

## *A Brief Overview Of Draft Horse Numbers - continued*

Maury has spent many years teaching people about draft horses and their history. He understands, as well as anyone, the importance of understanding our past in order to ensure a bright future.

Here are some results from the Columbus, Ohio sale from the 60's – 80's. If you take a minute and look at the number of horses being consigned, as well as the average prices, it will give you a good indication of the state of the draft horse business in those years.

Year	1964	1969	1974	1979	1984	1989
# of Horses	98	127	222	298	563	519
Average Price	\$340	\$446	\$1082	\$3279	\$1680	\$1937

Things had really taken a positive upswing in the 1980's in the U.S., and the outlook was improving here in Canada as well. The chart below shows the number of horses being registered here.

Breed	Year	Number of horses registered
Belgians	1984	1,023
Clydesdales	1985	236
Percherons	1984	582
Shires	1985	25 - Don't forget, the CSHA had only reorganized two years earlier.
Suffolks	1984	3 horses were registered between 1980-84.

I'll change pace slightly and include one story of interest for each of the five breeds.

Both Hubert and Eddie Freitag of Alameda, Sk., worked at Meadow Brook Farm in Howell, Michigan as young men. Meadow Brook was owned by a Mrs Wilson, the widow of John Dodge of automobile fame. Mrs Wilson provided the enthusiasm and money, and Harold Clark provided the knowledge. Together they promoted the Belgian horse through the lean years (50's, 60's, etc), and shaped it into the breed it is today. (The horses bred at Meadow Brook are in Belgian pedigrees everywhere).

Many people have heard of the Budweiser Clydesdales. The Budweiser horses first started parading as they do now in 1933. One of Budweiser's first purchases was the hitch of Clydesdales from the Shea Brewery in Winnipeg. Still parading over 75 years later, the brewery has hired a healthy number of both men and horses from western Canada.

Whenever I used to hear the name of Jonathan Fox of Lloydminster, I associated it with Hereford cattle. What I didn't realize was that Jonathan played a very important role in keeping the Percheron breed alive. Justamere Par Excellence and Justamere Stylish Stella will always have a place in the history books, and the influence of Justamere Showtime lives on still today.

In the late 1980's a man from Illinois with a lot of money started importing a number of Shire horses from England – maybe over 300 head. He spent a lot of money on promotion, and even developed a theme park called Shireland. I drove past that park (it was closed for the day) on an evening in the summer of 1991. There were Shires lined up eating out of a cement trough in numbers that I'm sure I'll never see again. It was quite a sight. Shireland is no longer in existence, but if you look in Shire pedigrees today you will still see the Fox Valley prefix.

Georgina Robbins of Saskatoon (she and her family have raised excellent Clydesdales) is a distant relative to Andy Haxton, who in 1939 was driving a hitch of Suffolks which had been imported from England. At that time Clydesdales almost completely dominated the hitch classes at the shows. Andy took this hitch to the shows on behalf of Hawthorn Melody Farm of Illinois, and had an excellent year with their Suffolks.

I'll finish this article with the number of draft horses registered here in Canada for the last few years.

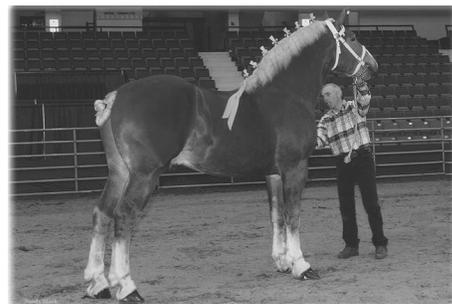
Breed	2001	2006	2007	2008
Belgian	795	667	589	671
Clydesdale	407	401	443	501
Percheron	1005	974	865	918
Shire	12	22	22	17

To date in 2009, there have been 24 Shires registered in Canada.

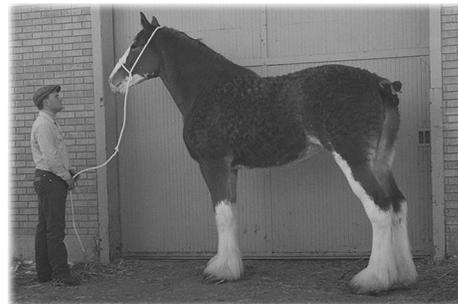
For the ten years prior to December 31, 2008 there were 331 Suffolks registered here in Canada – for an average of about 30 registrations per year.

I've tried to include a decent number of Saskatchewan connections in the photos and content that I've included. Not only has the number of draft horses changed over the years, so has the style of horse being raised, and I think these photos will help to illustrate that.

I hope that you'll take the time to go through this article a couple of times – consider the numbers, and let's all do our part to ensure a bright future for the draft horse.



**Bridgeman's Paul, Gr. Ch. Belgian Stallion, 2006 CWA. Owned by Gerald & Diane Hendry, Kronau.**



**Donegal Lady Iona, Gr. Ch. Clydesdale Mare, 1993 CWA for Hatfield Clydesdales, Gladstone, Mb.**



**Prince, All American Percheron Gelding 1990. Bred by Walter Hughes, Preeceville, Sk.**



**Gentle Giant Lucky Choice – Shire Champion of the 1990's. Owned by Keith Gibson, Westlock, Ab.**



**A Suffolk stallion competing in England in 1990.**