

Canada's National Draft Horse



THE claim that the Clydesdale is Canada's national draft horse can be amply justified. For over half a century the Clydesdale has been Canada's premier draft horse. The early introduction of the breed by people from Scotland who settled in Ontario and Quebec away back in the 30's and 40's of the past century has made the Clydesdale the dominant type among the draft horses of older Canada. The foundation stock on the farms of Ontario and the Eastern Townships to-day is largely of Clydesdale type. Clydesdale blood has been so strongly infused into horse breeding operations, especially during the last half century, that the average farm horse shows more of the Clydesdale type than of any other breed.

In the early settlement of the Western Provinces there was large emigration from Ontario. These Ontario settlers took with them to the West horses from the old home or from the old neighborhood in the East, and one may fairly claim that in a very large measure the foundation stock in the West is also largely of the Clydesdale type. It is, therefore, no mere play upon words to state that the Clydesdale is Canada's national draft horse. It is true because the pure bred Clydesdale is more numerous than any other breed. It is also true, because Clydesdale blood, more than any other, predominates in the horses kept on the farms of Canada.

And this fact should be put to practical use by every farmer. With so much of Clydesdale blood already in the horse stock of the country, it is poor business to use any but Clydesdale sires. The farmer who desires to breed that show the Clydesdale type should not cross them with other breeds. The only way to build up and improve what he has is to use only Clydesdale sires.

CAREFUL BREEDING BEHIND IT

The Clydesdale is worthy of being Canada's national draft horse because of its breeding. No other breed of draft horses has so much of definite, systematic breeding behind it extending over a long period of years as the Clydesdale. To get to the very beginning of Clydesdale history, when it became known as a distinct type of horse, we have to travel back a century and a half. In fact there is reasonable ground for believing that the blood that now predominates in the Clydesdale traces back several centuries to the old warrior horses for which Scotland was famous in the days of Robert Bruce. The horses of those early days are described as active, strong and well built, and particularly prized for their ability to carry the sturdy warriors and their war equipment many miles to battle with the foe. There are on record many instances when raids were made on the "Scots" by their English neighbors to the south for no other purpose than to capture some of the horses of the north so highly were they prized by the people of the south. Interesting as it would be to trace in detail the development of