

The Clydesdale at Home.

"There is nothing in the show-yard that can match you, bonny Clyde,
For you take me back in fancy to the Scottish Borderside."

—The Clydesdales.

Scotland, in the general sense of the word, is the home of this great breed of draft horses; and in few parts of that country are they bred to a higher standard, fed to more perfection, or used to greater advantage, than in the rich agricultural valley of Tweedside. Viewed as a home for man or beast, what a magnificent district it is! Northward, the broad, green tops of the Lammermoors, eastward the wooded height of Flodden Hill, southward the blue line of Cheviot from Yeavinger Bell to the Carter, westward the three peaks of Eildon and the far domes of Ruberslaw and the Dunion; and between, like the check on some goblin-woven plaid, lie the squares of green and brown and golden fields that make the pride of agricultural Scotland in a valley the fairest in the world.

Through this garden of Eden runs the broad Tweed, bearing on its silvery breast a precious burden of the lore and legend of romance. Through wide, green meadows, where the giant Clydesdale mares move slowly with their foals at foot, the little burns go singing down to the Tweed, singing songs of seed time and harvest, songs of rural simplicity and pastoral content. At distances of a mile or so apart, the grey-roofed farmhouses, with their attendant groups of cottages and barns and byres, nestle among little sheltering plantations of larch or elm or fir; near them are grouped, like sentinel troops, the golden oat and barley stacks. Not least among these cosy farm buildings stands the warm, straw-bedded stable, where the big Clydesdales in their hours of leisure tug at their well-filled hay-racks, making merry music with the rope blocks on the mangers, or lie dozing in the soft, yellow oat straw to the gentle patter of the brown rats in the bedding.

Betwixt farm and farm run the clean, white roads, with a strip of green grass at either side, and beyond the grass the hawthorn hedges, tender green in early spring, foam-white with blossom in May, rich with berries in autumn, silver with hoar-frost in the Christmas weather. On these roads in summer you will pass the Clydesdales stepping soberly between the shafts of the farm carts, going to and from the town with their varied loads. In winter, on the same road, now deep with snow that drifts above the hedge-tops, you will pass the Clydes again, hauling the heavy snow-plow, four abreast, snorting in the cold, frosty air, and making the tug-chains ring again as they bend their proud necks to the collars. In the harvest time you will meet them yoked to the high loads of oats or barley, stepping carefully and proudly to the stack-yard, as though afraid to shake a sheaf from its place.

Close to each farm steading lies the willow-shaded pond, where the farm boys slide in frosty weather, or in summer throw stones at the long-suffering ducks in the glad hours after school. The Clydesdales know that mill-pond well, for there in the dusty summer noons they are ridden knee-deep into the cool, green water-weed, and allowed to drink their fill, and there in the summer evenings they quench the thirst of the long, hot afternoons, while the big collars slide forward on their necks, and they shake themselves till the looped chains jingle.

Where in the wide world is the air so fresh or the pasture grass so green, as down those sloping braes above the burns and in the shelter of the high thorn hedges? Here in the heart of the summer, for two irresponsible months the big Clydesdales go free of the chains and graze along the shady headlands, or stand in the warm noons under the shadow of the spreading ash trees, nibbling at the drooping branches or rubbing one another's shoulders, or flicking the flies from a comrade's face with busy tail, while accepting the same good office from him. Later on, when the grain is cut and gathered, and the stubble fields lie naked to the autumn winds, you will see the white-faced, feather-fetlocked beauties stepping slowly two by two from hedge to hedge, while in their wake the brown ribbons grow broader and the golden strips grow less. In a snow-white cloud the sea gulls follow, fighting among themselves over the spoil of the rich earth's larder. The plowman plods on, swinging between the handles of his plow with one foot on the stubble and one foot in the furrow. Every now and then he gives an order to his horses in the "soft low-land tongue of the Border": uncouth words are his, and unintelligible to the stranger, but plain and familiar to the Tweedside natives, and soothing as a caress to the steady, big team that swings a hand's-breadth to the right or left at every whispered word. Later in the season still there is heavy pulling for the Clydesdales on the turnip brake, with the purple or yellow roots piled

high upon the carts, with the steep braeside to climb, and every gateway fetlock-deep in mud and slush.

Sometimes the rather monotonous routine of the winter's work is broken by the fox-hunters crossing the farm. In the far distance is heard the sound of the horn and the eager music of the hounds hot upon the trail. A horseman appears on the skyline, then another, a score, half a hundred. Down in the hollow the clamour of the hounds grows louder, and up on the brae-top they come, heads down and tails in air, spreading, driving, racing, with the scent breast-high. Behind them flashes a scarlet coat, another and another, while down in the hollow sounds the crash of rotten rails and the splash of hoofs in the burn. The plowmen stand up at their horses' heads, and the big bay fellows cock their ears and fidget and fret, or stand tense with wonder and awe as the earth trembles beneath them to the beat of galloping hoofs. These are exciting moments, and it takes but little to set the lusty, full-fed Clydesdales off into a mad stampede, dragging heavy plows or lumbering carts behind them. But the men know the temper of their charges, and with tender words

pair of horses, and this is an honor much sought after.

When a plowman leaves one farm for another, it is the Clydesdales which draw the cart containing his household goods, walking with an air of additional importance under their unaccustomed load of tables, chairs, bedding, and, it may be, a baby as well.

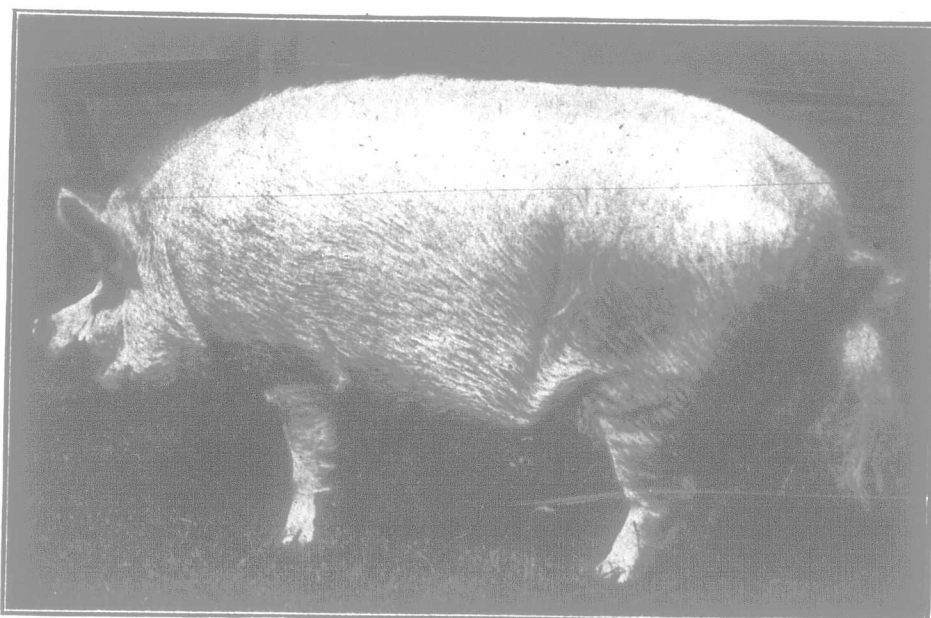
There is nothing the old, well-broken Clydesdale likes better than a visit to the blacksmith's shop, which is found on every farm of importance, and to which the village blacksmith comes once or twice in every week to shoe horses and set shares, and to do the hundred-odd jobs on the farm. It is good to watch patient old Clyde standing there in the shop, undisturbed by the creaking of the bellows, the roaring of the red cinders, or the ceaseless clang of the hammer and anvil. Through a shower of falling sparks you may see his honest eyes questioning mildly as he turns his head to find out the delay when for a moment the big sledge ceases to fall. At the word of command he lifts each huge foot, taking care to keep his weight off the man who is paring his feet or fitting his shoes. And when the work is done, and the last nail driven and the last hoof cleanly rasped, how proudly he steps through the doorway, lifting his feet daintily, like a child with its new red shoes!

The Clydesdale horse is as much a part of this landscape as the blue hills, the green woods, the grassy braesides and the singing, tumbling burns. It will be a sad day if ever motor plows or motor reapers and motor cars shall drive the draft horse from the Border, and no longer on the headlands are seen the white-blazed faces and the active, feathered feet. I have seen the Clydesdale under many conditions and in many

lands. I have seen him starting the five-ton trucks on the wharf at Cape Town, where the mule teams seemed to make him a giant in contrast; I have seen him girth-deep in the swamps of Australian river-roads, pulling on the wagon chains as though his heart would burst; I have seen him amid the cheers of a dense crowd stepping gaily in the amphitheatre at the Chicago shows; but here only in this beautiful, silent valley did he seem to be thoroughly and emphatically at home.—[From "My Life in the Open," by Will H. Ogilvie.]

Horse Exhibits Deserve Attention

Of the almost innumerable attractions which are features of the larger exhibitions, perhaps there is no exhibit which appeals to more people than the horse department. Aeroplanes may be circling through the air over the grounds, motor cycles and automobiles may be whirling at break-neck speed around the track, the manufacture of almost every article of commerce may be going on in the manufacturers' building, the most beautiful of the productions of the world's greatest artists may be hanging gracefully from the walls of the art building; the world's greatest bands and musicians may be discoursing the sweetest of music; the most daring of trapeze artists may be



An English Prizewinning Yorkshire Boar.

soothe them, till the big fellows bend their heads and rest them against their masters' shoulders, knowing that, in spite of all the noise and tumult, there is nothing to fear if those masters are there beside them.

The drivers, as a rule, are very fond of their big babies, and well they may be, for all the working day is spent in their company; the horses reciprocate this affection, and look with some suspicion on a stranger in their stall. If one of a pair of horses is sick, the man who drives him will sit up all night to tend him, even though at dawn he must go to work as usual, but without his favorite. These men will sit for hours upon the cornbin in the stable, talking of the merits of their own horses, discussing those of their neighbors, or recalling good old steeds that have worked upon this very farm in days of yore. When a complimentary day's farming is given to a neighboring farmer, and the farms from far and near send one or two of their best teams, there is opportunity for decoration and display. The men whose horses are chosen as representatives are given half a day in which to prepare their charges for the event, which resolves itself practically into an unauthorized Clydesdale show. The horses are beribboned and braided and groomed till they shine again, for there is usually a prize given on these occasions for the best-groomed and decorated



Judging Oxford Down Rams at an English Show.