

The Gentle Giants of the Horse World-The Drafters

Whether it is their size or their great beauty that impresses us most, draft horses have been a long time favorite among horse lovers of all walks of life. These huge animals seem too big to move with the grace that they do, and their gentle nature makes them hard to resist. Although drafters are not as commonplace as they were 100 years ago, they can still be seen in some rural areas helping the farmer just as its ancestors did. They can also be seen in parades, circuses, and at Disneyland and Disneyworld pulling the trolley cars back and forth down Main Street. Some draft breeds are bred

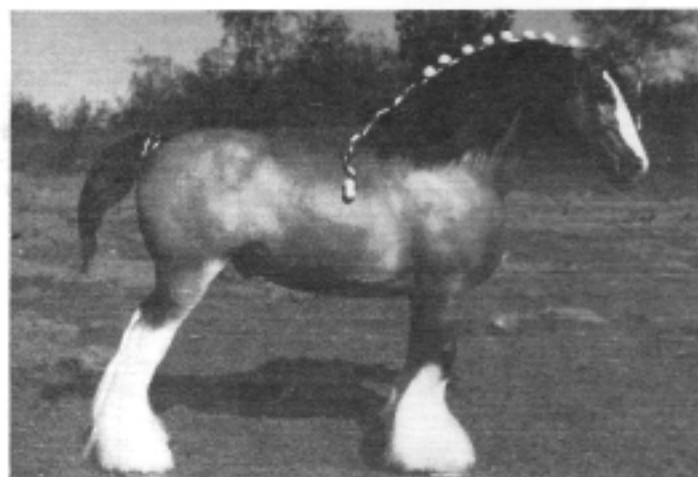
with lighter warmbloods to produce large, strong, willing hunters. There is even a registry for Percheron-Thoroughbred crosses called 'Thorcherons'.

In the model show ring, draft horses can be shown in halter as well as pulling competitions, heavy harness or team harness, and medieval or circus costume.

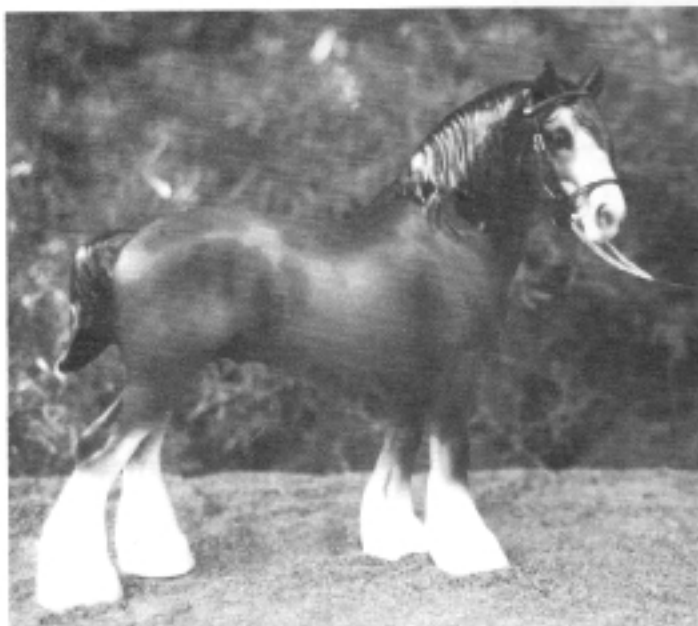
These are only a handful of the draft breeds—there are several more. Check your local library for more information. The library is a great place to get ideas for sack, RRH, etc.

The Clydesdale originated in the Clyde Valley of Lanarkshire in England. Local mares were crossed with the heavier Flemish stallions in the 18th century to produce large, willing horses to haul wagons of coal and other heavy loads that lighter horses could not handle. The Clydesdale is known for its docile character, as well as its beauty. Most Clydesdales are bay with white stockings and a bald face, but chestnuts and blacks are not uncommon. They average 16.2 hands in height. The Clydesdale is the most popular of the draft breeds with non-horse people as he is known for pulling the Budweiser beer wagon.

The Shire, which originated in the 'Shires' of England, is a descendant of the Old English Black horse whose ancestors were the 'great horses' of medieval times. They are big, strong horses weighing up to one ton, with the ability to pull up to 5 tons. Despite its size and strength, it is quite gentle and graceful, and has a fine head in comparison with its size. They average 18 hands in height at the withers and are seen in all colors, with chestnuts and greys being the most popular in the model world.



*Quest for Diamonds Clydesdale gelding
RRH by Kathleen Maestas owned by Jana Morton.*



Rob Roy's Augustus, H-R Clydesdale owned by Cindy Dilks.



Imperial Echo, OF Northlight Creation Shire, owned by Lee Francis.



*Shamrock Shannon My Lass. OF Beswick
"Spirit of Earth" owned by Lisa Donnelly.*