

Livestock at Cholderton

Cleveland Bay Horses

Cleveland Bays are a registered and long-established breed, more popular now than they have been for a hundred years. The breed was originally created in the north-east of England as a good, reliable mount and a tough all-rounder capable of pulling heavy loads. They were at their most popular in Victorian times, when they were often used as carriage horses because they were strong and 'steady', as well as uniform in colour.



A Cleveland Bay stud was founded on the Cholderton Estate by its owner – Henry Charles Stephens – in the 1880s, and many Cleveland Bays were reared to work on the Estate, for sale in the UK and for export. Two Clevelands, Cholderton Rex and Cholderton Robert, were sold to the Royal Family in 1946, and they pulled carriages bearing members of the royal family and notable public figures on many state occasions.

But by the 1970s Cleveland Bays had fallen completely out of fashion. Only four stallions were left in the world. Two of these were at Cholderton, and it is these stallions that kept the breed alive. At that time they had no economic value and it was only his affection for the breed that prompted Captain L Edmunds (Henry Edmunds' father) to keep on the estate.

It was fortunate that he did, as today the breed is once again highly sought after, with much of the interest coming from the USA. Horse sales to the USA are now a regular contributor to the Estates finances, to the extent that two people are employed on a regular basis as grooms.

Horse 'farming' fits in well with Cholderton's other agricultural regimes, where grass leys and re-seeded permanent grasslands form part of the overall land use strategy. As an added benefit, horses can be good for some wildlife; for example, their manure attracts insects that are preyed upon by the Estates healthy bat population.



Henry Edmunds with some of the Cleveland Bays.

For more information on Cleveland Bays visit:

<http://www.clevelandbay.com/>