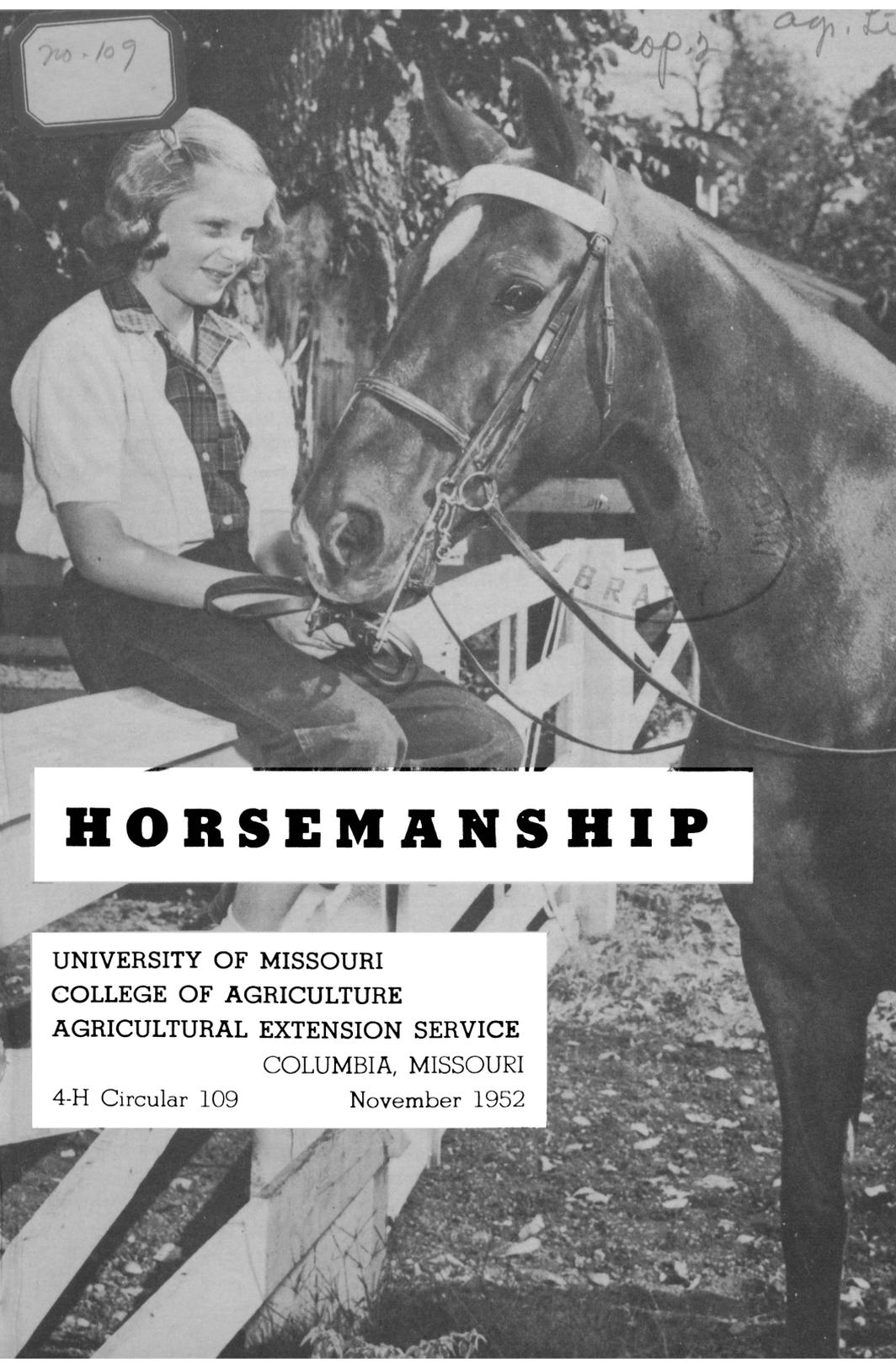


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HORSEMANSHIP

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI
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WHERE TO FIND IT

	Page
Some Fundamentals of Horse Make-Up	3
Breeding, Feeding and Care	6
Horses' Gaits	10
Some Defects and Peculiarities in the Way of Going	10
Some Common Blemishes and Unsoundnesses	10
Unsoundnesses of the Foreleg	11
Unsoundnesses of the Hind Leg	12
Unsoundnesses of the Eyes	12
Unsoundnesses of the Wind	12
Horsemanship	13
Showing to Halter	13
Bridling and Saddling	14
Mounting and Dismounting	17
Good Seat and Hands	17
Riding at the Walk, Trot and Canter (English Saddle)	22
Riding With Western Equipment	25
Care of Tack	25
Light Horse Breed Associations	26

HORSEMANSHIP

A 4-H Club Project

JOHN M. KAYS

This circular is for 4-H Club members who enjoy working with light horses and who are enrolled in the Horsemanship Project.

Anyone who starts in the horse business should realize at the outset that as compared to a meat animal or dairy project the horse enterprise is somewhat speculative. There is a low reproductive rate among horses. Mares have the longest pregnancy period of any of our farm animals. There is a high foal mortality. A long time elapses before one has a salable product. And only the highest quality horses command high prices.

Despite these drawbacks, the horse enterprise can be a profitable experience. Opportunity for large financial gains is small, but the intangible returns are great and beneficial. The practical experiences gained in breeding, feeding, and managing horses can be applied clear across the field of livestock production. The relaxation, exercise, and genuine fun derived from riding horses cannot be measured in terms of money.

SOME FUNDAMENTALS OF HORSE MAKE-UP

When you start your horse project, keep in mind those fundamental qualities that every good light horse should have.

First of all a riding horse must be surefooted. Any horse that stumbles is likely to fall and hurt his rider. A pleasant riding horse must have a good kind disposition and an easy mouth so he can be readily controlled. Also, a useful horse must have a quality known as courage or ambition or the will to do all that is asked of him. Because he must carry a load, a saddle horse should have the conformation of a weight carrier and the ability to carry some weight. For this purpose a short, strong back and well muscled coupling are essential. Lastly, if he is to be a real high class riding horse, he must be able to perform his gaits well, and must have good manners.

Horses are valued primarily for what they can do. While beef cattle, sheep, and hogs are valued for the carcasses they produce, horses serve man only when they are in motion. Hence, a horse's way of going is of extreme importance.

Every horse should go with a long stride so that he covers a lot of ground with each step. Every horse should move with a true, direct stride

so there is no waste motion. And every horse is more useful if he goes with a prompt, rapid stride. A riding horse should have some spring to his stride, and should go in a regular, rhythmical, balanced manner with his legs beneath him. The height of stride desired will vary with the type and breed of horse. Power of stride should be evident in the riding horse as well as the drafter.

All good livestock judges recognize the correlation between form and function. Nowhere is the relationship more marked than in horse judging. The shape and position of a horse's feet and legs determine in large measure the way that horse moves.

The forelegs as viewed from the front should be absolutely straight and should toe straight ahead. Knock-kneed horses may hit their knees and cause injury. Bow-legged horses cannot go true, and will move somewhat clumsily. A horse that is pigeon-toed will wing out or paddle, one that is splay-footed will dish in and may interfere. Viewed from the side the forelegs should be straight down to the fetlock, and then have about 45 degree slope to the pastern. A calf-kneed horse is apt to pound. A buck-kneed horse is less stable on his legs than one with straight legs. Slope of pasterns is needed for springiness of motion as opposed to jarring, stilty action.

The hind legs should be so made that, with the horse in normal position, a straight line dropped from the point of the buttocks would hit the point of the hock, follow the hind cannon, and hit the ground a little in back of the heel. Very crooked or sickled hocks are predisposed to the development of hock unsoundnesses such as curbs and bog spavins. When viewed from the rear, the hind cannons should be parallel to each other and perpendicular to the ground. The hind feet, unlike the fore feet, should toe out slightly. Horses that are pigeon-toed behind and horses that stand wide at the hocks are very apt to sprawl and spraddle and go uncollectedly and inefficiently when on the move. Horses that are cow hocked, that stand with the points of their hocks together and their feet spread apart, show but little power in their way of going.

The feet should be large in proportion to body bulk, full and rounding at toe and quarter, wide and deep at the heel. The hoof wall should be strong, tough in texture, free of cracks and ridges. The sole should be strong and arched rather than flat.

Every riding horse should be short, strong, and straight in his back, short and heavily muscled over his coupling. These features are necessary if the horse is to carry weight with ease and if the propelling power generated in the hind quarters is to be most efficiently transmitted to the front end. Balanced conformation is impossible without a strong, smoothly turned topline.

No matter what job a horse does he needs a deep, full heart and a

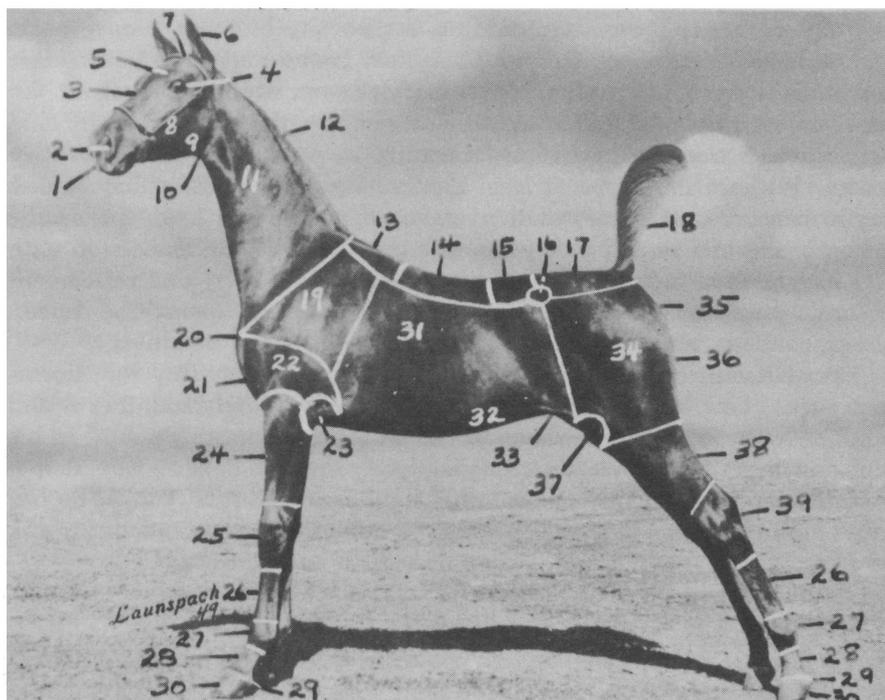


Fig. 1.—Points of the horse.

- | | | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Muzzle | 11. Neck | 21. Breast | 31. Ribs |
| 2. Nostril | 12. Crest of Neck | 22. Arm | 32. Belly |
| 3. Face | 13. Withers | 23. Elbow | 33. Flank |
| 4. Eye | 14. Back | 24. Forearm | 34. Thigh |
| 5. Forehead | 15. Coupling | 25. Knee | 35. Point of Buttocks |
| 6. Ear | 16. Point of Hip | 26. Cannon | 36. Quarters |
| 7. Poll | 17. Croup | 27. Fetlock or Ankle | 37. Stifle |
| 8. Cheek | 18. Tail | 28. Pastern | 38. Gaskin |
| 9. Jaw | 19. Shoulder | 29. Coronet | 39. Hock |
| 10. Throat latch | 20. Point of Shoulder | 30. Foot | |

Not shown in picture:

Chestnut—horny projection located on the inside of the forearm and a hand's breadth above the knee, and on the inside lower rear edge of the hock.

Ergot—horny projection at the lower rear point of the fetlock joint usually covered by hair.

deep, roomy middle. These qualities insure ample room for the respiratory and digestive organs, and in the mare, of course, a roomy middle is wanted for reproduction. Shallow middled, slack coupled horses are hard keepers.

Since the hindquarters furnish the propelling power, every horse—hunter, cow pony race horse, or pleasure horse—should be heavily muscled through the quarters. The more strenuous the job, the more essential the muscling.

Correct set to the underpinning, a handy way of going, a deep heart and middle, a short back and coupling, and heavy muscled quarters are essential fundamental features in horse make-up. Refinement about the head, smart carriage of the ears, fineness of the throatlatch, length and arch of neck are qualities that contribute to good looks and attractive fronts. Withers should be at least moderately high, on all riding horses partly because such conformation makes it possible to keep the saddle properly in position and partly because such withers are associated with free easy motion in front. Good horses also show quality and refinement of underpinning, leanness, cleanness, and hardness about the knees, hocks, cannons, and ankles, as opposed to fullness and meatiness.

Soundness is probably the single most important quality that horse-men seek. It is obvious that a horse must have absolutely sound eyes and wind, if he is to be useful. He must be at least serviceably sound in his feet and legs. The horse that is completely free of defects, one that a veterinarian could certify as sound, is comparatively rare. But, if he has some minor abnormality that does not hinder the performance of his job, he is serviceably sound and can render much useful work.

BREEDING, FEEDING, AND CARE

If you are starting your horse project with a brood mare, get a good useful mare of one of the recognized light horse breeds. The mare should be of handy size, at least serviceably sound, and of refined, feminine, broody character. The mare should be bred to as good a stallion of the same breed as can be found within reasonable distance.

Spring is the usual breeding season for horses. Mares usually are not bred until they are three years old or older. Mares experience a sexual (estrual) cycle which is most often about 21 days long. At the time the mare shows greatest desire she is said to be in heat, or in season. Ordinarily mares stay in heat for 3 to 7 days. The best time to breed is late in the heat period because ovulation, or release of the egg cell from the ovary occurs then. If a mare settles to breeding service, she will not come in heat again. She should be watched closely around the times her heat periods would normally occur to see if she has settled or if she has returned to heat and must be bred again. When large numbers of mares are considered, an average of two or more services are required for conception. The pregnancy period is about 340 days, though there is considerable variation.

Good pasture, water, salt and some shade will be all that is necessary for the brood mare in summer. In the fall and winter when pastures do not furnish much feed the mare will need every day about one pound of good quality hay for every hundred pounds she weighs. At least one half of the hay should be a legume. As her pregnancy progresses the mare

should get a little grain (oats, corn, bran), about one half to one pound for every hundred pounds of bodyweight. If the hay fed in winter is of poor quality, adding a handful of linseed meal will improve the ration.

In the winter the mare should be treated by a veterinarian to remove any roundworms and bots. The owner himself can treat the mare with phenothiazine in amounts prescribed by his veterinarian for the removal of strongyles or blood worms.

The brood mare should have opportunity for taking regular exercise right up to the time she is to foal. If the foal is expected late in the spring, the mare can foal on pasture. However, if the mare is to foal in cold weather, prepare a large box stall. The stall should be disinfected and then kept clean.

Indications of approaching foaling include enlargement of the mare's udder during the eleventh month, formation of beads of wax on the teats about one or two days before foaling, depression of the croup muscles on either side of the tail, restlessness of the mare.

An experienced person should be on hand if possible when the mare foals in order to give assistances if necessary, to treat the foal's navel with iodine, and to perform any needed task.

Mares usually foal when lying down and a normal foaling is a matter of just a few minutes. If the afterbirth is not passed in 3 or 4 hours, a veterinarian should be called to remove it by hand.

Altho the colostrum, or first milk from the mare, has laxative properties, sometimes the newborn foal appears constipated. If so, he should be given an enema. If a foal scours during the time his dam is in heat he can be treated with a couple ounces of castor oil.

If the mare foaled without difficulty and both she and her foal are normal in every way, the mare may be rebred during her foal heat, about nine days after foaling. If a later foal is desired the mare may be bred somewhere around 30 days after foaling, during her second heat period.

The mare and foal can be run on good pasture without additional feed. But if the foal is to be shown, feed the mare to keep up her milk production. The foal can eat with the mare or may be fed separately after it is a few weeks old. Farm grown feeds alone are satisfactory, but a little linseed meal may help give gloss to the hair coat.

The foal should be handled from the start. It should be haltered and taught to lead readily and to stand quietly when still very young. The foal's feet should be kept straight and level to help prevent any faulty development of the underpinning. Foals are usually weaned when about six months of age. By that time the foal should be accustomed to eating grain.

If you plan to show a foal, then for at least six weeks before show time, keep the mare and foal up and out of the sun during the day. Turn them out at night. Such a practice makes for greater comfort for the horses and prevents sunburning the hair.

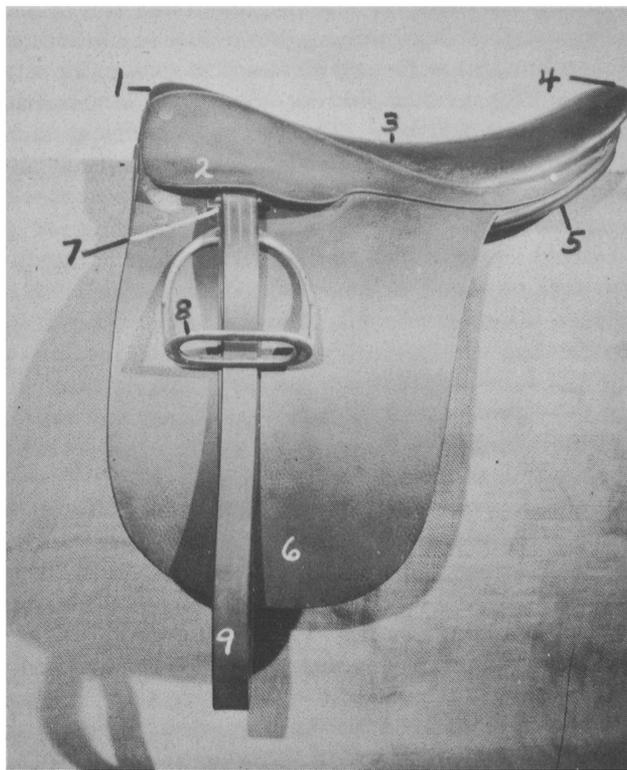


Fig. 2.—English saddle.

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|-----------|-----------|--------------------------|
| 1. Pommel | 4. Cantle | 7. Stirrup bar |
| 2. Skirt | 5. Panel | 8. Tread of stirrup iron |
| 3. Seat | 6. Flap | 9. Stirrup leather |

Even though horses are in good health and well fed, good grooming contributes much to their appearance. Foals to be shown should be brushed thoroughly and regularly. American Saddle bred foals and Tennessee Walking horse foals are shown with their manes and foretops roached as close as possible. Quarter horse foals have their manes roached except for a lock at the withers, and their fore tops are not cut. The ears and fetlocks of all show stock should be trimmed. Sometimes foals are clipped all over. But usually they look better if they are simply well fed, well groomed, and blanketed for a time before show day.

The small horse breeder usually benefits from selling his foals as weanlings or yearlings. In that way he speeds up the returns from the business. He has less money and time invested in a weanling or yearling and he passes on to the buyer the risks involved in training and developing the horses.

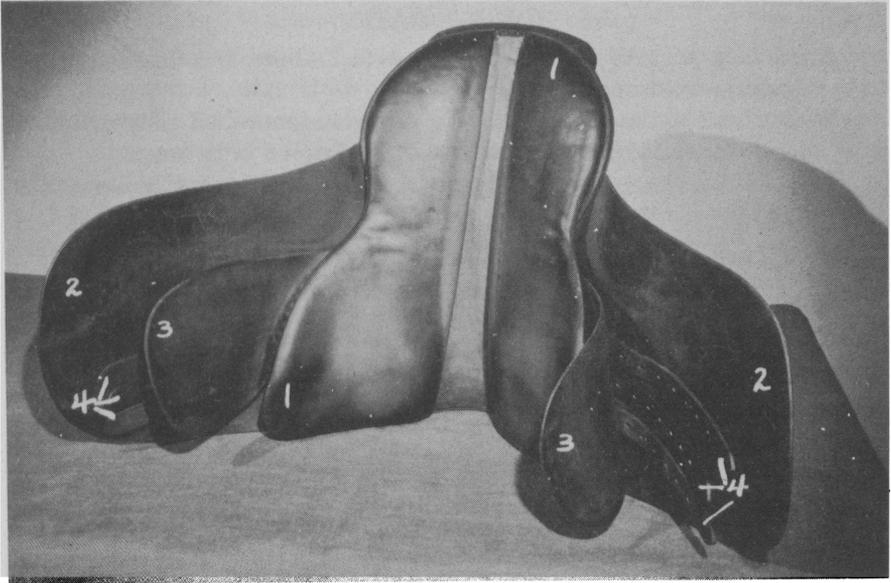


Fig. 3.—English saddle, under side.

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|----------|---------------|
| 1. Panel | 3. Sweat flap |
| 2. Flap | 4. Billets |

If the weanling colt is kept over winter he should be run on pasture, fed a good legume hay and some oats to keep him growing and in good condition. Salt and water are the only other essentials. Treatment for bots, roundworms, and strongyles should be given.

Good pasture provides not only the best but the cheapest feed for horses.

Legume hays of good quality are best for young growing colts and broodmares.

Horses should be watered and fed hay and grain at regular hours if not on pasture.

Grain and hay given to horses must be sound, free of spoilage, dust, and mold. Horses are very susceptible to spoiled feeds.

After a full feed a horse should not be required to do fast or hard work.

An exhausted horse should not be fed until recuperated. Kept and used with good common sense and management horses would never be ridden to the point of exhaustion.

Training in harness or under saddle is usually not begun before a colt is 18 months old. Breaking a horse to drive makes him bridle wise, helps to set his head and neck, and helps teach him to go in good form. Then he can more easily be trained under saddle.

HORSES' GAITS

A gait is a particular way of going with definite and distinctive features regularly executed.

Walk. A slow, flat-footed, four-beat diagonal marched gait, one of the most useful under saddle or in harness if performed with snap.

Trot. A two-beat diagonal leaped gait. The diagonal legs work in unison, and for a moment all four legs of the horse are off the ground.

Canter. A slow, restrained gallop, a three-beat gait. If extended to full speed at the run, it becomes a four-beat gait.

Pace. A two-beat lateral leaped gait. Both legs on the same side work together. A very undesirable gait in a riding horse, but very fast for harness racing. The pace is a natural gait for some Standardbred horses.

Running walk. A four-beat gait natural to the Tennessee Walking horse and suggestive of a continued breaking out of a walk. A most comfortable gait to ride.

Slow gait or stepping pace. One of the learned, man-made gaits of the five-gaited American Saddle. A somewhat lateral four-beat gait.

Rack. A fast flashy, four-beat, learned, man-made gait of the five-gaited horse. Only one foot is on the ground at one time, hence the former name, singlefoot.

SOME DEFECTS AND PECULIARITIES IN THE WAY OF GOING

Forging. Striking the ends of the branches or the undersurface of a front shoe with the toe of the hind foot.

Interfering. Striking the supporting leg (usually at the fetlock) with the foot of the opposite striding leg. This defect is commonly found in splay-footed horses.

Paddling or winging out. Throwing the front feet out to the side during the stride. This defect is common in pigeon-toed horses.

Dwelling. Showing a perceptible pause in the flight of a striding foot.

Pounding. Making unduly heavy contact with the ground at the completion of the stride. Often found in calf-kneed horses.

Pointing. Extending the foreleg without flexing the knee and fetlock very much.

Hitching. Not moving squarely behind; apparently going farther with one hind foot than with the other.

SOME COMMON BLEMISHES AND UNSOUNDNESSES

From the technical standpoint any abnormality in form or function of a part is an unsoundness. However, those abnormalities which merely detract from the horse's appearance are regarded by the practical horseman as blemishes unless their presence might lead to a future true unsoundness.

Unsoundnesses of the Foreleg

Fistula. An ulcerous lesion at the withers which should be treated by a veterinarian only since the brucellosis organism that causes abortion in cattle is almost always present. After a fistula has healed, there often remains a "crease" at the withers.

Sweeny. An atrophy or shrinking of the shoulder muscles.

Shoeboil or capped elbow. A bruise and swelling at the point of the elbow caused by irritation of the shoe when the horse is lying down.

Splint. A bony enlargement located most commonly on the inside of the front cannon. Sometimes when they appear in foals, they are resorbed without treatment. If located so high on the cannon that the bones of the knee may be involved, splints are serious.

Bowed Tendon. A swelling of the back side of the cannon resulting from a severe strain or rupture of one or both of the flexor tendons or tendon sheaths. Most often found in Thoroughbred race horses where it is a serious unsoundness for the horse in training.

Road puffs or windgall. Soft puffy swellings about the size of a hickory nut located on or above the fetlocks on either forelegs or hind legs. Usually just a blemish, a sign of second handedness.

Cocked ankles. Partial dislocation of the ankle or fetlock joint brought on by a shortening of the tendons on the back side of the leg. A serious unsoundness because of the effect on the way of going. Sometimes young foals that are fed too heavily and exercised too little get cocked ankles, but recover when properly handled.

Ringbone. A bony enlargement often but not always encircling the pastern region and involving the bones of the pastern. Usually regarded as a serious unsoundness.

Sidebone. A bony enlargement at the hoof head and back toward the heel, resulting from a turning to bone of the lateral cartilage of the feet. More common in drafters than in light horses.

Quarter cracks and toe cracks. Splitting of the hoof wall from the coronet downward. Sometimes caused by fast, hard riding on a hard surface.

Navicular disease. A chronic inflammation involving the navicular bone and other sensitive structures within the hoof. A serious trouble because it becomes worse and is practically incurable.

Founder or laminitis. An inflammation of the sensitive laminae of the foot which may be brought on by concussion, over-eating, over-exertion, exhaustion. If of the chronic type, founder renders a horse useless for most service because the structures of the feet are broken down.

Corns. A bruise to the fleshy sole that may cause severe lameness.

Thrush. A disease of the cleft of the frog which may cause lameness.

Usually the result of negligence of the care taker and unsanitary conditions.

Unsoundnesses of the Hind Leg

Stifled. A dislocation of the stifle joint which if permanent is a serious unsoundness.

Curb. A swelling on the back side of the hock and four to six inches below the point of the hock caused by a sprain of the tendon or the ligament in that area.

Thoroughpin. A soft, puffy swelling located in the hollows of the hock. The swelling can be pushed through from one side to the other.

Bog spavin. A soft, fluctuating swelling at the inner face of the hock. More often a blemish than a true unsoundness.

Bone spavin or jack spavin. A serious unsoundness affecting the bones of the hock joint. Sometimes results in a bony enlargement at the inner, lower border of the hock.

Capped hock. A swelling at the point of the hock.

Stringhalt. A nervous-muscular disorder characterized by the sudden, irregular, violent jerking up or flexing of the hock when the horse is moving.

Unsoundnesses of the Eyes

Blindness. A very serious defect because it makes a horse useless for almost all jobs. A blind horse creates special handling problems. Any evidence of defective vision constitutes grounds for rejecting a horse for unsoundness.

Periodic ophthalmia or moon blindness. Recurrent inflammation of the eyes finally ending in loss of sight. This trouble may be prevented, but not cured, by a minimum daily intake of 40 milligrams of crystalline riboflavin or vitamin B₂.

Unsoundnesses of the Wind

Heaves. Broken wind characterized by abnormal breathing and a short, hollow cough. Because of ruptured air vesicles of the lungs the horse cannot breathe out naturally and brings his abdominal muscles into play to complete expiration. Hence, the characteristic "double lift" of a horse with heaves. Horses with wind trouble should never be given dusty hay or bedding, or kept in a dusty atmosphere.

Roaring. Loud, unnatural noise in breathing caused by paralysis of the muscles of the larynx. This trouble can sometimes be successfully treated by a veterinarian.

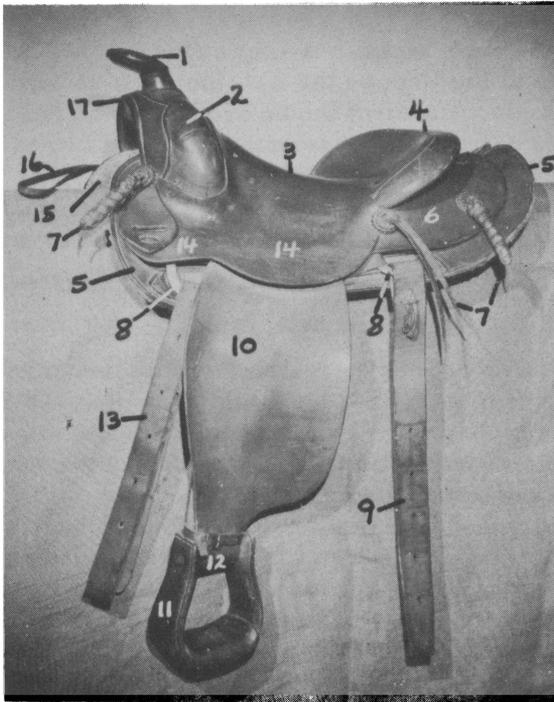


Fig. 4.—Western stock saddle.

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|-----------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Horn | 7. Lace strings | 13. Front tie strap or cinch strap |
| 2. Fork | 8. Dee rings | 14. Front jockey and seat jockey,
one piece |
| 3. Seat | 9. Leather flank girth | 15. Wool lining |
| 4. Cantle | 10. Fender or sudadero | 16. Rope strap |
| 5. Skirt | 11. Stirrup | 17. Pommel |
| 6. Back housing
or back jockey | 12. Stirrup leather | |

HORSEMANSHIP

Showing To Halter

When a horse is brought out for inspection at the halter, he should be shown properly and posed to his best advantage. The horse should always be stopped with his forefeet on higher ground than his hind feet, if he is to look his best. He should stand squarely on all four feet and slightly stretched. Such a position elevates the head and neck, levels out the topline, and gives the illusion of straightening the hind legs. On the other hand a horse pitched downhill is thrown clear out of balance.

To lead the horse at the walk or trot the leader should hold the lead strap in the right hand. Unless the horse is very fractious he should be given two to three feet of lead so that he can keep his head, neck and body

in a straight line as he moves forward. The lead, however, should be kept taut so that the leader has continuous contact with the horse. Whether shown at the walk or the trot, the horse should be moved out smartly and briskly. Any turns should be made to the right hand, that is, the horse should be turned away from the leader. If turned to the left the horse is more apt to step on the man leading him.

If the horse is shown in hand when wearing a bridle, the leader should take care not to jerk so strongly on the reins as to cause the bits to injure the horse's mouth.

Bridling and Saddling

Horses should always be approached and handled quietly and firmly. When the horse is to be bridled he should be approached from the near (left) side. The bridle should be held in the left hand and the reins slipped over the horse's neck with the right hand. If the horse is wearing a halter, he then can be unhaltered but still be under control. The crownpiece of the bridle should be transferred to the right hand. The left hand keeps the bit or bits straight. The left thumb can be inserted gently into the horse's mouth to press open the mouth. The right hand immediately should draw up on the bridle and thus draw the bit into the mouth. The left hand can be used to help pull the ears under the crownpiece of the bridle. The ears should be handled gently. The throat latch should then be buckled. The nose band, if present, should be fastened. The curb chain or strap if present, should be straightened out and so fastened that two fingers can still be inserted under it.

When a saddle is not in use, each stirrup should be slid high up the side of the stirrup leather next to the saddle flap and held in place by having the stirrup leather drawn down through the irons. With the stirrups thus arranged and with the girth (fastened on the right side) drawn over the seat of the saddle the saddle is ready to be put on the horse. The left hand grasps the pommel, the right hand grasps the cantle and the saddle is gently placed on the horse's back. If the saddle is not placed properly the first time, it should not be pushed forward, but should be lifted clear of the back, set down slightly forward to the true position and eased rearward. Thus none of the hair under the saddle will be rubbed the wrong way. If any hair under the saddle is not clean and straight, the pressure and friction developed during a ride is very likely to cause a saddle sore.

After the saddle has been placed on the horse, the saddler passes to the off (right) side, arranges the girth and the billets under the flap and lets down the right stirrup. He then returns to the near side, reaches under the horse for the girth and, taking care that it is still straight, buckles the girth to the billets on the near side. He then lets down the left stirrup. When the saddle is properly placed the girth should be four inches to the

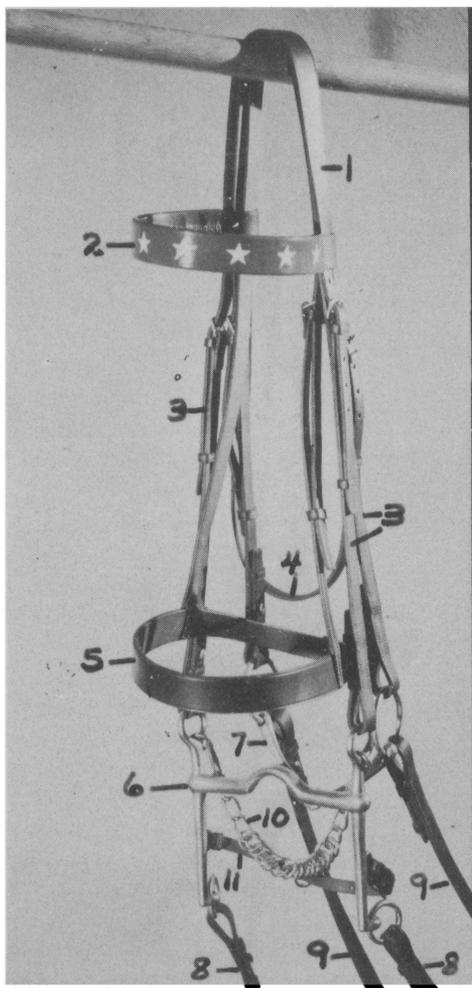


Fig. 5.—Weymouth bridle, hook stud style. This double-bitted, double-reined bridle is used for showing 3- and 5-gaited American saddle horses.

1. Crown piece or headstall
2. Browband
3. Cheek pieces
4. Throat latch
5. Caveson or noseband

6. Weymouth curb bit
7. Snaffle bit
8. Curb rein
9. Snaffle rein
10. Curb chain
11. Lip strap

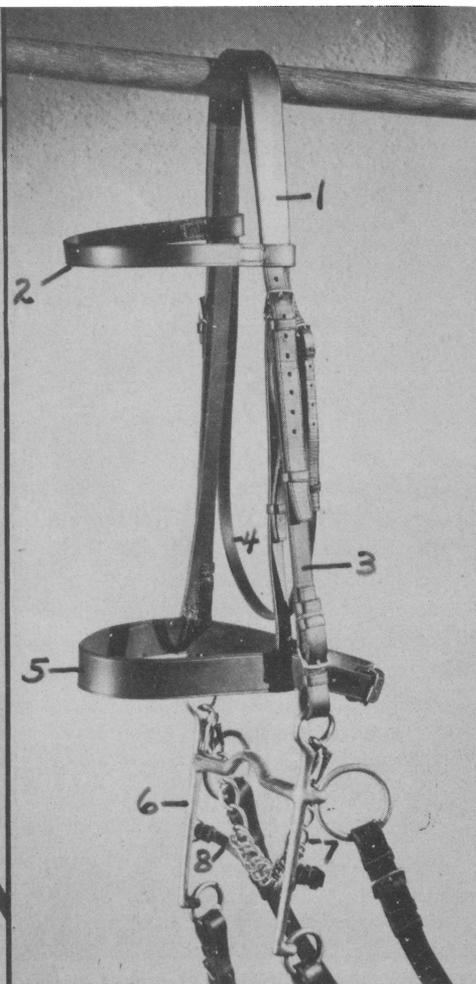


Fig. 6.—Pelham bridle, buckled style. This single bit double-reined bridle may be used for hunters, polo ponies, or pleasure horses.

1. Crownpiece or headstall
2. Browband
3. Cheek pieces
4. Throat latch

5. Caveson or noseband
3. Pelham curb bit
7. Curb chain
8. Lip strap

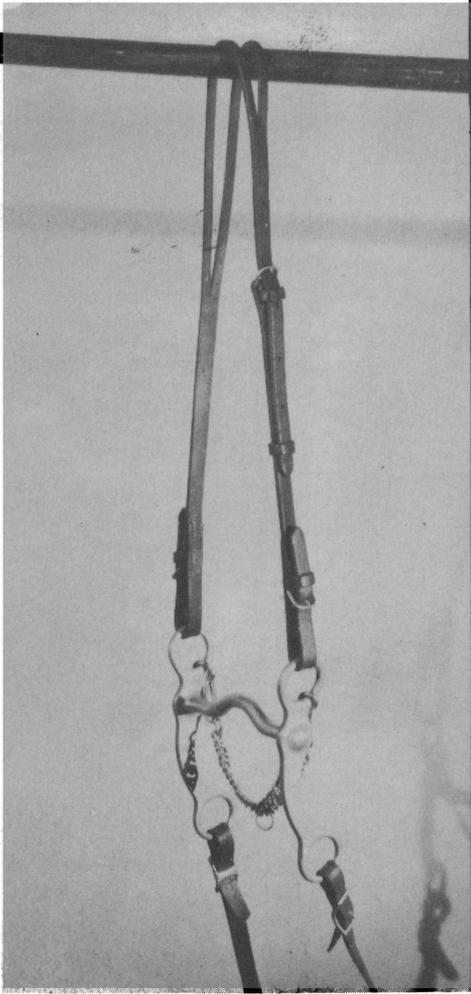


Fig. 7.—One ear bridle. Often used on the working stock horse.

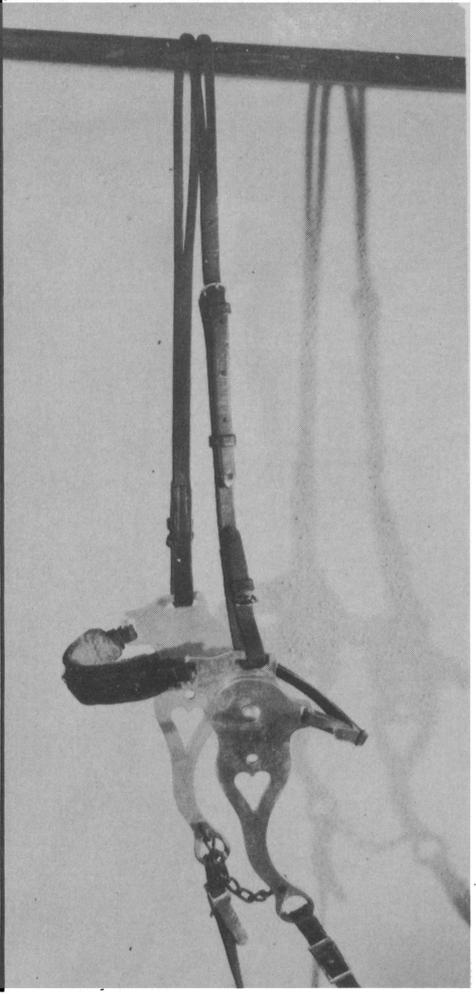


Fig. 8.—Hackamore. Used on the western cow pony in particular and on many young horses when they are being broken because it eliminates the possibility of injuring the mouth.

rear of the point of the horse's elbow. The girth should be tight enough so that two fingers can be inserted about half-way under it. Since some horses distend their bellies when being saddled, it is a safety precaution to test the girth before mounting and to tighten it if necessary. The correct stirrup length can be approximated from the ground. The stirrup leather should be of such a length that when the stirrup iron is held in the arm pit of the prospective rider he can touch the stirrup bar with his fingers.

Mounting and Dismounting

There are two main ways of mounting and gathering up the reins preparatory to mounting. Both are considered good form.

One method is as follows. The rider stands, half facing to the rear, opposite the horse's left shoulder. He takes the reins in the left hand, adjusts them so as to have gentle contact with the horse's mouth, places the left hand on the horse's crest with the bight of the reins falling to the off side. He then places the left foot in the stirrup, assisted by the right hand if necessary, brings the left knee against the saddle, and places his right hand upon the cantle. Then aided by his left foot in the stirrup and his grasp on the saddle he rises by springing off his right leg, swings his right leg over the horse and settles gently into the saddle. Last he puts his right foot in the stirrup and takes the reins in both hands.

The second method of mounting follows these steps. The rider stands half facing to the front, opposite the left stirrup. He grasps both reins in the right hand with the forefinger separating them and the bight falling off to the off side. He then places the right hand on the pommel and adjusts the reins so as to feel the horse's mouth lightly. Assisted by the left hand, if necessary, he places his foot in the stirrup and brings the left knee against the saddle. He now moves the left hand to the horse's crest, springs from the right foot while keeping the left knee bent and still firmly against the saddle, and raises his body erect in the stirrup with the heels together for an instant. He then passes the right leg over the horse and sits lightly in the saddle. He puts his right foot in the stirrup and takes the reins in both hands.

The description of mounting takes much longer than the act itself. The important thing is to mount quickly, efficiently, and quietly while the horse remains still.

Dismounting is simply the reverse of mounting no matter which method is used.

Good Seat and Hands

Equitation, or horsemanship, has been defined as the art of riding a horse intelligently, gracefully, and well, with the greatest degree of comfort and enjoyment to the rider and to the horse. The two fundamental

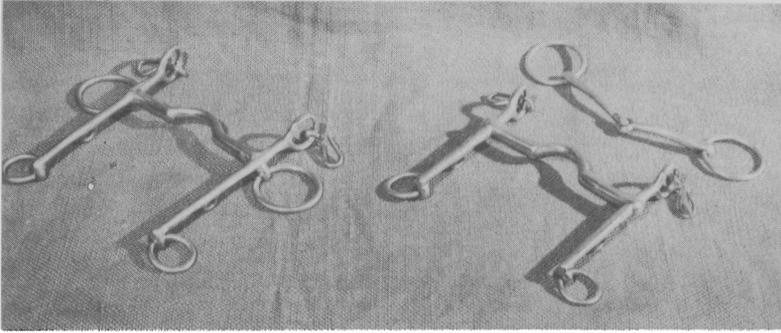


Fig. 9.—Riding bits. Left, Pelham curb bit with rings at end of mouthpiece and rings at low end of cheekpieces for attaching two sets of reins. The hooks are points of attachment for the curb chain. The eyelets in the lower cheek pieces are for the lip strap. Right, Weymouth curb bit and snaffle bit used with it in a Weymouth bridle.

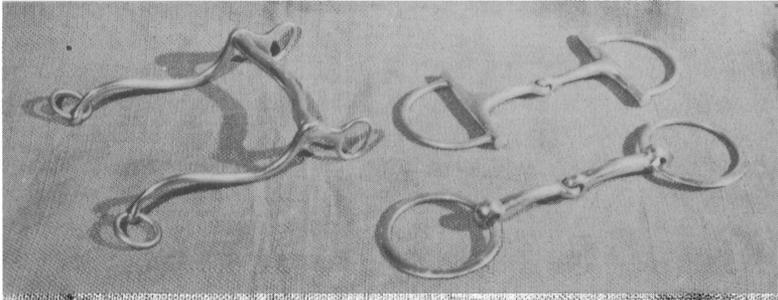


Fig. 10.—Riding bits. Left, a style of curb bit frequently used on Walking horses. Right, two snaffle bits, the upper one a Dee bit often used on Thoroughbred race horses. The lower bit is a hunting snaffle with flat, round rings used on some hunters and race horses.

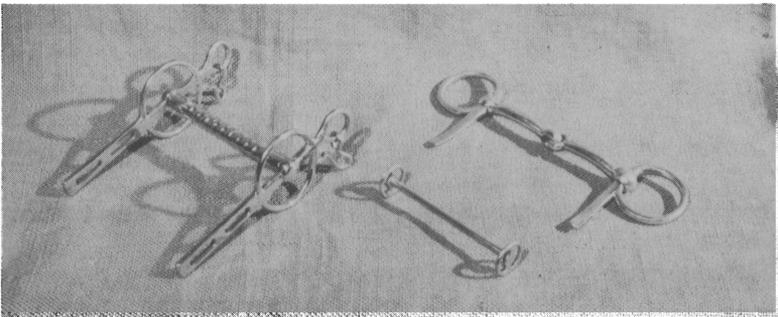


Fig. 11.—Driving bits. Left, Liverpool bit (a curb bit) used on Hackney horses and ponies and on 3-gaited saddle horses when shown in harness. One side of the mouthpiece is smooth, one side corrugated. The driving reins may be attached at any one of three places. Right, a half-cheek snaffle bit and small check bit. These bits are used on harness race horses, roadsters, and fine Harness horses. The driving reins are attached to the snaffle bit, the overhead check rein to the check bit.



Fig. 12.—The saddle horse seat. Welch Greenwell, Shelbina, Missouri, riding Golden Butterfly, winner of the five-gaited championship stake at the 1947 American Royal. The mare is trotting in this photo. Note the erect but easy carriage of the rider's body and the firmness of his seat. The arms and elbows are natural, the thigh close to the saddle, the lower leg vertical, the heel down. (Photo by McClasky)

principles of horsemanship are a good seat and good hands. Good hands, being the rider's means of control and communication, are perhaps the more important. However, since one cannot have good hands without first having a firm, comfortable, steady seat, the most fundamental requirement for riding in good form is a good seat.

A balanced seat is that position of a mounted rider when he sits balanced on the horse, in the lowest part of the saddle, leaving a space of at least a hand's breadth between his breeches back and the cantle. The body is easily erect, balanced on a base consisting of seat, thighs, knees, and stirrups; chest high and just forward of the true vertical. The back is hollow, waist relaxed, head erect, shoulders square.

The seat and legs are close to the horse without pressure, knees down and closed against the saddle. Thighs, knees and calves turned in to the horse. Lower legs are brought back under the seat and rest lightly



Fig. 13.—The western seat. The working cowboy in action on a high-class Quarter horse. Frank Albright of the Bateman Ranch, Knox City, Texas, on Steeldust's Little Sister, champion reining horse at the 1949 East Texas Quarter Horse Show. In this picture the mare is turning to the left and is galloping on the left lead. Note the deep, firm seat, the close leg contact, and low heels of the rider. (Photo by Dixon)

against the horse. Stirrup straps are vertical, feet at least halfway home in the stirrups, ankles bent, heels down to the limit, toes out slightly. With the eyes directed downward the rider will not see his toes. The stirrup leathers should be long enough so that with the rider's legs hanging naturally out of the stirrup the tread of the stirrup will strike just below the rider's ankle bone.

The elbows bend slightly just forward of the body, but hang from the shoulders naturally. The arms are extended to make a straight line from the elbows through the wrists and reins to the horse's mouth. The hands, separated evenly across the horse's withers and closed lightly on the reins, feel the horse's mouth by flexing of the fingers.

This position balances the rider on his seat in exactly the right spot on the horse's back, just to the rear of the withers. The rider's center of gravity is directly over the center of gravity in the horse. Therefore the rider represents the least possible load to the horse and should feel himself "part of the horse."

The rider who has acquired this seat finds that a minimum use of aids is necessary to get immediate and correct response from the horse at any gait.



Fig. 14.—The western seat. Steeldust's Little Sister galloping on the right lead and turning sharply to the right. The strain that is put on the hind legs can be seen clearly. Correct position and soundness of underpinning are essential, if the horse is to give long, hard service. Note how the rider and horse are working in perfect harmony. (Photo by Dixon)

The balanced seat, assisted by the flexibility of the waist and back and the "clinging of the thighs to the saddle" gives the rider a secure position which is not easily dislodged even by unexpected movements of the horse.

The reins should be held in both hands not only for the sake of balance but also for obtaining the best results from the horse. The hands should be held with the little fingers down and the thumbs up. If riding with a single rein bridle, the rider passes the reins under the little fingers, through the hands, out over the forefingers, and holds them with the thumbs, with the bight of the reins falling to the off side.

An accepted method of holding the reins of a double-reined bridle is as follows. The snaffle reins are passed under the little finger and the curb reins between the little finger and the third finger. Both reins pass through the hands, come out over the forefinger, and are held in place by the thumb, with the bight falling to the off side.

Every effort should be made to keep the hands and wrists soft, pliable, flexible, and yielding to the horse's mouth. The wrists should work like a hinged door, and should give and take with the horse's head. The control of the horse should come largely from the movement of the wrists and fingers, while the arms should remain quiet.



Fig. 15.—The western seat. The light hands and firm seat of the top cowboy are clearly evident in this picture of Frank Albright riding Cindy, a product of the Quarter horse breeding operations of the Bateman Ranch, Knox City, Texas, and champion cutting horse at the 1949 East Texas Quarter Horse Show. (Photo by Dixon)

Riding at the Walk, Trot, and Canter (English Saddle)

Whenever the rider wants to move out from the halt, he must first attract his horse's attention. This is called "gathering" the horse. The rider gathers his horse by settling in the saddle, by moving his hands a bit, and through leg action getting the horse's legs so disposed under him that he can move readily. The rider simultaneously releases somewhat his hold on the horse's mouth and boots the horse lightly with his heel.

The rider is said to be "with his horse" or "in balance" whenever he so disposes his weight as to require the least muscular effort to remain in his seat, and when the weight distribution interferes least with the horse's movement and equilibrium. This condition of being "with the horse" is the keynote of good riding. The rider's balance must be entirely independent of the hands and reins. The rider must fit into the saddle and so be attached to the horse. Thus both rider and horse can move in rhythm, gracefully and comfortably.

When the horse is in motion the rider's upper body is inclined forward to a degree determined by the speed of the horse and gait. This forward inclination should always be such that the rider remains in balance over his base of support and never gets "behind his horse." In the case of unforeseen movements by the horse, such as shying or bolting, which tend



Fig. 16.—The hunting seat. William (Billy) Steinkraus, Westport, Connecticut, member of the American 1952 Olympics Equestrian Team, showing correct seat and hands while his hunter jumps in excellent form. In the photo above, the rider is “with the horse.” Note the light but firm contact with the horse’s mouth, the close contact of thighs, knees and legs, and the position of the foot in the stirrup with the heel down. (Photo by Bert Morgan)

to unbalance or unseat the rider, security is provided and balance retained by an increased grip of the legs.

At the walk the upper body is inclined forward slightly more than at the halt. As a result the rider remains in balance. He does not slouch, lean back on the cantle, or get “behind his horse.” The upper body should have the same erect, alert appearance as the halt. For good form and safety the rider should always look down the road between the horse’s ears and not look down at the horse. The rider should keep the horse up in the bridle and swinging along at a good brisk, flatfooted, ground covering walk.

At the trot the rider’s center of gravity undergoes more varied displacements than during any other gait. With this two-beat diagonal gait

there is a decided impact which throws the rider from the saddle. The correct way to ride a trot is by posting. Posting can be described as "rocking" to the trot. More comfort for both horse and rider is achieved by the rider posting or rocking gently from the saddle and easing back into the saddle with the two beats of the trot.

Balance and grip are the principles of a good seat. At the trot the rider uses his balance from his stirrups about fifty percent and contact with his knees and thighs about fifty per cent. The knees and thighs must at all times be in contact with the saddle if a secure seat is to be maintained. The legs will not swing as the rider posts if his weight is evenly distributed between grip and balance. Posting should be a gently rolling motion in co-ordination with the horse's trot, not a forced, labored rising from the saddle to stand in the stirrups.

The canter is a restrained collected gallop, a three-beat gait. When riding at the canter the rider sits as close to the saddle as possible, with his knees, thighs, and seat in close contact with the saddle. The upper body should be relaxed but erect and not inclined forward quite so far as at the trot.

A horse should be taken into the canter from a walk. The rider shortens the reins a bit, then simultaneously lifts the horse's head, boots him, and loosens his hold on the horse's mouth (without, however, losing contact) so that the horse can bound into the canter. To regulate the speed and ride at a collected canter the rider must use his hands in rhythm with the horse and "take the horse back" gradually, so that he is cantering in harmony with the rider's hands and not against them. No gait requires such light hands as does the canter.

The canter can be done on either the right lead or the left lead, that is, with either forefoot leading. If a horse is ridden in an enclosed ring he should canter on the left lead when circling to the left and on the right lead when he is reversed. This is necessary for balance, comfort, and safety. To get his horse off on the left lead the rider turns the horse toward the rail at about a forty-five degree angle, lifts his head, boots him with his right foot, swings him to the left, and the horse, being in proper position, takes his canter on the left lead. These actions are reversed to canter on the right lead.

Speed is not a requisite of the canter. A horse that looks animated enough to run, but which restrains himself at the will of the rider, hits the ground lightly in front and sustains more of his weight in the hind-quarters and canters at a rate of speed very little faster than a fast walk is performing properly. The old horseman saying about "cantering all day in the shade of an apple tree" expresses the desire for a slow, restrained "rocking chair" canter, easy on both horse and rider.

Riding With Western Equipment

The general principles of good seat, good hands, and good riding form mentioned in the foregoing sections apply with equal force to Western Style riding. There are, of course, some differences. The deep seated western stock saddle is usually ridden with a fairly straight leg and long stirrups. Both reins are held in one hand only. The horse, particularly if well trained, is ridden with a loose rein, and in most instances is trained to neck rein. Because of the practical cattle work done by most stock horses and because of the speed which is frequently required, a strong, firm seat and excellent balance are important if the rider is to look the part of a finished horseman.

Care of Tack

Good saddles, bridles, halters, and harness are expensive items of equipment and deserve good care. If made of high quality leather and properly treated, they will last for years. Ideally, each piece of equipment should be cleaned every time it is used on a horse. However, the owner-caretaker rarely can devote so much time to care of the tack. Nevertheless an effort should be made to give regular attention to saddle soaping and conditioning all leather goods. For softness, pliability, and long life regular cleaning with saddle soap and an occasional light dressing with neats foot oil is all that is necessary. Dirty tack may cause saddle and harness sores on the horse. Special care should be given to bridle reins, stirrup leathers, and cinch because the rider's safety depends on these straps. For that reason, keep the leather in good condition.

LIGHT HORSE BREED ASSOCIATIONS

Appaloosa Horse Club, Rt 4, Moscow, Idaho - George B. Hatley, Secretary.

Arabian Horse Club Registry of America, 111 West Monroe St., Chicago 3, Ill. - Frank Watt, Secretary.

American Hackney Horse Society, Room 1737, 42 Broadway, New York, N. Y. - Mrs. J. Macy Willets, Secretary.

Morgan Horse Club, 90 Broad St., New York 4, N. Y. - Frank B. Hills, Secretary.

Palomino Horse Breeders of America, P. O. Box 82, Mineral Wells, Texas - Dr. H. Arthur Zappe, Secretary.

American Quarter Horse Association, P. O. Box 2290, Amarillo, Texas - Raymond Hollingsworth, Secretary.

American Saddle Horse Breeder's Association, 929 South 4th St., Louisville 3, Kentucky - C. J. Cronan, Jr., Secretary.

American Shetland Pony Club, 518 East Dubail Ave., South Bend 14, Ind. - Mary Catherine Lean, Secretary.

United States Trotting Association, 1349 Broad St., Columbus 5, Ohio - Ken McCarr, Registrar. (Standardbreds)

Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders' Association of America, Lewisburg, Tenn. - Miss Syd Houston, Secretary.

The Jockey Club, Thoroughbred registry, 250 Park Ave., New York 17, N. Y. - Marshall Cassidy, Executive Secretary.

Welsh Pony Society of America, 409 West Engineering Building, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich. - Frank H. Smith, Secretary.

4-H RECORD

HORSEMANSHIP

(To be used with 4-H Circular 109, "Horsemanship")

Name _____ Age _____

Address _____ County _____

Name of 4-H Club _____

Name of Club Leader _____

Project Leader _____

Jr. Project Chairman _____

Club meetings attended during year _____ Project meetings held _____

Number attended _____ Number of units in completed project _____

Number of Horsemanship demonstrations given at:

Club meetings _____, Project meetings _____, County meetings _____, District meeting _____, State meeting _____.

Number of times participated in judging work in:

Project meetings _____, County _____, District _____, State _____, Interstate _____.

Number of exhibits made in:

Community _____, County _____, District _____, State _____, Interstate _____.

Participated in:

County Achievement _____, District Round-up _____, State Contest Program _____, National Contests _____, County Fair or Show _____, District Fair _____, State Fair _____, Interstate Show _____, Marketing Days _____, County Camp _____, District Camp _____, State Camp _____, National Camp _____, National Club Congress _____, News stories published _____, Radio Programs _____.

Served on _____ Standing Committee

4-H Activity selected by club for this year _____

Brief of club achievements in club activity, health and recreation _____

_____ Year _____

Project Requirements

1. Own and care for one or more light horses including a foal up to weaning age if starting project with a brood mare.
2. Know the parts of the horse.
3. Recognize, know, and define the gaits of a horse.
4. Recognize defects in the way of going.
5. Recognize common blemishes and unsoundnesses.
6. Demonstrate proficiency in horsemanship by:
 - a. Properly showing a horse to halter.
 - b. Bridling and saddling a horse.
 - c. Mounting and dismounting in good form.
 - d. Showing good seat and hands while riding at the walk, trot, and canter.
 - e. Knowing the parts of the tack and also the proper adjustment and care of riding equipment.

Project Report

Date project started _____

Number of animals in project _____

Breed of animal (s) _____

Name and registry number, if any _____

Age of animal (s) at start of project _____

Grains and supplements fed _____

Kind of roughage fed _____

Kind of pasture used _____

Original cost of animal(s) _____ Value _____

Amount of grain fed _____ Value _____

Amount of supplement fed _____ Value _____

Amount of roughage fed _____ Value _____

Pasture charge _____

Other cash expenses, veterinary bills, etc. _____

Total _____

Value of animal (s) at close of project _____

Value of prizes won _____

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE COOPERATING

J. W. BURCH, Director, Agricultural Extension Service

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