

# Wigton Sales

At the annual Fell Pony Society's sale at Wigton in October, prices continue to rise. The secretary, Miss Crossland, is always in attendance hoping that sellers and buyers will notify her of their transactions so that transfer certificates can be issued and ponies re-entered in the N.P.S. stud book.

## 1971

The highest priced pony was a three-year-old black filly Town End Polly XI by Lunesdale Richard 202 gns., and a five-year-old mare Lownthwaite Ebony Queen made 160 gns., Guards Gypsy, two-year-old filly 102 gns., Adamthwaite Rose, four-year-old mare 152 gns., Adamthwaite Grey Madge, grey two-year-old filly 130 gns. Yearling fillies 102, 90, 82, 78, 84 (grey). Colt foals 75, 30, 27, 26.

## 1972

Highest priced pony was Greenfield Beau Brummel (1968), a dark brown gelding quiet to ride and drive 170 gns. Black yearling filly Bowderdale Black Bess 162 gns., Lownthwaite?, black filly foal 125 gns., Flimby Hall Daisy May (1969) quiet to ride 150 gns. Various others passed out at higher prices. Birkett Bank Nancy (1965) 150 gns.

Two-year-old geldings 100, 95. Yearling fillies 134, 125, 116, 100, 76. Two-year-old filly 128, filly foals 90, 75, colt foals 80, 70, 56, 50, 46, 30, 34, 28.

## 1973

43 ponies were forward, and buyers came from all over the country. Prices for all classes, except colt foals of which there were 20, continued to rise.

The highest price was for Mr. R. W. T. Bray's seven-year-old brown mare, Greenfield Mayamber, which made 410 gns. She is by Linnel Fox, ex May Queen. This is believed to be the highest price paid for a Felly Pony at public auction.

Other prices were: Mr. E. M. Wilson's Adergill Bonny Lass, two-year-old filly by Twislehope Druid, ex Heltondale Sally 300 gns. Mrs. S. C. Morton's Lownthwaite Ghostly Gossip by Town End Prince ex Lownthwaite Guards II 340 gns. Mr. T. C. Thompson's two-year-old gelding Drybarrow Danny Boy by Heltondale Sonny Boy, ex Drybarrow Blossom 158 gns. Mr. T. R. Harper's High Fawes Regent, yearling colt by Adamthwaite Flashlight, ex Heltondale Princess 100 gns. Messrs. Noble's stallion, Heltondale Black Jock 120 gns. Mr. H. F. Wale's 3-year-old filly Lownthwaite Tamara by Heltondale Sonny Boy, ex Lownthwaite Edna 330 gns.

Average prices in guineas were as follows, with 1972 averages in brackets: Colt foals 45 (46), Yearling colts 74 (37), Two-year-old colts 63 (60), Two-year-geldings 152 (97), Yearling fillies, one forward, 340 (116), Two-year-old fillies, one forward (300 128), Mares 343 (150).

## AVERAGE PRICES IN GUINEAS

	1971	1972	1973
Mares over two years .. .. .	146	150	343
Fillies two years .. .. .	116	144	300
Fillies one year .. .. .	85	117	340
Filly Foals .. .. .	84	85	—
Broken Geldings .. .. .	94	170	—
Two-year-old Geldings .. .. .	—	97	152
Colt Foals .. .. .	27	47	45
Yearling colts .. .. .	—	36	74

## 1974

Fell ponies will be sold on Wednesday, 23rd October at a special sale in conjunction with a sale of Shetland ponies.

# Open Days

The first of these enjoyable days was held at Packway, Windermere, by kind invitation of our secretary, Miss Crossland. Packway is delightfully situated among the wooded, rocky fields above the lake, and it being a lovely day in May 1971, many members and friends gathered to see the ponies.

Mr. Wales and Mr. Winder, both knowledgeable veterans of our Society, discussed the merits and faults of each pony: these talks are of great benefit to younger members and are much appreciated.

A delicious tea was provided.

## OPEN DAY AT BARNCROSH

When I blithely said "Oh yes, we will have an open day at Barncross", I had no idea what I could show far more experienced and knowledgeable Fell pony breeders than myself with my 'collection'. Finally I decided to have a Young stock judging class comprising 2 and 3-year-old fillies and geldings which were placed by Miss Crossland. This was followed by a demonstration of Fell ponies under saddle, doing some of the things that are expected of them in the riding world today. Also, a little bit of how we progress from a newly broken pony to the finished article — a willing, obedient, well balanced pony, able to perform all reasonable ridden work.

We had five ponies, each ridden by a different person and each giving a solo demonstration.

The first was a 5-year-old mare which had a foal at 4 having been backed and ridden a little as a 3-year-old. She showed elementary schooling at the walk and trot, designed to make the pony supple and obedient.

This was followed by a 4-year-old gelding being schooled on to the next stage, i.e. teaching him to go into a canter and practicing smooth transitions from one pace to another.

We then had a very nervous, strong, impulsive 6-year-old mare ridden by an eight-year-old child. This combined the two objects of showing how a difficult pony can be made steady and obedient enough to be ridden by such a small child, and an elementary jumping lesson trotting over poles on the ground before jumping two small jumps.

The fourth pony was a 14-year-old mare who, 4 years ago, was strong, rough, disobedient and hard to hold. She performed a Pony Club "S" Dressage Test in quite a creditable fashion followed by a Show jumping round. She won a Pony Club Associate Dressage Test at Open Trials 2 years ago and is quite a good show jumper and hunter.

We finished up with what we hoped would be the perfect child's pony, a 12-year-old Heltondale mare ridden by a ten-year-old. They did a little schooling and then jumped the same course as the previous pony. By this time, all the other ponies were back in the stable. Rosie pecked on landing on a downhill slope at jump No. 3, Tessa fell off, lost the reins and rolled downhill away from the pony. Rosie did indeed prove herself to be a perfect child's pony by standing stock still until Tessa remounted and was ready to complete the course.

Although correct breaking and schooling go a long way to producing a good riding pony, sound conformation is equally important. A pony that is active and free moving will always perform better at any job than one that is tied at the shoulder and cannot cover the ground. Also to be avoided is Hackney type action which gives a most uncomfortable ride. Strong hind-quarters and well made hocks make for activity and good jumping.

A pony that has a straight shoulder or a short neck is loaded in front and is neither a comfortable ride nor does it look well under saddle. Temperament is also

important. Those that are quick to learn, quiet and willing, make life much easier but care must be taken not to lose their spirit.

Above all, we must retain the true Mountain and Moorland characteristics of the Fell pony, the hardiness and ability to live and work in all weathers on poor quality food. With this goes the true pony type coat with great length of mane and tail hair and the lovely shapely pony head with plenty of width between bold eyes. The stamina that we admire so much in Native ponies owes itself to breadth and depth which gives plenty of room for heart and lungs to perform, also legs with good bone to stand up to endless work without developing splints, spavins, strained tendons and feet that are round and hard to avoid sinking in the soft or splitting on the hard.

The Fell pony is a true all-purpose, hardy, economical pony. Let us keep him so for future generations to enjoy.

ELIZABETH BALL.

### OPEN DAY AT TWISLEHOPE

Mrs. George Laing and her charming family gave us a very enjoyable afternoon at Twislehope on 10th September. We saw her nice young Fell Ponies and also several mares with most promising foals.

The stallion T. Druid was brought out for us to see and very well he looked too. We saw him ridden and then jumped over some little fences which he did beautifully. Linnel Rogerly was there too for us to see, a well-known fell pony and winner of many jumping classes and Hunter Trials, etc. Also he is trained for dressage, and can hold his own anywhere. Then we saw Lownthwaite Rob. What a great pony he is, and how hard he works, and still looks young and gay. He is a winner of championships both at the Royal Highland Show, and Ponies of Britain (Kelso), and also has done very well at Hunter Trials, etc., not to mention carrying the Huntsman of the Liddersdale Hounds when necessary. He and Linnel Rogerly are by Blakebeck Boy, a grand old fell pony now dead, alas!

We all packed into a big barn where we were shown some lovely films of the fell rides. Some of the shots were really quite beautiful. The rides take place in the autumn over some glorious country and all the riders seemed to be enjoying themselves very much. It was so nice to see so many really nice fell ponies doing a job that they are so well-suited for, and doing it so well.

We also saw a film taken at the Fell Pony Show. There were some excellent driving turn-outs and some really top class ponies both in hand and ridden. After seeing these excellent films we went in to tea, and what a tea!

Mrs. Laing is well known for her excellent baking and this really surpassed everything — delicious, it all was.

Twislehope is such a lovely quiet glen, with the wee burn running down quite close to the house, and the beautiful hills all round. We peeped into a big wire run, and there were a pack of Beagles, and in a little house was a family of gorgeous Siamese kittens) and of course the Liddesdale pack of foxhounds is kennelled there. It really was a wonderful afternoon and I am sure everyone enjoyed it as much as we did. The Bring & Buy stall presided over by young George Laing was a huge success, and I heard that over £20 was made. Lady-Fairfax Lucy made a charming speech, thanking Mrs. Laing for such a lovely afternoon.

JOAN BROOK.

## OPEN DAY AT WOLDS STUD

On 30th September 1973 an enjoyable time was had at Miss Glass's Wolds Stud, Leicestershire.

We were delighted to see Miss Crossland and Mrs. Laing who drove down from the Lakes and joined our willing helpers for a buffet lunch.

Our visitors, who numbered over eighty, began to arrive soon after lunch and came from as far as Yorkshire, Wales, Somerset and Essex.

Miss Crossland opened the afternoon with a talk about Fell ponies and their characteristics and several of Miss Glass's ponies, including her stallion Waverhead Rob, were paraded so that points of conformation could be appreciated. We then walked to the paddocks to see the mares and foals and it was interesting to see the stock that Rob is getting. He imprints free movement, a fine pony head, good bone and an equable temperament, and it is worthy of note that his stock won the produce class at the National Pony Society's Show last summer, beating the well known Welsh stallion Chirk Caradoc.

On this cold September day everyone next enjoyed tea in the nearby Scout Hut where Miss Crossland and Mrs. Laing showed films of Fell ponies in action and answered questions about them. A raffle was held and we were able to auction many other splendid gifts, including a nomination to Waverhead Rob. Poor Rob had been boxed to the local weighbridge to enable us to hold a "Guess the weight of the stallion" competition and we were astonished to find he tipped the scales at 8 cwt. 42 lbs.

We were delighted to give the Fell Pony Society £50.

The afternoon would not have been possible but for the great helpscapes generosity of friends who donated many gifts and absorbed most of the running costs. It is very much hoped that an annual event will be held in the South for members of the Fell Pony Society.

ONLOOKER.

## OPEN DAY AT ABBEY ST. BATHAN'S

A very enjoyable day was spent by a large number of members and other pony enthusiasts in a lovely setting at Abbey St. Bathans, where Mr. and Mrs. Dobie and their sons made everyone welcome.

All their ponies were lead out for inspection, headed by the well-known gelding, Heltondale Toby (Tufty) who has done so well in handy pony classes and hunter trials. He was followed by the stallions, Linnel Flamenco and Gala Barberrry, the mares and foals, and their older progeny.

An excellent riding demonstration was given; the legs of the three ponies going in such good rhythm that they looked as though they belonged to only one!

A breaking and long-reining demonstration was given by Miss Gilfan with Abbey Pimpernel, and lastly a jumping demonstration by Lownthwaite Lucky and Toby.

A scrumptious tea was provided in the village hall. Local ladies had been hard at work baking for it.

A film show brought the day to a close.

"Bring and Buy" stalls raised money for the R.A.S.E. Exhibition Fund. I got rather a surprised look from the receptionist at the hotel that night when I handed her a biscuit tin for safe custody and told her it was full of money!

P.C.

# Fell Ponies at Dalemmain

'Tis August and our Summer Show  
And out to Dalemmain's park we'll go.  
Ponies come from far and near  
With shining coats and gleaming gear;  
Blacks and browns and sometimes grey  
With sweeping tails and action gay,  
Mares with foals and youngsters shy;  
And some in harness flying high  
Across the green sward of the park;  
The Show goes on from dawn to dark.  
They toss their heads with native pride  
And take the day within their stride.  
From Heltondale to Patterdale,  
To Keswick and St. John's sweet vale;  
From Lownthwaite's steeps to Waverhead,  
And Caldbeck where good ponies feed  
On Carrock's mighty misty bray:  
O'er Kirkstone's pass to green Packway,  
From Leithenwater's ancient slope  
To Huntfield's hills and Twislehope  
From Linnel's woods and dauntless Dene,  
These ponies gather on the scene  
Where yoemen mustered to the call  
With swords and drums and cannonball.  
These times of raids and strife are past —  
The noonday sun long shadows cast,  
The river's ripples onward flow  
'Neath leafy branches, bending low.  
Dark, dreamy woodlands, dappled cool,  
While spotted trout rise from the pool.  
Hark! Sounds of harness jingle near  
Now ponies' hoof beats echo clear;  
Fine feathered ponies pace and fret  
To battle for that red rosette!

S. M.McC.

## A Descriptive Appreciation of the Fell Pony

By Mrs. OLIVE FAUDEL-PHILLIPS

The Fell pony is the most useful as well as decorative of our Native Breeds.

He is hardy and tough with good feet and a lot of bone; strong back and loins, carries himself and has quality in plenty. He also has, to my mind, one of the best features of any of the native breeds, namely a long and quality front with good natural head carriage. A grand thing for anyone young or old to sit behind. He walks on freely with a long stride making one feel that one is on a well-bred horse, except that the ground is a bit nearer!

He can live out or in but beware too good grazing. His natural habitat is the fells in all weathers and there is precious little good grass there.

The Fell can be ridden by grown-ups, old and young and by children capable of riding a pony of his size. He will go hunting; you can jump him or you can drive him. He goes superbly in harness and looks grand. I remember Windsor's very first horse show (an afternoon affair!) when H.M. The Queen, then Princess Elizabeth drove her fell pony and a very good turnout it was.

Black or a very dark brown are his proper colours. My word, don't their coats shine and what a picture he is after five minutes with brush and rubber.

Many years ago the late Roy B. Charlton of Linnel fame lent us Linnel Pearl, a 4-year-old, to see what kind of general riding pony a Fell would make. We had her 3 or 4 years before she returned to stud. We clipped and trimmed her in the winter. I do not think there was anyone who did not profit from riding her or who did not thoroughly enjoy their ride. She was a complete success as were many of her successors. Always willing and ready to pull out, never turned sour or stale in the way some ponies do. In 1936 we took her to the N.P.S. Show at Islington where she won the Country Life Cup against all ridden breeds of Mountain and Moorland ponies. The following year we again won the cup this time with Linnel Best Boy.

We had any number of Fells through our hands. Some better than others, but all turned out well and made good riding and/or driving ponies for their various owners.

If I had to choose one animal only, the Fell Pony would be my choice every time.

## The Martindale Ride

1971

The first Sunday in October seems to be auspicious for our Ride; we met at Pooley Bridge and started up the long track across Barton Fell, with Ullswater, blue and sparkling in the sunshine lying far below us. Across the bracken-covered fell and through the deep ravine of Elderbeck, we rode, and from there a long upward and sometimes treacherously boggy climb to the top of Swarth Fell. We were not far from High Street, the Roman road that traverses these fells between their mighty forts at Brougham and Ambleside. Some of the ponies were fit and found the long ascent no problem, but for the others it was quite an effort before they reached the top of Loadpot and began to descend steeply into the head of Martindale. A few red deer were grazing quietly and disappeared back over the top in a hurry as we led the ponies down the close-cropped grassy slopes. We passed through the wicket gate in the wall above the old primaeval forest where carpets of bluebells mirror the sky in May — and on down among the alders and other ancient trees, to rest the ponies and eat our picnic lunch beside the Ramsgill Beck.

Refreshed and very cheerful we set off down the valley with its grey walls alive with parsley fern, to Sandwick's picturesque humpy bridge, and thence along the fellside to Scale Howe waterfall above the lake. The waters crashed down among the rowan trees, laden with berries, into deep pools where the ponies quenched their thirst: they seemed to enjoy the ride along the tall bracken lined sheep tracks, as much as their riders.

Tea was arranged at a farm in Sandwick which was much enjoyed, and our president, Major Hasell, joined the party; it was so hot that we cast our coats and rode home along the track below Swarth Fell, and up to the stone circle on Moor Divock. The atmosphere almost felt enchanted as we circled the stones in the gathering dusk, after a wonderful ride. Back at Mains House farm we took farewell of one another and departed the many ways from which we had earlier come.

# Pennine Ride

The meeting place in 1972 was at Bow Hall, Dufton, by kind invitation of Mr. Dargue, who ably led the party on his black Fell mare of the old "Peeping" breed which he and his family have kept for many generations.

The day was perfect for an expedition on to the high far out fells — one of those glorious mellow days in St. Luke's Little Summer. Seventeen riders set out along the narrow walled road to Murton and from there climbed the fell track to Murton Heads. This was a long, fairly steep climb and the ponies needed to be reasonably fit, having already jogged for several miles before we began to ascend. The wild peat mosses would be very soft going in a wet autumn, but with the lack of rain in past weeks and little snow to fill the springs last winter, the going was exceptionally sound all the way which is a great relief when a number of ponies are involved.

Eventually the highest point was reached, and the vast expanse of white mosses on High Cup Plain where the shallow stony Maize Beck sallies down the centre, appeared for an instant like a misty lake in the hazy sunlight. Suddenly the breath takingly awesome gully of High Cup came into view with its limestone fringes around the rim of the gill appearing like chiselled-out frescoes.

At this point the ponies were unsaddled and everyone enjoyed a rest and picnic lunch, before setting off along the forbidding looking track above the far side of the gill and through Narrow Gate. To look down into the "cauldron" below might be unwise for those with bad heads for heights, but the sure-footed fell ponies found no difficulties.

From then on a quiet sheltered ride across Peeping Hill and Bluethwaite Hill led to Rundale Beck and so down the track to Dufton. The last part of the track was a narrow leafy lane where every sort of hedgerow plant grew as it must have done for generations past — blackthorn covered with dark blue sloes, hazel, hawthorn and wild roses, their glowing hips rambling among the other plants. Probably little modern fertiliser has ever harmed them or the spring flowers that grow in their shelter.

A delicious tea was provided by Mr. Dargue for the riders in Dufton village after which they departed on their many different and distant routes.

## Ride in Hexhamshire

Mr. and Mrs. Charlton kindly invited the 1973 ride to meet at Linnels, and the most enjoyable day was spent in an entirely different countryside.

Some of the transport lost its way, so it was noon before Mr. Charlton was able to lead the gathering of twenty ponies through lovely winding country up the Devils Water Valley for about eight miles to Eads Bush where Mr. and Mrs. Mann kindly provided most excellent refreshments.

Mr. Charlton continues: "The Linnels is 200 ft., Eads Bush 800 ft. above sea level and on the fringe of the famous grouse moor Riddlehamhope, where 3,500 grouse were shot in autumn 1973.

The Devils Water Valley is heavily wooded and the rides through the woods run parallel to the river providing excellent pony tracks. About one mile up river from Linnels is the site of the Battle of Hexham, 1464, the final battle in the Wars of the Roses.

On the return ride after lunch we reached a height of 1,250 ft. on the watershed between the Devils Water and the Derwent, on the moors among the heather. Unfortunately visibility was not very good, but on a clear day one can see Cheviot 60 miles to the North, and Coquet Island off the Northumbrian coast 40 miles to the East.

During the whole ride we were in that part of Northumberland known from time immemorial as Hexhamshire, which has ecclesiastical connections with Hexham Abbey and the See of York.

There were one or two tired ponies at the end of the ride, but the majority were still on the bit at the end of the 20 miles.

Cumberland and the Lake District is superb, unique riding country, but the fell pony members who took part in this year's ride and did not know Hexhamshire were surprised at the beauty and extent of this wild, unspoilt part of Northumberland.

## Grass Sickness

It may not be generally known that grass sickness was first reported at the Yeomanry camp at Barrie, Dundee in 1911. Before this date it was thought to be a form of chronic colic, but after this recorded case many instances were recorded several in the Biggar area in the same year, one being at Covington Mill.

Animal Diseases Research Association,  
Moredun Institute, Edinburgh

## Grass Sickness Research

In December 1970, the Horserace Betting Levy Board commenced a full-time project of research into grass sickness. Since that time, a large number of individual cases of the disease have been studied both alive and at post-mortem, and a survey of the disease over large parts of Scotland carried out, all aimed at gleaning information pointing to the cause of this unpleasant disease. This cause has not yet been identified; however the work has provided new information about the circumstances under which grass sickness arises, and has revealed promising avenues for further research.

We now know that horses and ponies are equally likely to be effected, and that donkeys, too, are susceptible, but that there does not appear to be any sex predisposition. The disease does not seem to be associated with any particular type of pasture, nor with changes in grazing, but it is more likely to be encountered on premises where grass sickness has occurred before (especially within the previous two years) than on establishments with no history of the disease. There is, however, good evidence to suggest that grass sickness is not contagious. Horses and ponies which are recent arrivals seem to be more susceptible than those established longer than two months, but stabling, even for part of the day, or overnight, may substantially reduce the incidence.

The other face of the research has been directed at the pathology of the disease. It is known that the principal changes are found in specialised areas of the nervous system — those concerned with swallowing, stomach and bowel function, heart-beat, sweating, etc. It has now been shown that blood plasma taken from an acute case of grass sickness will reproduce those changes in an experimental animal, although without clinical illness. However, the factor in the plasma which creates these changes is likely to be closely related to the cause of grass sickness, and present endeavours are being directed at identifying this "neurotoxin".

J. S. GILMOUR, B.V.M. & S., M.R.C.V.S.



# Colourful History

Delving deep into the misty past in order to gather sufficient information and facts to compile a history of the Fell Pony Breed is a difficult task as the period up to about the mid-nineteenth century is poorly documented, and a great deal of surmising is required to fill in the gaps and give a complete picture up to that date. Often this can be facilitated by viewing the subject from a particular angle, in this case colour, and much information can be collated on the breed generally by using this indirect viewpoint as a medium for further investigation. Certainly, the colours in which Fell Ponies are bred are indicative of the foundation stock from which the breed evolved and the influencing factors — a precised history in itself.

The Fell Pony was based on two quite separate breeds or types:—

(a) The indigenous wild ponies of the region which looked like something between the Tarpan and the present day Exmoor pony. They stood on average between twelve and thirteen hands and were usually brown or dun in colour. Dun was, incidently, the original colour for all ponies and the dun fell ponies mentioned in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were throwbacks to the indigenous ancestors of the breed.

b) The Frisian Horse about one thousand of which (mainly stallions) were imported into northern England by the Romans about one hundred A.D. Frizington in Cumberland was a centre for these horses at that time and the name Frizington means literally "Village of the Sons of the Frisians". These imports from Friesland (now part of the Netherlands) were substantial animals, standing between fourteen and fifteen hands, and not really dissimilar to an oversize Fell Pony. One of their characteristics was that they were invariably black, sometimes with a small star or a little white on the heel, and their prepotency when used for crossing with other breeds gave the Fell it's black colouration. Black being the dominant colour, the browns and duns soon became secondary colours and throughout the middle ages, Tudor and Stuart times, any mention of the ponies of the northern counties describes them as black.

As the Galloway of south-west Scotland was bred on the same lines as the Fell, the two breeds looked very alike as regards both conformation and colour, and by eighteen hundred the Galloway had merged into the Fell. It is very probable that the original Lingcropper found on Stainmore in seventeen forty five(?) was a Galloway and not a Fell as legend would have it.

Henry VIII's innumerable statutes and laws pertaining to horse breeding always exempted the northern counties of Westmorland and Cumberland, but his influence was still felt indirectly. After the reformation all the large abbeys and monasteries were dissolved. Most of these wealthy institutions had kept cattle and horses, and quite often these were white, the colour acting as a sort of recognition mark, the monks being white robed themselves. When the white stock was dispersed after the reformation, it naturally merged, over the years, with the Fell stock and eventually disappeared altogether. Whilst this had no long term effect on the Fell as regards either conformation or colour (black maintaining it's dominance), the grey element had been introduced into the breed. I should add here that grey is a colour which comes and goes genetically in all breeds hence the spayt of grey Fell Ponies in recent years.

In fifteen-thirteen, grey was the most prevalent colour in northern England with black in second place, then brown and bay, though this set up was short-lived and the darker colours soon regained their virtual monopoly. The primitive dun colouration was slowly dying out and is now extinct. Roans are closely associated with greys and were also introduced into the breed in Tudor times.

The occasional occurrence of piebald Fells in the early stud books can be discounted as these animals were undoubtedly bred from the coloured gipsy

ponies annually brought to Brough Hill Fair and their inclusion in the register of pure-bred Fells reflected on the lack of breed standards laid-down at that time and on the lack of discretion on the part of the inspection committee. This can be clarified further by reference to stallions like Goblin who, though accepted for registration, was out of a pure-bred Exmoor mare from the Acland Herd, by Blooming Heather.

The "Yellow Earls" insatiable passion for that colour and chesnut horses was characterised by the chesnut Fell ponies he bred and got registered. Such ponies, like the piebalds mentioned above, undoubtedly introduced into the breed a small percentage of undesirable blood which is still capable of appearing in "throw-backs" in present day Fells which have for past generations been of an acceptable breed colour.

Neither the indigenous pony nor the Frisian sported excessive white markings, white socks or blazes are unknown and their occurrence would indicate cross breeding.

CLIVE RICHARDSON.

## A Visit to the Border Country

October 1972

With only two days in the North to find a suitable stallion for my four-year-old fell mare "Wold's Bunting", I could only visit a few breeders, all of whom were most kind and very helpful.

It was extremely interesting and instructive to see many fell ponies almost all at once. Each owner obviously favoured a type of pony and was breeding to that end. One could almost pick out the line a pony came from by looking at it, though I could not remember the pedigree of each individual.

The first day cleared towards the afternoon and the second was a gorgeously bright bold autumn one.

We arrived at Penrith at the end of the Council meeting; and after a comfortable night at Moffat, and having bought some Scottish delicacies, we found our way to Mrs. McCosh's at Huntfield with lovely open hill country plentifully supplied with good shelter belts of woodland. Incidentally, I admired her lovely garden. She has some super ponies which she took time and trouble to show off to us. "Dalemain Nettle" the stallion was running contentedly with his mares, perfectly willing to have a halter put on him, and to be taken off the hill and trotted up and down for my inspection. He is a great mover and has a most attractive head. I saw all the ponies, Fell and others. Mrs. McCosh bred the dam and grand dam of famous eventer and show jumper "Merely a Monarch" who is an eighth Fell.

We went on to the Misses Brooke at Innerleithen where the countryside is wilder and steeper, but as conifers have been planted over a lot of the hillsides it will soon be more enclosed and dark. Two-year-old "Dene Devout" or "Henry" as his owners call him, was running with his mares, very friendly and quiet to handle and inspect. There are some very nice young ponies and good brood mares. Gala Bramble and her lovely foal were guests as their owner had no grazing for them. Then up the Etrick valley to see an eight-year-old bay Fell gelding for riding belonging to Mr. Anderson at Midgehope. Across in fading light to the Laings at Twislehope, we only met two cars in twenty-eight miles. In the morning Isabel and Fiona brought in the mares and foals for us and some other visitors to see. The Laing girls and I rode in turn "Lownthwaite Rob" an old show gelding who gives one the feeling of being on a big horse; he carries Mr. Laing the Master of the Liddleesdale Foxhounds. We also rode a Fell X T.B. five-year-old hunt horse with a big jump, and Twislehope Druid, the Fell stallion, who is a good ride, also jumps well. The countryside is beautiful, natural, and away from it all. No trees

except in the small valley containing the farm and buildings. Mid-morning we left, drove out of Scotland down the North Tyne valley to Mrs. Newall's at Todridge who very kindly took me to see all her ponies. "Lucky Jim" the stallion, a grand old man who carries his years lightly, was looking well running with his mares. I saw a good, even bunch of fillies as Lucky Jim throws more fillies than colts.

From there we went south-west into more enclosed and wooded land with narrow lanes. Our final visit was to Mr. and Mrs. Charlton at the Linnels, with another very attractive garden; this one has the mill stream running through it. There is a lovely old bridge on the road with a terrifyingly steep corner.

Mr. and Mrs. Charlton took me out to see the ponies. Here there were more colts. "Linnel Romany Boy", the very nice young stallion with plenty of bone and good head, was running with his mares and foals. After this Mr. Charlton took me to see more of their well known ponies grazing in well sheltered fields with forest land in between. I like the Fell X T.B. young ponies who look most promising. We had tea and a long talk about ponies and breeding.

I saw so many Fells in forty eight hours that I dreamed of black and brown ponies for many nights afterwards.

ANNE GREENLEES.

## Looking Back into History

The history of the Fell Breed goes back to time immemorable, and until recent years the horse or pony was one of a farmer's most valuable assets: without one he was "Sunk", and you will notice that the stable was always the best building in the old steadings, usually built onto or near the end of the farm house.

The fell pony played its part well: it was a tough hardy breed, and could do a much longer day's work than its taller neighbours. By force of circumstances fell ponies had to be "capable harness ponies" in the first instance; it was frequently a long, hard day when the family drove to market, especially if the farm was a long way off the beaten track. It also had to be a strong pony, able to carry a heavy man across the fells in all weathers to shepherd his sheep; though the fell tops are fairly easy going, there is often a hard climb out to the ground where the sheep are required to graze: the sheep must be encouraged to find fresh herbage as far out as possible. Lastly the ponies would be needed to pull the mowing machine in hay time, on fell fields, frequently on slopes with outcrops of rock, much too difficult for a Clydesdale and dangerous for a tractor, but every inch of the precious "in-by" land must be made to produce what it could for the winter.

The lands of Cumbria were not all rich lands, and while the rich arable acres gave the dwellers of the low ground a better living, the hill farmers all down the centuries have struggled to make ends meet, and, perforce, their ponies were small, strong and surefooted.

Pony racing was a great sport in the Lake District. There was racing at Brough Hill Fair and many other places, and on the top of High Street, between Mardale and Martindale, the "race-course" is still marked on the map. This was a splendid centre near the Straits of Riggindale where pony fanciers could meet, and people from Windermere and Troutbeck side could easily join them at this point.

Jack's Delight, who was bred in the 1880s by Mr. Bennett of Walthwaite became the property of Mr. Joseph Relf who for three years advertized him to trot and Fell Pony in the world. He was four times shown in competitions open to the world, including the Highland Society's Show at Glasgow, which he won by beating thirteen others, and an offer of £200 was refused. Jack's Delight's sire was Mountain Hero, grandsire Highland Rope, and Great-grandsire Lingcropper. His full sister Little Fan won many first prizes at such places as



*Anne Varley winning at the Breed Show 1972 with Calgarth Brown Jack*



*Mr. J. Wilson and Eden View Beauty at the Dalemain Show*

Carlisle, Wigton, Penrith and Keswick, and she was eventually sold to a Mr. Johnstone in London for £200, in whose possession she trotted a match against the famous Steel Grey for £50-a-side, and beat him: she was then sold for £300, and a hundred of her portraits were sold on the ground at a guinea a time — such was her fame.

Another early mention of trotting records was of Mr. Dent's Balderhead, a brown mare who trotted in a trap, as many of them did, 2 miles and 120 yards in seven minutes. Her daughter was the famous brown mare Doll whose action was said to "never have been surpassed in the North". Doll's daughter, Heatherbell, was "that noted trotter" who won so many prizes in Liverpool and elsewhere.

There is also mention of Merry Driver, who was got by Old Merry Driver who trotted 10 miles against Mousetrap for £50-a-side beating him and going the whole distance in 33 minutes carrying 12 stone. Old Merry Driver was got by Old Grey Shades, who was descended from the fastest trotting blood in England.

These were all pure-bred fell ponies, recommended by the Fell Pony Committee of the day to travel the districts.

There are plenty of mentions of grey fell ponies. One of Mr. Dargue's ancestors, at Bow Hall, Dufton advertised a dark grey five-year-old pony, in about 1870, 13½ hh high: could trot a mile in 3 minutes and 2 seconds carrying 12 stone, and was a good harness pony as well. Another dark grey 4-year-old 13¼ hh high Spanker, could trot a mile in 3 minutes 4 seconds carrying 12 stone and naturally "goes well in harness". Spanker was also sold about the same date.

Such was the stamina and quality of those early fell ponies. Mountain Ranger, who was famous about the turn of the century, was admitted by all judges to be the heaviest animal of his height that ever served mares in Cumberland. They need to be tough, and their hard round blue feet were the most important points to preserve — "no feet, no horse", is a true saying.

Even though the "raison d'être" of our modern fell ponies has altered, we must preserve the inherent qualities bred so carefully into them in the generations past, when £300 for Little Fan before the turn of the century must have been an enormous price, and she was not alone in commanding a big price as other early records show.

S. M.Mc.

## Driving Ponies

Driving has become very popular and several ponies belonging to members go extremely well in harness. The class at the breed show is the most spectacular event of the day, with a variety of vehicles in use. A four-wheeled wagonette was brought all the way from Hampshire by Mary Longsdon, and looked very fine with her Bewcastle Beacon between the shafts. This wagonette was found as a wreck and restored to its former glory. In the main, gigs and dog carts are most numerous in the ring.

Mr. Bell and his Waverhead Magic have taken part in many competitions and one of their earliest and most spectacular successes was at Leicester in 1972 when they won the Wills Knock-Out Stakes from all comers, with the only clear round in the fastest time. This sporting event so far south must have been a great advertisement for the breed. Magic has taken part in the driving class at the Cumberland Show on several occasions. This entailed an 8 mile drive through the town and the traffic and out into the country before the final drive in the show ring, and a pony needs to be fit to compete in these events and end up looking fresh before the spectators round the ring.

Anne Varley's Calgarth Brown Jack has also taken part in many events, some of which have been written of in other pages. These ponies and several others are

now well-known in harness and we hear that some new comers are "in the offing". Skelton Show is yet another show that schedules a driving class with a seven-mile marathon round country roads as part of the competition: while Appleby was one of the first of our North Country shows to resurrect the driving class. On one occasion a few years ago this was won by Sleddale Beauty driven by Mr. Morland. This small, old-fashioned type of fell pony looked so well in harness and moved with such spirit. Harness in good condition and in sound condition is almost more difficult to find than the vehicles, and is also very costly. It seems so sad that so much harness and so many pony traps must have been literally thrown away not so very long ago.

**The Combined Driving Championships will be held again in Lowther on 25th and 26th May.**

The F.P.S. has been invited to stage an exhibition of fell ponies showing their uses, during these days. They will also have a tent where literature and photographs will be on show.

## Combined Driving - Lowther 1973

The 1973 driving season opened in the heart of fell pony country with the Lowther Combined Driving event. This event was the first of its kind when other than teams of horses were eligible. There was a large entry in the class teams of four horses (which was the selection event for the European Championships) and the single pony class (which included two fell ponies — Mr. Bell's Waverhead Magic and my pony "Jock"). The other classes were not very well attended, but Lowther is a rather distant part for most of these combinations, most of which are from the south.

The combined competition consists of three parts:—

COMPETITION A	Section I Presentation
	Section II Dressage
COMPETITION B	Marathon
COMPETITION C	Obstacle Driving

**Presentation.** This is judged by two judges and the "score" is average. Marks are given for:—

- Driver — 10 marks (Position, dress, hat, gloves, whip)
- Groom — 10 marks (dress, gloves, handling of pony)
- Horse — 10 marks (condition, turnout, matching for teams, etc.)
- Vehicle — 10 marks (condition, cleanliness and *spare equipment*)
- General Turnout — 10 marks.

**Dressage.** There are 3 tests — Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced. The teams at Lowther drove the advanced and everyone else, including the ponies, the elementary. To be driven from memory.

**Marathon.** This is to test the fitness and stamina of the horse, and the judgement of pace, of the driver. The latter is as important as the first, as each section of the course (see below) has to be driven at a set pace and speed, and for every 10 seconds early or late, penalties are given:—

Section	Approximate Distance	Pace	Time per KM.
A	11	Trot	3 mins. 45
B	1	Walk	8 mins. 35
C	6	Fast trot	3 mins. 20
D	1	Walk	8 mins. 35
E	10	Trot	3 mins. 50

Section C contains hazards, which cause many problems for the teams, but for singles they are little trouble — if your pony will not hesitate at water.

The speeds sound very technical, but if you can measure the course on the inspection car trip, and mentally mark the end of each Km — you know the time you should take — and can allow for hills, hazards, etc.

Section A. This trot is comfortable for Jock and we tend to be early.

Sections B and D — walk — we can do this time but both Jock and I find it difficult — (to keep walking fast without breaking into a trot, and for me to concentrate hard for 8 minutes!).

Section C — fast trot. This we find possible on a flat road with a good surface. Unfortunately this is not provided! The only pony to do this section without penalty was a hackney. I think most fell ponies will find this speed difficult — especially for the distance and the conditions, as it includes hills, hazards, mud and water.

Section E is a nice trot but for a tired pony it is often difficult to maintain the speed required.

N.B. The times are the same for teams, pairs and singles — horses and ponies.

**Obstacle Driving.** A course is set with cones. The course is twisty and requires obedience to turn quickly, sharply and smoothly without getting upset. Time does not count for the combined score, as penalties are given for knock downs, and exceeding the time allowed.

Jock and I went into serious training at the beginning of March. However, he was quite fit already, as he had hunted every Saturday during the season and had been inside, and fed. However, I was working in Barnsley and could be at home only at weekends. I started to come home mid-week to take Jock out, and then back to Yorkshire early the next morning. A friend took him out another day so he had plenty of hard work — and so did I!!

School holidays saw the beginning of daily hard work, and 12 miles a day — come rain, hail, snow or occasionally sunshine. I found many new routes around Sedbergh, as well as hardening us both off. George Bowman and Jack Collinson gave the competing members of the North West Driving Club “a lesson” on the organization of the Marathon as well as dressage instruction. This was most useful as I had no idea as to the speeds that were expected — whatever the terrain. So, the next few weeks saw me trotting round Sedbergh, complete with stop watch, learning to time myself.

The week before Lowther saw frantic polishing, grooming and plucking. Jock was very woolly and I had not wanted to clip him in March, so I tried to get his coat out by grooming and keeping him rugged up. For 10 weeks he was strapped hard, but he still had a long “overcoat”, especially on his tummy, over his summer coat.

The weekend arrived and on the Friday we had a competitors meeting and inspected the course. H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh was worried about the hazards; he thought he would have difficulties getting his team through the trees — and he was proved right!

9 a.m. on Saturday saw the Marathon. The competitors set off at 10-minute intervals. Spares and harness checked, off we went. My groom (Tony Collinson) peered at the stop watch and carefully watched his list of kilometres. We started off along by the river and then up the steep hill in Askham village. Our first hazard was the water in a farmyard. This was a sharp turn through a gate: the turn, for us, was quite simple, but the teams regularly caught a hub on one gatepost or the other. The water was quite deep and muddy, and I was relieved to be through with no trouble. The next part of Section A was a rough field — up and down, bang, bump — it was most uncomfortable. The river was rough and stoney. One had to turn under a bridge and cross the river. I had had professional advice as to where to go to miss the stones. After passing through a slippery farmyard Section A was completed. We were 10 seconds early, so I was quite pleased. The walk section was level and a road surface. I was only a few seconds late so we were doing quite well and I was pleased. After 10 minutes break, we set off on the last section.

Negotiating a steep hill we passed through the "Duke's Trees", along a muddy track — about 4 inches of mud — and then along the old gallops through more hazards — still on time — and then came this enormous hill. It went on and on, steep, but always a pull. Jock thought this too much and we went slower, and slower, and were two minutes late at the top. However, the next walk again was flat and we both got our wind back before another 10 minute break. Section E was a nice trip home except for another long hill. Once at the top we trotted gaily for the last few miles back to the finish — both tired, but only 3 minutes behind our scheduled time. Whilst recovering in the bar (mother looking after Jock!) the reports coming in from the teams were most exciting — "Would a horse box go to pick up Mr. X at the quarry? — "Mr. W. has overturned — would a doctor please attend. "Mr. Y. has lost a wheel rim and as the teams referees returned, the tales grew more vivid — one "abandoned ship about 3 miles out — one spoke of fences demolished — another of lead horses splitting one each side of a tree, and others of loose horses galloping about. My round was most tame!!

9 a.m. Sunday saw the Presentation.

This is very strict and can be most discouraging, as the southern opposition is so very smart. However, marking should be for condition, cleanliness and fit of harness and trap — not value and expense. I was encouraged by the thought that you lose 2 points for being 10 seconds late at every section, and the smartest turnout could always be slow, or even have a disaster at a hazard! All the expense and polishing in the world can come to nothing once you are out on the marathon, especially if your pony doesn't like water!

My Dressage was a complete disaster. I had walked, drawn and driven the test until I really knew it, but I get in a dressage ring and am totally lost. Jock was so fit I was waiting for him to take off (my backing usually meant 5 steps back and a leap in the air and the halts resembled an I.R.A. bomb about to explode) However, I got lost: I lost 10 marks for that plus 10 more for the bit I missed out, and I still wasn't last, so for a learning exercise Jock (not I) did quite well — we were at least still in one piece. The extended trot of the Welsh ponies and the Hackneys was most impressive, but our 7½ marks was I thought quite satisfactory.

The Obstacle event I hoped was to be Jock's forte and it proved to be the fell ponies forte. The first round was for the combined result and both Mr. Bell and I were clear. They had a drive off for the prize of half a case of White Horse Whiskey. Mr Bell went first and was clear in a fast time. The next four competitors faulted and I was last to go, so it was do or die (I don't like whisky anyway!). Jock went like a bomb, clipped the corners (my groom was reported to have both eyes tightly closed and hanging on for his life). I finished 4 seconds in front of Mr. Bell — what a credit to the fell breed. I finished 6th overall and Mr. Bell 7th, and, although tired, thoroughly enjoyed my weekend.

Combined driving sounds very grand and complicated but the only way to learn about it is to have a try. However, a word of warning — your harness needs to be sound — not just clean — and it must fit well, especially the collar. And both the pony and the driver need to be fit — the pony very fit. The marathon is far too long and difficult for an unfit pony and attempting the speeds could be cruel, if the pony was not really up to it. However, it is great fun, and the "driving people" are all very kind and helpful; they are great fun, and make everyone most welcome.

ANNE VARLEY

\* \* \*

The beautiful old mare Gala Bramble, bred by Dr. Adams in Peebleshire, returned north to her owner but will end her days with Miss Brooke at Innerleithen where she produced a filly foal, Gala Bryony. She was owned for some years by Mrs. Payne in Warwickshire: both she and her offspring have had many successes in the show ring.



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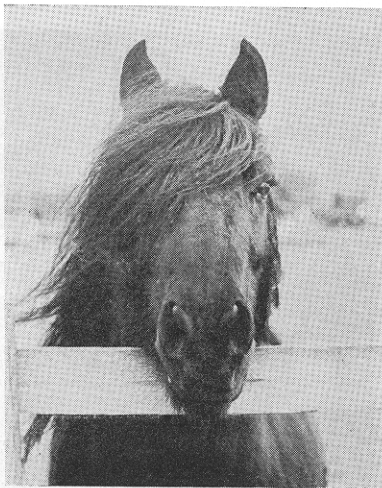
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Mrs. Pinsent from Ivybridge, Devon wrote to tell me about Dalemain Hazelnut who left the north many years ago. She bred regularly always to the Premium Stallion and produced twelve foals: two by Little Cloud, one of which hunts with the Vale of Aylesbury, and another in Cornwall. Hazelnut's progeny have all been splendid hunting ponies; one of them, Nutmeg, who belongs to Mrs. Pinsent's sister will jump absolutely anything. Hazelnut was out of Dalemain Heather whose sire was Linnel Lingcropper and she was by Linnel Romany II. Her days ended peacefully.

# Wolds Stud

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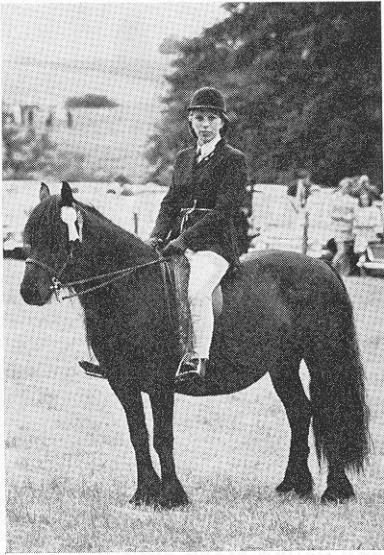
**Miss JANE GLASS,**  
**Cum Cottage, Wymeswold, Loughborough,**  
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The T.V. film, "The Foals of Epona" was transmitted in the series "The World About Us" in September 1973. This was about each of the native pony breeds, and the fells were filmed in Northumberland enacting their old job as pack ponies. It is hoped that more films will be made, but our society has produced several films of the Pleasure Rides, and of the breed Shows which have been shown at the end of the meetings held in Penrith. They have been shown to very enthusiastic audiences: the films of the rides on high fell land have been particularly attractive.

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