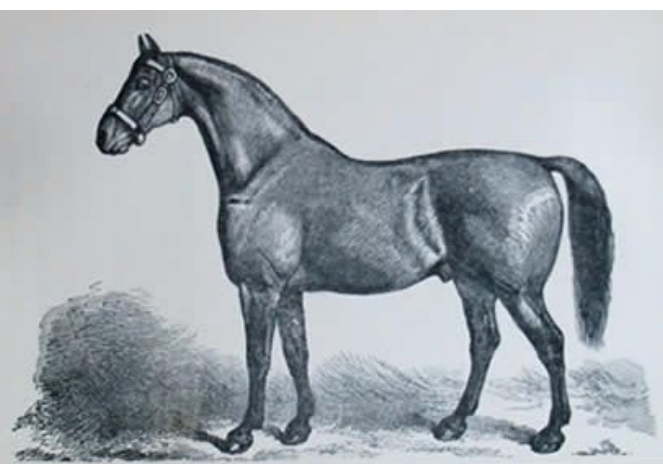


The Development of the Cleveland Bay

The Cleveland Bay originated in Britain, in the Cleveland area of Northern Yorkshire, and is the oldest of the indigenous breed of English horses. Yorkshire is known as the source of two breeds, the Thoroughbred and the Cleveland Bay. The Cleveland Bay breed is thought to have evolved from crossing native bay coloured mares with sons of the same famous oriental stallions during the 17th century that determined the Thoroughbred breed - the TB being selected for speed and the CB for work.

Shaped by a harsh environment, and careful farmer breeding selection a horse of durability, longevity and quiet disposition resulted. These characteristics, combined with the uniformity of bay colour, size, and substance, developed a versatile breed used as hunt horse, coach or packhorse, but mainly as an agricultural and industrial worker.

Originally known as the Chapman horse, after the travelling salesmen who exclusively used Cleveland Bays, the breed excelled as an all-rounder. During the peak of the breed's popularity in the late 1880s, the Cleveland Bay Horse Society of Great Britain published the first volume of its Stud Book, which contained stallions and mares carefully selected for the purity of blood. This stud book continues right up to this day and still applies strict requirements before an entry is registered.



Picture of a Cleveland Bay born in the 1880s?
Sourced from First Volume of the CBHS Stud Book

During the 19th century, some Cleveland Bays were bred to Thoroughbreds, which produced a new type or variation combining the best qualities of both breeds and called The Yorkshire Coach Horse, a carriage horse with unmatched ability for speed, style, and power. Eventually its own stud book was produced but was short lived due to the inevitable scientific progress. With the advent of the mechanical age, the numbers of Cleveland Bay and Yorkshire Coach horses rapidly declined. They were further decimated by use as artillery horses during World War I. The Cleveland Bay survived, but only just, in the region of its birthplace during these difficult times, but in the 1960's only four mature stallions were known. Due to the foresight and determination of the Yorkshire admirers, the breed has survived and numbers have grown. Her Majesty the Queen became the Patron of the breed, and her Royal Mews continues the tradition of using Cleveland Bays and cross-breeds in ceremonial duties.

Britain, North America, New Zealand, and Australasia and to a lesser extent Japan, are dedicated to the conservation of this unique horse. However the struggle continues as there are only on average 70 annual registrations.

Cross bred Clevelands are doing very well in the world of competition and in numerical comparisons to other sporthorse breeds have had a relatively high rate of success. However this has been difficult to quantify and attribute to the Cleveland Bay Breed as many of these horses have been registered with other registries where their Cleveland Bay roots have not been recognised and promoted.

In order to do justice to the contribution that the Cleveland Bay Breed is making to British Sporthorse breeding, a new group has very recently been established to identify such horses and to collect breeding and performance data with the aim of compiling a comprehensive data base. The International Cleveland Sporthorse Group has been established with similar groups in North America and Australasia.

www.cleveland-sporthorse-performance.com

This group is looking for all active horses with Cleveland breeding in their pedigree and invites breeders or owners to send details to the persons listed on this website.

