLACK SHIRE HORSES

Blacks are more common among Shires than any other breed, and the colour is of frequent occurrence in the progeny of sires and dams both of other hues.

This is easily explained. Our Shire Horses are descended largely from the "Large Old English Black Horse" which Arthur Young, over a century ago, described as one of the only two breeds of English cart horse worth mention.

The "Black" was a recognised breed in Oliver Cromwell's time, and commanded a high price, as I have shown elsewhere.\* This animal was "the produce principally of the Shire counties in the heart of England." In the Eastern counties it was known as the Black Lincolnshire Horse; and Mr. Reynolds, Veterinary Inspector to the Liverpool Corporation, points out that black and grey were held to indicate purity of breeding.

The grey coat, as already shown, is much less common than it was twenty or thirty years ago; but the black has greater vitality, and, as we shall see, reappears frequently in the progeny of bay and brown sires. The characteristics

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\* *The Great Horse or War Horse.* 2nd Edition. By SIR WALTER GILBEY, Bart. Vinton & Co., London. 1899.

of an old breed are the certainty with which they reproduce themselves. We know, for example, how marked is the Arab character in the foal one of whose parents is an Arab; and the appearance of a black coat may certainly be regarded as a "throw back" to some ancestor, more or less remote.

No fewer than four of the "foundation grandsires" are blacks; and of the 16 winners of the 23 Champion Cups three have been blacks—namely, Vulcan, 1889 and 1891; Bury Victor Chief, 1892 and 1894; and Present King II., in 1906.

Among the prize-winning sons of the grey Lincolnshire Lad II. (1365), were the brown Harold (3703) and the roan Lincolnshire Boy (3188). Harold begot a black son, Prince Harold (14228), out of the bay Hale Lofty as before mentioned.

The bay Prince William (3956), son of the brown William the Conqueror, had two prize-winning sons—one the black Lockinge Albert (15695), out of the brown Forest Queen. The brown Prince Victor (5287), son of the bay Lincoln (1350), got the black Bury Victor Chief (11105) out of the brown Daisy.

On the other hand, the black sire fails to bequeath his colour more often than not. Prince Harold (14228), above referred to, has seven prize-winning sons to his credit, and of these only two—Hendre Baronet (16714), out of the black Hendre Baroness and Xerxes II. (15943)—were blacks. The black Vulcan (4145) got three prize-winning sires, only one of which was black—namely, Scylax (8177), out of the bay Gyp—the other two being bay and brown respectively. Scylax got one prize-winning son, and he was a bay. Bury Victor Chief also got three prize-winning sons, and only one of these.—Rocks Commander (16924), out of the bay

Jeanette—was a black; the other two being, again, bay and brown.

The black Hindlip Champion (9584) had two prize-winning sons—the black Jeroboam (15172), out of the bay Wildflower, and the bay Stonewall (15375), out of the bay Wallflower, either of whom got a brown son.

Examination of almost any Shire pedigree shows the existence of one black ancestor or more. To take an example at random, the descent of the bay Blythwood Conqueror (14997) is recorded for ten generations. The colour of his great-great-grandsire Ben (120) is not known; but Ben's great-grandsire was Blacklegs, a black, and Blacklegs' great-grandsire was John Bull, otherwise known as Fisher's Black Horse. Among the nine ancestors whose colour is recorded, Blythwood Conqueror has two blacks, the most distant ancestor to whom he can be traced being one of them.

## ROAN AND PARTI-COLOURED SHIRES

Roan, more especially blue roan, is not at all an uncommon colour in this breed. Referring again to the list of prize-winners in Vol. 27 of the Stud Book, we find that one son of Lincolnshire Lad II. (1365) was a roan—namely, Lincolnshire Boy (3188). This horse has one prize-winning son in Coton Conqueror (12948), a black, out of the chestnut mare Bounce. Harold (3703) has, among his prize-winning progeny, one blue roan, Horbling Harold (15647), out of the blue roan mare Bluebell (4627).

Piebalds are seldom seen among pedigree stock, but the parti-coloured Shire is by no means uncommon in the Fen country. Some fifty years ago Mr. Colvin, of Pishobury, Sawbridgeworth, in Hertfordshire, possessed a

breed of piebalds. Mr. Charles Maisters, of Saddlebow, King's Lynn, Norfolk, had a famous stallion named England's Wonder, foaled in 1871. England's Wonder was a roan horse, but among the many good horses sired by him were several of odd colours.

Teams made up of piebalds were not unusual in the stables of great brewing firms a century ago. Such were Pirate and Outlaw, whose portraits were painted in 1810 by J. C. Zeitter.\*

Dun is a very uncommon colour among Shire Horses.

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\* This picture is reproduced in *The Great Horse or War Horse* (2nd edition).



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