

125.
Horses.

Wednesday morning the 2003-02-09, I spoke to Michael Adams from Bugbrooke who lives at the Byre Church Lane (Farm).

I asked him about the type or breed of horses that they had on the farm when I was a boy, as they were very unusual, and not like the horses on other farms in the village.

He told me that they were Percheron's.

They were a very large black draught horse, of a breed developed in France.

(French) from Percheron, a native of Perche, a district South Normandy.

Michael said they were quite a handful when working with them, as they always moved very quickly compared with other horses, he said when he was a Eight to Nine year old, and was working with them, one had to watch your feet or toes as they would move so quick and stand on them if you were not quicker than them.

I remember them being used at harvest time, when a extra horse was needed to be hitched up on to another horse in a wagon, this was to give it some help to move the heavy loaded wagons about while carting the harvest in, their hooves would sink very deeply into the soft soil of the fields, as they took the strain to move the wagons along.

Other Shire Horses in the village that were seen to be about like Clydesdale, Suffolk Punches, etc, seemed to just plod along at a very steady pace, be they pulling a cart or a plough.

These Percheron's were something like a special infantry brigade that marched extremely very rapid, whether they were moving along the road with or without pulling a cart, wagon, or ploughing a field.

Some horses would have to break into a trot to keep up with them.

Whether at the end of the day they could or do more work than any other horse, I do not know.

My father worked on Adam's farm for a short period when he left school in about 1917or18, and they were using Percheron's horses on the farm then.

A little about horses from a bygone age.

Stanley Joseph Clark.