

FOUNDED 1866

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a certain vogue; in the United States, greater per-
haps twenty years ago than during the last de-
cade, when the Percheron, by dint of continued,
extensive, and well-planned advertising, bid fair
to overwhelm all other draft breeds, and managed
to eclipse for a time the British draft breeds. The
revival is at hand, judging by reports of recent
auctions in the United States. Farmers are be-
ginning to find out that the cleverly-engineered cry
for extreme quality of bone and slope of pastern
was one to turn a deaf ear to, and find that
weight, bone and substance cannot be sacrificed
with impunity if one is attempting to build draft-
ers. In Canada the breed has made comparative-
ly slow progress. Vol. I. of the Canadian Shire
Studbook, issued 1901, contains the pedigrees of
320 stallions and 155 mares; while Vol. II., only
now in the printer's hands, will contain pedigrees
of 374 mares and 369 stallions. Several reasons
may be given as explanatory of the comparative
paucity of numbers, such as (a) the preponderance
of Scotch settlers of the agricultural class, who
naturally preferred the breed they were acquainted
with; (b) the high prices in England were pro-
hibitive to would-be Canadian importers; (c) the
financial depression, extending in influence to agri-
cultural enterprises, in the nineties; (d) the craze
which swept over Eastern Canada for an infusion
of trotting blood, the worst cross ever known on
the ordinary farm mares, at about the same time,
1888 to 1895. Following on this arose a demand
for quality of bone, large feet, and extreme slope
of pastern, all of which had been lacking in many
of the Shires of the eighties; also, the few Cana-
dian breeders of the English draft horses did not
advertise their favorites by means of the shows
and the use of printer's ink, as did the Clydesdale
men.

Despite all these handicaps, the demand for
Shires is steadily increasing, due partly to the
coming of so many American and Old Country set-
tlers to the West, the use of larger and heavier
farm implements, and the disgust of many sections
where pony-built, so-called draft stallions, or
weak-joined, shallow-flanked, effeminate males had
stood for service. These sections of our farming
districts wanted more weight and size, deeper-mid-
dled horses, and, therefore, easier keepers, better
wearers, with sufficient bone to carry a draft
horse, and consequently turned to the Shire for
these desiderata. It speaks volumes for the
breed that in districts where a good Shire stallion
has done stud duties, no other draft breed need
come. A recent sale at St. Thomas, Ont., of
mares and fillies of the breed in Ontario, averaged
\$303.85—not at all bad for an offering of thirty
two- and three-year-olds.

The modern type of Shire has weight, size,
and sufficient bone to correspond, is an easy
keeper and long wearer; is strongly prepotent,
the entire being virile, and can suit all tastes in
equine colors, either in blacks, browns, grays or
bays. In addition, it should be emphasized that,
as a breed, the Shire is probably the most free
from hereditary unsoundness of any of the draft
breeds—all considerations that will not be over-
looked by the horseman, and which must not be
forgotten by the would-be breeders of draft
horses for the markets.

"Whip's" Experience as a Colt Trainer.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

I am in receipt of yours of January 25th, in
which you state that you have received from a
disappointed competitor in the recent colt-training
essay competition a letter in which he finds fault
with the awards, and asks, "How a man like
'Whip,' with scarcely any experience, was capable
of judging the essays?" You ask me to state
what experience I have had in training colts, how
many I have trained, etc.

Now, sir, your correspondent evidently knows
nothing about "Whip" or his experience, else he
would not claim that his inability to correctly
judge the essays was due to inexperience.

As to how many colts I have handled, it is not
possible for me to state with any degree of ac-
curacy, but, to be well within the mark, I will say
at least 100.

It is not always pleasant for a man to be
forced to think of things that forcibly impress him
with the fact that he is no longer a young man.
This subject forces me to admit that my experi-
ence in handling colts covers a period of more than
40 years. This again forces me to admit that I
have passed the half-century mark, and that I com-
menced to handle colts at a very early age. My
earliest recollection of the matter is when my
brother and myself were teaching one of my fath-
er's colts (still nursing) that we called "Wrinkle-
tail" to lead. We succeeded in getting her handy
on the halter and to stand tied before she was
weaned. During the following winter we took
her out into the snow in a field, and gave her her
first lessons as a saddler. We both were thrown,
but the snow was soft, and we enjoyed the fun,
and, from my recollection of the occurrence, so did
the filly. After this we got some old harness, and
trained her to draw our hand-sleigh up and down
the lane. At first, one led the filly, and the

other rode on the sleigh, but we soon got a pair
of plow lines, and taught her to drive. I may
say that father encouraged us in this practice, and
we used to follow the same practice with other
colts, but father would not allow us to use the
colts more than he thought they could stand with-
out injury. As we grew older and stronger,
father purchased more land, until he had 370 acres.
He used to breed a few mares, and frequently buy
colts of one, two or three years old. The foals
that were born on the farm always got the early
training mentioned, except that part relating to

a business of buying green three, four and five-
year-old horses or colts, handling them and fitting
them for market. These, of course, were of the
lighter classes, carriage, road, saddle and combina-
tion horses; and, of course, in order to sell well,
they required good manners. In addition to those
I handled in this way, I handled many for the
residents of the city, and for neighboring farmers
who wanted their colts educated to single harness
or saddle, or both, and did not care to train them
themselves. In some cases I adopted the "break-
ing method," when I was anxious to get them go-

ing in harness as
soon as possible,
but in most cases
I practiced the
"educating meth-
od," which, of
course, was not so
speedy, but I
found, in most
cases, more satis-
factory. Since ap-
pointment to my
present profession-
al position, in
January, 1893, I
have not had so
much time for
training colts, and
have ceased han-
dling for other
people. During
the first few years
at the College
where I lecture, it
was my duty to
spend the first
three weeks in
January in visit-
ing and speaking
at Farmers' Insti-
tute meetings. One
of my subjects, and
one that was very
often selected, was,
"The Education
of the Horse." In
addition to speak-
ing on this sub-
ject, I occasionally
wrote on it, and I
think, sir, that an
article on it by
me appeared



Sussex Blue Gown.
Shire mare. First at Royal Show, 1906.

the hand-sleigh. We got too big for that. The
most of the training took place during the winter,
when we had more time. Father made us an af-
fair that he called a "jumper." It was a sort of
a cutter made out of ironwood saplings, strong,
with long shafts, and reasonably comfortable to
ride in. After we got a colt sufficiently handy to
hitch we would hitch him to this, and drive to
the different barns to attend the stock, etc. We
always taught the colts to go in harness during
their second winter; then, during their third win-

in your journal some years ago.

I may say that when I read Clark Hamilton's
first-prize essay, a few weeks ago, he followed so
closely my ideas that I was impressed with the
idea that he had either heard me speak on the
subject or had read my article. During all these
years I have had more or less experience in han-
dling colts. Some I have bred. Even though I
have no farm, I continue to breed. I have now
one in his third year, one in her second year, and
two in their first year. Probably it does not pay

me to breed, but I
get a lot of pleasure
out of them, espe-
cially when they are
quite young. I am
not now as fond of
handling a green
colt of three or four
years as I used to
be. It is all right
until I come to that
stage where I want
to teach them to
drive before hitch-
ing. I do not en-
joy following a colt
around on foot as
much as I did a few
years ago. My ex-
perience during the
last twelve months
has been as fol-
lows: Last spring
I taught my colt
(then two years
old) to drive, and
in the fall, after
fetching him off pas-
ture, I hitched him
a few times for
short drives, and he
has now good man-
ners. I have taught
the filly, that will
be two years old



A Typical Shire Cart Horse.

ter, the education would be continued, and by the
time we wanted them for work we seldom had dif-
ficulty in driving them in double harness. This
sort of thing continued until I was well into the
twenties. No doubt this letter will be read by
some who can verify the statements, as there are
many of our old neighbors still in the section of
Ontario where I was raised. About this time I
left home and attended college, and after a time
graduated as a veterinarian. I started practice
in May, 1882, and, in addition to practice, made

in May next, to the use of harness, and she
drives well on the street. She met with an acci-
dent in the stable a short time ago, and but for
that it is probable I would have had her going to
a light cutter by this time; but, at all events, I
expect to hitch her before she goes to pasture next
May. On the first of April last I purchased a
four-year-old imported Hackney mare. She was in
foal, and, while trained to halter, had never had
harness on. She foaled on May 7th, but in the
meantime I had given her what I considered the