HORSES FOR THE ARMY
A SUGGESTION

BY
SIR WALTER GILBEY, BART.

LONDON.
VINTON & CO. & FRAM'S BUILDINGS, CHANCERY LANE E.C.
1913.
Horses for the army: a suggestion.
The original of this book is in the Cornell University Library.

There are no known copyright restrictions in the United States on the use of the text.

http://www.archive.org/details/cu31924014558690
HORSES FOR THE ARMY
A SUGGESTION

BY

SIR WALTER GILBEY, Bart.

LONDON:
VINTON & CO., 8 BREAM'S BUILDINGS, CHANCERY LANE, E.C.

1913
INTRODUCTION

THE NEW KING'S PREMIUM SCHEME ... ... ... 1

RESULTS TO BE EXPECTED ... ... ... ... 3

HORSES BRED FOR FOREIGN MARKETS ... ... ... 4

REGISTRATION AND SUBSIDY ... ... ... ... 6

WEAK POINTS IN THE REGISTRATION SCHEME ... ... 11

GOVERNMENT BREEDING IMPOSSIBLE... ... ... ... 15

PURCHASE OF YOUNG HORSES ... ... ... ... 17

NECESSITY FOR INCREASED EXPENDITURE ... ... ... 19

MEANS OF RAISING THE MONEY ... ... ... ... 21

CREATING TEN REMOUNT DEPÔTS ... ... ... 22

DEPÔT BUILDINGS REQUIRED ... ... ... ... 23

STAFF FOR EACH DEPÔT ... ... ... ... 24

PURCHASE OF THREE- AND FOUR-YEAR-OLDS ... ... 28

PROMOTION OF BREEDING OF SPECIAL TYPE ... ... 29

INCIDENTAL ADVANTAGES OF DEPÔTS... ... ... 31

NO RIVALRY WITH REGISTRATION SCHEMES ... ... 32

DEPÔTS IN OUR COLONIES ... ... ... ... 34

SUMMARY ... ... ... ... ... ... 34

ESTIMATED COST OF DEPÔT ... ... ... ... 36
HORSES FOR THE ARMY

A SUGGESTION

This pamphlet was originally published in the year 1902, when the experience gained by the South African War had made it evident that the system of obtaining remounts for the Army then in vogue could not be depended on by the nation for future emergencies.

During the eleven years that have elapsed the situation has undergone a change for the worse; the progress made by motor traction has been the means of causing tens of thousands of horses to be discarded, and those, very largely, of types most essential for military purposes. Unable to sell, farmers have very largely ceased to breed any but the heavy horse of the Shire stamp, and at the same time the best of the horses which would serve as remounts are eagerly bought up by foreign purchasers to be taken abroad. The time is come when steps must be taken to ensure that...
we shall have within our own coasts a supply of horses upon which, both in numbers and quality, our Army may depend.

Past Governments have realised the necessity of placing our Navy on a sounder footing to protect our possessions, and the country has cheerfully expended many millions of money on the building of battleships, knowing that a powerful Navy is the first condition of the Empire's strength.

The newest type of battleship of the first class is to cost about two and a half million pounds, but one-tenth of that sum, say £250,000, would purchase and equip the ten permanent Remount Depôts suggested in the following pages, which would ensure an adequate supply of horses to the Army and give to British horse-breeding the stimulus which the increase of self-propelled vehicles has now made absolutely imperative.

The vital importance of properly horning our Army has never been questioned, but the measures taken to encourage the breeding of suitable animals have never been commensurate with our needs. In 1887 Lord Salisbury's Administration wisely diverted to this end the £3,000 which had been given annually since
the reign of Queen Anne in Royal Plates for horse-racing, adding at the same time a sum of £2,000, to bring the total up to £5,000.

This grant was administered by the Royal Commission on Horse-breeding and devoted to the award of premiums to thoroughbred stallions for stud purposes, and this Commission carried on its work until 1911, in which year its task was brought to an end by the adoption of an extended programme on very similar lines under the direction of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries. The Board now distributes a sum of £40,000 in premiums among fifty stallions.

The fatally weak point in the new scheme, as in the old one, is that it encourages farmers to breed horses without providing a market for the produce.

Elsenham Hall, Essex
March, 1913
HORSES FOR THE ARMY

The condition to which horse-breeding has been reduced in this country during recent years by the steady progress of motor traction has induced the Government to take various measures by which it is hoped (A) to promote the breeding of a good class of horse; and (B) to secure to the Army an adequate supply of horses in time of emergency.

It will be well to examine the schemes which are now in operation, and, as far as may be, forecast the measure of success which is likely to attend them.

THE NEW KING'S PREMIUM SCHEME

The new horse-breeding scheme directed by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries may be examined first.

This in its essence is an extension of the programme carried out for many years by the Royal Commission on Horse-breeding, of which I had the honour to be a member. In place of the £5,000 placed at the disposal of the...
now extinct Commission, the Board has £40,000 to administer, and this sum is employed in the same way as the smaller grant—namely, in subsidising selected stallions for public service.

The funds at the Board’s disposal enable it to award premiums to fifty stallions, and to make the animals’ earnings larger than they were under the old scheme. Sir Merrik Burrell, in the Field of 30th December, 1911, showed that, with service fees and the 12s. 6d. paid for living foals, each horse earned on the average a sum of £332 per year.

The system of making a substantial proportion of the stallion’s earnings depend on the number of foals got by him and shown to be alive some months after birth is open to criticism. Apart from the trouble thrown upon the owner of the sire, the young animal is liable to many accidents and diseases between the time of foaling, in May, June, or July, and December, when the “foal premium” may be claimed, and these mishaps are obviously quite beyond the control of the stallion’s owner. But when the whole system is open to criticism it is unnecessary to dwell on minor defects
It is due to those who undertake the task of administering the new grant of £40,000 to say that they are showing a praiseworthy breadth of view in one particular.

The scheme includes the provision of "Board Stallions": these are not to be chosen from one particular breed, as has been the case in awarding the King's premiums. The Board has wisely copied the example of foreign nations and proposes to subsidise for the public use sires of various breeds, so far as the £5,000 per year which has been "earmarked" for this purpose will allow. These "Board Stallions" must be over three years old, and they must be entered in the Stud Book of their breed; they will therefore be serviceable in begetting stock of greater variety than was possible when thoroughbred sires, and thoroughbred sires only, were encouraged for public service.

**Results to be Expected**

In its direct effects this new scheme may fairly be expected to produce larger results than were possible to obtain under the old method. Assuming each of the fifty King's premium horses to beget sixty-five foals in the
season, and forty of these survive the mischances of their early days, we have two thousand young horses of good class each year as the direct fruit of the Board's work. But what becomes of these animals?

If it were possible to believe that they remain in this country, if it were the case that they could be depended on for use in the nation's service, we should have the nucleus at least of a dependable supply of horses for the Army—for those branches at least which require animals of the hunter type. But that is not the case

The statistics furnished me by the Customs and Excise show that we send abroad far more horses of this particular stamp than are produced, or ever can be produced, under the new scheme. I am assuming that the young horses so bred are worth, when four or four off, from £50 to £100 apiece. Figures for previous years, I regret to find, are not available; but in 1912 6,942 horses of value per head between £50 and £100 were exported

**Horses Bred for Foreign Markets**

It is the old story; the best of our *good* horses find their way into the hands of the
foreign buyer. The French or German purchaser is quite willing to take the three or four-year-old at a price which pays the breeder. Our own Remount buyers, restrained by regulations, are unable to do so, and thus a large proportion of our best leave the country.

Of course these 6,942 horses formed only a small proportion of the total number sent abroad. No fewer than 10,592 horses of value between £20 and £50 per head left our shores for foreign countries in 1912: many, very many, of these were of the stamp we so sorely need for remounts, but the method of classifying the animals exported does not permit an estimate of our losses in this regard.

So far as the horse-breeder himself is concerned there is this to be said. The Government are doing something to encourage him to breed by providing good and cheap stallions under the premium scheme, and he is taking advantage of it to produce horses of a fair stamp. It is not to be expected of the farmer that he shall refuse the chance of profitable sale because the purchaser happens to be a foreigner. To the breeder it is purely a matter of business. He avails himself of the Premium stallion, his mare drops a good foal, and he sells the animal as soon as he can in the best market.
The labours of the Board of Agriculture, then, amount to this: they are helping the British farmer to breed horses for sale to the foreigners. This is good for the farmer, but it is bad business for the nation seeking horses for its own troops.

**Registration and Subsidy**

Now let us see what measures are being taken to encourage owners to keep in this country animals which the Army will require in the event of war. The old system of registration has been remodelled and elaborated on lines which, as far as they go, are practical, and calculated to serve the immediate end in view—the horsing of troops in the hour of emergency.

The War Office is now engaged in forming an "Army Horse Reserve" in two distinct sections, namely, a reserve of "Miscellaneous" horses suitable for all military uses other than for artillery, and a reserve of "Artillery" horses.

The main principles of the scheme are these: the owner of horses registered under either section agrees, in return for an annual payment, to sell his animals when called upon to
do so to the Remount Department at prices which are agreed upon at the time of making the agreement. The owner of horses scheduled under the “Miscellaneous” section makes an agreement binding him for one year, receiving for each the sum of 10s. per head

The War Office authorities have been kind enough to give me the form of schedule showing the manner in which the “Miscellaneous” horses are being classified:

Saddle Horses—R. 1. Cavalry “ Riders” and Chargers over 15'1

Saddle Horses—R. 2. “ Riders” under 15'1

Transport Light Draught, i.e., Trotting Vanners not up to Artillery stamp, from 15'1 to 16 hands

Transport Heavy Draught, i.e., Dray and Plough Horses

These are called “Registered” horses

The second section is to consist of Artillery horses, described officially as “of the bus type”

The owner of horses eligible for the “Artillery” section makes an agreement binding for
three years, receiving in respect of each horse the sum of £4 per year

Artillery horses are accepted only from studs numbering ten horses or more.

These are called "Subsidised" horses

Apart from the duration of agreements and the annual sums paid in respect of each horse, the conditions for Registered and Subsidised horses are the same.

The owner undertakes to keep a stud sufficiently large to permit of some selection being made by the Remount officer; he undertakes that the horses shall be between six and ten years old and serviceably sound, and he undertakes, when a state of national danger arises, to deliver, within forty-eight hours of receipt of notice from the military authorities, the Registered or Subsidised animals at a place not more than ten miles from his stable, receiving for each the price arranged for at the time of making the agreement. The owner is liable to a penalty of £50 in respect of each horse he fails to produce.

The owner of either Registered or Subsidised horses may withdraw from his agreement on
giving due notice and refunding the fee or subsidy, or so much of it as has been paid him.

I understand that in November, 1912, some 15,000 horses had been secured for the “Miscellaneous” or Registered section.

The War Office hopes to enrol 10,000 Artillery horses under the subsidy scheme, but in February, 1913, it was not possible to say how many horses had been scheduled; many tenders had then been received from owners of animals eligible for either the Miscellaneous or Artillery section, but the work of inspection was still going on, and no definite information could be given as regards numbers.

The task is one that must occupy much time; not only has the Remount officer in each district to examine the horses offered, but to arrange the price payable for each in the event of mobilisation.

It is hardly necessary to say that the creation of that special section for Artillery horses, for each of which £4 per year is to be paid, has been forced upon the War Office by the practical disappearance of the horse-drawn bus from our streets.
It is impossible to feel sanguine concerning the success of this Artillery horse scheme; that the authorities anticipate difficulty in finding animals of the stamp required is obvious from the fact that they offer £4, or eight times the sum they offer for any horse in the Miscellaneous classes. Animals of the bus type were used for bus work and for little else, and now the horse omnibus has disappeared it will be no easy matter to find horses of that particular type elsewhere.

The animals used by the great bus companies were not bred in this country; they were, almost without exception, produced on the grazing grounds of Canada and America, and were brought over to England in large numbers. How greatly the progress of motor traction has affected the numbers of horses imported the following figures show:

Before the era of the motor: during the four years 1895-98 inclusive, we imported 167,209 horses, or an average of 41,802 per year. Since the motor became established: during the four years 1908-11 inclusive, we imported 56,192 horses, or an average of 14,048 per year—a falling-off of over 27,000 horses a year, of which the bus type formed a very considerable proportion.
It is exceedingly doubtful whether our home resources can furnish the Artillery with the 10,000 horses of the bus stamp sought by the War Office to fulfil its subsidy scheme.

**Weak Points in the Registration Scheme**

I have said that the remodelled Registration Scheme is practical and well calculated to serve the immediate end in view—the horsing of our troops in the hour of emergency—but it is impossible to bestow upon it unqualified praise.

The two schemes of Registration and Subsidy have been devised to meet a certain contingency, the invasion of this country. We may take it for granted that the 15,000 "Miscellaneous" horses will be forthcoming in the hour of danger—I wish it were possible to feel equally sure of the 10,000 Artillery horses—to be distributed among our troops. But assuming actual invasion and hard-fought battles in our eastern counties; how long will that supply of horses last? And where are we to find animals to replace them?

Individual patriotism will come to the rescue with hunters and carriage horses, but the latter, at least, taken from stables where they have
been kept under highly artificial conditions, and lacking the seasoning derived from really hard work, will not last long under the trying conditions of warfare.

Even with the instinct of self-preservation to stimulate effort, we shall soon come to the end of our Home horse-supply. The number of carriage horses in the country has been largely reduced by the extensive use of motors.

It may be urged that during the South African War some 73,000 horses were purchased in this country to send out to the Army, and that this total was largely in excess of the expectations formed by the Remount Officers themselves.

But the situation has undergone a very material change; we can still obtain horses from abroad—if we retain our command of the sea; but a material factor in increasing the number of horses in the remount market during the last three months of 1899 and the years 1900 and 1901 was this:—"the extensive use of electric power in the streets, and of mechanical means of progression, which, while its effect has been to throw a large number of horses on the market and to reduce the demand,
has been too sudden and rapid in its development to immediately diminish the supply "*

The coincidence of the adoption of motors and the South African War was an accident which made for the National advantage; it is one that cannot occur again; the horses we were then able to provide for the Army no longer exist: in a word, we have no reserves to fall back upon.

The weak point of the Registration Scheme—of all such schemes, however well devised—is that they provide for immediate needs and for nothing further. They offer no inducement whatever to the farmer to breed horses. No man will be influenced to start horse-breeding for the sake of ten shillings a year, or four pounds a year (obtainable only for four years, moreover) and the chance of selling his animals represented by National danger.

If he breeds at all he will devote his attention to the class of horse he already breeds, the Shire stamp, for which he can find a certain market. There are still considerable numbers of these heavy horses in the country, though

* Proceedings of a Court of Enquiry on the Administration of the Army Remount Department, 1902
the official Returns of Agricultural Horses show that they are fewer by 23,500 than they were in 1898.

I doubt whether any sound inference may be drawn from these Returns of "Horses Used Solely for Agriculture"; the numbers fluctuate from year to year in a manner which prevents us from drawing definite conclusions.

The following figures for the two series of five years, 1898–1902 and 1908–12, sufficiently show the changes in the Agricultural horse population:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>In England, Wales, and Scotland</th>
<th>In Ireland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>1,075,308</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>1,085,395</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>1,078,371</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>1,069,418</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>1,076,170</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>354,700</td>
<td>358,314</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>In England, Wales, and Scotland</th>
<th>In Ireland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>1,119,324</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>1,132,014</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>1,136,915</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>1,097,054</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>1,051,887</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>374,826</td>
<td>372,711</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We can, however, take this for granted: that horses suitable for military purposes are not bred to anything like the same extent as they were twenty years ago; and, to set beside this fact, we have the other equally grave, that...
nothing is being done to encourage the breeding of Army horses.

The purpose to which the Board of Agriculture—quite properly—apply their grant of £40,000 a year is the improvement of Horse breeding; not the increase of numbers; and for National uses we need quantity as well as quality. We want some definite encouragement given the farmers to breed horses that we may have some reserve upon which to fall back in a prolonged struggle; we must have animals to replace the inevitable loss and wastage in war.

There is only one way of doing this, and that is to create the market which does not now exist. Let that be done, and within a few years we shall find that the difficulty now experienced by Remount Officers in buying the 2,500 or 3,000 horses required each year to replace the annual waste in peace time disappears.

**Government Breeding Impossible**

I am no advocate for State Horse-breeding Establishments on the lines of the great Haras of Continental countries. It needs little examination of the conditions to discover that
State horse breeding on any scale likely to be of practical use is impossible in these islands.

The experience gained by over a century of horse-breeding work in India, formerly under the Honourable East India Company and since 1858 by the Crown, has been far from encouraging; the horses obtained under the various systems tried from time to time have always been too few for the purpose required, and those bred cost far more than a business-like administration should continue to pay.

To attempt the establishment of Government Depôts for Horse-breeding in Great Britain would be to court failure. To begin with, Parliament must be called upon to grant the War Office compulsory powers to purchase large tracts of pasture land; and, while the initial expense of buildings and stock would be enormous, the cost of maintaining large numbers of mares and young animals in this country would be out of all proportion to the results we might expect in the way of troop horses.

Moreover, a State establishment would, beyond question, militate seriously against horse-breeding by private individuals, and
would strike a blow at an industry which stands in urgent need of fostering and encouragement. We may therefore dismiss once for all any idea of a Government Horse-breeding Establishment in the United Kingdom as impracticable and undesirable

**Purchase of Young Horses**

The alternative is to place our purchasing organisation on an entirely new footing. Any system adopted must fulfil certain conditions which are now lacking. Above all, it must be recognised that the British farmer cannot breed a horse, keep him until five years old, and then accept the regulation price of £40 now paid for a remount.

The Government must either buy horses when three or three off, or raise the limit of price; whichever course be taken the pecuniary result will be much the same to the country, as three-year-olds must be kept at the public expense till they are fit to take their places in regiment or battery.

When the question of Remounts for the English Army was before the country in 1886,
General Ravenhill, then Inspector General of Remounts, was, with his staff, sent to Canada with the view of buying horses.

At this period (1886) I advocated in the English press the advisability of the Government purchasing three-year-olds, believing the purchasing staff would thus secure the pick of the home markets of the United Kingdom; and the advantages this policy would offer are realised by many whose opinions carry weight.

In course of the debate which was raised by Lord Dunraven in the House of Lords in March, 1902, on the encouragement of horse-breeding, Lord Ribblesdale said, “If the Government could see their way to buy horses a little younger for the public service, and give a better price, he was certain that they would have more horses bred.”

This is a proposition it would be difficult to controvert; but five years old is the minimum age at which a horse can safely be asked to perform the often heavy work demanded of him by military necessities—as we have seen, the Registration and Subsidy Schemes stipulate for horses not less than six years old. We therefore must devise some means whereby the interval of time, whatever it may be, that
elapses between the date of purchase and the horses reaching five years old may be profitably employed

Necessity for Increased Expenditure

Before attempting to do this, note must be taken of the significant remark made by the late Duke of Devonshire in course of his reply to Lord Ribblesdale and other speakers in the debate above referred to. The Duke said he "should think it would probably be found that the most effectual means of improving the supply of horses would be if the Secretary of State for War, with the assent of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, could see his way to increase the price which they gave for remounts"

Here we have recognition by the Duke of Devonshire, himself a man of experience in horse-breeding, of the principle that more money must be spent on horses for the Army. The guarded utterances of an eminent statesman are not required to support a fact so obvious; the matter is simply one of supply and demand; the Government cannot expect to buy for £40 an animal for which a private purchaser will bid £50 or more
The question to be considered is how an increased outlay can be best applied

The answer is, the Government should take horses from the breeder when they are over three years old—that is, in the late summer and autumn—when breeders can readily sell them at a price from £30 to £40

It may be safely predicted that horses could be purchased not only in larger numbers but of a better stamp, if taken at this age; for a horse that is worth £40 at three years old, if well fed and judiciously used, will probably furnish into a horse worth £60 or more by the time he reaches five years old. A proportion of four-year-olds should be bought, for reasons which will be given later on.

If the scheme here suggested prove applicable for the United Kingdom, there is good reason to suppose that, with such modifications as local conditions make necessary, it would be found suitable for adoption in our colonies and in India.

The expense of creating the establishment would necessarily be considerable; but, in considering the cost, it must be borne in mind that any scheme which aims at the efficient
mounting of the Army must be conceived on a more liberal scale than that which had been made to answer the purpose hitherto. We are about to spend two and a half million pounds on a battle-ship of the latest type for the Navy, and surely the nation would not grudge one-tenth of this sum—say £250,000—to purchase and equip the Depôts proposed in the subsequent pages

**Means of Raising the Money**

Lest it be thought that I suggest diverting money from the Navy for this purpose, it may be well to say that I have no such idea in mind. There could be no more suitable method of raising the funds necessary than by the introduction upon our race-courses of the Totalisator, from which, under its name, *Pari-mutuel*, our French neighbours derive a large and steady income for the national treasury.

It has always appeared to me that there can be no method of taxation more legitimate and less calculated to oppress than that which appropriates a percentage of the money men voluntarily risk in betting, and a source of revenue which provides France with nearly a million sterling per year may be relied upon to produce at least thrice that sum in this country.
The Totalisator was brought into use a few weeks ago at a Point-to-Point Race meeting; and though a novelty, proved exceedingly popular.

Creating Ten Remount Depôts

Leaving the financial aspect of the subject, I will set out the details of the scheme under consideration.

The most practical plan would seem to be the establishment, in suitable localities, of Permanent Remount Depôts. There would be obvious advantages in making these Depôts moderately numerous and comparatively small.

Three thousand horses a year would be required to satisfy the needs of the Army in time of peace, if the conditions now prevailing are maintained hereafter; but there is good reason to suppose that mounted infantry will receive far more attention than it has done hitherto, and if this arm is to be placed on an efficient footing, a very much larger number of horses and cobs will be necessary. It may be assumed that about 4,000 horses of all classes will be wanted annually, and on this assumption the suggestions which follow are founded.
If the number of horses mentioned is required, it will be necessary to establish in England, Scotland and Ireland ten permanent Remount Depôts, each capable of accommodating 400 horses, with the necessary staff to tend, break and train them.

Probably the most suitable sites for these in England would be Carlisle, York, Northampton, Shrewsbury, Salisbury, and Tonbridge; in Scotland two Depôts, one at Ayr and the other at Inverness; and in Ireland two Depôts, one at Kilkenny, as fairly central for the chief horse-breeding districts of the south, and the other at Mullingar.

**Depôt Buildings Required**

The main feature of each Depôt would be four ranges of stabling, each range to consist of fifty stalls on either side of a wide gangway, hay and straw being kept in store-houses attached to each stable. A riding-school, wherein the young horses might be handled and broken, would be a necessary adjunct; and space for outdoor training must also be provided, to train horses for Artillery use.

At a distance from the main stables and riding-school it will also be necessary to erect
accommodation for sick horses. This might well consist of two blocks, containing twelve loose-boxes each, isolated one from another to ensure safety when infectious disease made its appearance; there might also be accommodation for a single suspected case of disease.

The plan attached will give an idea of the arrangement and relative positions of the various buildings.

All these buildings should be constructed in a cheap and economical fashion; the less our future troop horses are pampered, the harder will they be and the better able to withstand the hardships of campaigning. More especially should economy be studied in erecting blocks of stabling for the sick, with the view of pulling down and destroying the materials should risk of infection render it desirable after a visitation of glanders or other serious epizootic.

**Staff for each Depot**

The Depot staff would be under the command of an officer in charge as Superintendent. This responsible position might well be filled by an officer who had served in one of the mounted branches of the Army—the Army
Service Corps for choice, as the functions of that Corps compel acquaintance with both saddle and draft horses, and also knowledge of forage and the forage markets.

It would not be necessary to provide house accommodation for the officer within the Depot; it would be more economical to give him a "lodging allowance," and permit him to find his own quarters in the nearest town or within easy reach of his work.

Immediately subordinate to the officer in charge there should be a non-commissioned officer who had served in the Horse or Field Artillery, or Army Service Corps, resident in the Depot as Overseer of the stable staff.

It would be necessary to provide men in the proportion of one to every eight horses, which would give a staff of fifty for each Depot. These might be appropriately selected from time-expired soldiers of good character, who had served in the cavalry or other mounted arms, preference being given to those who could produce testimony of their qualifications to deal with young horses—patience, gentleness and horsemanship.

The work of the stable staff would be practically confined to breaking and training the
young horses for their career in regiment or battery. Accommodation for forty men on the barrack principle and cottages for ten married men would be required. A clerk, or clerks, would also be necessary to deal with the work in the Superintendent's office.

The veterinary work of each Depot might be most economically provided by paying a veterinary surgeon practising in the nearest town a moderate fee per head per annum in respect of each horse stabled in the Depot. Or, with so large an assemblage of young horses, "with all their troubles before them," it would perhaps be advisable to appoint a member of the Army Veterinary Department to each Depot, providing him with lodging allowance to live outside, as in the case of the officer in charge.

The War Office should take upon themselves the appointment of buyers. Horse-dealers in the towns near each Depot would be the most suitable agents to buy horses from the farmers and breeders; they would be instructed to make purchases in the late summer and autumn, and should be paid on commission.

There would be no difficulty in obtaining horse-dealers of good standing—respectable
and reliable men—who attend fairs and markets in the ordinary way of business; these would have an incentive to devote attention to the purchase of young animals.

The young horses thus purchased would be stabled at the Depot and taken in hand by the staff to break, train, and generally prepare for that particular arm of the Service for which the make and character of each animal appears to make it most suitable.

Having nothing to unlearn, and receiving their education from the beginning at the hands of soldiers who know exactly what is required, these animals should be perfectly ready when five years old to take their places in troop or gun team.

They would remain at the Depot, well fed and doing work appropriate for young animals, for from fourteen to eighteen months; and, when rising five, would be drafted in January or February to the regiments and batteries which required them.

The plan attached will show that no great area of land would be required for the necessary buildings of such Depôts, and the figures attached show that the cost need not exceed
£250,000. Including all necessary acreage for exercising grounds, the whole space need not exceed 50 acres.

The Depot staff would be by no means an expensive item. There are only too many capable and active men on the retired list who would regard an appointment to such a Depot as a prize to be eagerly sought. Even if only small pay were offered to enhance the pensions such officers enjoy, it is safe to say that the difficulty would be less in finding suitable men than in making the selection. The same applies with equal force to the non-commissioned officer and military stable hands.

**Purchase of Three- and Four-Year-Olds**

While the Remount Depôts, when in full swing of work, would aim principally at the purchase of three-year-olds, the exigencies of space compel a certain elasticity in its operations. It is obvious that if 400 young horses are bought in the autumn of, say, the year 1903, and kept until February, 1905, the Depot will have no space to receive young horses in the autumn of 1904.

That difficulty may be got over in various ways, but the most economical and satisfactory
method would be to sanction the purchase of four-year-old horses, and draft these out of the Depôts to regiments and batteries before the three-year-old stock of the next year come in.

By taking a proportion of four-year-olds, the Remount Department will widen the area of supply and will carry on the Depot work most economically by having the stalls fairly full.

**Promotion of Breeding of Special Types**

Forming as they would do regular and reliable markets, the Depôts would be in a position to exert influence on the surrounding area as regards the stamp of horse it pays the farmer to breed. Let the officer in charge give it to be understood that Artillery horses are in constant demand, and that three-year-olds of the bus type will be most acceptable, and there need be no further anxiety as to the supply of these.

Here the scheme of the Board of Agriculture can be made to work in co-operation with the Depôts; the Board proposes, as said on a former page, to subsidise stallions of breeds other than thoroughbred. It would be represented to the Secretary for Agriculture that a stallion of the type likely to beget
Artillery horses was desired in a district by which the Depot is "fed," and in the interests of the farmers a suitable stallion would be sent to stand in or to travel that district. This is the system pursued in France, and we cannot do better than adopt it.

The class of mare in the district must of course be taken into account, but it is safe to say that once the breeders of any given district are assured of a certain and fairly remunerative market for any given description of stock they will find the mares required to supply the demand.

Farming is not in a condition so flourishing that men will deliberately sacrifice opportunity to make a little money.

We might in course of time find that the various Depôts were specialising in the class of horse they received, guided by the demand each has created; some receiving and furnishing the Army with the Artillery horses it requires, others devoting themselves more to horses for the Cavalry—the hunter type.

It need not be pointed out that the Remount Department would be placed in a position of peculiar strength as regards purchases by these methods.
Incidental Advantages of Depôts

Such Depôts, besides fulfilling their direct important purpose, would offer facilities which are very urgently needed for teaching yeomanry recruits and men of mounted infantry companies to ride.

Major F. Dashwood, late of the 16th Lancers, in a letter to the Journal of the Royal United Service Institution for January, 1902, drew attention to the necessity that exists for creating more opportunities for teaching men to ride—a necessity that was very closely brought home to us by the experiences of the South African War.

The Depôt riding schools, when not in use by the breakers of young horses, might well be placed at the disposal of riding classes from the neighbouring barracks.

In every Depôt would be found a few four-year-olds steady enough to use as school horses for more advanced riding pupils, and thus the number of animals maintained as school horses for riding classes need not be considerable.

There is much to be said, further, in favour of utilising the Depôts as schools wherein men
of the mounted arms might learn the elements of the horse master's business—a science in which it is to be feared we are sadly deficient.

These uses of the proposed Remount Depôts would, of course, be entirely subsidiary to their main purpose, but they are worth suggesting as additional arguments in favour of the plan.

One great advantage of having separate Depôts will be in the facilities offered for comparing each Depôt with others; further, if ten establishments are created, it will be easy to compare the cost and utility of one Depôt with those of others.

The cost of buying the young horses, the cost of fodder and the total cost of each Depôt, as well as the general results obtained in the receipts and discharge of horses, will be apparent.

The Depôt should be worked as any business house is worked—that is, quarterly and audited accounts should be punctually rendered from each Depôt to the War Office in London, which would have entire control of the accounts of the different Depôts.

**No Rivalry with Registration Schemes**

The establishment of these Remount Depôts would in no way compete with the War Office.
Registration and Subsidy Schemes now in process of organisation. Those schemes require horses of from six to ten years old; the very essence of the plan I have outlined in the foregoing pages is that the majority of horses for the Depôts shall be purchased at three years old or three off.

For that reason alone there can, therefore, be no friction between the two; on the contrary, the existence of the Depôts as markets for three-year-olds would be an encouragement to farmers to register their old horses, because by so doing they would be brought in personal contact with the Remount Officers, and thus find better opportunity of selling their young animals. This is one of those apparently small details which go for much in the successful conduct of affairs.

The Remount Depôts would serve purposes distinct from the Registration and Subsidy Schemes; the former would give the sorely needed stimulus to British horse-breeding and provide the Army with its peace requirements of a much better class than it now enjoys; the Registration and Subsidy Schemes provide against the contingency of war.
I may draw attention also to the value these Depôts would be in the event of war as centres for the assembling and distribution of horses.

**Depôts in our Colonies**

In conclusion, it may be pointed out that if the scheme outlined in the foregoing pages be considered suitable for adoption in the United Kingdom, a similar plan might possibly be found applicable to those of our Colonies where horse-breeding is an industry.

With such modifications as local conditions and prices suggest, the Permanent Remount Depôt system might well be established in Canada, South Africa and Australia. It would, in point of fact, prove more profitable in countries where large numbers of horses are raised, horseflesh being necessarily cheaper.

**Summary**

By the adoption of the above suggestions—

1. The Army would obtain all the horses it requires in time of peace.

2. The horses, being purchased at three years or three years and a half for the same price as is now paid for five-year-olds, would be of a better class.
(3) The existence of a constant and profitable market for three-year-olds would give a very real stimulus to the now neglected industry of light horse-breeding.

(4) The *personnel* of the Remount Depôts would provide a corps of trained officers and men for the important work of buying horses in foreign countries in time of emergency.

(5) The Depôts would provide much-needed facilities for teaching recruits to ride and for teaching the elements of horse-mastery.

(6) The creation of separate Depôts would facilitate comparison of each Depôt with others in buying horses, cost of fodder and general results.
ESTIMATED COST OF EACH DEPÔT

1. Four Ranges of Stables, each Stable having 100 Stalls, 5 ft. 6 in. wide
   = 400 horses ... ... ... £6,000
2. Four Stores for Fodder, &c., adjoining Stables ... ... ... £400
3. Riding-School, 240 ft. x 84 ft. ... £2,000
4. Quarters for Married Men — 10 families ... ... ... £2,000
5. Quarters for 40 Single Men ... £1,500
6. Overseer’s Cottage and Offices for Clerk ... ... ... £500
7. Corn Store and Rooms over ... £500
8. Stables for 24 Sick Horses... ... £750
9. Isolation Box ... ... ... £100
10. Forge, Boiling Shed, Operating Shed, Surgery ... ... ... £750
    _______£14,500
11. Forming Road to Buildings, Drainage, Fencing, &c. ... ... ... £2,500
12. Sundry Contingencies ... ... ... £1,000
13. Cost of 50 acres of Land—say ... £7,000
    _______£25,000

Cost of each Depot ... ... ... £25,000

Ten Depots at £25,000 each = £250,000
THE BUILDING SITE CONTAINS ............... 12 ACRES.
TRAILING & EXERCISE GROUND CONTAINS...38....ACRS

TOTAL 50 ACRES

NOTE: 100 STALLS IN EACH RANGE, EACH STALL 6.6 WIDE.
10 FEET GANGWAY IN CENTRE OF RANGES TO FeDDER STORES & MANURE DEPOTS.

TRAINING AND EXERCISE GROUND
(38 ACRES)
Works by SIR WALTER GILBEY, Bart.,

Published by Vinton & Co., 8 Bream's Buildings, Chancery Lane, London, E.C.

Hounds in Old Days  Published 1913
Some account of Hounds and Hunting in England from early times, showing how our modern breeds of Foxhound, Harrier, Beagle and Otterhound have been developed. Octavo, cloth, price 5s. net; post free, 5s. 4d.

Sport in the Olden Times  Published 1912
A short history of Cock-fighting in England; showing the prevalence of the old pastime and its popularity among all classes of our ancestors from early times. Octavo, cloth, price 5s. net; post free 5s. 4d.

The Royal Family and Farming  Published 1911
In this work is shown the importance of the part borne by the Sovereigns of England, from George III to His present Majesty, in agricultural affairs. Octavo, cloth gilt, price 2s. net; post free, 2s. 3d.

Racing Cups (1559 to 1850)  Published 1910
Racing Bells, Tankards and Cups from Stuart to Victorian times, and Courting Cups. Numerous Illustrations. Octavo, cloth gilt, price 5s. net; post free, 5s. 4d.

Farm Stock 100 Years Ago  Published 1910
A period of important changes—Conditions under which Stock-breeding was carried on—Breeds of Sheep, Cattle, Horses, Swine and Poultry. Appendix; Famous Agriculturists of George III's time. Fifteen Illustrations. Price 5s. net; post free, 5s. 4d.

John Thornton, Life of  Published 1901
Cloth gilt, price 2s. net; post free, 2s. 4d.

Pig in Health & how to avoid Swine Fever. 2nd Edition Published 1910
Swine Fever—History of the Wild Pig and Diseases in the Olden Time—Various Breeds of Pigs, with a Chapter on the Healthy Housing of Swine. Six Illustrations. Price 2s. net; post free, 2s. 3d.

Horses Past and Present 2nd Edition Published 1910
A sketch of the History of the Horse in England from the earliest times. Nine Illustrations. Octavo, cloth gilt, price 2s. net; post free, 2s. 3d.

Young Race-Horses—Fresh Pastures for Rearing 5th Edition Published 1913
Illustrated Octavo, cloth gilt, price 3s. 6d. net; post free, 3s. 9d.

Milk and Milch Animals Published 1908
A Treatise on Animals used for Milking Purposes by Various Nations. Octavo, price 1s. net; post free, 1s. 2d.

Horses—Breeding to Colour 2nd Edition Published 1912
Facts as to the origin of the term "Thoroughbred"—History of Race-Horses descending from the "Royal Mares" of Charles I—How horses of different breeds can be bred to colour. Six Illustrations. Price 2s. net; post free, 2s. 3d.

Farms and Small Holdings Published 1907
Previous to 1800, 1,700 private Acts were passed for enclosing Commons and Waste-Lands—Decay of Fairs and Markets—Increase of Auction Marts and Agricultural Shows—Small Holdings in the Past and at the Present Day. Two Illustrations. Price 6d. net; post free, 7d.

Modern Carriages Published 1906
The passenger vehicles now in use, with notes on their origin. Illustrations. Octavo, cloth gilt, price 2s. net; post free, 2s. 3d.

[P.T.O.]
SIR WALTER GILBEY'S WORKS—continued

Horses for the Army—a suggestion
Price 6d. net; post free, 7d.

Poultry-Keeping on Farms and Small Holdings
Being a practical treatise on the production of Poultry and Eggs for the Market. Illustrated. Price 2s. net; post free 2s. 3d.

The Harness Horse
4th Edition Published 1904
The scarcity of Carriage Horses and how to breed them. Twenty-one Chapters. Seven full-page Illustrations. Octavo, cloth gilt, price 2s. net; post free 2s. 3d.

Notes on Alcohol
Showing the relative value of Alcohol in Brandy, Whisky and Rum. Octavo. price 6d. net; post free, 7d.

Early Carriages and Roads
In this publication attention has been given to the early history of wheeled conveyances in England and their development up to recent times. With Seventeen Illustrations. Octavo, cloth gilt, price 2s. net; post free, 2s. 4d.

Thoroughbred and Other Ponies
With Remarks on the Height of Racehorses since 1700. Being a Revised and Enlarged Edition of PONIES PAST AND PRESENT. With Ten Illustrations. Octavo, cloth gilt, price 5s. net; post free, 5s. 4d.

Hunter Sires
Suggestions for Breeding Hunters, Troopers and General-Purpose Horses. By Sir Walter Gilbey, Bart. II. Charles W. Tindall. III. Right Hon. Frederick W. Wrench. IV. W. T. Trench. Octavo, paper covers, 6d. net; post free, 7d.

Horse-breeding in England and India, and Army Horses Abroad
Seventeen Chapters. Horse-breeding in England; Eight Chapters, Horse-breeding Abroad; Thirteen pages, Horse-breeding in India. Nine Illustrations. Octavo, cloth, price 2s. net; post free, 2s. 3d.

Small Horses in Warfare
Arguments in favour of their use for light cavalry and mounted infantry. Illustrated. Octavo, cloth gilt, price 2s. net; post free, 2s. 3d.

Animal Painters of England
Vols. I & II. Published 1900
The lives of fifty animal painters, from the year 1650 to 1850. Illustrated. Two vols., quarto, cloth gilt, price £2 2s. net.

Animal Painters of England (Second Series) Vol. III.
Published 1911
The lives of forty-six animal painters from the year 1650 to our own day. Illustrated. Quarto, cloth gilt; price £1 1s. net.

The Great Horse or War Horse
From the Roman Invasion till its development into the Shire Horse. New and Revised Edition, 1899. Seventeen Illustrations. Octavo, cloth gilt, price 2s. net; post free, 2s. 3d.

Life of George Stubbs, R.A.
Ten Chapters. Twenty-six Illustrations and Headpieces. Quarto, whole Morocco, gilt, £3 3s. net.

January, 1913