Continuity and Diversity in Nineteenth Century and Contemporary Racehorse Training

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Abstract:

This thesis explores stability and diversity in the approaches taken to training National Hunt racehorses by nineteenth-century trainers and those of the modern day. The work first explores horseracing as a sport in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, including consideration of social class, gambling, and the structures surrounding horseracing, particularly the operation of the Jockey Club, as a means of establishing the way in which horseracing operated in this period. This part of the thesis also explains how racing employees operated, the costs of training, and how the role of the trainer evolved from grooms training for their employer into that of public trainers with large racing yards. This section is followed by consideration of the training methods employed during the nineteenth century, with a focus on the practices of purging, sweating, exercise, diet, and physicing, as well as explaining how racing yards were managed. The key research findings of the thesis are then presented in two chapters, the first of which discusses the way in which 'communities of practice' have operated in training stables, both in the context of the nineteenth century and in the context of contemporary racing. These 'communities' allow the passing on of knowledge through generations of racing trainers, through kinship as well as through close working relationships. Some biographical examples of both historical and contemporary trainers and their kinship groups/communities are presented. The final section of the work presents the thoughts of modern trainers, gathered through a series of interviews conducted with leading figures in the field of racing. Trainers discussed their perspectives on nineteenth-century practices and compared those with their own. The thesis concludes by considering these responses and highlighting points of diversity and continuity between historical horseracing practices.

Keywords: Training, Horseracing, Purging, Sweating, Exercise, Communities of Practice, Physic**.**

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Contents

Tables

Glossary

RSPCA	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
NAGL	National Anti-Gambling League
GSB	General Stud Book

Introduction

Sport in Britain evolved rapidly during the nineteenth century. At the beginning of the century the word ‘sport’ was recognized within field activities such as hunting, fishing, and coursing, although a different use of the term emerged during the Victorian age to include many of the activities that are understood to be 'sport' today. During a period of 'athleticism', the British created most of the sports which later spread around the world, such as association football, rugby, golf, and tennis, many of which developed as the result of conflict between different social groups over issues such as amateurism and professionalism, betting and alcoholism, the sporting treatment of animals, and Sunday play. Sports became increasingly commercialized and a sports industry emerged leading to significant growth between 1800 and 1850, when there was an increase in leisure opportunities for many classes, especially the wealthiest, and interest expanded for events such as horseracing, pedestrianism, rowing, and wrestling. In the 1840’s, *Bell’s Life* described numerous sporting events drawing tens of thousands of spectators, with steeplechasing and pugilism attracting the highest figures, followed by pedestrianism, cricket, and wrestling. Annual local football matches, often staged on Shrove Tuesday, took place in town centres in front of large crowds, although early industrialization generally had a limited impact upon sport in towns. This changed in some instances, particularly in London, as the towns grew in size and absorbed rural working populations. In addition, the upper-classes were spending more time in the emerging cities and they brought their sporting interests with them. The increase in the growth of towns meant that existing sites of sport and play were taken over as property became privatised or more exclusively used for botanical gardens, museums, or promenades for the rich. Commons became enclosed, patches of open ground were filled with houses and street became overly congested. This pressure on space for residence, commercial, and industrial use forced the development of enclosed sporting grounds.[1] Other factors influencing sport, such as the middle classes and their positive attitudes to sport, were clearly important to its development. The middle classes, in particular, valued the spirit of competition and they applied this to their sports, with local authorities providing facilities such as parks and baths to assert their status in comparison to other towns. As a result, urban sport was widely watched and played by the mid-nineteenth century with working-class sports often based on cash challenges, with the winner taking the stake money, and widespread gambling taking place on events. While the popularity of pugilism declined, it was replaced in the public imagination by professional pedestrianism, the forerunner of the amateur athletics of the late Victorian era.[2]

Sporting patterns changed continuously during the mid-nineteenth century with increasing interest among sections of the middle class, particularly in sports such as athletics, angling, cricket, and rowing, and, by the 1850’s, sports clubs were proliferating. Cricket club playing memberships could

[1] Mike Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport* (London: Hambledon, 2004).
[2] See Dave Day, (Ed) (2014). *Pedestrianism*. Manchester: MMU Sport and Leisure History Group ISBN 978-1-905476-95-4

often be cross-class, including both the gentry and professionals, although most clubs became predominantly middle class. Sports became the subject of protracted public discussion and, as cricket teams began to tour the country, it became much more competitive. The period from the 1860's onwards witnessed something of a sporting 'revolution', and changes in the nature of the British sporting culture as the middle classes significantly increased their level of participation, at least partially due to the influences of the public schools. New sports such as mountaineering encouraged new participation levels and *The Times* was reporting on nineteen sports in 1874 and twenty-seven by 1901, including far more articles on individual sports.[3] The number of sporting clubs, governing bodies, and institutions to control sport grew rapidly and, in all sports, new rules emerged, records began to be kept more regularly, and sports became increasingly standardized with changes being made to suit the needs of players, in particular, but also of spectators. Sporting events began to be held more regularly and in the 1880's and 1890's those who could afford to watch sport went more often because much more sport was on offer.[4]

Sports provided a seasonal pattern to the year with winter sports at the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign involving foxhunting, hare coursing, and steeplechasing, normally beginning in September and ending in March. Summer sports included rowing, participated in from March to October, while cricket, tennis, archery, and pedestrianism, were carried out throughout the year. Sports such as bowling, handball, and golf, were more common in summer but were also competed in other months of the year. In the later Victorian period, rugby and association football competed for the position of leading winter ball sports throughout the 1870's and 1880's, although, by the 1890's, primarily because of the competitive structures surrounding the FA Cup and Football League, association football had became the leading sport.[5] The railways were important for this rise in spectatorship and in facilitating travel for both spectators and teams so many new sporting grounds in the cities were situated close to mainline train links. This was also the case for horseracing, with train stations being built near race grounds, and it can be argued that, throughout the Victorian period, this remained the leading British sport since it consistently attracted the largest crowds and the largest financial investment, mainly due to its connection to a significant betting industry.[6]

Horseracing

Given the nature of the relationship between man and horse, the racing of horses had long been a human 'sporting' activity but this had generally been in ad hoc events that lacked any degree of

[3] Mike Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport.;* Richard William Cox, *British Sport: Local Histories* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2003).
[4] Martin Polley, *The History of Sport in Britain, 1880-1914: British Sport and the Wider World* (London: Routledge, 2004).
[5] Tony Collins, John Martin and Wray Vamplew, *Encyclopaedia of Traditional British Rural Sports* (Oxon: Routledge, 2005); Neil Tranter, *Sport, Economy and Society in Britain 1750-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
[6] Mike Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport.*

centralized direction and organisation. This 'sport' became more formalized in the eighteenth century, when the Stuart kings imported three Arabian stallions, which were bred with native mares to produce the thoroughbred racehorse. Using practical experiential knowledge in the breeding of the racehorse had evolved over four centuries and the native British mares, which were notorious for their hardiness and great stamina, were interbred with the exceptional speed and agility of the Arabian Stallion to produce an animal racing machine.[7] Thoroughbred racing subsequently developed as a major spectator sport and one that encouraged the involvement of different social classes.[8] Two types of racing evolved, Flat racing and National Hunt racing, originally called Steeplechasing, which had a lower social status since it attracted the working classes and developed a reputation for riotous behaviour. In order to control horseracing, the Jockey Club was formed in 1752 by a group of gentlemen and this organization exerted an influence which still impacts on contemporary racing. These aristocrats were keen supporters of the racing industry, with substantial involvement in gambling as well as racehorse ownership, and they regulated the sport to ensure that it met their own particular requirements. Jockeys had to be licensed to ride on a Jockey Club racecourse in the nineteenth century while trainers of flat racehorses were required to obtain a licence from 1905 onwards. The nineteenth and twentieth century's also saw major developments in National Hunt racing, with the National Hunt committee becoming regulated in 1865 and National Hunt trainers' licences being introduced in 1910.[9]

The driving force behind racing was always its potential for betting and this led to owners appointing trainers to ensure that their horses were suitably prepared. The high status of owners and their powerful positions in society encouraged trainers to develop systematic and rigorous training programmes so that they could be competitive in attracting owners to their stables. Nineteenth-century trainers initially followed the practices of their predecessors, who had trained both animal and human bodies according to the humoral theory as advocated by Greek physicians. Humoral theory considered the body as consisting of the four humours of blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile and focused on how they worked in unison. If one humour were out of balance, a corrective method would be implemented to bring it back into equilibrium.[10] Purging and sweating were employed to cleanse the animal so that the trainer was working with a 'clean canvas' before beginning training. It was believed that purging cleansed the racehorse of impurities from the inside while sweating was a system of cleaning the outside of the horse.[11] These elements of training were followed by diet, exercise, and careful stable management to ensure that the horse would run satisfactorily for its aristocratic owner.

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[7] Fred Marshall, *Stable Secrets* (California: Sanders Publishing Co, 1912).
[8] Mike Huggins, *Horse Racing and the British* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003).
[9] Wray Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Pass, 1988).
[10] Dave Day, *Professionals, Amateurs and Performance Sports Coaching in England, 1789 -1914* (Bern: Peter Lang AG, 2012).
[11] William Day, *The Racehorse in Training: Hints on Racing and Racing Reforms* (London: Chapman And Hall, Limited, 1880), 75-76.

The aim of this thesis is to explore the development of training methods in horseracing from the late-eighteenth century onwards and to investigate the communities of practice involved in training racehorses. In particular, the study utilises primary and secondary data to outline the development and organization of horse racing during the nineteenth centuries, to investigate nineteenth-century racehorse training techniques and to explore the operation of training communities. This material is then compared to contemporary racing practices, through the use of oral history techniques, triangulated with primary sources, to identify continuity and diversity in training techniques and training processes. The following chapters, then, explore the methods employed by trainers of the Victorian period and compare these to those of their successors. In addition, the thesis examines the operation of communities of practice within the horseracing environment and identifies how knowledge has traditionally been transmitted, often orally, by trainers and their confidants. [12] Wenger suggests that these communities depend on internal leadership with key figures, such as the trainer, helping to develop the community,[13] and this theme pervades those sections of the work that discuss how racing communities operate. To achieve the research objectives, the author accessed a contemporary kinship group, consisting of three individuals who have long been connected to National Hunt training, and a number of other interviewees, not connected through kinship, from the wider racing community who shared some training knowledge while protecting other aspects of their work. Initially, both primary and secondary data was utilized to outline the development and organization of horse racing during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and to uncover both nineteenth-century racehorse training techniques and the operation of training communities. Archival research was critical in establishing the details of nineteenth-century training and sources included newspapers such as *Bell's Life* and *Baily's Magazine,* together with instructional books from the period and other primary material such as census data. It was critical to accesses as wide a variety of sources as possible in order to be able to triangulate material effectively. Information on contemporary training methods was gathered by the researcher conducting interviews with a number of individuals well-versed in the techniques of horseracing. Oral history methods were used to explore kinship and non-kinship communities of practice in contemporary horseracing this material in order to identify areas of both continuity and diversity in training techniques and in training processes. Some key interviewees were purposefully selected because of their kinship ties to the researcher, including a Grand National winning jockey who then went on to become an established trainer. In addition, the broader community of racehorse training was accessed in order to enable investigation into communities of practice. All archival material was treated in accordance with the Royal Historical Society ethical

[12] See Dave Day, 'London Swimming Professors: Victorian Craftsmen and Aquatic Entrepreneurs', *Sport in History* no.30 (2010): 32-54.; Dave Day, 'Victorian Coaching Communities: Exemplars of Traditional Coaching Practice', *Sports Coaching Review* no.2 (2013): 151-162.; Dave Day, 'Craft Coaching and the 'Discerning Eye' of the Coach', *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching* no.1 (2011). 132-148; Dave Day, 'Magical and Fanciful Theories': Sports Psychologists and Craft Coaches' *Sports Coaching Review* no.1 (2012): 52–66.
[13] Etienne Wenger, 'Communities of Practice and Social Learning Systems', *Organization 7* (2000): 225-246

procedures[14] while the interview process adhered to the Oral History Society ethical guidelines.[15] Interviews were recorded and a thematic analysis undertaken with key points related to the aims and objectives of the study subsequently transcribed. The researcher recognizes that family interviews were conducted slightly differently to other interviews, since the researcher is a community 'insider' in that instance, and particular care was taken with the interviewing process since interviewees may not want certain of their responses made public. All interview material has been stored safely and transcripts will be subject to participant revision before being utilized for further research.

The themes followed in the thesis cover a variety of aspects of the training of racehorses and move from the archival to the contemporary. Chapter one describes the organization and context of nineteenth century horseracing, including gambling and how this changed over the period. The material covers the regulation of horseracing through the Jockey Club, whose evolution is described briefly, and the changes that were made to the development of both flat and National Hunt racing. Of particular relevance to the thesis here is the discussion of the role of employees, such as trainers and jockeys, in the operation of the racing industry. The thesis moves on in chapter two to investigate the training practices of these nineteenth-century racing men and draws on texts from the periods, particularly William Day's 'The Racehorse in Training: Hints on Racing and Racing' to explore elements of training such as purging, sweating, exercise, diet, and medicine. The chapter also touches on aspects of stable management and the training resources and processes used in this period. The operation of 'community' in horseracing in explained first in chapter three by describing racing families from an historical perspective before going on to extend this work to the contemporary racing scene.. Finally, chapter four explores modern perspectives on training through interviews with some of the trainers described in the previous chapter and outlines their opinions on some of the training methods used by previous generations. Overall, the thesis records a great deal of continuity of training throughout the periods considered with many traditional methods still being utilized in modern day training. However, variety in training was also noted, with methods such as sweating and purging being abandoned or modified and innovations being incorporated in a number of areas, particularly diet and the conditions created for exercise.

[14] www.royalhistoricalsociety.org/rhsstatementonethics.doc
[15] For full details see www.ohs.org.uk/ethics.php

Chapter One: The Structure and Context of Nineteenth Century Horseracing.

Introduction

Games and play in nineteenth-century England evolved alongside developments in the social structure and in the economy. This period changed the way in which rural games and sports were played, with many people moving into cities for work, thereby reducing the size of local communities,[16] while new occupations were created and there was a rise in real wages. The new industrial organization changed the nature of spectatorship because factories were unwilling to close for race meetings or any other sporting events and workers were strictly supervised, although many took days off unofficially.[17] Equestrian sport had always taken up significant amounts of time for young gentlemen in the country and social changes stimulated the introduction of equine sport into the industrialized towns and cities, such as Manchester.[18] The expansion of the railway system in the mid-nineteenth century assisted a cheaper and easier method of travel to further afield race meetings for both horses and spectators.[19] This caused problems with large crowds now passing through stations and towns to access racecourses and 'rough' urbanites were able to attend small distant race meetings, thereby changing the context of the racecourse.[20] On the other hand, being able to travel around the country meant that networks of standardized rules were established from town to town.[21]

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the non-conformist middle class, which campaigned vigorously against slavery and cruel sports involving animals, had become a much more powerful constituency in British society. Gambling and drinking were considered inappropriate behaviours by religious groups such as the Methodists and these views were imposed upon the working class as a mechanism for encouraging sobriety and diligence. The formation of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) in 1824 actually stimulated attendance at racing because it resulted in a decrease in blood sport spectatorship.[22] Badger baiting, bear baiting, bull baiting, dog fighting and cock fighting were the best-known blood sports around the middle of the eighteenth century, and they were an accepted part of English life, both rural and urban. The baiting of animals with dogs was very popular, with bull baiting being the most common and taking place at any time, but particularly at wakes, fairs, elections, and other gatherings. In 1835, Parliament passed the Cruelty to Animals Act ('The Pease's Act') followed, in 1849, by the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act,

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[16] Hugh Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution* (London: Biddles Ltd, 1980).
[17] Mike Huggins, 'Horse Racing on Teesside in the Nineteenth Century; Change and Continuity', *Northern History* 23 (1987), 98-118.
[18] Richard Holt, *Sport and British: a Modern History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Laura Westgarth, Venues for Horseracing in Manchester, *Manchester Histories Festival*, 29 March 2014.
[19] Mike Huggins and John Tolson, 'The Railways and Sport in Victorian Britain: A Critical Reassessment', *The Journal of Transport History* no.23 (2001): 23-45.
[20] Huggins, 'Horse Racing on Teesside in the Nineteenth Century'.
[21] Jack Simmons, *The Impact of the Railway on Society in Britain* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2003).
[22] Frank Ascione, *The International Handbook of Animal Abuse and Cruelty: Theory Research* (USA: Purdue University, 2008).

both of which prohibited cruelty to dogs and other domestic animals, along with bear baiting and cock fighting.[23] These laws were important because many of the traditional sports and pastimes of England were being suppressed.[24]

The opposition to blood sports comprised only part of the drive against the leisure pursuits of the working classes. Street football, for example, was also under attack from the middle classes, on the basis that they were violent, drunken, and potentially dangerous to respectable people and their property. There was natural resistance from participants, and these sports became a major moral battleground between traditionalists and reformers between the mid-eighteenth and the early-nineteenth centuries. Sports that had widespread upper or middle-class support, such as foxhunting, were either ignored or expressly excluded from the campaigns, and in a case such as cock fighting it was only when the gentry abandoned the sport that action was taken. These anti-blood sport initiatives increased the number of racing spectators and the amount of betting on courses, although the sport itself also came under pressure as concerns over animal treatment were extended to horseracing. In 1809, the *Morning Chronicle* argued that those concerned with the health of the racehorse did not condemn racing itself but the practice of 'urging the horse beyond its powers',[25] while the *Morning Post* in 1828 argued that horseracing authorities should take action to protect the animal's welfare.[26] Those middle class members objecting to horse racing often held meetings to encourage support among the middle and working classes such as when Reverend Clone preached against horseracing in 1829 at Cheltenham, saying 'you must not go to the races, at least your pastor says so'.[27] In addition, the House of Commons had many discussions concerning the working classes involvement in racing, developing parks for the working class to enjoy, and how this would be of a greater benefit to them rather than visiting the racecourse.[28]

Despite objections, horseracing united the top and bottom of British society, bringing together the working, middle, and upper classes, and one report of a race meeting in Doncaster in 1835 emphasized the 'striking specimen of the old-English men and women' in attendance.[29] While racehorses were predominantly owned by the gentry and aristocrats, the middle classes were involved in the training while the working class were heavily involved as jockeys and in the betting that surrounded the sport.[30] Racing was always well supported by the gentry and upper class men like the Duke of York who expressed his attachment to horseracing in 1827.[31] In general, stewards at racecourses came from

[23] Robert Garner, *Animals, Politics and Morality: Second Edition* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004).
[24] *Belfast Newsletter,* July 3, 1874.
[25] *Morning Chronicle,* May 16, 1809.
[26] *Morning Post,* October 20, 1828.
[27] *Morning Post,* July 30, 1829.
[28] *Leicester Chronicle and Agricultural Advertiser,* March 5, 1836.; *Bradford Observer,* May 11, 1837.
[29] *York Herald and General Advertiser,* September 19, 1835.
[30] Mike Huggins, *Flat Racing and British Society 1790-1914* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2000).
[31] *Caledonian Mercury,* January 11, 1827; *Lancaster Gazette and General Advertiser,* January 13, 1827.

the gentry, such as the Marquis of Waterford, although some race officials, such as judges might have been paid members of other social classes.[32] While certain middle-class individuals and groups, like those connected to the RSPCA, objected to the racing of horses, and opposed events taking part in their locality, others gave their active support through shared ownership, betting, holding official positions, and organizing, as a means of boosting their social status. As the nineteenth century progressed, an increasingly wealthy and leisured middle class became anxious to distance itself from 'labourers' and the working classes so they regulated their leisure activities.[33] This particular middle-class faction had time to attend sports such as horseracing, which became social events for the display of status through ownership of horses and the social circles integral to the sport.[34]

The working class played no significant role in the organization of, or officiating at, race meetings, and attended races primarily to wager with the total amount of working class betting expanding from the 1860's onwards.[35] Elite trainers and jockeys were often working class in origin but sometimes became middle class, at least in terms of income, suggesting that racing may have offered a mechanism for social mobility.[36] However, trainers were always treated as employees by the individuals whose horse they prepared, and social distance was maintained by many owners into the late nineteenth century.[37] Because working for a living was perceived as plebeian by the upper class, trainers, jockeys, and race officials, were always going to be considered middle class at best. Although racing might provide a degree of social mobility, race meetings themselves became important events on the social calendar for the upper classes.[38] At the beginning of the nineteenth century, grandstands were, to some extent, already exclusive but they were sometimes over filled and accidents occurred.[39] As race meetings increasingly became more socially mixed, many racecourses established member-only stands, so that upper-class women were protected from intermingling with the inferior classes.[40] It was especially important that higher status social classes were protected from the frenetic gambling that surrounded racing and that women, in particular, should be kept as far away as possible from the 'horrid ring-men'.[41]

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[32] *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser,* October 27, 1843.
[33] Mike Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*.
[34] Bob Bachelor, *The 1900's* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2002).
[35] Mark Clapson, *A Bit of a Flutter: Popular Gambling and English Society 1823-1961* (Manchester: Manchester City Press, 1992).
[36] Huggins, *Flat Racing and British Society 1790-1914*.
[37] Mike Huggins, 'Nineteenth-Century Racehorse Stables in their Rural Setting: A Social and Economic Study', *Rural History* no.2 (1996): 177-190, 179.
[38] Jamie Bronstein and Andrew Harris, *Empire, State and Society: Britain since 1830* (Chichester: Blackwell Publishing, 2012).
[39] *North-Eastern Daily Gazette,* August 17, 1892.
[40] Mike Huggins, *Horse Racing and the British* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003); Huggins, *Flat Racing and British Society 1790-1914*.
[41] Duke of Beaufort, *Racing and Steeplechasing* (London: Spottiswoode and Co, 1886).

Gambling

Betting, according to many observers, added pleasure to attendance at a sport and, whether or not this is true, the fact remained that gambling was widespread in eighteenth-century England both by those taking an occasional 'flutter' and by the experienced gambler.[42] Betting accompanied all leisure, sport, and recreational activities, with pugilism, cock fighting, dog fighting, and bull and bear baiting being particularly popular, although athletic sports such as pedestrianism and horse racing were also important gambling events.[43] Most race meetings represented carnivals with institutionalized disorder, sexual licence, an overindulgence of food and drink, loud music, gambling, and fighting.[44] The middle classes, who preferred more rational and restrained ways of spending their leisure time, generally avoided heavy gambling so wagering was predominately participated in by the lower and gentry classes. George Osbaldeston, who died almost penniless, had a gambling debt of c. £200,000 in 1831 forcing him to sell his house, while Jack Mytton ('Mad Jack'), who inherited a large fortune early on in life, proceeded to lose most of it gambling on horses.[45] The Duke of Beaufort commented that, although it may have been fundamentally immoral, the love of betting on racehorses was ingrained in the British psyche,[46] while Watson suggested that racing would be healthier if betting did not exist at the racecourse. He also acknowledged, however, that the event would be far less interesting for most of its followers if there were not opportunities for wagering at the course. Watson went on to describe 'professional backers' and to discuss how they were warned off the turf, before pointing out that many of them returned to the course to pursue their trade with the connivance of dishonest jockeys and trainers.[47]

The organization of betting in horseracing was dependant on bookmakers who were generally expert judges of handicapping and in studying the form of the horses. On the principal British racecourses, there were two major betting rings, Tattersalls, where the heaviest betting took place, and a second ring, where the ready money business was transacted and a payment made after each race. The focus of legislation tended to be on ready-money betting because of the danger of bookmakers leaving the racecourse while the race was ongoing.[48] The larger bets made in the Tattersalls ring were booked bets and made on the 'nod', meaning that the client's account was settled at the end of every week.[49] A network of off-course betting, consisting of the bookmaker, his agents, and the punters, came into prominence in the second part of the nineteenth century with the nature of transactions varying

[42] Joseph Walsh, *Encyclopaedia of Rural Sports* (London: Fredrick Warne and Co, 1867).
[43] Roger Munting, *An Economic and Social History of Gambling in Britain and the USA* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996); Bob Erens, Laura Mitchell, Jim Orford, Kerry Sporoston and Clarissa White, *Gambling and Problem Gambling in Britain* (Hove: Brunner-Routledge, 2003).
[44] Huggins, 'Horse Racing on Teesside in the Nineteenth Century'.
[45] Martin Wallen, *Fox* (London: Reakton Books Ltd, 2006).
[46] Beaufort, *Racing and Steeplechasing*.
[47] Alfred Watson, *The Turf* (London: Lawrence and Bullen Ltd, 1898).
[48] Beaufort, *Racing and Steeplechasing*.; John Mason Good, Olinthus Gregory, and Newton Bosworth, *Pantologia: A New Cyclopaedia, Comprehending a complete series of essay* (London: T Davison, 1813).
[49] Walsh, *Encyclopaedia of Rural Sports*.

according to the size of the bookmaker's business. The bookmaker would make it known where he would be taking the bets on the street, while his agents would operate at pubs, clubs, and houses on his behalf. The bookmaker also usually had an agent in the local mill or workplace. Betting was often conducted from the front or back of a house in a working-class district, with 'look-outs' watching for the police and the property was adapted to facilitate transactions, usually through a window or a flap. The public house often acted as a site for paying out, although this could cause the publican to lose his licence.[50] Betting at the racecourse was carried out on many courses by means of the 'Totalisator' or the mechanical bookie working out the odds by mechanical methods'.[51] On the morning of a race day in Manchester for example, betting on these races took place in all Britain's major cities, although the odds offered by the bookmaker on the course could be substantially different to those in London.[52]

Betting during the eighteenth and nineteenth century helped sustain many British professional sports although, in horse racing there were stiff regulations established to keep the racing 'clean'.[53] With significant sums of money being wagered, extra rules needed to be introduced since fair competition was necessary to allow betting to take place.[54] Anti-doping rules in horse racing for example were designed to promote a fair environment for gamblers. As Vamplew points out, those who were making the rules were not only wagering large amounts of money but they were also owners, so they benefitted from regulation on two accounts,[55] although the 'fixing' of races remained an on-going factor.[56] In 1865, Mills described the art of 'nobbling' a horse, by giving it a drug to stop it from running to its full potential. A typical mixture would be a preparation of bitter aloes and opium, which made the animal, sick, faint, and drowsy. Stable boys looking after a particular horse were often unaware that this was taking place and when undertaking their morning duties they often panicked about being blamed for doping.[57] A jockey ring also existed in the late nineteenth century, consisting of a group of jockeys, bookmakers, and owners, which involved deciding before the race which horse was going to win so that others in the 'ring' could place their money with confidence. As Black points out, this led to those outside the ring never knowing whether any result was a function of the best or the nominated horse winning.[58]

The Victorian and Edwardian eras saw considerable criticism of gambling, both of the upper class practice of betting at horse races and the lower class forms of street cash betting. The middle classes

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[50] Clapson, *A Bit of a Flutter*.
[51] Walsh, *Encyclopaedia of Rural Sports*.
[52] Watson, *The Turf*.
[53] Robert Crego, *Sports and Games of the 18th and 19th Centuries* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing, 2003).
[54] John Gleaves, 'Enhancing the Odd: Horse Racing, Gambling and the First Anti-Doping Movement in Sport 1889-1991', *Sport in History* no.32 (2012): *26-5*.
[55] Wray Vamplew, 'Playing with the rules: Influences on the development of regulation in sport', *The International Journal of the History of Sport* no.24 (2007): 843-871.
[56] Gleaves, 'Enhancing the Odd'.
[57] John Mills, *Life of a Racehorse* (London: Ward, Lock and Tyler, 1865).
[58] Robert Black, *Horse Racing in England* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1893).

saw gambling, along with drinking and indiscriminate sex, as threatening the virtues of hard work through encouraging a 'something for nothing' attitude.[59] In 1831, the *Morning Chronicle* argued that betting on horseracing was actually illegal,[60] while at Ascot Races in 1843 regulations were in place to expel from the track anyone placing stakes or bets.[61] That same year, in a 'court of commons', it was being argued that horseracing itself should become illegal.[62] Between 1845 and 1928, following the Gaming Act, which declared that all betting contracts and agreements whether in writing or by word were null and void, gambling was made much more difficult.[63] The anti-gambling campaign founded by the National Anti-Gambling League (NAGL) became particularly strong, especially in the north-west region of England in the late nineteenth century, while the protestant churches provided news articles and preached against gambling.[64] *Baily's Magazine* in 1902 anticipated that betting would be further controlled by the government, which might well eradicate horseracing as a sport. [65]

Regulating the Sport

Racing at local level in many parts of England was often organized partially by the clerk of the course and a committee of local business owners with commercial gain being their main interest.[66] At Newmarket, which had been used for racing since the sixteenth century and incorporated gallops, training areas, and a race track, the governance of horseracing was undertaken by the Jockey Club, the term jockey not referring to a rider, which became the main organizing body for English horseracing.[67] Although some reports suggest that the club originated in 1750, the earliest reference to it was in 1752 by the *Sporting Kalendar* (sic)[68] in a report on a contribution plate to be run in Newmarket 'by the horses of noblemen and gentlemen of the Jockey Club'.[69] Up until 1770, the Jockey Club, which had originally been formed by owners, breeders, and gentlemen jockeys,[70] only had one steward but from then on three stewards were appointed with the main one being replaced annually.[71] It appears that the initial aim of the club was to organize horse races in Newmarket for its members and that the club met at the Red Lion Inn in Newmarket, although other reports suggest that it also met in London at the Star and Garter in Pall Mall. The club premises were exclusive, with hired professionals being barred, and, although membership lists were not documented until 1835, it is thought that in the late eighteenth century the club had around one hundred members. The club recruited new members from among the

[59] Clapson, *A Bit of a Flutter*.
[60] *Morning Chronicle,* April 25, 1831.
[61] *Standard,* October 5, 1843.
[62] *York Herald,* November 25, 1843.
[63] Walsh, *Encyclopaedia of Rural Sports*.
[64] Clapson, *A Bit of a Flutter*; Benjamin Rowntree, *Betting and Gambling: A National Evil* (London: Macmillan and Co Ltd, 1905).
[65] *Baily's Magazine,* April 15, 1902.
[66] Huggins, *Flat Racing and British Society 1790-1914*.
[67] *Morning Post,* June 2, 1830.
[68] Beaufort, *Racing and Steeplechasing.*
[69] Wray Vamplew, 'Reduced Horse Power: The Jockey Club and the Regulation of British Horseracing', *Entertainment Law* 2 (2003) 94-111.
[70] Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game.*
[71] Vamplew, 'Reduced Horse Power'.

richest and most influential members of society, which meant that it, unsurprisingly, gradually gained authority over the governing of the whole of British racing. In 1825, the individuals attending the club's dinner included His Grace the Duke of Grafton, Lord Anson, the Marquis of Titchfield and the Earls of Stradbroke and Verulam.[72] Seventy years later, attendees at the Jockey Club private members only area at Newmarket races included both the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Cambridge,[73] thus illustrating the long term involvement of the aristocracy with the club. *Baily's Magazine* in 1900 described eighty prominent members and explained that elections were held twice a year with a candidate having to be nominated by existing members. At least nine members had to vote but two black balls were sufficient to exclude someone from joining.

Table 1. Jockey Club Members 1900. Source: *Baily's Magazine*.[74]

Members	Year Joined	Members	Year Joined
King of the Belgians	1866	Lord Coventry	1860
Prince Christian	1868	Lord Colville	1869
Prince Soltykoff	1867	Lord Roseberry	1870
Prince d'Arenberg	1896	Lord Harewood	1873
Duke of Richmond	1838	Lord Alington	1876
Duke of Portland	1881	Lord March	1879
Duke of Devonshire	1883	Lord Cadogan	1882
Duke of Connaught	1872	Lord Durham	1884
Duke of Cambridge	1872	Lord Penryhn	1887
Prince of Wales	1864	Lord Russell of Killowen	1895
Grand Duke Vladimir	1871	Sir F. Johnstone	1860
Earl of Cork and Orrery	1866	Sir Reginald Graham	1869
The Marquis of Londonderry	1884	Sir Robert Jardine	1877
Viscount Falmouth	1898	Sir Waldie Griffths	1897
Earl of Ellesmere	1879	Hon. W. H. Fitzwilliam	1875
Earl of Derby	1894	Hon. James Lowther	1882
Count Lehendorff	1895	Mr Henry Chaplin MP	1864
Earl of Crewe	1895	Mr J.H. Houldsworth	1874
Comte de Berteux	1890	Mr Leopold de Rothschild	1881
Count Elmer Batthyany	1893	Mr Douglas Baird	1887
Marquis of Zetland	1875	Mr T.H Barclay	1890
Count Tassalo Festetics	1880	Mr C.D. Rose	1891
Comte de Juigne	1896	Mr H. McCalmont	1893
General Owen Williams	1881	M.Henri Delamarre	1896
		J. W. Lanarch	1900

From its early days, the Jockey Club refused to have anything to do with gambling, although they were keen to ensure that any misconduct within the sport was dealt with. In 1811, the club offered 500 guineas reward for the unmasking of the individual who had put poison into water troughs at

[72] *Morning Post,* April 7, 1825.
[73] *Daily Mail,* July 15, 1896.
[74] *Baily's Magazine*, February 18, 1900.

Newmarket Heath after an anonymous letter was sent to a trainer telling them to avoid allowing their horses to drink from certain troughs.[75] They also became involved in disputes over racing at Newmarket, such as in 1823 when, after a fourth false start in a race, jockeys failed to pull up and the clerks of the course refused to accept the winner.[76] Other incidents included individuals being warned off the heath and off the premises of the Club for betting unlawfully and losing a race on purpose.[77] With prize money increasing, owners generally ran their horses to win, unless they were trying to confuse the handicapper for a more important race in the near future, because without success on the track there would be no means of paying for the trainer, jockeys, and horse. However, gambling interfered with this approach since it was often unclear whether a horse was racing to win or not.

In the late nineteenth century, the club refused to publish results of any race in the racing calendar unless the event and course complied with their rules, and any trainers or jockeys taking part in these non-ruled events were disqualified. Race meetings were often held on local holidays such as wakes, which enabled the working class to attend,[78] but the Jockey Club policy of arranging the racing calendar to avoid clashes between competing racecourses meant that working men and women did not have the time or the money to attend all the meetings. During the 1860s, the club oversaw innovations such as having an assistant starter with a starting flag and the introduction of the telegraph board.[79] In 1870, the Club also began to control racecourses, which would only be recognized if they followed their rules in all aspects of a race meeting including stabling, parading, registering owners, and their colours. In time, the club became a dominating force over all aspects of racing, with its authority being unchallenged, enabling them to formulate the rulings and regulations that transformed horseracing into its modern form.[80] The organization became commercialized and systematized from 1879 onwards and introduced flat trainers licences in 1905, although it was only in 1968 that a single organisation was created to control all forms of horseracing, when the Jockey Club and the National Hunt Committee combined and this new organization subsequently decided on disciplinary matters and key rule changes.[81]

Until the creation of a single organization, the Jockey Club were primarily concerned with the control of flat racing and its rules were gradually refined to be more specific and adapt to an expanding racing programme. By the early nineteenth century, flat racing had established itself as a major sporting phenomenon, a flat race occurred over a short distance, with no obstacles. The attendance at Epsom races in 1818 was such that from early in the day the London to Epsom road was ‘blocked up with

[75] *York Herald,* May 11, 1811.
[76] *Morning Post,* September 18, 1823.
[77] *Sheffield & Rotherham Independent,* July 4, 1889.
[78] Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game*.
[79] The Honourable Admiral Rous, *Laws and Practice of Horse Racing* (Cornhill: A. H. Baily & Co, 1866).
[80] Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game*.
[81] John Nauright, *Sports Around the World: History, Culture, and Practice* (California: ABC-CLIO, 2012).

vehicles and horses of all sizes and descriptions'. The course itself was lined with carriages three to four deep and the surrounding hills of the Epsom racecourse were covered.[82] The first rule introduced by the Jockey Club, on 24 March 1758, related to the weighing in of jockeys, with any jockey failing to weigh in being banned from racing again at Newmarket.[83] Rule changes were published in the *Racing Calendar*, although trainers and owners would also be notified through the newspapers, such as in 1836 when the *Morning Post* reported a change in rule number thirty-three relating to a dead heat.[84] The club's rules covered all aspects of racing, from jockeys, betting, and stewards, and when they were revised in 1857 they included some interesting examples of the reach and scope of the club at that point in time. Rule four, in respect to maidens, was extended to include racing globally, while rule nine raised the standard weight to eight stone ten pounds from the original St. Leger weight for colts of eight stone, and the Epsom Derby eight stone two pounds. Rule ten reemphasized that the club and its stewards would not involve themselves in any disputes or claims with respect to betting. Until 1857, it had been optional to weigh-in after a race with the whip, although some jockeys had taken advantage of this and rule thirty-seven was changed to state that no whip or substitute for a whip would be allowed on the scales.[85]

National Hunt Racing

Flat race meetings had a longer race card and attained a higher status than National Hunt meetings so they attracted a far greater proportion of the upper and middle classes. A National Hunt race was over a longer distance with varying obstacles to be jumped. In the 1860's, the Jockey Club had had an opportunity to take charge of the jumping branch of the sport but they turned this down as they saw it as 'improper horseracing'.[86] National Hunt racing was deemed a mediocre feature of the racing calendar, with many avoiding events that were regarded as a 'danger zone' because they attracted a bad crowd that indulged in fighting, thieving, and drinking. Nevertheless, in 1884, steeplechasing was being described as a manly English sport with 'just the sort of danger about it that Englishmen like to encounter, a danger which skill and courage' were required to overcome,[87] and the nineteenth and early twentieth century's saw significant developments in National Hunt racing. From the early stages of the nineteenth century, steeplechase owners ran their horses for prize money contributed to by all competitors, such as the Marquis of Waterford who at the Caher Steeplechase races in 1843 donated over £100.[88] The ten early rules for steeplechasing, established in 1845 by Henry Wright, included a rule that if any rider rode up a main road, lane, or public through road, for over one hundred yards he would be disqualified. Any riders crossing, jostling, or riding at another competitor while jumping a

[82] *Trewman's Exeter Flying Post,* June 4, 1818.
[83] Beaufort, *Racing and Steeplechasing*; Vamplew, 'Reduced Horse Power'.
[84] *Morning Post,* May 23, 1836.
[85] Rous, *Laws and Practice of Horse Racing*.
[86] Vamplew, 'Reduced Horse Power'.
[87] *Longmans Magazine,* April 1, 1884.
[88] *Freemans Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser,* October 27, 1843.

fence would be disqualified, while rule nine stated that if a rider was dismounted his horse could be caught and remounted if it were in the same field and that members of the crowd were allowed to assist with catching the horse.[89]

Further regulations appeared after the Grand National Steeplechase Committee, which included sixteen men who were already members of the Jockey Club, was instituted in 1866. Admiral Rous, a Jockey Club steward for several years advised the nascent committee on their rules and regulations for the sport, and a key task addressed by the committee was the selection of a course for the Grand National Hunt Steeplechase.[90] Although the prize money was low in National Hunt races compared with that of flat racing, the Grand National prize money was significant and the committee eventually settled on Aintree. In 1867, the committee took responsibly for hurdle races as well as steeplechases[91] and ten years later, Thomas Pickernell, a retired jockey with three Grand National wins to his name, became the first Inspector of Courses. The committee introduced stricter regulations concerning jockeys with amateurs needing to belong to one of a select list of clubs or be an officer on full pay, or a magistrate in order to qualify.[92] Although, technically, somebody of a lower social class could be balloted into the draw, they had to be nominated by somebody in the club. The committee addressed many problems that troubled the sport and a set of governing rules were established. Local and outside stewards were given powers at the course and attempts were made to standardize the height of fences and the number of obstacles in a mile. The National Hunt racing calendar in the 1880's ran from January to December with the bulk of racing taking place between March and May. In 1889, the Grand National Steeplechase Committee changed their name to the National Hunt Committee and there were 1,626 National Hunt races in the racing calendar by 1902. The committee imposed licences for trainers in 1910 and a year later there were 235 licensed professional jockeys and fifty-five qualified amateur riders.[93]

Racing Employees

Employees in racing stables ranged from the trainer, who was nominally in charge, down to the lowest stable lad or lass. Because of the social and sporting context of the nineteenth century, the numbers of women involved were inevitably low and the involvement of girls working in stables only really began to increase in the early twentieth century when more females were seen as being capable of working long hours and handling strong horses. In a 1925 survey of females in 'Queer Trades', the percentage of those involved in equine activities was small in comparison to other trades, although there were

[89] James Christie Whyte, *History of the British Turf* (London: Henry Colburn, 1840).
[90] Rous, *Laws and Practice of Horse Racing*.
[91] Vamplew, 'Reduced Horse Power'.
[92] Dilwyn Porter and Stephen Wagg, *Amateurism in British Sport: It Matters not who Won or Lost?* (London: Routledge, 2009); Michael Ross and Sue Dyson, *Diagnosis and Management of Lameness in the Horse* (Missouri: Elsevier Saunders, 2011).
[93] Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game*; Nauright, *Sports Around the World*.

eleven females training horses or working as a jockey.[94] It was only in 1966 that the Jockey Club sanctioned women trainers, although many women before this had trained but under their stable lad's name.[95] Inevitably, then, what follows is primarily a history of men's involvement.

Jockeys

Statistics for Newmarket show that racing was thriving by 1853 when there were 172 races, involving 854 horses, with one dead heat that remained undecided, fourteen walkovers and twenty-three matches forfeited. The races saw 104 different jockeys riding with forty-two individuals recording wins, including E. Flatman, who won thirty-nine races and lost eighty-one, and F. Butler, who won nineteen races and lost thirty-eight. In terms of trainers, William Butler won seventeen races and had two walkovers with nine races being forfeited, while Harlock won ten races, had three walkovers and received four forfeits.[96] Clearly some trainers, like Butler, and some jockeys such as Flatman were appearing regularly, and successfully, as professional members of the racing community.

The word 'jockey' was initially used in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to describe a horse dealer or vagabond and, according to the *Times of India* in 1910 the dictionary defined the verb 'to jockey' as meaning to cheat.[97] The current meaning of 'riding the horse' was first used in the late seventeenth century, when gentlemen riders included members of the royal family and men such as Sir Robert Geere and Colonel Aston.[98] Horseracing increasingly became more professional, however, as owners began to realize that their chances of winning improved if they employed a specialist to ride for them. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, many jockeys were simply grooms and livery servants to a specific house, but, as the sport expanded and gambling became more important, independent jockeys emerged who were able to choose their rides, often riding six to seven races in a single day. Because the Jockey Club was concerned about putting valuable horses at risk, the club encouraged professional jockeys and the number of amateur riders decreased throughout the century. In 1879, the Jockey Club introduced professional jockey licences and many gentlemen riders who acquired this licence preferred to race in National Hunt events rather than on the Flat because the heavier weights that horses could carry meant they could still lead the 'good life'.[99]

Early jockeys often travelled to races on a pony with their lightweight racing saddle tied around their waist,[100] and they were known for their cunning in dodging weights, pulling up horses to win bets, and knowing how to fool the stewards. Older, more experienced, jockeys used to trick young jockeys into

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[94] *Daily Mail Atlantic Edition,* February 17, 1925.
[95] Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game*.
[96] *Spirit of the Times; A Chronicle of the Turf, Agriculture, Field Sports, Literature and the Stage,* March 19, 1853.
[97] *The Times of India,* June 6, 1910.
[98] Black, *Horse Racing in England*.
[99] Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game*.
[100] Day, *The Racehorse in Training, 247.*

thinking they were working and riding their horse hard coming into the home straight, although the experienced jockey, who apparently would be working his arms and hand and vigorously using his whip, was sitting still and the whip never touched the horse. The young jockey would then do the same to his mount, which would tire before reaching the finishing post, in a process known as being 'jockeyed' out of the race. Fred Archer, who won 2,748 races throughout his career,[101] was well known for bullying and frightening the young jockeys to make way for him when he was 'shut in' at the rear of the field with no chance of getting through the leaders except by going around the outside. Other tricks known to jockeys were fixing the race for a certain horse to win, pulling a horse back and not letting it run the race properly, and purposefully losing a stirrup and falling of the horse.[102]

In the 1880s, the Jockey Club set the remuneration for jockeys at three guineas for a ride and five for a win,[103] but jockeys with talent often gained bigger rewards because the increasing size of winning purses meant owners would give more money to a good jockey to order to get him to ride for them. Contracts began to emerge in the late eighteenth century and, while Tom Cannon was apparently given £15,000 for a three-year contract, jockeys in the 1830's generally received around £100 and Fred Archer only received £3,600 in 1881. Owners would often give presents to their jockeys, which could double their income, while a successful jockey could expect more offers of rides and the opportunity to select his mount. This meant that a small percentage of the top jockeys rode all the winners and a good jockey, such as Elijah Wheatley who rode 124 winners whilst still an apprentice, could quickly become a champion jockey. Normally, though, apprentice jockeys, such as Fred Archer who earned nine guineas in his first year and thirteen in his fourth and fifth year, made very little money, although a stable lad doing a similar job might expect three and four times as much. Trainers might also deduct part of an apprentice's fees for teaching him how to ride properly and for providing him with racing opportunities.[104]

Trainers

In the early nineteenth century, a racehorse trainer would merely be a low paid servant or 'training groom' who worked for a single owner, often on his private estate, for a fixed salary,[105] although the sport did have a history of particular individuals, such as Tragonwell Frampton who trained horses for the Stuarts, becoming extremely wealthy. The training position became more valued as racing became more commercialized and owners responded to the increase in prize money by searching out the most experienced and successful trainers to ensure that their horses were suitably prepared. For their part, trainers developed systematic and rigorous training programmes so that they could be competitive in

[101] Black, *Horse Racing in England*.
[102] *The Times of India,* June 6, 1910.
[103] Day, *The Racehorse in Training*, 164.
[104] Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game*.
[105] Huggins, 'Nineteenth-Century Racehorse Stables in their Rural Setting'.

attracting owners to their stables. This meant that the man who trained fifteen to twenty of his master's horses was no longer sufficient for the job and public trainers evolved supervising a central racing establishment that different owners were able to send various horses to for training.[106]

These trainers of the middle nineteenth century also had a better education than those who had previously trained horses since a number of them were middle-class gentlemen who had attended public schools. In the racing world of this time trainers needed two attributes to have a successful career in training racehorses. They needed enough funds to start their training establishment and then they needed contacts with wealthy gentlemen who would bring their horses to be trained at the yard.[107] In the earlier part of the nineteenth century few public trainers carried out their work in purpose-built accommodation, much of it being adapted from existing substantial farm buildings with only limited stabling, although successful private trainers were sometimes set up in purpose-built accommodation by owners. Wealthy ex-jockeys sometimes purchased stables, but more often, much of the accommodation and stabling was rented, putting money into the local economy.[108] In 1907, according to the *Daily Mail*, the amount required to build a complex to train horses suitable for those racing on the Flat was £1,393. This was revealed at a court hearing to recover money owing to racehorse trainer William Richard Baker, from a Mr David Faber, an owner of racehorses, for preparing his stables for training flat racing horses.[109]

Most trainers beginning to train were already well known in the 'crowd' as a jockey, a promoted head lad, or as sons of trainers who had grown up learning the trade.[110] This history of engagement was particularly useful in their selection of, and interactions with, jockeys. In contrast with amateur jockeys, some of whom were not very skilful and others of whom refused to listen to the trainer, the young professionals appearing in mid century needed to be taught the business and advised on their lifestyles. Fame created a number of issues, as did the practice of owners showering jockeys with presents that were sold on. Trainer William Day advised that these presents should be kept until the jockey was old enough to appreciate them and to put them to good use and that, in the meantime, jockeys should be paid fairly.[111] Equally important for trainers was their relationship with owner, which was often challenging, given that owners often lived at a distance and trainers were often away at meetings. While some of the more successful trainers, despite being predominantly working-class in origin, became major employers and could be regarded as middle class in terms of wealth, position and literacy, it paid to 'fit in' with the social and political attitudes of their owners. For example,

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[106] Wray Vamplew, *The Turf: a Social and Economic History of Horse Racing (*London: Western Printing Services Ltd, 1976).
[107] Bill Eacott, *A History of Racehorse Training at Epsom* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009).
[108] Huggins, 'Nineteenth-Century Racehorse Stables in their Rural Setting'.
[109] *Daily Mail,* November 20, 1907.
[110] Vamplew, T*he Turf: a Social and Economic History of Horse Racing*.
[111] Day, *The Racehorse in Training*, 163.

trainers who became politically active as councillors or members of Boards of Health were almost invariably Conservative, mirroring the perspectives of the owners with whom they worked.[112]

The expenses an owner would pay a trainer would vary £200-£250 per year in the nineteenth century. The *Morning Post* in April 1839 believed that training costs were £2 per week for the upkeep of the horse, then extras on top of that, for the farrier, surgeon, saddler, and stable lads, might total up to £200 a year. [113] This compared to a wage of a farm labourer in the 1840's as £30.40 per year, showing the expense of a horse in training.[114] The *Dundee Courier and Argus* in July 1864 described the risk of keeping horses as considerable and suggested that the price of this would be £230 per year, excluding the price of the jockey.[115] Trainers found it difficult to please their employers, the owners, and the general public at the same time, unless the horse won. Day observed that journalists, the public, and bookmakers considered every horse that failed to win as 'too big like a bullock or too poor over galloped and starved to death', while winners, whatever their condition, were 'unreservedly praised'. He made a point of avoiding incurring the displeasure of his owners and running his horses unfit, if he ran his horse half fit, everyone would be happy before the race, and if somehow, the horse won, the victory was put down to its condition. [116] Not surprisingly, trainers sometimes had a negative relationship with their owners, often because of the owner's ingratitude for their efforts and their insistence on immediate results without giving the trainer sufficient time to prepare the horse.[117] In the late nineteenth century, there were a number of trainers who were owed money by their employers and this often turned trainers to gambling to make up the deficits in their finances.[118] This was frowned upon as it tempted trainers into dishonesty, although few trainers were called before the Jockey Club, apparently, it was said, because they were 'too clever to be caught'.[119]

The burden of being a trainer grew at the end of the nineteenth century, as he became responsible for purchasing the yearlings, entering horses into the right races and choosing the correct jockey, in addition to preparing the horse for the race. Owners were often fickle, and their horses could be raced for pleasure, prestige or profit, so effective stable management was complex, with the ever-present risk of losing owners and consequent financial failure.[120] There was also the increasing pressure of losing his licence if the horse was doped to either win or lose the race.[121] It was illegal for a trainer to dope a horse but there was always the possibility of an individual from outside of the training yard

[112] Huggins, 'Nineteenth-Century Racehorse Stables in their Rural Setting', 179.
[113] *The Morning Post,* April 22, 1839.
[114] Marion Allen, *the Oxford Encyclopaedia of Economic History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 59-65.
[115] *The Dundee Courier & Argus,* July 18, 1864.
[116] Day, *The Racehorse in Training*, 50-51.
[117] Vamplew, *The Turf: a social and economic history of horse racing*.
[118] Huggins, *Horse Racing and the British*.
[119] Day, *The Racehorse in Training,* 279.
[120] Huggins, 'Nineteenth-Century Racehorse Stables in their Rural Setting', 179.
[121] Thomas Barnes in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 6, 2014.

gaining access. There was also the risk of injury and illness affecting their income such as horses falling over on the gallops or the blacksmith accidently pricking the horse whilst plating.[122] As the stresses increased on trainers the head lads of the yard became more responsible for ensuring the horse's safety.[123] Other problems trainers faced were that in a stable of fifty horses no two horses were the same, and each individual case needed to be treated according to their individual needs, in the manner of their feeding, their comfort in their stable and the amount of work they were given. The same was true of the amount of physic supplied since not all horses were given the same dose.[124] These difficulties made the successful training of a racehorse something of a challenge.

[122] Plating - shoeing the horse with lightweight racing plates .
[123] Vamplew, *The Turf: a social and economic history of horse racing*.
[124] Day, *The Racehorse in Training*, 66.

Chapter Two: Nineteenth-Century Training Practices.

Introduction

As racing flourished in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, success on the course relied on the appropriate training of suitable raw material. The agricultural revolution of the eighteenth century witnessed an increasing concern with the selective breeding of livestock such as cattle and sheep and this was reflected in an expansion of interest in the breeding of thoroughbred racehorses, which had been underway for some time. The breeding industry rapidly increased during the nineteenth century, with large stud farms proliferating, and the value of horses rose significantly, as the pedigree of the horse became an important factor in influencing buyers as to which animal could potentially be a St Ledger winner. In 1791, J. Wetherby introduced the General Stud Book (GSB), which recorded, in four yearly instalments, any thoroughbred mating and giving birth in Britain and Ireland, in order to ensure the integrity of bloodlines. In addition to the GSB, the *Sporting Magazine* began producing statistical details about offspring from a stallion making certain stallions more desirable to potential customers.[125] Over time, breeders responded to changes in the structure of racing. In the early nineteenth century, the majority of races were run in heats and the horses were three to six year olds that raced over longer distances so horses were bred for middle distance with stamina in mind. However, the racing world had adapted by the 1880's when the majority of races were handicapped or short sprint races entered by two or three year olds, so breeders adjusted accordingly, as did the trainers who worked with these animals, although training practices were not changed as significantly as might have been thought.

Racehorse training

Seventeenth-century equine training was predicated on the notion that any impediments to full function had to be removed, allowing the horse to achieve the full extent of its natural abilities, but the idea gradually evolved that training schemes based on scientific principles could extend the performance of all animals beyond their God-given abilities.[126] When thoroughbreds were introduced into Britain, the training of the animal was taken very seriously with literature advising on practices such as 'See that he be empty before you Course him; and it is wholesome to wash his tongue and nostrils with vinegar, or piss in his mouth, before you back him', along with purging and sweating, both of which were still being implemented in the nineteenth century.[127] In this respect, early

[125] Nicholas Russell, *Like Engend'ring Like: Heredity and Animal Breeding in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Anne Milne, 'Sentient Genetics: Breeding the Animal Breeder as Fundamental Other', *Journal of Eighteenth-Century Studies,* no.4 (2010): 583-597; John Child, *Britain 1750 to 1900* (London: Heinemann, 1995); Fred Marshall, *Stable Secrets*.; Frank Mitchell and Steven Roman, *Racehorse breeding theories* (Neenah: The Russell Meerdink Company Ltd, 2004).

[126] Dave Day 'Science', 'Wind' and 'Bottom': Eighteenth-Century Boxing Manuals, *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, no.29, (2012): 1450.

[127] Robert Howlett, *The School of Recreation Or, The Gentlemans Tutor, to those Most Ingenious Exercises of Hunting, Racing, Hawking, Riding, Cock-fighting, Fowling, Fishing* (London: H Rodes, 1684).

racehorse trainers followed the practices of their predecessors, who had trained both animal and human bodies according to the precepts proposed by Classical Greek physicians. Many of the elements that underpinned training programmes were part of the accepted wisdom of the period regarding health and its dependence on the six non-naturals: air, food, exercise, the passions, evacuation and retention, sleeping and waking. Texts rarely mentioned the theory behind the procedures they recommended but training practices were clearly influenced by humoral theory which held that bodies were comprised of the four humours of earth, fire, water, and air, each having its associated characteristic of melancholy, choler, phlegm, or blood. Grooms of the nineteenth century were always concentrating on controlling noxious humours to keep the horses healthy and fit.[128] The work of the trainer was to identify humoral imbalances and correct them through a programme of diet, exercise and medication. The animal should be prepared by being well purged and cleared of all ill humours by taking medicines over two or three days. The first day purged the bowels, the second the liver, and the third the 'reins' in which lay the 'drain' of the ill humours.[129] These principles continued to underpin training practices throughout the nineteenth century and humoral theory was only finally discarded in the early 1900's. By this time, developments in science and medicine had changed not only some of the basic methods of training but also the way in which illness was treated.

Purging

In the nineteenth century, when a horse entered a new yard, the stable lads would cleanse the animal inside and out by purging and sweating, before the trainer would exercise it, so that the trainer was working on a 'clean canvas'.[130] Purging was a method of cleansing the racehorse of impurities from the inside through the administration of different aloes (a purgative obtained from the processed juice of a certain species of plant), usually by the head groom. For Darvill, a systematic process of purging began by relaxing the bowels and keeping the horse on mash with small quantities of hay for the twenty-four hours before purging commenced. The following morning the horse would have a double-handful of mash then be taken out for a walking exercise for two to three hours. The purge would be given directly after the horse had returned from exercise.[131] This method was used to keep the horse healthy and thriving throughout the season as well as it being cleansed when it first came to the yard. Neutral salts such as potassium, Glauber's Salts, effective for worming, and mercury were employed, although racing and training performances were often affected because the purge given was too large or too frequent. Other purgatives employed were croton, linseed oil and olive oil, though this was considered somewhat uncertain and unsafe. Given with linseed oil, croton induced severe diarrhoea,

[128] Sir John Sinclair, *The Code of Health and Longevity: or A Concise View, of the Principles Calculated for Health* (Edinburgh: Thomas and Archibald Constable, 1870); Gail Paster, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 1993).
[129] Dave Day, *Professionals, Amateurs and Performance* (Bern: Peter Lang AG, 2012); 'Science', 'Wind' and 'Bottom', 1453.
[130] Walsh, *Encyclopaedia of rural sports.*
[131] Robert Darvill, *A Treatise on the Care, Treatment and Training of the English Racehorse* (London: James Ridgway, 1840).

while linseed oil alone was safe to use in doses from a pound to a pound and a half. A pregnant mare could also be given linseed oil as a method of keeping them fresh and boosting their appearance and brightening their coat.[132]

Sweating

Sweating was a system of cleaning the outside of the horse, the hair, skin and pores, thereby removing all unnecessary interstitial matter. Since it was believed that noxious materials were passed out of the body by both the lungs and the skin this was an important part of the cleansing process and was referred to by all authors concerned with the training of the racehorse. Some trainers also sweated their racehorses before a race to lighten them for the race, thereby helping with the weight of the horse. William Day suggested that, in the lead up to the sweat, it was customary to gallop the horse over the distance that they were to compete in, certainly up to two miles, although, two-year olds had a half-speed gallop for around a mile. The horse would be clothed with up to three layers, and exercised up to five miles, maintaining a steady gallop with bursts of sprinting speed. Chiffney speaks of sweating horses for six miles twice a week. If one part of the horse was considered as being too heavy they would put extra layers on this area to sweat further before being taken back to the stable where they were strapped and scraped[133] to help rid of impurities. The horse was then left in a closed stable to sweat violently. When in the 'rubbing house' additional clothing was thrown over the horse to promote perspiration until it ran in streams down their legs and down to the fetlocks. Water was then given to the horse through a bottle, the nostrils, lips and face were well sponged, the clothes thrown forward from the quarters, and the animal thoroughly but lightly scraped. The girth of the saddle was then slackened and the hood taken off.[134] Darvill also suggested that a physic was given to the horse in its food, to help the sweating procedure.[135] Sweating was commonly performed when first entering a yard and every ten days thereafter, and it was carried out in the morning so that the horse could be checked on throughout the day by stable lads. In the *Morning Post* in 1840 it was suggested that when the sweat was occurring it should be done on straw-beds or the stable hay loft. [136]

Sweating had its critics as well as its advocates. Lawrence had objected to the practice as early as 1809 but the practice gradually increased to such an extent that no horse was deemed fit unless it had been galloped for a number of miles. However, heavy clothed sweats were going out of fashion by 1856,

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[132] William Youatt, *The Horse: With a Treatise on Draught* (London: Baldwin and Cradock, 1831).
[133] Strapped and Scraped – Brushing vigorously to clean the skin and hair
[134] Laura Westgarth, Continuity and Diversity in Training Racehorses since 1750, *British Society for Sport History Conference*, September 7, 2013;Laura Westgarth, Continuity and Diversity in Training Racehorses from 1750 to today, *IPR Seminar,* December 19, 2013.
[135] Darvill, *A Treatise on the Care, Treatment and Training of the English Racehorse*; Mills, *Life of a Racehorse*; Derek Blaine, *An Encyclopaedia of Rural Sports* (Edinburgh: Thomas and Archibald Constable, 1870); Walsh, *Encyclopaedia of Rural Sports*; Day, *The Racehorse in Training,* 75-76.
[136] *The Morning Post,* April 10, 1840.

unless a horse was considered to be overweight.[137] Day recalled that the sweating of horses had been much more severe when he had been a boy working in a yard and that it had not been restricted to mature horses, with two-year olds having to go through the same process once a week, and that it had been carried out on every day of the week, although it was minimized on Sundays. Day had discontinued the use of sweating in the 1860's, as a result of two horses breaking down after going through the process, and he suggested that the practice of heavy sweats had almost disappeared completely by the late 1880s.[138] During this period, trainers, as training practitioners invariably did across all human and animal sports, considered alternatives. The Turkish bath was compared to the process of sweating extensively in *Bells Life* in 1861, which reported on an 'experiment' by a trainer who had sweated two horses, one through the method of using a Turkish bath and the other through a four mile gallop. The horse sweated using the bath lost three pounds more than that which was galloped, results which drew a number of comments from correspondents to the paper. One writer argued that since trainers knew the constitutions of their individual horses and that they would not all respond in the same way, any conclusions about this 'experiment' would be invalid. In addition, by merely standing the horse in a bath, it would gain no other benefit, such as strengthening the muscles and improving the wind, which it would have got from a gallop. Further correspondence explained that the Turkish bath was not solely the method used to train a racehorse but merely recommended as a valuable support and the trainer argued that a gentle perspiration in a bath was less likely to damage muscle fibres than galloping heavily clothed.[139]

Exercise

The importance of physical exercise was well known by the eighteenth century with one author describing it as a 'beneficial agitation of the body, a system of tubes and glands providing an engine for the soul'. A combination of enlightened thinking and increasing industrialization engendered the concept of achievement through improved performance, resulting in the development of systematic training programmes as contemporaries reassessed traditional ideas relating to the animal body.[140] Training the horses during the week consisted of two days of speed work on either the heath or moorland over the specialized distance of the horse, as identified by the trainer, with other days concentrating on building stamina and trotting on the road to strengthen legs and muscles. Blaine suggested that the training grounds should be smooth and flat to encourage the horse to glide over the grass and that it should not be encouraged to try and jump over hills and divots. The workouts lasted for one hour to one and a half hours and were supervised by the trainer,[141] who would position himself,

[137]James Farquharson, *The Post and the Paddock: The druid* (London: Vinton & co, 1856).
[138] Day, *The Racehorse in Training,* 76-77.
[139] *Bells Life*, April 28, 1861.
[140] Day, 'Science', 'Wind' and 'Bottom', 1450.
[141] Blaine, *An Encyclopaedia of Rural Sports*.

either in a trap or on a hack, at a vantage point where he could view the speed work.[142] The training of the horses would be varied according to the characteristics and habits of the horse in question. In the *Glasgow Herald* in October 1858 it was suggested that when training for speed, a horse must be made to lead the gallops, or the horse who is training for a specific race would not exert themselves fully.[143]

Day believed that racing horses in public should be not be performed too often because horses should only be raced when fit, although a horse's superiority combined with the inferiority of its opponents could allow a less than fully fit horse to be successful. Some trainers deliberately started their horses in the season unfit in the hope that they would race themselves into a good racing condition and these men even backed them financially, as a result of which they often lost their money. Day believed that if he brought his horse to the post fit, the trainer would probably win the race and most likely a large stake in bets. After that one victory the trainer could afford to wait until another suitable opportunity came along. He believed that he knew when the horse was fully fit and the signs to look out for, one clue was available at the finish of a gallop, if the horse's nostrils were distended comparatively very little, the animal was not blowing hard, that it did not 'heave at his flanks', and if the horse quickly recovered its composure. He did not consider that excessive sweating in gallops or races proved unfitness because those animals that sweated most profusely were often fitter to run than those which were scarcely wet after galloping.[144]

Diet

In addition to the physical training it was important that the horse's feed was varied on the build-up to a race, to adjust quantities for maximum performance. Equally, it was important that stable lads monitored the feeding habits of their horses, reporting if a horse had gone off their food to the trainer. The *Caledonian Mercury* pointed out in 1836 that training was a methodical method of inducing the maximum state of health and morale achieved through regular feeding as well as exercise.[145] Horses were fed five times a day with as much good old oats and hay chaff as they could eat and, in some cases, light or delicate feeders might have a few old white peas or split beans added to each feed. Hay could be given like corn without any limit because as long as they had enough of both horses would not overeat to the extent that they did themselves any damage. On the qualities of food and water, a matter of the utmost importance, it was important that the trainer should be supplied with the very best of oats, they should be old and of English growth. In Day's opinion, oats at £42 per bushel and black tartan at £40 were best during the winter. T. Parr, on the other hand, gave plentiful amounts of hay and suggested that oats should be supplied sparingly. Trainers discussed the issue of where the hay had been grown and believed its quality was affected by the soil. Hay grown on rich alluvial soil or well-

[142] Hack - An old retired racehorse, who would stand quietly and watch proceedings without becoming excited
[143] *Glasgow Herald*, October 11, 1858.
[144] Day, *The Racehorse in Training*, 76.
[145] *Caledonian Mercury*, April 30, 1836.

drained clay was the best while that grown on gravel or poor chalk was the worst. While it might keep its colour and smell, and it may be cheap it should never be used for racehorses, as it contained little nourishment. After every feeding all the corn that was not eaten would be removed and the manger thoroughly cleaned, and the hay should be treated in the same way before being given to the hacks or to the cows. By adopting this method, horses would be tempted to eat all of their feed despite the belief that horses would not eat food that they had blown on. The water that was given to the horses had the chill taken of it to prevent griping and it was given two or three times a day.[146]

Consideration also had to be given the diet of the jockeys, which was often very demanding because they ate comfortably through the winter season so, when March came, some of them had to lose up to three stone. During the season, the jockeys had careful diets, which often consisted of very few nutrients by modern standards. For example, Fred Archer's daily diet was warm castor oil, a strip of dry toast and half a glass of champagne, which often made him susceptible to illness. There was always a temptation to take an extra ride, which was under their normal weight, and so jockeys often had to shift the weight fast. The usual method of losing weight was through a combination of sweat and diet. The sweat involved a heavily clothed run across the country, so it was not uncommon at Newmarket in the late nineteenth century to see up to a dozen wasting jockeys returning from an eight mile run. One alternative was the Turkish bath, which often took a lot of the jockey's energy, although, Black believed the Turkish bath in the late nineteenth century to be less tough as a regime than it had been at the start of the century. For Day, the faithful jockey who worked night and day to fast and lose weight to be the suitable size for the race and, in addition, kept the stable secrets to himself should be substantially rewarded by trainers and owners for their commitment.[147]

Medicine

The use of medicines to treat injury and to deal with humoral imbalances was a critical skill for any trainer. If they were out of sync the trainer would often give herbal medicines to realign the humours. Herbal medicines consisted of ingredients such as gentian and ginger used to make a vegetable tonic added to copper in doses of two drachms,[148] ingredients which would used to help solve discharge coming from the nose of the horse. Arsenic was formerly seen as a way of destroying worms in the horse, although an injection of a quart of linseed oil was also seen as a method of dealing with worms.[149] Another method was to administer two drachms of emetic tartar with a scruple of ginger made into a ball with linseed oil. Some trainers in the 1800's believed that a method of ridding the horse of gripes, now known as colic, was to ride the horse at a full gallop after it had had a lot to drink. The *Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* in 1874 had readers send in their own

[146] Day, *The Racehorse in Training,* 18.
[147] Black, *Horse Racing in England*; Day, *The Racehorse in Training*, 163.
[148] Drachm – 1.77 grams
[149] Youatt, *The Horse.*

theories on how to cure colic. One popular choice was to use Chamberlain's colic and diarrhoea remedy, which included blackberry, an organic compound called ethyl ether and chlorobutanol, a chemical compound, this method was still being discussed in the early twentieth century.[150] In some horses the urinary organs were so defective that after a long work out it was necessary to give them sweet spirits of nitre in the water because, it was believed, that without it, not only would the animals suffer great pain and inflammation but it would subsequently die. Referring again to the individual nature of training, it was recognized that some horses were predisposed to constipation while others tended to relaxation of the bowels and that treating them both in the same way would be detrimental to at least one type. Experienced trainers believed that there were a multitude of differences in constitution and temperament in different animals, but that these could be identified in each individual through the 'practised eye' of the trainer.

A common injury in racehorses in the nineteenth century was damage to the flexor tendons in the leg, and veterinary surgeons were generally experienced in these types of injuries and able to determine treatment by looking or feeling around the area. It was believed that the flexor tendons were protected by a sheath of dense cellular substance to keep them in their place and to protect them from injury. Between the tendons and the sheath was a mucous fluid to prevent friction and it was considered that either over-work or sudden violent exertion sometimes caused the tendons to press upon the delicate membrane of the sheath and rupture the fibre which tied them down. When the inflammation in legs and ankles was significant then the vet would reduce the inflammation to reduce the pressure. This was known as ‘bleeding from the toe’. Firstly the vet would thin the sole, and then cut a groove with a rounded head of a small drawing knife at the junction of the sole and the crust. As soon as the large vein in the toe opened and blood began to appear the vet would drive a small lancet horizontally under the sole, at which point blood would spurt out of the foot. Hot water was then applied by a pippin for an hour at a time, following which the vet would bathe the ankle and wrap it in a case of linseed-meal.[151]

Training resources and processes

Many of these approaches to training were standard practice for anyone training animals in the early nineteenth century. In cockfighting, young birds would be referred to training farms before starting their fighting career when three years old. They were exercised through sparring, with the heels covered with rolls of leather, and they would fight on straw beds long enough to heat their bodies and break down any excess fat. This was followed by the cocks being fed a mixture of sugar candy, chopped rosemary and butter before hemmed in to a basket of straw until the evening, in order to

[150] *The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser,* October 9, 1874; *Auroa Advertiser*, February 6, 1914; *Lilydale Express,* January 15, 1915.
[151] Mills, *Life of a Racehorse*.

induce sweating. For thirty to fifty days before a contest, the bird would be trained by toughening its body, including daily baths and massages, using a variety of mixtures such as alcohol and ammonia, whilst being fed a special diet to increase its aggressiveness and stamina.[152] Clearly, though, larger animals such as racehorses demanded more resources. To be successful, they needed gallops on long stretches of good quality turf, not just on the mediocre grass found on estates, and some regions of Britain already had dedicated training areas by the mid-eighteenth century. These facilities often neighboured unenclosed turfed heathland, moors, or downland, and some of them were associated with a racecourse. Newmarket emerged early on because of its royal associations while Yorkshire had major training areas at Malton, Richmond, Middleham, Hambleton, and Beverley.[153]

The ideal ground for training horses was the subject of much debate in the nineteenth century with one author arguing that the training ground should not be either clay or sand, which could create good going in wet weather but became very hard and unfit for galloping in the dry. Unmixed clay was worse than sand and clay because in wet weather it was too deep and in the dry it 'baked like a brick'.[154] The surface soil on the training ground should be of a light texture resting on a chalky subsoil giving it moisture which would keep it moderately soft in dry weather and porous enough to prevent the ground becoming heavy in the wet. The size of the training ground should be based upon the numbers of horses likely to train on it and should always be on the large size because if it were small the horses would be continually galloping on the same track, thereby spoiling the ground and causing horses to become lame. In the best training grounds, the walking ground was distinct from the galloping ground, and it was necessary to have two or three pieces of half and three quarters of a mile in extent, together with additional space for gallops of a mile and mile and three quarters or two miles or sometimes an even longer straight. This was to give scope for training for the long distance races. Horses were to be galloped uphill, because if they only galloped downhill they would never get fit, Day had no objections to an occasional steady gallop over undulating ground and thought it necessary that the training ground should nearly be straight so that the pace could be kept up all the way. Often there were two entirely different courses for wet and dry weather. As soon as the March winds set in, exercise could commence on the summer ground but, in the event it was a wet spring, rather than spoil it, the training should go back to the winter/wet ground.[155] Training was hindered due to the weather during the National Hunt racing season and a few days of frost could make a significant difference to a horse's preparation for a race. Gallops were put out of use and the roads were unsafe for exercising so the only place horses could be exercised was in a small track in the paddock or a straw ring in the yard, making all fast work impossible.[156]

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[152] Day, *Professionals, Amateurs and Performance.*
[153] Mike Huggins, 'Nineteenth-Century Racehorse Stables', 178.
[154] Day, *The Racehorse in Training*, 4.
[155] Day, *The Racehorse in Training,* 15.
[156] *Daily Mail,* January 8, 1931.

Day discussed how the training process should operate and the schedules to be followed in his text of 1889. The state of the ground controlled how horses were trained as they did not have the modern technology available today to prevent injury to both horse and rider. In regards to the season which he believed the horse should be trained, his ideal season would be spring because the ground was soft and the horses could become fit with less risk of injury to the legs than when it was hard. But, if there had been a long drought, then it was necessary to minimise work, with only gentle exercise, and if the drought had been a long one, a physic would be given before going into active work again. This would prevent the horse from becoming too big and it brought the horse to the post better prepared than would have been possible using any other methods. When the physic was given the horses would be kept in the stable for that day and the following day. However, if the horses have to run within a short space of time, the work must have to be continuous and it would be necessary to take risks. In open weather, if two-year olds felt chilly they would be trotted to assist their circulation. When they felt comfortable after walking for some time then they were cantered and this would be repeated at short intervals, after which they would be galloped for a half of a mile, gradually increasing the speed as they approach the end of their race preparations. Occasionally, two-year old horses would be set off by the side of an older more experienced horse, and they were made to go the whole course together as well as they can, but they should never be abused or frightened by the sight of a whip of a stick. The use of the hands and the heels was seen as more important to young horses and just before the finish the young horse should be allowed to pass the other horse if they could not do it earlier. This method was believed to teach the novice horses to set off quickly and in passing the older horses they were given confidence, regarded as an important part of the training schedule.[157]

Managing the Stable

The training stables were a key consideration for a successful racehorse trainer and stable management was seen as a necessity to run a good racing yard and to ensure the health and well being of the horses. While not all stables would be organized in the same way, most of them had the same main features. Day described his stables, Woodyates, built in the mid eighteenth century, as being made of brick and faced with flint, There were lofts above the stables and the roof was composed of tile, which was better than slate since tile kept the stables cool in summer and warm in summer. These stables were made up of nineteen boxes and thirty-one stalls, intermixed for an equal temperature throughout. Both boxes and stalls were necessary because if a horse were a 'weaver'[158] it could be put in a box, where it would be encouraged to 'forget his tricks', while other horses put into a box would 'walk themselves to a standstill'. The normal routine at Day's stables involved opening at five in the morning in winter and four in summer. In both seasons the horses were first fed and watered, then tied to the rack chains, the dung removed and boxes and stalls swept out before the horses were brushed over. The dung was

[157] Day, *The Racehorse in Training,* 15-28 .
[158] Weaver – swings head from side to side in stable, wasting energy

carted to the manure heap, put at a distance from the stable to avoid noxious smells, and the stable yard was then thoroughly swept before the stable lads were allowed time for their breakfast.

During the winter, horses were exercised at around eight for two hours, although this was dependent upon the individual horse with some taking as long as three hours and the younger two-year olds finishing earlier. The horses were then thoroughly cleaned and hay could be given to prevent griping when watered, which was done before having their corn. This was given after they had been well dressed and their feet washed and clean, tarred, and greased, and their bed put straight for them to lie on. They were then fed again at twelve and given hay at one. In the afternoon, horses would be brushed over and fed and the afternoon horses were then taken out for exercise, after the stable lads had eaten, until half past three. The same amount of attention would be given as given to those in the morning and in the same manner. At five, the morning horses were again watered and thoroughly cleaned by brushing and wiping them all over. When the legs were cold they were well hand rubbed until a 'healthy glow was produced on all the extremities', Day having found that rubbing by hand was better than using a bandage. The horses had to be finished by six to be fed again at seven. At eight, both the morning and evening horses had hay given to them after the stable had been cleaned and the manure removed. Their heads were then let loose for the night, so they could lie down, and the stable lads would then have their supper between seven and eight, usually followed by bed at nine. Day suggested that there should be no variation in this routine except in cases of illness or in wet or foggy weather when the horses did not leave the stable unless there was a race in the near future and exercise was a necessity. Sundays followed the same process as a weekday, although, there was no exercising and labour was minimised as far as was practicable.[159]

In the summer, the stable was opened at four in the morning when the horses were fed and after the preliminary duties the morning horses were exercised from five until seven or half-past. Breakfasts for the stable lads was at half-past eight and at nine the other horses were taken out to exercise returning around eleven. The cleaning was finished by noon when they were watered and fed and all were given hay. They would rest until four in the afternoon, and then the early morning horses were again exercised for an hour, some being cantered once or twice while others were only walked for a short time. After this the horses would be well dressed, watered and fed at six and again at seven and at eight, as in winter, they were finished for the night and fed with hay. The winter clothing was heavier than that used in summer, although both sets should be dried before use since damp clothing could give the horses colds.[160] The stable was to be kept at a constant temperature in winter, about forty-five degrees Fahrenheit, and in summer it should be kept as cool as possible. All soiled straw had to be removed as soon as a stable lad saw it and the stalls and boxes were swept clean every day and were

[159] Day, *The Racehorse in Training,* 88.
[160] Day, *The Racehorse in Training,* 19.

left bare while the horses were out at exercise. The doors, windows, and air holes, were then left open while the walls were cleaned from dust and cobwebs. A good supply of clean straw was given twice a week using either wheat or rye, although wheat was generally used due to the scarcity of rye. Day sprinkled Sir William Burnett's disinfecting fluid daily, which he advised every stable to have as a preventative against disease, behind stalls and boxes.[161]

The timing of when training was undertaken in winter was flexible and was regulated by the weather. What was important was that the horses got sufficient exercise of an hour and a half or two hours. Summer training was very different because it was believed that exercise in the warm weather should not be commenced any later than five, with up to two hours of training and the horses being brought back in until four, when they were then exercised again for three quarters of an hour or an hour. Day considered exercising in the morning as advantageous because the ground in the morning was much better after the night's dew had added elasticity to the soil. In addition, the temperatures being cooler meant the horses could undertake their work with less fatigue and escape the excessive sweating which, under the heat of the midday sun and with the ground then being harder, would inevitably cause injuries and enervate others. After a long winter of rest the older horses could get very fat and great care should be taken when introducing them to their spring preparation. For example, horses should be exercised in the straw bed before leaving for the downs, which quietened them down and helped to keep the boys on their backs. If the horse was taken straight to the downs to canter, they would get loose and probably hurt themselves by galloping too far or have some kind of accident. Following a week of work, it was suggested that they could be given a dose of physic. After the usual amount of walking and trotting exercise, the older horses were then galloped for a mile and this was gradually increased to their intended distance, whether this be two, three or four miles, although this was entirely dependent upon the horse's condition and its constitution. As a basic principle, the animal should be made to go steadily for a week or two until its condition allowed it to go faster with ease, then the whole length of the course could be galloped at a better speed and on alternative days at a half speed. No horse should be worked when off his feed since this would weaken him instead of strengthening him, the only remedy being partial rest until the appetite returned. The legs and feet of each animal should be carefully checked every day as a basic stable management rule, because if anything was wrong with the legs and feet the horse 'may as well be dead'.[162]

This training advice would have been familiar to many of Day's predecessors and highlights for the contemporary observer the longevity of training practices that had their roots in the eighteenth century. The way in which training was organized and the content of the training day remained relatively unchanged even though some practices, especially those based around humoral theory, which was

[161] Day, *The Racehorse in Training,* 33.
[162] Day, *The Racehorse in Training,* 27.

being increasingly discredited by emerging scientific and medical discoveries, were beginning to undergo modifications. As with previous generations of trainers, though, this was not the result of any communication between these men and the scientific community but the result of experience and the 'practised eye' of the trainer. Information came not from texts or formal education in the training of horses but through practical engagement and the passing on of knowledge from experienced practitioners. In that respect, the racing 'community' was a vital feature in the continuation and development of racing training techniques.

Chapter Three: The Horseracing 'Community'

> Training knowledge is traditional and oral…imparted by mystery-men, adept professional trainers…who derive their maxims from their predecessors, and polishing them by their own experience, duly instil them into the minds of admiring pupils.[163]

Introduction

Trainers of the racehorse never worked in isolation and their daily lives were surrounded by others who shared a common interest in the welfare and development of the animals in their charge. While some of these individuals may have been related through kinship to the trainer, the racing community included individuals from both inside and outside the family. In that sense they formed a racing 'community of practice'. This relatively recent term was propagated by Etienne Wenger, and it describes a collective group of individuals who share a general passion for something they are involved in, and learn how to do this better by interacting with each other regularly. The members of the community of practice engage in joint activities and discussions, building relationships in the group thereby enabling learning. Learning together is the main part of the term community of practice, if ideas are not shared and interaction is not occurring individuals are not part of the group. For example, having the same job title does not make for a community unless sharing of knowledge is evident. Knowledge sharing may be very informal, with nurses having discussions over their lunch sharing knowledge of how to care best for their patients, but, on the other hand, automotive mechanics that make a concerted effort to document the tricks and lessons they have learned into a knowledge base are also functioning as a community of practice. Communities can be large or small, some may be local and meet face-face, while others may be global, passing knowledge mainly online. Some organizations are formally recognized and are supported by generous budgets whereas others are very informal and occur without any financial help. It has been suggested that communities of practice have been around for as long as human beings have been learning from each other, at home, at work and at leisure, and that everybody belongs to a community of practice and has passed through many communities throughout their lives, sometimes at the core and sometimes on the periphery, the community structures being defined by engagement in practice and the informal learning that comes with it.[164]

Communities of practice are applied in business, organizational design, government, education, professional associations, development projects, and sport. The concept of a community has been interpreted by those in business as focusing on people and the social structures that enable individuals

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[163] *Cornhill Magazine*, July 16, 1867, 92.

[164] See Etienne Wenger, *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). Etienne Wenger, Rachel McDermott and William Snyder. *Cultivating Communities of Practice: A Guide to Managing Knowledge* (London: McGraw-Hill, 2002). Etienne Wenger, 'Knowledge Management is a Donut: Shaping your Knowledge Strategy with Communities of Practice', *Ivey Business Journal* no.3 (2004): 1-8.; Etienne Wenger and William Snyder. 'Communities of Practice: The Organizational Frontier', *Harvard Business Review* no.6 (2000):139-145.

to learn with and from each other. There have been many positive aspects identified by organizations about communities of practice, such as the benefit of communities not being limited by formal structures and their ability to create connections with others in different organizations, therefore aiding learning. In the healthcare sector, communities of practice are promoted as a positive method of sharing knowledge and improve organizational performance. There is not one single way of structuring these communities but they are presented in many different ways, even in the same sector, to suit those involved in the community.

For some commentators, such as Brown and Duguid, these 'communities' might be more easily understood as 'networks of practice'. In this interpretation, a network involves individuals connected informally through social relationships while the term 'community' tends to represent a stronger relationship between those involved. Individuals interact through information exchange in order to perform their work, asking for and sharing knowledge with each other. A network of practice would involve common interests such as hobbies, for example discussing sports on the bus travelling to work. This casual knowledge exchange is unlikely to reoccur. For Brown and Duguid, communities of practice are localized and specialized which is very different to networks, which often consist of weak ties and operate through virtual or electronic communities, such as blogs, electronic mailing lists and bulletin boards.[165] Given these definitions, the localized and specialized world surrounding the training of racehorses would seem to be much closer to 'community' than 'network'.

Victorian training communities

As sporting opportunities expanded during the eighteenth century, a number of individuals made a living from exploiting their skills, initially as competitors and later as instructors. Subsequent practitioners invariably drew from, and elaborated on, these existing practices, ensuring a degree of consistency both in how such knowledge was transmitted and in how it was subsequently sustained and developed. The key elements of this process were the linking of oral traditions to personal experience, the ongoing existence of a body of craft knowledge operating within communities of practice, and an ability to innovate and apply entrepreneurial skills. Coaching operated as a trade or a craft with the typical coach relying on traditional practices, experience, intuition, and the ability to innovate. The sporting context that provided a framework for these practices altered during the nineteenth century under the influence of an increasing internationalization of sport, technological advances, mounting urbanization, and commercialization, all of which enabled sportsmen, and women, to make greater entrepreneurial use of their expertise. Drawing primarily on their own experiences and the mores of oral tradition, nineteenth century coaches accumulated a range of techniques and sport-specific practices related to both skill development and physical preparation.

[165] John Seely Brown and Paul Duguid, 'Knowledge and Organization: A Social-Practice Perspective', *Organization Science* no.2 (2001): 198-213.

Sports coaches also experimented in applying emerging knowledge. In doing so, they intuitively accepted or rejected appropriate material, thereby adding to a traditional body of craft knowledge. In contrast to 'professional knowledge', this craft knowledge was 'knowing in action'; a feel for coaching developed with and from experience which appears to have been embedded within informal structures created by coaches engaging in a process of collective learning. Although societal and economic developments, together with scientific and technological advances, have facilitated significant changes over the last two hundred years, coaching practices remain distinguished by continuity rather than novelty.[166]

Communities of Practice in Horseracing

In terms of trainings practices, there were similarities between the approaches adopted by those who trained humans and those who trained animals. The notion of communities of practice suggests that sporting communities depend on internal leadership with key figures, such as the trainer, acting as the organic intellectual at the centre of the group. The training collective evolves naturally because of the members' common interest, for example in National Hunt Racing, and it is through the process of sharing information and experiences within the group that members learn from each other. They develop a shared practice and a repertoire of resources, such as experiences, stories, tools, and ways of addressing recurring problems, which contribute to their 'toolbox' of craft knowledge. Membership of a community implies a commitment to the group, in this case training racehorses, and a shared competence that distinguishes members from other people. Communities of practice come in a variety of forms, although, clearly, in the periods considered here most coaching communities were small, locally-based, and meeting mainly face-to-face. These features can be clearly identified in the kinship groups, both immediate family and a wider system of support, trainer/employee relationships, and close-knit local groups of individuals who shared and disseminated training knowledge.

A National Hunt racing yard community generally involved the trainer, owners, stable lads/lasses, grooms, and jockeys. At Goodwood in 1872, John Kent had 95 men and boys to manage in his stables, fourteen or fifteen in the paddocks, up to a hundred labourers improving the gallops and five women employed in levelling the track and filling in indentations. For most stable lads, the training stables represented a relatively short career stage and there was always the risk of death or injury, with no compensation.[167] Stable lads prepared the horses early in the morning before they were exercised, partly by vigorously strapping them to help stimulate the horse's muscles, and, together with the jockeys who rode at the stable, they ran the morning routine. Lads would usually look after two horses

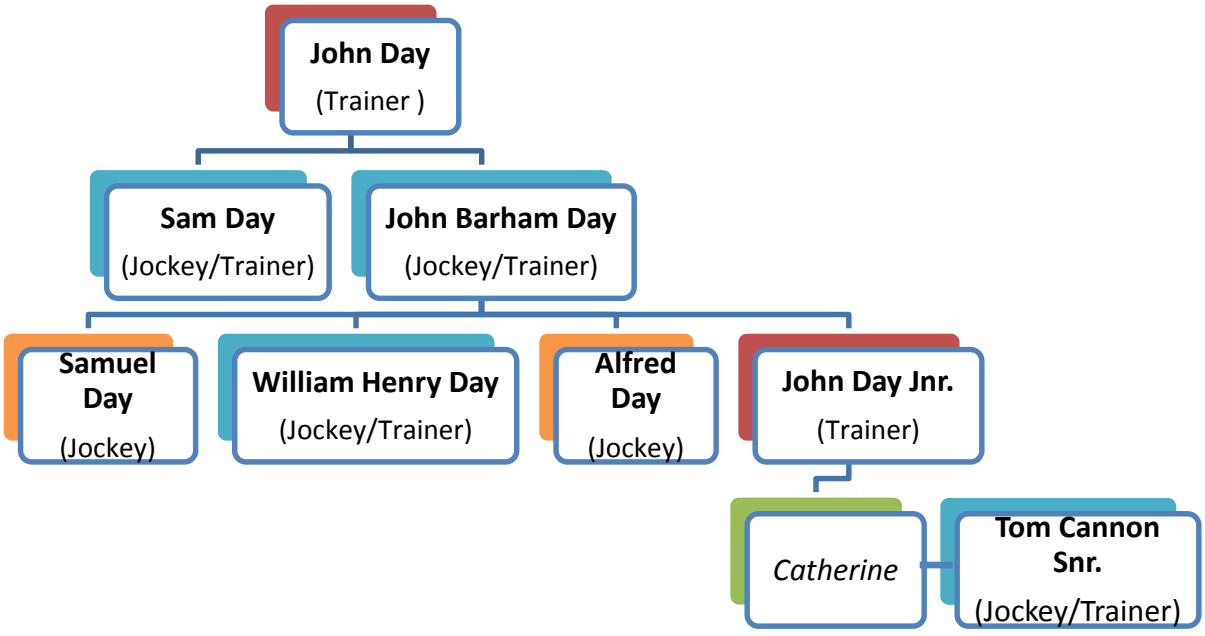
[166] See Dave Day, 'London Swimming Professors: Victorian Craftsmen and Aquatic Entrepreneurs', *Sport in History* no.30 (2010): 32-54.; Dave Day, 'Victorian Coaching Communities: Exemplars of Traditional Coaching Practice', *Sports Coaching Review* no.2 (2013): 151-162.; Dave Day, 'Craft Coaching and the 'Discerning Eye' of the Coach', *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching* no.1 (2011). 132-148; Dave Day, 'Magical and Fanciful Theories': Sports Psychologists and Craft Coaches' *Sports Coaching Review* no.1 (2012): 52–66.
[167] Huggins, 'Nineteenth-Century Racehorse Stables'.

and then move on to three after they had proved their reliability to the satisfaction of the head lad or the trainer. Very few of the most successful trainers gave opportunities for stable lads to ride at their yard as they preferred the experienced jockeys and professionals to ride their horses. William Day and his training colleagues would recognize their management practices in the way that modern yards operate with the head lad/lass acting as the link between the trainer and other individuals in the community, such as the stable hands. Communication about the horses and the training goes through the head lad and then on to the trainer who is busy with other major tasks associated with running the yard. Other relevant individuals working through the head lad include the feed man, the blacksmith, and the saddler, and the trainer's instructions are communicated to them through the head lad. While the head lad has many responsibilities, the trainer would still handle the most important aspects such as the jockeys, the veterinary, and the owners. These are high profile tasks associated with the training yard and the trainer's responsibility.

Kinship ties in Horseracing

One important factor in the ability to access centrally-held knowledge regarding training is the personal relationship with the gatekeeper and this is made easier for those who have kinship ties. Historically, there is a continuous link with the trade being passed from one generation to the next, traditionally father to son but also through marriage into other training families. These kinship ties can be seen in a number of nineteenth-century examples such as the Day family.

The Days



The Day family's involved with racing extended over four generation. John Day was a racehorse trainer and racing adviser to the Prince of Wales and George IV in the eighteenth century.[168] He was father to John Barham Day (1793- 1860) and Sam Day (1802-1866), both famous jockeys of the early nineteenth century, although Sam left his father's stable at an early age to work for the Duke of St Albans at Barnet before moving onto Newmarket riding for the Duke of York's trainer, Mr Cooper. John became a jockey in the 1820's riding sixteen classic winners before retiring to become a trainer in the mid 1830's at Danebury near Stockbridge[169] where his patrons included the Duke of Grafton, Lord George Bentinck, and Lord Palmerston. He had seven classic winners between 1838 and 1854 and was regarded as the leading trainer in the South of England. John had twelve children, four of whom, John Jnr, Samuel, William Henry and Alfred, had successful racing careers.[170]

William Henry Day was born on 9 August 1823, and was educated privately. After entering his father's stable, he acquired some fame as a jockey, winning the Ascot Cup in 1838. Subsequently, he started training at the 900-acre Woodyates yard[171] in Cranborne Chase, Dorset, where he trained many winners, usually ridden by his brother Alfred, including the Two Thousand Guineas in 1855 and 1859, the Oaks and Ascot Cup in 1869, and the Goodwood Cup in 1859. Alfred was born in November 1830 rode his first race at the age of eleven for Mr Osbaldiston.[172] William's patrons included Lord Ribblesdale, the Marquess of Anglesey, Lord Coventry, and Lord Westmorland. In 1846 he married his cousin Ellen[173], daughter of James Day, a veterinary surgeon.[174] By 1873 he had formed a large breeding stud at Alvediston, near Salisbury, having over sixty thoroughbred brood mares. The winner of the St Leger in 1880, was bred there, and for a time, the 1875 Derby winner was also at Alvediston. William sold off his stud, for £25,000, and resumed training in 1881, following which he won the Grand Prix, the Cesarewitch, and the Cambridgeshire in 1881, and the Ascot Cup in 1882. Day retired from training in 1892 and in 1901 he was being described as an 'author'.[175] Day used his experiences at Alvediston in writing, *The Horse: how to Breed and Rear him* (1888). He also wrote several articles on turf politics in the *Fortnightly Review*. His *The Racehorse in Training* (1880), which was translated into French, was one of the first attempts to treat the subject scientifically. William died at Shirley, Southampton, on 29 August 1908 having won stakes for his patrons to the value of over £200,000.[176] William's brother John (1814–1882), succeeded his father at Danebury when he went to train privately

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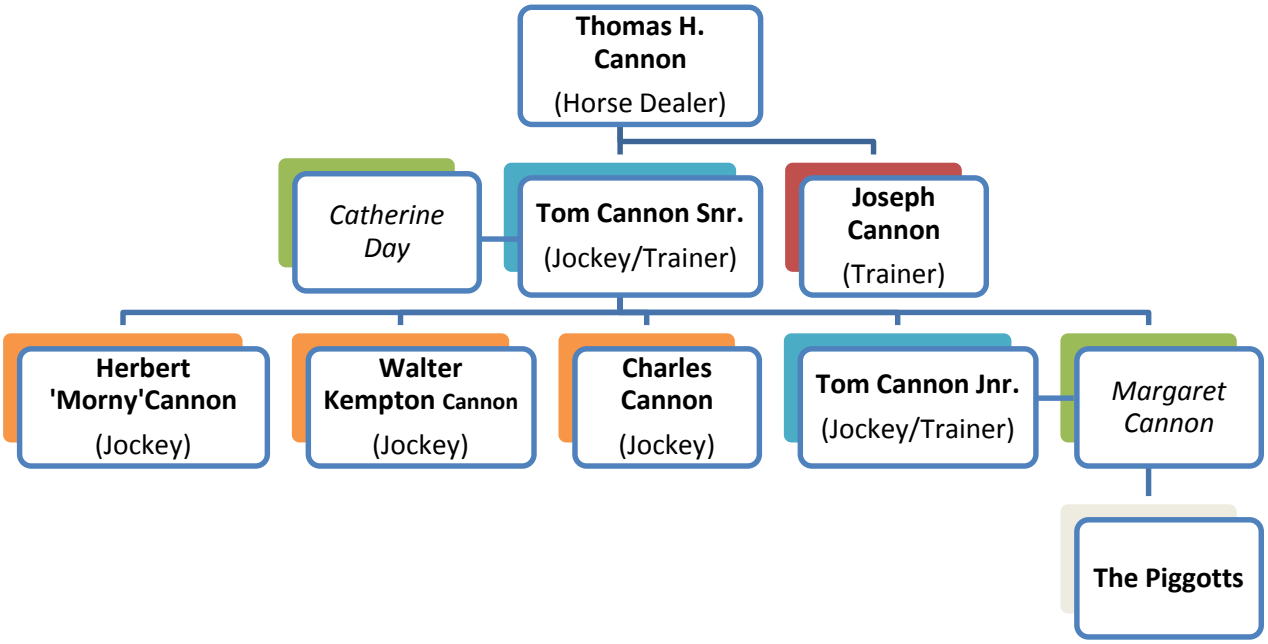
[168] *The Derbyshire Times,* December 9, 1882; *The York Herald,* December 6, 1882.
[169] *Census Returns of England and Wales, 1871, John Day, RG 10/1265; Census Returns of England and Wales, 1881, John Day, RG11/1227.*
[170] *Census Returns of England and Wales, 1871, John Day, RG 10/1265;* Emma Eadie, 'Day, John Barham (1793–1860)', Oxford *Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
[171] *Census Returns of England and Wales, 1851, William Day, HO107/1854*
[172] *The Observer,* January 18, 1868.
[173] *Census Returns of England and Wales, 1861, William Day, RG9/ 1336*
[174] *Census Returns of England and Wales, 1881, William Day, RG11/1261*
[175] *Census Returns of England and Wales, 1901, William Day, RG 13/1007*
[176] *Yorkshire Post and Lee,* August 31, 1908; *Manchester Courier,* September 3, 1908; Edward Moorhouse, 'Day, William Henry (1823–1908)', rev. Emma Eadie, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

for Henry Padwick, and in 1867 John trained 146 winners in a single season, with Alfred appearing as his jockey on occasions.[177] His daughter Catherine married Tom Cannon.

The Cannons

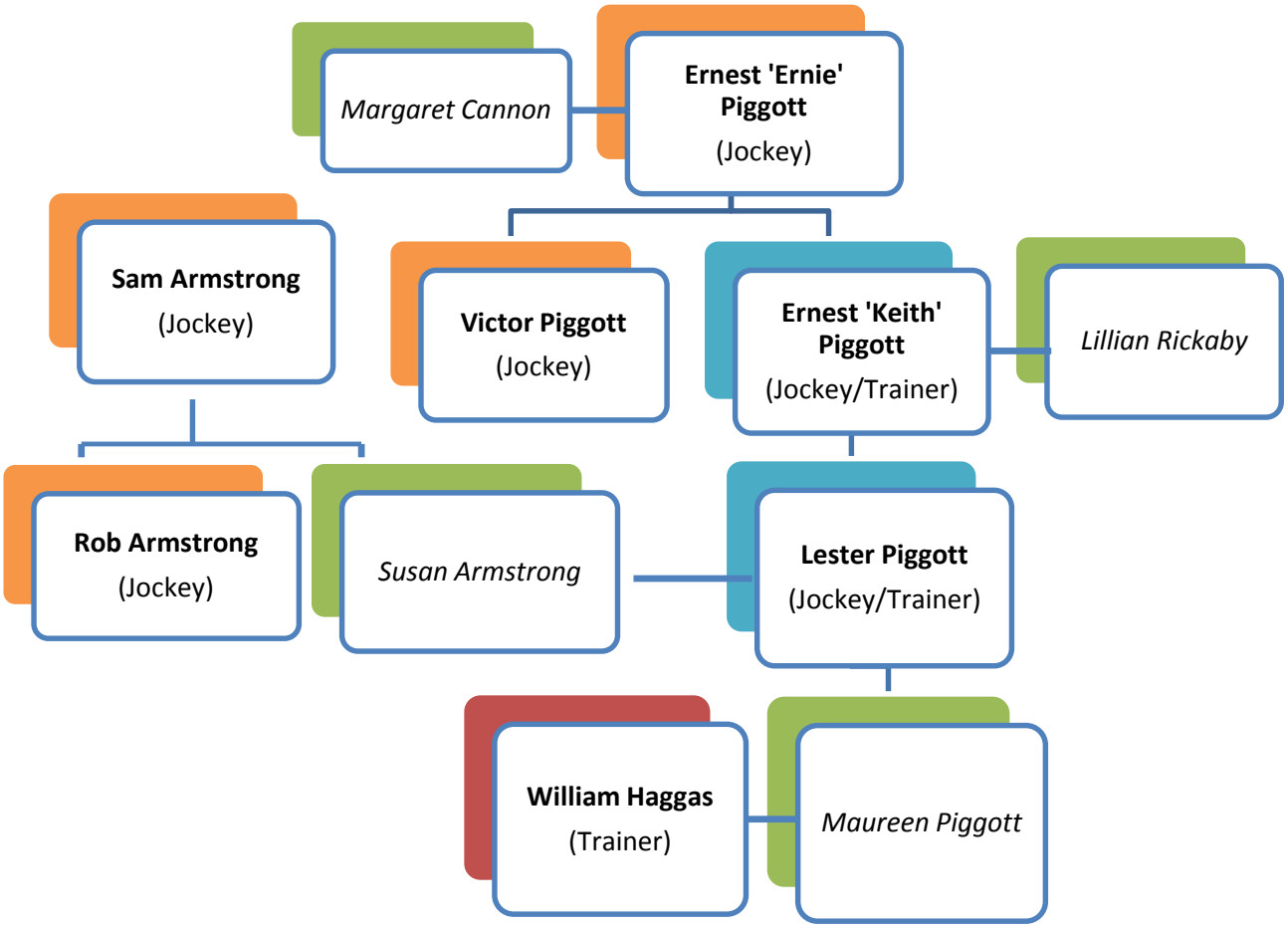


Tom Cannon senior (April 1846 – 13 July 1917) was born in Eton, Berkshire, to Harriett and Thomas H. Cannon, described variously as a livery stable keeper, horse dealer and keeper of the George Hotel in Eton. He spent most of career working at Danebury and took over the yard when John Day retired, having married Catherine, known as Kate, John's daughter. He was mentored by the jockey George Fordham and he won thirteen British classic races as a jockey and the Grand National in 1888 as a trainer. Day provided Cannon with his first classic win in the 1866 1,000 Guineas. He also rode for his younger brother, Joseph Cannon, and was associated with the stables of John Porter and James Ryan. In 1872, he took the title of champion jockey with a total of eighty-seven wins and it was said of him that "for thirty-five years he had no superior as a horseman".[178] Most notably, he won the 2,000 Guineas and Derby, and many of the major races in France. In the twilight of his riding career, he became a retained jockey for Scottish millionaire, George Baird. Cannon's reputation was such that he was able to refuse the single year contract on offer and instead negotiate a three year contract at £3,000 per season, paid up front. In total, he rode 1,544 winners in his career as a jockey. Catherine and Tom had four sons Herbert, Walter, Charles, and Tom, who all became successful in racing, and one daughter, Margaret.[179] Herbert Mornington Cannon (1873–1962), commonly referred to as Morny,

[177] *Census Returns of England and Wales, 1851, Alfred Day, HO107/1572*
[178] *The Times,* Sept 26, 1917.
[179] Wray Vamplew, 'Cannon, Thomas [Tom] (1846–1917)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004.

was six times champion jockey in the 1890's and won the British Triple crown in 1899. Walter Kempton won the 1901 St Ledger and the 1904 Derby, he married the widow of jockey Jack Watts whose family had great success in racing with four generations of jockeys.[180]

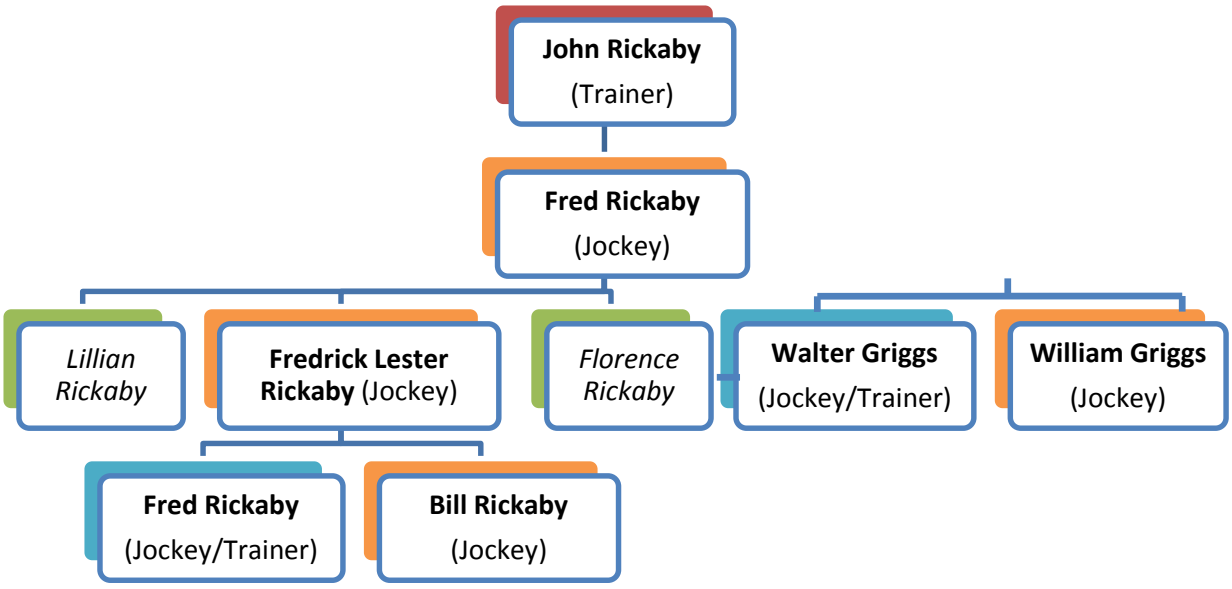
The Piggots and the Rickabys



Margaret Cannon married Ernest Ernie Piggott twice winner of the Grand National as a jockey in 1912 and 1919. Ernie's brother Charles was a famous trainer and Ernie's sons both became well-known in racing. Victor Piggott was a successful national hunt jockey who became a bookmaker after he was forced to retire through injury. Ernest Keith won the champion hurdle as a jockey and later won the 1963 Grand National as a trainer. He was also champion trainer in the season 1962-1963. He married Lillian Rickaby daughter of another racing family, and they had son Lester, who later became acknowledged as one of the greatest flat racing jockeys of all time, with 4,493 career wins, including nine Epsom Derby victories. He became champion jockey eleven times in his career and became a trainer after retiring handling ninety-seven horses at his peak and sending out thirty-four winners.

[180] For more information see - www.jockeypedia.co.uk

Lester married Susan, the daughter of trainer Sam Armstrong, whose son Robert was also a trainer at Newmarket, and Lester's daughter Maureen went on to marry trainer William Haggas, who trained British classic winners in 1996 and 2011.[181]



Lester's mother, Lillian Rickaby was the granddaughter of John Rickaby who trained the 1855 Derby winner, and daughter of Fred Rickaby, rider of five classic winners, despite being 'warned off' between 1902 and 1904. Lillian had one brother Fredrick Lester and a sister Florence. Fredrick Lester rode five classic winners, he had two sons Fred and Bill who were adopted and apprenticed after his death by Florence's husband, the well-known jockey Walter Griggs, who won the St James Palace, the Eclipse Stakes, St George Stakes and the 1914 St Ledger before becoming a trainer. Walter's brother, William, rode sixty-seven winners in 1907. Fredrick Lester rode his first winner for his uncle at the age of fourteen but became too heavy, after which he began successfully training racehorses in South Africa while his brother Bill became one of the most gifted jockeys of his generation, riding 1,324 winners in eight countries. Florence later married Fred Lane, another Classic winner.

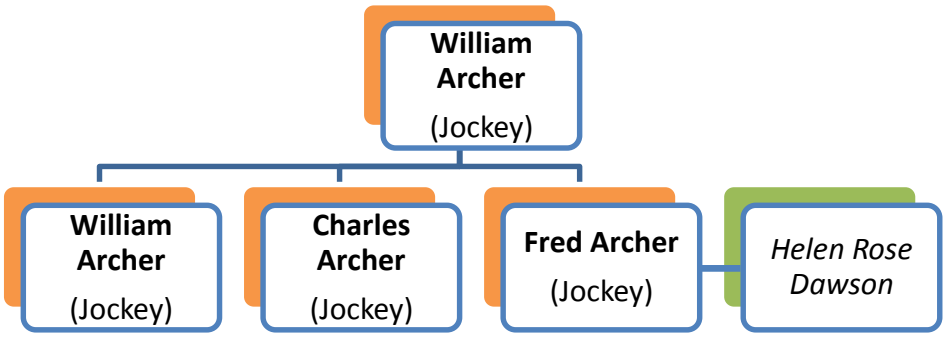
It would be a mistake to assume that the Rickaby training knowledge came only from family connections. Fred Rickaby had served his apprenticeship with Alfred Brettle Sadler, who retired from active training in 1922 and he clearly learnt something from his time with Sadler. However, Sadler's own knowledge came from generations of family connections to horseracing, which had extended for over a century. He was the grandson of Issac Sadler, who won the 1833 Derby as a trainer, and had three sons, Harry, Gordon, and Alfred, who became trainers at Newmarket.[182]

The Loates

[181] For more information see - www.jockeypedia.co.uk
[182] *Daily Mail,* January 25, 1929.

Although not linked by bloodline to Tom Cannon Snr, one of his apprentices, Samuel 'Sam' Loates (1865 - 1932) came from a racing family suggesting that knowledge transfer may well have occurred between, as well as within, racing yards. Sam, who was champion jockey in 1899 with 160 winners, had three brothers, all of whom were active as jockeys before and around the turn of the twentieth century. The best known was Tommy, one of Sam's predecessors as champion jockey. Sam rode his first winner at seventeen and the first of two Derby winners at nineteen, subsequently also winning the Oaks and the St Leger. In 1898, he won the 1,000 Guineas and the 2,000 Guineas. As the nation's leading jockey, he entered into a lucrative agreement on 28 October 1899, with Sir John Blundell to be his retained jockey for three years. The fee was to be £2,000 p.a., plus travel expenses, plus £25 for each winner he rode. In 1902, Loates rode the winners of over £20,000 in prize money but, on 14 November 1902, he broke his thigh and lost sight in one eye, so he was unable to take up his licence for the following season. Although he finally obtained a licence in April his employer had terminated their agreement. Loates took the case to court where the judge ruled that he was entitled to his retainer for 1902, but the relationship had been soured. Like many jockeys, he became a trainer on retirement.[183]

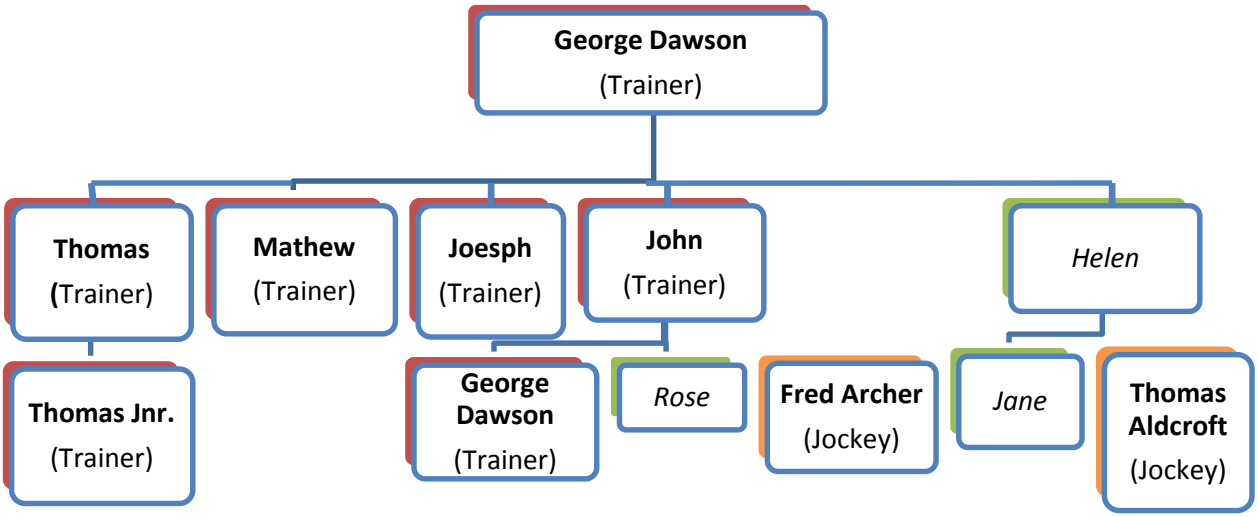
The Archers and Dawsons



Fred Archer (1857–1886), born at St George's Cottage, Cheltenham, on 11 January 1857, was the son of William Archer, a steeplechase jockey who won the 1858 Grand National and who later became a publican. Fred's brothers, William and Charles, also became jockeys, William dying from injuries sustained in a fall in a hurdle race at Cheltenham. His racing education came not only from his father but from Newmarket trainer Mathew Dawson, to whom he was apprenticed on 10 January 1867 and for whom he became stable jockey in 1873. At his peak Archer earned around £8000 p.a. much of this coming from retainers to secure even a fourth call on his services and from presents from winning owners. In January 1883, he married Helen, Mathew Dawson's niece. Unable to come to terms with

[183] For more information see - www.jockeypedia.co.uk

the death of his wife a year later, Archer committed suicide in 1886, leaving an estate valued at over £66,000. His record of 246 winners in the 1885 season remained intact until 1933.



Mathew Dawson had three brothers, Thomas, Joseph and John, and between them won forty-two Classics, including nine Derby victories. His father George Dawson was trainer for Lord Montgomery and the Earl of Eglinton and George won the Doncaster Gold Cup in 1797 and 1798. He had seventeen children, and his four sons who later became established racehorse trainers were brought up in Georges training stables in Stamford Hall, Gullane. The eldest son, Thomas, trained in Middleham, Yorkshire, and was something of an innovator, pioneering the training of horses without sweating them under heavy rugs in the 1840s, methods that produced five classic winners. Mathew joined him as head lad in 1838, after working as an apprentice for his father, and both Joseph and John served their apprenticeships at his yard. His son, Thomas Jnr. became a trainer and won the Chester Cup in 1862 and officiated as clerk of the course at Redcar, Thirsk, Lanark, Haydock Park and York. Jockey Thomas Aldcroft, who rode for Thomas Snr, won the 1856 Derby and also married Dawson's niece Jane. In 1866, Mathew started as a public trainer in Newmarket where he took over Heath House, originally built for his brother Joseph by the Earl of Stamford. Mathew trained the Cesarewitch winner in 1867, and won two Derby's, three Oaks, three St. Legers, three one thousand and, three two thousand guineas. Brother Joseph started training at East Ilsley in 1853, before going to Newmarket to become a private trainer to the Earl of Stamford. He won the two thousand guineas in 1861 and the one thousand guineas in 1863. He was an innovative trainer, developing the training of two-year-old horses for racing, and introduced new feeding methods. He recognized that little care was taken of the foals and yearlings in the first half of the nineteenth century, so they were weak when they began racing. Joseph realised that they would have a great advantage over those from other stables if their strength was developed from birth, so they were fed the best of the oats, brought from Scotland, and given rich Alderney milk. Joseph followed in his brother's technique of not sweating the horses, becoming the first Newmarket trainer to introduce the idea and meeting some resistance initially

although the success enjoyed by his stable soon brought imitation. John Dawson, the youngest brother, left his eldest brother's stable and took Roden House at Compton, Berkshire, subsequently being appointed private trainer to Prince Batthyany and General Peel, among others. John's son George was also a very successful trainer in Newmarket and he took over Heath House Stables from Mathew in 1885.[184]

These examples of racing communities demonstrate clearly the importance of kinship in the transfer of training and craft knowledge in horseracing over the course of the last hundred and fifty years. They also emphasize that communities of practice were not dependent on family alone and that knowledge was transferred just as easily through the apprenticeship system and through the sharing of understanding within a racing yard, whether or not the recipient was a family member. The mobility of racing employees and personnel ensured that knowledge was also shared with other communities at different times. In order to explore whether this remains the case or not, the author investigated the status of communities of practice in contemporary racing by conducting interviews with a number of individuals well-versed in National Hunt racing. At this stage, although these interviews extended across all areas of training and stable organization, the aim of the rest of this chapter is purely to explore the ongoing existence communities of practice, at least partly through the biographies of the interviewees. Chapter four will deal with training and other management issues in detail.

Contemporary Training Communities

It should be noted at the outset, that the interviewees were predominantly with National Hunt trainers, although each individual had also trained horses for the Flat. The key interviewees for this study, Thomas 'Tommy' Barnes and Maurice Barnes were purposefully selected because of their kinship ties to the researcher. In addition to these family members, four other established racing trainers, Stephen 'John' Leadbetter, Nicholas 'Nicky' Richards, Martin Todhunter, and Jonjo O'Neill, were interviewed to further explore the wider issues surrounding communities of practice, training, technical developments, and horse/stable management. All of these participants not only have strong connections to the leading National Hunt event, the Grand National, but they also have, albeit tenuous, links with each other as a result of their racing careers. One of the main tasks of the interviews was to explore continuity and diversity in racing practices and this is not only addressed below but also in the succeeding chapter.

Martin Todhunter

Martin Todhunter, who worked for Gordon W. Richards, was an amateur rider, coming third in the Grand National. He then became the travelling head lad for Gordon before he took out his training licence in 1995 when renting a small yard in Ulverston, Cumbria. The highlights of Martin's training

[184] Dawson family papers available at www.newmarketshops.info

career to date include winning the Edward Hanmer Memorial Chase at Haydock and the Chivas Regal Handicap Chase at the Aintree Grand National Meeting.[185]

Jonjo O'Neill

Jonjo O'Neill began his career with an apprenticeship with Michael Connolly before moving to England three years later, where he also rode for Gordon W. Richards. In 1977/78 he broke the record for the most winners in a season with one hundred and the following season he claimed the Jockeys' Championship for the second time, the same year that he had his first win in the Cheltenham Gold Cup in March 1979. He retired as a jockey in 1986 and began training racehorses at a small farm near Penrith, Cumbria, producing three Cheltenham Festival winners, before moving on to the 'state of the art' complex at Jackdaws Castle, Cheltenham. His accomplishments include 1245 winners, nineteen of them at the Cheltenham Festival. Although Jonjo never completed the Grand National course as a jockey he won the race as a trainer in 2010. As well as being a top National Hunt trainer, Jonjo has also produced winners on the flat, including two Royal Ascot winners.[186]

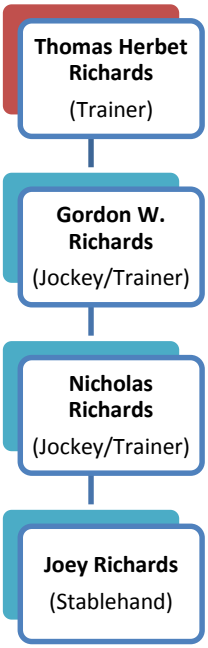
Stephen 'John' Leadbetter

John Leadbetter, a farmer's son brought up in the countryside, spent a year at Rodbaston College training to be a chef, although he abandoned that career route and took an apprenticeship at Harry Blackshaw's yard in Middleham, Yorkshire. Harry had been in the veterinary corps when on National Service, so he never employed a vet at his yard and he always taught the lads how to care for and treat a horse correctly. John also rode on the flat occasionally but acknowledges he was never good enough to pursue a career as a jockey given the number of apprentices competing for the same rides. After finishing his apprenticeship, John became head lad for a year at Blackshaw's before leaving to work for Captain Neville Crump, the three-time Grand National winning trainer. John worked at Crump's yard for four years and he described the yard as very precise and very old fashioned in its methods of training horses with Crump's military background having a significant influence on his training regime. 'You started at 6.45 you didn't start at 6.46 you started at 6.45'. Whilst at Crump's yard, John had been responsible for the winning horse of the Scottish Grand National, which also finished fifth in the Grand National. After leaving Crump, John moved to Denholm to work for Kenneth Oliver for four years. He then started his own small yard locally, working in the mornings for Oliver and then training his own horses in the afternoon for a year before finally training full-time on his own, at which point he produced Rubstic, the Grand National winning horse ridden by Maurice in 1979. Rubstic was bought by owner John Douglas for £1,400 from Harry Bell and moved from Bell's yard, firstly to Gordon Richards and then on to John, who had twenty-three horses in training at that point. Throughout the bad weather, Rubstic only missed one training day, being frequently taken to the sands

[185] Martin Todhunter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 15, 2014.
[186] Jonjo O'Neill, email to Laura Westgarth, May 22, 2014.

near Holy Island and exercising at Tommy Barnes' yard on one occasion with Tommy and Maurice. John first met both men at Ken Oliver's yard, where Wynburgh, Tommy's ride in the 1962 Grand National, was trained and Tommy and Maurice both rode for Oliver. When asked who influenced his training career the most John said Harry Blackshaw followed by Crump, and that, by the time he went to work for Oliver, he had already learnt everything he needed know about training horses. [187]

The Richards connection[188]



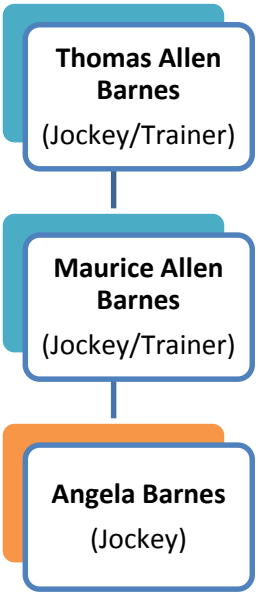
Thomas Herbert Richards was a haulage driver and racing enthusiast and once held a training licence, himself and his wife name their son after the famous champion jockey, Gordon. Gordon W. Richards was a racehorse trainer winning two Grand National's and a flat racing jockey, he apprenticed at Louie Dingwall after this Gordon changed his indentures to J. C. Waugh at Didcot and at the age of thirteen had his first ride in public at Salisbury finishing fourth. He then became too heavy to ride on the flat and changed finished his riding career at Wroughton jumping stables for Ivor Anthony. He married and had a daughter, Joey and son, Nicky. After a bad fall at Perth, Gordon established himself as a horse dealer and livery stable proprietor, after breaking in a two-year-old for a friend he began training setting up with eight horses. In 1968 Richards took the tenancy at Castle Stables, Greystoke, Cumbria where he trained until he died, and leaving £200,000.[189] His son Nicky took his training licence after he died in 1998.

Nicholas 'Nicky' Richards

[187] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.
[188] Wray Vamplew, 'Richards, Gordon (1930–1998)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
[189] Probate, 19 April 1999, *CGPLA Eng. & Wales.*

Nicky Richards an owner, trainer, and in 1973 the British Champion Amateur Jockey. He began his career working with his father before apprenticing with Kevin Prendergast for a summer in Ireland until he got injured and was sent home earlier than anticipated, subsequently became his father's assistant trainer. Nicky is now the fourth generation trainer in his family, and he has trained winners of the Ascot Chase, the Melling Chase, and the Old Roan Chase.[190]

Thomas 'Tommy' Barnes



A farmer's son from Cumbria, Thomas Allen Barnes (born 16 March, 1930) began his interest in horses working with the farm horses on his father's farm, subsequently participating in 'flapping' for local racehorse trainers around the North of England.[191] He took out an amateur jockey licence in the 1950s, riding seventy times and winning eight races between 1952 and 1954, before gaining his professional licence midway through 1954. He continued riding through to 1963, recording 101 wins in 512 races. At the peak of his career he came placed second in the Grand National in 1962. He rode a number of winners for Harry Bell and John Dixon, when the latter was a public trainer, and Tommy was described as 'one of the finest National Hunt riders on the Northern Circuit'.[192] A fall at Carlisle ended his riding career prematurely, as he sustained severe back injuries, so he took out a permit licence to train his own horse, winning four races. Tommy took up training seriously after buying Proud King, the best priced horse out of Ireland as a yearling, whose performances subsequently established Tommy's training career and gave Tommy's son Maurice his first riding success, averaging at least three wins per year within seven seasons.[193] By the time the horse was put down

[190] Nicholas Richards, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 18, 2014.
[191] Flapping - a form flat racing that sits outside the Jockey Club control
[192] *Sporting Chronicle Handicap Book,* August 16, 1980
[193] Sporting Chronicle, April 2, 1979

after a fall at Hexham in spring 1976 which caused him to crack a bone, he had recorded sixteen wins over hurdles and fences. Tommy was now a well established trainer with a public licence[194] and with a particular reputation for sending out winners at Teeside and Sedgefield. He had a thriving string of horses in the yard at Ousby, near Penrith, the most prestigious training success being the Johnnie Walker Hurdle at Ayr along with the Grand National Trial Stakes at Catterick, and many other notable races. Maurice rode over 90 percent of the horses trained by his father, including victories such as the Sedgefield two and a half mile hurdle in 1974 and the two mile chase at Carlisle in 1977, in a track record that still stands. In one instance, Gillmarsh, trained by Tommy, won four races in a week, Tommy's wife, Nora, later recalling:

> 'Other trainers were ringing asking if Gillmarsh was going to Sedgefield and then to Carlisle so I said yes and they said we won't go then if Gillmarsh is going, I thought we were going to have a walk over if anymore rang'[195]

Gillmarsh had a very short racing career having been put out to grass by his owner, despite the objections of the trainer, and succumbing to grass sickness. Tommy had very strong links within Cumbria's farming community and his yard thrived with local long-standing owners keeping a number of home-bred jumpers in training even though there were far more places than wins. After retiring from training, Tommy continued to be involved with horse racing through ownership, with son Maurice taking over his father's training licence.[196]

Maurice Barnes

Maurice started riding in local gymkhanas around at the age of fourteen, winning a large amount of rosettes, he then became an apprentice with Tommy at the age of sixteen. Maurice had an amateur licence, which he kept for only a year winning eighteen races against experienced and high-quality jockeys he finished fourth in his first race at Sedgefield and recorded his first win at Hexham on his second ride. At the age of seventeen, he was amongst the leading contenders for the 1969-70 amateur riders' championship, he became a professional at the start of the 1970-71 season at the age of eighteen. Maurice won the Scottish Grand National in 1972 on Quick Reply, trained by Harry Bell and owned by Mr W. Thyne at a starting price of 11-1. *Sporting Life* reported,

> …the twenty-one year old son of the one-time top Northern jockey Tommy Barnes, took quick reply into the lead three fences from home and despite losing his irons over the last stayed on to win by two lengths.[197]

Maurice won a variety of plates and cups on the Northern circuit such as the Haig Whisky Novice Hurdle at 5-1. Maurice rode as a freelance jockey for numerous trainers over the years of his career, including Harry Bell and John Dixon, although the majority of his rides were for Tommy. He also

[194] Public licence - the trainer can train anyone's horses
[195] Nora Barnes, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 6, 2014.
[196] Thomas Barnes, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 6, 2014.
[197] Sporting Life, June 17, 1972.

picked up rides for other trainers, such as W.A. Stephenson and Dennis Smith. The highlight of Maurice's racing career came on Saturday March 31 1979, when he had his first ride in the most famous steeplechase in the world, the Colt Car Grand National. Maurice, on board Rubstic trained by John Leadbetter and owned by former British Lion John Douglas. Rubstic, from a little stable in Denholm, won just ahead of Zongelero at 25-1, becoming the first Scottish trained horse to win the race, a record that is still held today. Only seven of the thirty-four starters completed the course that year with nine horses failing to negotiate the Chair, largely due to two loose horses running across the fence as the field approached. Two weeks before the 1979 Grand National, Maurice and Rubstic won the Durham National at Sedgefield, a race he won three years in a row between the years of 1978 and 1980. They competed again for the 1980 Grand National but unfortunately fell at the Chair. When asked who the best horse Maurice rode was, he nominated Proud King, his first ever ride in a race and his first winner. Maurice rode 242 winners in his eighteen-year career.[198]

Maurice's career in the saddle was ended after a heavy fall at Cartmel which knocked him unconscious and gave him severe concussion, following which it took eighteen months to recover. Taking over his father's training licence in 1989 he started his own yard in Little Salkeld, Penrith. At the time he had seven horses in training, which expanded to fourteen being stabled at the beginning of the 1992/93 season. In the 1993/94 National Hunt season Maurice had nineteen winners from ninety-one runners with a string of sixteen horses and, over the years, has won the Tote Gold Trophy twice and the Cumberland Plate. A horse owned by Tommy and his wife Nora, trained by Maurice, won seven races in the 1993/94 season and won numerous races including the Tennants handicap hurdle by nine lengths in the hands of stable jockey Tony Dobbin, who now trains in Northumberland with wife Rose. Other successful horses which Maurice has trained include Nijway, Torkinking and Caulker. Another jockey based at the Barnes yard, Scott Taylor, rode many winners for the yard, including his favourite horse Caulker, which defied top weight to win the Tote Gold Trophy Trial at Ayr in the 1998/99 season. Scott and Caulker, owned by Tommy, won numerous races after first turning out in 1997 in November at Wetherby. Scott was a five-time finalist at the stable lads' boxing championships but when he fell at Perth in August 1999 on novice chaser Te Akau Dan his head was rotated at such a speed when he hit the ground that his brain was severely damaged. In the immediate days and weeks it was a struggle for his survival. Although he survived, Scott is now paralysed down his right hand side. Peter Scudamore visited him in January 2000 in the Hunter's Moor Neurological Rehabilitation Centre in Newcastle and noted that 'he was surrounded by pictures of his boxing exploits and, in pride of place his favourite horse, Caulker.' Emphasizing the family nature of National Hunt communities Scott had lived at the training yard in a flat provided by Maurice and his family.[199] Direct family engagement with training has continued through Maurice's daughter, Angela, who started out by

[198] Maurice Barnes, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 6, 2014
[199] Maurice Barnes, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 6, 2014.

riding for Maurice, gained her jockey's licence and now rides out for Marco Botti in Newmarket as well as running her own tack business.[200]

Community engagement

The examples of racing communities documented here reinforce the importance of community and kinship in the training of racehorses from an historical perspective and the notion that the training of racehorses is very much a craft rather than a science. They also emphasize that communities of practice were not dependent on family alone and that knowledge was transferred just as easily through the apprenticeship system and through the sharing of understanding within a racing yard. The interviews with contemporary trainers explored their biographies in order to expand further on this idea of community and the thoughts of these men highlight their engagement within the racing world. Their biographies suggest that there a number of possible routes into the training of racehorses, whether these be through kinship ties or communities, local and national, which were often rural in nature. Tommy Barnes began his involvement with racing on his father's farm,

> I worked with the farm horses mostly on the farm getting confident with 'em and then I started flapping 'coz I needed the extra money and I remember I rode one night at Newcastle…flapping, then the next day I was racing as an amateur jockey there, a lot different to today with all the paperwork and faff.[201]

After a fall at Carlisle left Tommy with severe back injuries, ending his riding career, he became a trainer at a small yard in Cumbria, where his son Maurice began his own racing career as a jockey, riding his first race at fifteen on Proud King 'you know Granda's horse that he had'.[202] Maurice went on to become one of the best northern jockeys of his time before also becoming a trainer like his father. John Leadbetter left school at sixteen and, after he abandoned training to be a chef, he went into racing,

> First year I came back home…for the summer recess and got back and everything was 'oh right are you not unpacking your clothes' I said 'no I'm off that's the deal…', [mother said] where you going? I said 'I'm going up to Yorkshire, Middleham, Harry Blackshaws its all fixed up'…she was broken hearted.[203]

John undertook an apprenticeship with Harry for six years, which he described as 'slave labour', before working there for a year as a fully-fledged stable lad, normally acting as the head lad. He observed that 'most head lads were like part of the fixtures and in some cases I know they have gone from one generation to another generation' but, in his case he had done his 'time' and he had taken

[200] Angela Barnes, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, June 14, 2014
[201] Thomas Barnes, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 6, 2014.
[202] Maurice Barnes, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 6, 2014.
[203] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.

over on the death of the previous incumbent. The 'head lad's job was never advertised and you would never go and get a head lads job, you'd start at the bottom and work your way up' because any newcomer would be unfamiliar with the stable routine and the trainer. The head lad normally had breakfast with the trainer, during which they discussed planning and any specific problems, and Blackshaw's experience in the veterinary corps, which had been with the equestrian section, meant that John learnt much from him about the treatment of horses. John notes that, 'We were taught the structure of the horse, the ins and the outs, the ups and the downs, and how it all worked, very basic, very crude, but good experience'.[204]

John left Blackshaw to work for Captain Neville Crump, renowned not only for training 'high-class staying chasers' but also for his 'unswerving loyalty to those he employed',[205] for four years riding some horses and working as a stable lad before leaving to 'explore'[206] and going on to work for Kenneth Oliver in Denholm. John then started his own stables, working part time for Oliver as he did so, thereby entering the training profession in a different manner to Nicky Richards. Nicky became a trainer by following in the footsteps of his owner and trainer father, Gordon W. Richards,

> Am about a fourth generation now training…so I suppose it's been in our blood for a hundred odd years…I always loved riding horses and everything and I suppose I was quite lucky that father had the horses.[207]

After his father passed away in 1998, Nicky took over his training licence,

> Aye I came to training horses when father passed away…if he had probably lived another…five or ten year I might not of trained horses because I probably would of been too old at that stage.[208]

Martin Todhunter, who became interested with racing through his brother Midge, had worked for Gordon with Nicky and rode there as an amateur rider, before he became 'too heavy',[209] going on to become the travelling lad who took horses to meetings, dealt with owners and saddled the horses. When riding as an amateur Martin considered training horses but gaining the finance to start was the main problem. After leaving Gordon's yard, he took out a training licence and began his own stable in Cumbria, renting a yard from a local trainer, a Mr Fisher.[210]

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[204] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.
[205] Richard Griffiths 'Obituary: Neville Crump', *Independent* January 21,1997.
[206] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.
[207] Nicholas Richards, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 18, 2014
[208] Nicholas Richards, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 18, 2014.
[209] Martin Todhunter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 15, 2014.
[210] Martin Todhunter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 15, 2014.

All of the trainers interviewed reinforced the notion that other trainers had a major impact on their careers. Tommy Barnes suggested that Walter Patterson and John Dixon were the most influential on his training and riding career,[211] while Maurice Barnes pointed to his father as his biggest influence.[212] Jonjo, Martin, and Nicky, all nominated Gordon as their biggest influence, although Nicky also believes that Kevin Prendagast, still training and someone who Nicky described as an 'Irish legend'[213] was important, while Peter Easterby influenced Jonjo.[214] Martin also highlighted other trainers that he rode for as being influential, including Ken Tuer and Ken Hogg.[215] John believes that the first two trainers that he worked for, Harry Blackshaw and Captain Neville Crump, both helped his career considerably, teaching him a lot before moving to Oliver's yard. Describing his time working for Harry Blackshaw he said, 'I would say that's where I learnt practically everything'.[216]

Jonjo spent as much time as possible as a jockey watching other trainers working, seeing what worked and how they got the best out of totally different horses. He always believes that there is quality in every horse and the puzzle as a trainer is how to reach that ability. He describes an example,

> There's no better example than getting Don't Push It to win the Grand National I took him out of the main yard, put him in a box with his own paddock so he could come and go as he liked, put some sheep in there with him so he had to compete for his food. The result was he learned to fend for himself, thrived and the rest is history.[217]

These biographies draw the reader's attention to the prolonged existence of communities in horse racing. Interviewees became trainers in the same way as their predecessors, through family or through an apprenticeship system, formal and informal. The way in which craft knowledge is passed through generations of families and staff of the training yard remains relatively unaffected, although the craft is now passed onto females, family-related or employees, much more than previously. Training racehorses is still a function of the 'practised eye' of the trainer whose knowledge and experiences are passed on to the next generation not from a formal education in the training of horses but through practical engagement. In this respect, the racing 'community' remains a vital feature in the continuance and expansion of training techniques.

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[211] Thomas Barnes, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 6, 2014.
[212] Maurice Barnes, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 6, 2014.
[213] Nicholas Richards, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 18, 2014.
[214] Jonjo O'Neill, email to Laura Westgarth, May 22, 2014.
[215]Martin Todhunter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 15, 2014.
[216] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.
[217] Jonjo O'Neill, email to Laura Westgarth, May 22, 2014.

Chapter Four: Contemporary Perspectives on Training

Introduction

As a key part of this research, and in an effort to identify continuities and changes in the training of racehorses over the past two hundred years, participants were asked about their thoughts and interpretations of eighteenth and nineteenth century training practices. This chapter uses their ideas about training to document points of continuity and diversity between their practices and those of their predecessors. The work is structured at this point to follow the outline of chapter two in terms of

selecting a horse, purging, sweating, exercise, diet, medicine, training processes and stable management.

The raw material

Eighteenth and nineteenth century trainers recognized the importance of good horses as the raw material for them to work on. Trainers would go to an auction to select a horse for an owner, a process which involved examining an animal's bloodline, the 'conformation' of the horse,[218] and the size of its windpipe, which was assessed by putting their fist under the jaw of the horse. When John discussed breeding, he said,

> …I've bought for owners myself and everything…is far, far, easier and simpler to go and buy something than it is to breed it because when you breed it you take what comes and you are left with all the problems possibly in some cases…but when you go and buy you obviously get sex, size, breeding, whatever you want.[219]

When selecting a racehorse Martin emphasized that,

> Everybody looks for conformation. Vincent O'Brian is probably one of the greatest trainers of all time and he says if you look hard enough there is a fault in every horse. But you look for a nice conformation, you look for a good walker, good limbs, you know you put your fist under there so there is plenty of jaw room.

Jonjo agreed and said that, when selecting a horse, he looks at every aspect of the animal and would 'watch it trot up, looking at the bone structure everything'.[220] For John, the critical thing was, 'conformation, conformation, conformation, all the time, and then if that meets the pedigree then obviously yes'.[221] Nicky was somewhat different in describing what he would look for in a horse, although he still referred to its conformation,

> I like a horse where you can imagine yourself sitting on him and when you sit on something, some horses you would feel very comfortable on and others you would think, oh, he hasn't got much of a front in him his ears are too close to you he hasn't got a very long neck and sometimes they can have a too long a neck. I like to imagine myself where the saddle will sit on him and would you feel comfortable when you're sat up on him.[222]

Harking back to previous eras, the experiential practice of assessing a horse by placing the hand under the jaw was still in use. Nicky believes that 'from the beginning of time you'd always put your hand up

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[218] Conformation – the degree of correctness of a horse's bone structure, musculature and its body proportions in relation to each other. Heather Smith Thomas, *The Horse Conformation Handbook* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2005).
[219] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.
[220] Jonjo O'Neill, email to Laura Westgarth, May 22, 2014.
[221] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.
[222] Nicholas Richards, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 18, 2014.

in the jaw and that you'd feel the teeth make sure he's not a parrot mouth on him'.[223] John also used this method of selecting a horse but notes that other methods are available to trainers today, such as using endoscopes to look into the horse's airway, although he emphasized that experience and the trainer's eye have always been important,

> You've got to have a good passage for airway. Those days there wasn't all this technology and modern aid as regards well endoscopes so you couldn't go and stick a tube down and have a look your eye and your experience was really your guide to buying.[224]

When discussing with the trainers if they followed specific bloodlines and certain sires, each trainer expressed that they would look into the line, although, as John describes about following Rubstic's sire, 'Lightening doesn't strike twice'.[225] Nicky agreed, considering that if a trainer is 'lucky' with a certain sire they would try to find another off this sire, but he was also clear the trainer should be 'ruthless and not just fall in love with one family'.[226] Martin describes different sires and how they suit different types of ground, factors which would influence his decision when selecting a horse,

> Yeah, if you've been successful with a sire you know they are all sires, like Presenting wants good ground, Rosalie's want soft ground, so that will tell you where you're going you buy a Rosalie one year and it wants soft ground but you get a wet winter, then you buy a Presenting that wants fast ground and it's a dry winter you just you look at the sires and what they've done and you know what they want. [227]

Purging

Purging was then discussed with the trainers, who considered this the same as what they would call 'physicing' a horse, discussed below when talking about medicine, although John reflected,

> No, never done it, heard of it, yes, but clean them inside and outside yes because the old fashioned way of cleaning them inside was liquid paraffin oil. Because yes, you get a strange horse coming into your yard nowadays you have an isolation box but they did that in the 1800's. It was the same thing so you didn't create a cross section of infection. If you got a horse coming from somewhere strange you didn't know what it had or what it was carrying to avoid contamination, isolation and, yes, clean the outside and inside but nowadays you wouldn't do it as harsh you'd get done for cruelty. [228]

This was not to say that he was not in the practice of administering physic to a horse coming into his yard but it would take a much milder form,

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[223] Nicholas Richards, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 18, 2014.
[224] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.
[225] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.
[226] Nicholas Richards, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 18, 2014.
[227] Martin Todhunter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 15, 2014.
[228] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.

> You'd probably give it a shampoo from top to bottom and everything.rid of any sort of infection and then inside I still use altan which is an old fashioned purgative. [229]

One of the reasons he considered this necessary was that the previous trainer may well have fed the animal before it left his yard, out of 'spite', using a drench bottle to put 'all sorts of things' down the animal's neck because in those days they had 'no other means of administrating any toxic dangerous medicines'. A drench bottle over the neck together with water poured down the nose made them swallow so,

> When it went to the next trainer it would take them six months to sort it out so therefore automatically they would clean the outside and the inside because you didn't know what was inside. As I say if some owner moved a horse the previous trainer would be so spiteful there is a little bit happening today but it's not as easy because there is so many ways of tracing things nowadays. All you need to do is take a blood sample and it will tell you a multitude of sins so people are getting more and more cautious of being caught because if they are caught they get banned them days they had no proof, they couldn't trace it[230]

Tommy said of purging that,

> It makes no sense to make the horse have diarrhoea and make it ill before a race, the horse should be trained properly so it can carry the weight of the jockey and lead, not make it ill so it is lighter. It might be given worming tablets and other medicines if something was wrong with its bowels or stomach but nothing else.[231]

Sweating

Sweating was also discussed during the interviews, the researcher beginning by describing the methods undertaken by trainers in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. All the contemporary trainers saw this method as ridiculous and none of them could understand how this would help a horse,

> I really just don't see the point, to get a horse to gallop five miles it's just near impossible, I would of thought. Well, it depends what it's been doing if it came straight out of a field maybe, I dunno, but, no, I couldn't go along with that one.[232]

Nicky gives his thoughts on this,

> Well I think time has probably proved that would be a negative move wouldn't it? No, I don't think that would be very good at all, that's all out the window. Can't see the point of it myself. I mean, I don't know what they are trying to get rid of or what it's got on it. That's news to me, I've never heard of that one before. I can't see the point in it wash it [but].gallop a horse five mile, tut no.[233]

John had read various books on the history of training at Middleham and explained that there are six sweat boxes at the top of a hill, very small boxes made from sandstone, with one air vent at the bottom

[229] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.
[230] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.
[231] Thomas Barnes, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 6, 2014.
[232] Martin Todhunter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 15, 2014.
[233] Nicholas Richards, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 18, 2014.

of the building. The boxes were used when anybody had new horses coming into the yard and they would be put into the box for around forty-eight hours. John sees the method as ridiculous,

> Somebody. must of said that's bloody stupid, I can't see it does any good really. I would say it was definitely an old fashioned theory. There wasn't the chemical them days are there is today and there was a lot of infection flying about and they couldn't control it in the same way and it was this is what we do this was we have always done this is the way you know. There are ten ways to skin a cat but I think it was just a traditional method or one of these things and nobody argued with it. I don't know how it. stopped or how they ceased doing it.[234]

Neither Tommy or Maurice knew what was meant by the term 'sweating' and saw the method as barbaric and one which would damage a horse rather than help. The horse would be groomed and cleaned well when entering the yard but the technique of sweating was never used,

> A horse would have a blanket on it if it was a cold morning for exercising but never done anything like that. It would probably cripple it by working it that hard, too hot.[235]

Exercise

When examining exercise with the trainers, some methods still followed the processes which were commonplace among trainers in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. John described himself strapping and scraping a horse before workout in the morning and how he was taught how to do this in his apprenticeship,

> A wisp of hay was the main piece of apparatus and a very, very, soft body brush and it was always a circular method. Everything went round in a circle all the time and you always went against the hair never against the grain. They looked a million dollars. It was a toning of the muscles more than anything else and the muscles all run one way and that's why you always went with the coat never went against it and if you were caught going the opposite way stand to attention, and it was drummed into you.[236]

Martin agreed, although he believed that in the modern day system,

> We haven't got the time or the money to do that. We haven't got the staff enough to do it. Basically what we do, they tack up in the morning make sure they are alright put on the walker and the box is done when they are out. Muck 'em out and whatever we have to do with them when they are out so we are trying to keep em away from as much dust as you can and also it gets loosened up while it's on the walker so that strapping that you know basically that's what that do. They are exercised, they are washed off, and they are put back on the walker to cool off and then we get on the next ones.[237]

Roadwork was thought to be a necessary part of a weekly routine in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, although Nicky does not believe in this now,

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[234] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.
[235] Maurice Barnes, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 6, 2014.
[236] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.
[237] Martin Todhunter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 15, 2014.

> It is just to let them freshen up a little bit coz they might of worked on the Wednesday or something. They just have a walk and a trot, just a light exercise, that's the old fashioned terms of strengthening legs up and that sort of thing. Well it might do but I think too much road work with young horses encourages you to bring splints up on them and everything so I don't do that much roadwork now as what the old fashioned way would. Father would do a lot of roadwork as well so he would be probably be playing hell with me if he was sat here now.[238]

However, John thinks it is important to have roadwork built into the horse's regime,

> Yes as much as possible. That's another thing that lacks today, no road work. I think it's more important to have even tar macadam surfaces than actual grass to gallop on but if you've got a good even tar macadam surface which is hard and compound you are toning the whole body all the time on this one consistent surface because there is no bounce in it so therefore it is all the time toning muscles, body, blood circulation and everything. That's one thing that well horses are so soft in there the muscle, if you've got a good hard trained horse that's done plenty its muscles are solid they are like concrete[239]

Jonjo, who trains at a purpose built complex, also still uses roadwork in his training, on the footpaths that surround the estate.[240]

Horses in the eighteenth and nineteenth century would be regularly galloped over the length of their race, although in contemporary training no trainer would gallop their horse over the racing distance,

> Some of mine at home, even if they are two mile horses, they might canter for three miles or something like that, aye, but that wouldn't be at racing speed just what we would call steady work and even fast work you would never gallop over two miles if you were a two mile horse.[241]

Martin would also never run the horse over their racing distance and noted that, 'nobody ever does, even them big trainers down south with gallops forever they will never, to my knowledge anyway, gallop them over what distance they are gonna run'.[242]

Martin explained how horses are quite different, in terms of training them, and horses became race fit in a certain period of time,

> A lot of the time you've got to know your horses. We had a good horse called Kingsmark. He won three Edward Hammers at Haydock and he won the big handicap race at Aintree on the Friday and he was fourth in the Grand National but [when] we first got him he went to Kelso and he absolutely bolted it. Then there was a race a fortnight later at Market Rasen a lot lesser race and we decided to run him in that and he just won. He wasn't same animal, he just looked different all together we couldn't understand it, and I checked him over got blood tests scoped him an all this and there was nothing wrong with him seemed happy enough. Anyway, we were chatting to the old man, the fella who owned him, and I said the only thing I can say is when he

[238] Nicholas Richards, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 18, 2014.
[239] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.
[240] Jonjo O'Neill, email to Laura Westgarth, May 22, 2014.
[241] Nicholas Richards, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 18, 2014.
[242] Martin Todhunter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 15, 2014.

> first ran obviously it was his first run and he was fresh and he said freshen him up then. So we waited six weeks and he went to the Edward Hammer and he won. I said I think I know what it is now, he wants six to eight weeks between his runs but, unfortunately, they made him favourite for the Hennessey that year and he had to run it. It was only four weeks but he had to really run because [of] his handicap mark. Anyway, he ran ok but he finished about sixth but then we stuck to the rules the minimum was six weeks, eight if we could plan his races out, and he was a different animal after that[243]

Diet

When discussing diet, and how this has changed over the centuries, there was again a difference of opinion, with John and Tommy using their experience of working in training yards as lads compared to the views of Maurice, Martin, Nicky, and Jonjo, who are now using the modern feeding bags. John explained the history of how he fed his horses,

> I mean years ago you had nothing but basically a plain oat and that was the base feed and that's what you chose to go with it to create a balanced diet. People used to get somebody to grow the oats for them so they had a year's supply, consistent, so they weren't going to two different sources because a change of variety upsets a lot of systems because they get used to one type or strain of an oat. Therefore, a lot of trainers used to have a source of oats from the same supplier of the same strain. The oat was the base of the diet, it's what they used to try and balance it. But there was far more value in the oat fifty, sixty, seventy years ago to what there is now because nowadays. trace elements are locked in. Them days an oat would carry a lot of protein, solarium, and a lot of iodine, zinc, all coming out of the ground but now the ground has been drained to such an extent, well, modern fert[iliser] and everything, so now the oat isn't much bloody good. Hence, you know you get these compound feeds now which are a readymade, all in one maybe, not very attractive and anybody can feed it whereas years ago it was a specialized way the feeding of the horses everything had well different amounts and different addictives well raw linseed oil was, I would say, one of your basis as they'd get a teacup of linseed oil in their feed. Raw linseed oil and bran. You'd get a double handful of bran all mixed in and it was quite attractive, it had a smell. They used to chop hay and then soak it in black treacle and handful of that so they got a lot of sweetness. Sugar beet was another thing and then, of course, sugar beet got poo poo'd because all it was heavy. Well, them days there was quite a high sugar content in sugar beet but nowadays there's nothing in it because they have extracted everything. Same as the bran you could put your arm in a bag of bran and it would come out white with flour now what is bran, sawdust. There's nothing in it, so you're losing so much protein and so that's where millions been spent on creating these compound feeds and I don't think I know many people that don't feed anything other than these compound feeds. I say you'll struggle to find somebody who feeds in a traditional [manner].[244]

When Tommy was a trainer he also often boiled linseed oil and added it to the feed of the horse,

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[243] Martin Todhunter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 15, 2014.

[244] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.

> If a horse was looking jaded and lost its healthy glossy coat then some linseed oil was boiled and given with their feed. This would lubricate their insides help get rid of worms, within a few days they would look much better[245]

Martin believes that there is too much protein in the modern feed bags and that this is damaging the horses, which are not getting enough exercise. He also described his experience working for Gordon Richards,

> When a horse ties up, when its muscles go stiff and hard, the lactic acid in his body because he hasn't done anything and then you do something with him he just can't take it and they just go rock solid it's an awful thing to see. Like what Gordon did. They used to boil it on a Saturday night with linseed oil and mash and bran and barley and mix it all up and put it with molasses over it. God, we were there for bloody hours doing it but Tom Bowes the vet used to go nuts and said you feed that stuff on a Saturday and I'm here most Sundays coz they are colicing or they are up and down. Their stomachs were a bit upset, I mean this was going through the system.[246]

Nicky has a slightly different method to other trainers, giving separate supplements and finding which ones will work the best for his horses,

> I think now there's about five, six different types and names of different feed red mills, millers, Dodgson and Holland and everything like that and I think every trainer has his favourite which he thinks is the right one. So every trainer has his base feed hasn't he? You might just tinker with it slightly. Each company will have a different.mix and they'll have a cube and each trainer will probably just juggle around if he thinks the horse doesn't like cubes he might give him mix or whatever. Basically you just try to keep it as simple as you can so you don't get too confused and your staff doesn't get confused. Where you had six different feeds everything is gonna get out of control. Well a lot of it comes in the feed bag but we would give them a few supplements we give them a bit of vitamin E for the muscles and everything which is fairly standard. We give them a bit of a tonic leading up to the run, and we give them salts and everything which is back to the hydration we have stopped feeding electrolytes because a lot of it is just a waste of money. If you smell it just got abit of perfume in it really and you're paying for the perfume whereas if you just give them proper natural salts that's far better than giving them electrolytes we find so naturally we are hydrating them a lot better that way[247]

Physic

Medicine changed dramatically between the eighteenth and twentieth century's and the evidence taken from contemporary trainers highlights just how dramatically this has changed, although the terms 'physic' and 'physicing' are still part of the modern language of horserace training. Physicing a horse clears the animal of worms after they had been out to grass for the summer and is also used to freshen up a horse half way through the National Hunt season. For John,

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[245] Thomas Barnes, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 6, 2014.
[246] Martin Todhunter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 15, 2014.
[247] Nicholas Richards, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 18, 2014.

> Physicing well every time, not so much with the jumpers, when they came in after their summer holiday the first thing you did obviously was worm them. You give them a week then the next thing you give them a physic to clean them out so then you were starting with a clean sheet. Grazing them days was not as clean as what grazing is these days through modern herbicides and everything else. These days it's clean whereas years ago it wasn't. They were picking up all sorts of muck and rubbish, you know parasites, and so therefore they came in and we automatically worm everything. [248]

Nicky noted that this had been common practice for as long as he could remember,

> It would be fifty years ago I can remember all trainers would give the horse like a physic, that's what they would call it, and you could give them a salt wash half way through the season and supposedly that used to freshen them up[249]

A 'physic' is a concoction of herbs, medicines and oils,

> Liquid paraffin and castor oil, altan, and I don't know where you get altan is a physic you'd maybe find it on the internet but it's like a laxative and it's an orange powder and oh what it would make you [Expletive deleted] through the eye of a needle it cleaned the gut out. [250]

> Gordon used to physic them when they came in like a salt wash with herbs and physics in and paraffin oil, the liquid oil, and you used to get about two gallons and you just pumped it in down the nostril into the stomach. The vet used to come and do it. He'd bring a big fine horse out the field and bring him in about a week to physic him clean him out, clean all the rubbish out of it, that's what he thought [251]

John also spoke of how to cure swelling and soreness in legs and ankles,

> Half the stuff we used them days you can't even get hold of nowadays. There was a thing called amoracaine which is a clay powder and you mixed it with vinegar and every time you ran you used to put it on their legs, and of course it was just cheap as chips. It was just like bags of cement powder but it was clay but it was ground up clay and you mixed it with vinegar to a paste and after they run sore joints, put this on.[252]

Tommy used a power called whitening powder for the same reason,

> When it had a swollen tendon or knee, whitening powder would be mixed with vinegar to take the swelling and heat out of the area that was injured, the hair was pulled up and the paste would be applied so the hair was not in the way of the affected area[253]

Maurice would also use this method, the powder in his case being Fuller Earth Powder, which, as discussed recently by Frape,[254] decreases swelling because it consists of montmorillonite, a hydrated form of aluminium silicate, with finely divided calcite to absorb gases, water, and swelling to about

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[248] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.
[249] Nicholas Richards, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 18, 2014.
[250] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.
[251] Martin Todhunter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 15, 2014.
[252] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.
[253] Thomas Barnes, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 6, 2014.
[254] David Frape, *Equine Nutrition and Feeding* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004).

twelve times the volume. Not that Maurice was basing his use on the science but on his own experience,

> Fuller's earth powder was mixed with vinegar to help reduce swelling and take the heat out of the area. The paste would be covered by brown paper and/or a bandage. Depending on how bad the horse was, small walks with a head collar and lead rope to help recuperate them.[255]

To administer medicines, and the physic itself, the yards used a drench bottle, as described by John,

> It would be something like tall thin glass bottle but it didn't have a neck on, but you could put it down their throat. So you put a twitch on them, tie their head up to a rafter, put that down and it guzzle, guzzle, down then you'd pour water down their nose then they would swallow swallow, swallow, gone, and that was the form of administration after that they used to get a stomach pump a modern like a bicycle pump with tubes connected so you push the air then you put a tube over their neck into the stomach then you pump the liquid into them.[256]

John gave an example of using the drench bottle for cabbage water along with feeding the horses dandelions to improve the iron in their blood,

> They used to boil cabbages and use the cabbage water for anything with colic. It was a mixture of all sorts of lime, cabbage water, just ordinary everyday things, and, of course, how did you get it into them? Push down their neck drench bottle again. That was the way of administering medicines for all aliments that you could recognize straight away because obviously some of them were sick. They did have different ailments so they didn't obviously chuck anything at them unless you could see, but you could identify yourself just from knowing and seeing one and another and that that's got colic that's got da, da, da. Another thing we used to use a lot was dandelion all through the summer. Dandelion, chopped dandelions it was, all to do with blood to maintain, well, I'm nearly going to say it was like feeding because there is a lot of iron in dandelions and we used to have to go and pick a bag of dandelions every day, each apprentice.[257]

The researcher discussed with the trainers the eighteenth-century method of ridding colic from a horse by riding it at full gallop after drinking large amounts. Each trainer thought this was a very old technique, 'barbaric I would of thought',[258] and could not see the benefits. Nicky observed,

> No, we wouldn't be doing that, no, I think that's long out the window that. I would say the vet would look at you strange if you had said you had took him up for a gallop wouldn't he? I don't think you would have a horse long too long if you had done that.[259]

Martin describes the course of action he would take if one of his horses was suffering from colic at home,

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[255] Maurice Barnes, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 6, 2014
[256] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.
[257] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.
[258] Martin Todhunter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 15, 2014.
[259] Nicholas Richards, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 18, 2014.

> It depends what how bad it was. If it's thrashing itself about I'd get the vet out but if it wasn't then I'd just try and deal with it ourselves get it moving, just look after it and hope that it would pass or one of the best ways is to put it in the wagon and take it out for a ride because most horses will pass their droppings in the wagon won't they it's just that nervous thing.[260]

This differs from Nicky's yard,

> Well, first I would ring my vet up as quick as I can and we would sort of work out if he's colicy nine times out of ten he's got a bit of a blockage somewhere and he's trying to get down on the ground we try to work out is it moving slowly? If it was moving slowly we would give him a few fluids inside try and help it move through all the fluids and everything, try to keep it coming, and if we thought it was too big of a blockage he would be straight away to one of these universities and we find quicker the better, if there is any doubt straight to one of these big animal hospitals, Liverpool or up to the vet or something like that.[261]

Jonjo also has a different method of curing a horse from colic. The 'first treatment would be to put the horse on the walker. They'd not be run at full gallop. The vet would only be called in if other options failed'.[262]

John described a traditional method of ridding colic used when he was a lad,

> Colic, well colic is basically belly ache isn't it so therefore, well, I still go back when you talk about blackberries and that sort of thing turpentine, turpentine and blackcurrant juice over the neck and that gets rid of colic because it's a soothing agent and it's like a coolant and I dunno what the turpentine does but you'd think it would rip the guts out of 'em.[263]

Training processes and stable management

Training days in John's yard followed a certain pattern each week. There was,

> Always walk and trot canter on a Tuesday, work on a Wednesday, easy on a Thursday, canter on a Friday, and work again Saturday, day off, that's how most people trained the horses.[264]

John spoke of when he was a lad at Crump's yard,

> We never went anything above six furlongs and, you know, this interval training it's been happening for years it's a load of, you know. Two year olds, we used to go two and a half furlongs, three times on the two years on the bridle hard, you know, buzz, buzz, buzz, and what do you call that, interval training. Work morning they would probably canter five furlongs pretty sedately. It would be a hack canter, five furlongs. They would then go up in pairs over three furlongs just a good half speed and then they would go up in pairs or threes six furlongs never once coming off the bridle, Wednesday and Saturdays, but that was practically everything, whether it's a three mile chaser, two mile hurdler, but they were all paired up or they were always arranged with similar types so if you had two mile hurdlers or two mile novices or

[260] Martin Todhunter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 15, 2014.
[261] Nicholas Richards, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 18, 2014.
[262] Nicholas Richards, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 18, 2014.
[263] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.
[264] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.

> three miles, or whatever, they would be mixed and matched accordingly to what they are running at. So, therefore, you haven't got one taking another off the bridle, or trying to, he didn't. He hated them coming off the bridle.[265]

At Maurice's training yard, the gallops are more technical with the gallop being made of woodchip and being uphill, Maurice's reasoning being that this strengthens the back, legs, and gluteus, of the horse, which they need for jumping fences in National Hunt races. His reasons for having a woodchip gallop, and not just a grass one as his father did, were,

> To jump over hurdles and fences the backend of the horse needs to be strong so the take off is clean and gives the correct power to sufficiently clear the jump. So, I gallop the horses from the bottom of the hill to the top of the hill, two horses next to each other so they are racing each other. But the gallop is made of woodchip and is called an all-weather gallop. This means the horse will not be trying to run through mud and tiring the legs a lot when it is wet. It also means it has better drainage so it can be used in bad weather. Previously, in very wet weather, we had no gallops and could not train.[266]

One training method that was not available in the early years of training racehorses but has now become available to trainers is the horse walker, a mechanical circular device in which five to six horses can be exercised at one time. The walker has different programmes so the intensity of the workout can be varied and suited for the horses. The horse walker keeps weight off the horses back but moves them as they have to keep up with the gate. Both Tommy and Maurice had a horse walker but stopped using it after a year of it being installed, Tommy observing that,

> The walker was good in one sense it saved time if there was a busy day of racing ahead and needed to exercise some horses, but there was bad things too. It was enclosed in a barn and the floor of the barn was dusty so the dust went up into the lungs of the horse and stopped it from breathing too well. It also meant that I could not see the horses moving, I could not judge how they were doing with training.[267]

On race days nineteenth-century trainers did not feed or water the horse and before a race they only had tiny amounts of water. They also did not train them the day before either so they were eager to run and they weren't fatigued. All trainers disagreed with this explaining how their horse would be fed on the morning of the race although Jonjo would take the hay off them and they would be fed very early, Nicky explains here,

> Yeah, they would be fed first thing in the morning, some of them get a little bit of hay and everything on the morning of the race and the odd one might get a little bit of hay when they get to the races, just to calm them down and one or two of them are prone to ulcers and we might give them a little bit of hay to keep them salivering and keep the ulcers at bay. They'd always have water here and when they get to the races they would have a chance of a drink if they

[265] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.
[266] Maurice Barnes, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 6, 2014.
[267] Thomas Barnes, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 6, 2014.

> wanted one, but if they went in and they were knocking the lad out of the way for water the boy would ring me up and say there's something not right here.[268]

Martin also explains if they were racing at night how they would be given food later on in the day,

> Normal feed, you know, same if it was running at night we would give it feed at about half 11 you know if it's running after 5 we'd give it a little bit more, They get as much water as they want I never take the water of them especially hot days you try and give 'em water.[269]

This was examined further by Maurice,

> On race day, the horse would only have a small amount of water because if they had a lot of water in them they would go a lot slower and not perform at their best. The day before the race, they would only have a small bucket of water in the stable with them, then the morning they would have a few mouthfuls but nothing too much and at the races they would not have any.[270]

When speaking to the trainers about exercising the day before the race they had varying opinions on this. Jonjo would give them a light workout to help freshen them up before the race, 'the horses would have light work the day before racing,'[271] and John, 'the day before I always do 3 furlongs sharp clear the wind'.[272]

Nicky explained it would be different for the type of horse,

> They'd have, well, some. We are back to the old fashioned way, some of them that need a lot of work we might exercise them on the morning of the race, some horses we might go very light on them for two days before they run they might only trot up the road for two days. It just depends on the horse, you know, some of them that are big, heavy. I'm not saying thick winded horses. We would give them a little pipe opener on the morning of the race.[273]

In summary then, contemporary trainers indicate a number of areas where the training or racehorses in the modern period exhibits some similarities with eighteenth and nineteenth century practices. The role of the trainer in selecting for an owner remains a significant one. The importance of breeding in helping to select an appropriate animal is still recognized, as are experiential practices such as using the trainer's fist to measure the size of the jaw. In addition, there are a number of aspects of Victorian training that remain in use with respect to the administration of medicines, the application of exercise, the forms of diet, and basic stable management approaches. In all of these respects there are signs of continuity and, since there remains, even now, little in the way of formal education for trainers, it has to be assumed that it was knowledge transfer through communities of practice that have allowed these continuities to survive for two centuries. That is not to say that training practices are accepted uncritically by succeeding generations. Purging and sweating, which were widely used in the

[268] Nicholas Richards, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 18, 2014.
[269] Martin Todhunter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 15, 2014.
[270] Maurice Barnes, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 6, 2014.
[271] Nicholas Richards, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 18, 2014.
[272] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.
[273] Nicholas Richards, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 18, 2014.

nineteenth century, have both been discontinued in the training of horses, although there are still signs that the use of physic for cleansing a horse remains in use. While critics of craft practices like training have often pointed at the inability of crafts to move away from traditional practices it seems there is still space in the craft process for self-analysis and innovation.

Conclusion

It is apparent from both the archival research and the interviews that communities of practice in training racehorses have existed for over two centuries, with the transfer of knowledge between family members and employees generating the development of training understanding and awareness. In this respect, the study supports the position taken by Etienne Wenger, whose exploration of the concept of a ‘community’ in business and nursing, with examples of how individuals share information in an informal manner, led to his formulation of the notion of 'communities of practice'. A key feature of communities is learning together and shared learning is a prerequisite for a community of practice. One alternative considered was the idea of ‘networks of practice’, which consisted of social relationships, and individuals interacting through social exchange rather than through strong relationships. In the context of training racehorses, the notion of communities appears to have more relevance since a community consists of strong individual ties whereas a network consists of weak ties with typical forms of communication involving loose connections between individuals in contexts

such as the internet. The author therefore concludes that the term ‘community’ applies better to a National Hunt racing yard because interactions between members take place face-to-face and their are also strong ties, such as the kinship relationship involved in many yards. In addition, the art of training racehorses was based upon craft practices rather than through education into the area or reception of training as a science. The art of training the horse was passed from one generation to another, drawing on experiences, and thereby creating a range of techniques and practices relating to both the skill of training and practical knowledge of how to identify the health and well-being of the animal. The art of the trainer included being able to watch a horse run and knowing how to improve the action through the experience gained from members of a previous generation.

The trainer is the leader within the racing community, acting as the organic intellectual[274] at the centre, with others such as grooms, jockeys, stable hands, and owners, interacting with the trainer to gain knowledge and insight into the trainer's methods. In this way, they develop a repertoire of resources through experiences, stories, and means of treating frequent problems, which contribute to their ‘toolbox’ of craft knowledge. This is emphasized by the studies of historical racing families, which uncovered various connections over two centuries, involving nineteen jockeys, twelve trainers and nine jockeys who later became trainers. John Day, the starting point for the research, had two sons who became jockeys and later trainers. Apprenticing with their father was their first contact with training racehorses and John would have shared knowledge and experiences with them to facilitate their training education. Sam left his father’s yard to work for a different trainer, where he would have gained further knowledge and come into contact with different styles and techniques of training. In this respect, Sam was involved in two separate communities of practice, with two experts providing him knowledge for his training ‘toolbox’. Contemporary examples of this approach were also examined via interviews with current trainers, gaining insights into the means by which they became trainers. Some indentified that their father or brother was a trainer, or involved in horses, and, therefore, knowledge and information was passed down from them. Specific kinship ties were evident through the Barnes family, father Tommy, a jockey and trainer, son Maurice, a jockey and trainer, and, also, granddaughter Angela, a jockey. In addition, Tommy trained his daughter Sheila, who also worked very closely with him in the racing yard, exercising the horses, transporting them to racecourses along, and ensuring the health of the animal. This example reinforces the kinship ties and closeness of the training community and its importance in working with racehorses. Another aspect influential on the concept of ‘community’ was marriage which connected various families in the research with, for example, Catherine Day marrying Tom Cannon senior, who had worked for Catherine’s father, John Barham Day, as an apprentice. Here he would have gained his knowledge and skills, and, after John passed away, Tom was left the training stables of his father-in-law and began training his own horses. Clearly, the community within the training of racehorses was a significant

[274] William Day, *The Racehorse in Training,* 22.

factor in the diffusion of training knowledge, because of the lack of resources, evidence, and understanding of training principles in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Without those who practiced the craft themselves sharing knowledge with the individuals surrounding them it would have been extremely difficult to begin training a horse from scratch. Without the community and its relationships exchanging knowledge training would have not developed as effectively and efficient skills and methods would have been lost.

Early racehorse training originally followed the practices of those training both animals and humans, systems which were informed by the humoral theory advocated by the Greek physicians. They believed in four humours, blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile, working in unison and that, if one was out of balance, corrective methods should be implemented. These 'humoral imbalances' were corrected through a programme of diet, exercise, and medication, specified by the trainer. Very often, herbal medicines, such as a vegetable tonic or arsenic, would be given to align these humours, although humoral theory was discontinued in the early twentieth century following medical advances in antibiotics and blood sampling. When the horse was in training, there were a variety of methods for training, medicine, and managing the stable. A process of purging and sweating was employed to clean the horse inside and outside when first entering a yard, to rid them of any disease but also for the trainer to be starting his work on a clean canvas. A sweat would consist of layers of heavy rugs being placed on the horse and the horse being galloped, before locking the animal into a small stable with no light and a small ventilation hole at the bottom of a wall. After this, the horse would be brushed and scraped to clean the pores and hairs. Purging would involve administering a concoction of medicines to give the horse severe diarrhoea, with the aim of cleaning the horse of worms or toxins.

Even during the latter stages of the nineteenth century, it was clear that trainers were amending aspects of their work and the interviews conducted with contemporary trainers discussed their own views of some of these historical approaches to training. They generally believed that these methods would damage the horse, rather than providing a benefit, and they considered that a horse would not be able to gallop five miles in heavy rugs without it becoming severely injured. On the other hand, aspects of nineteenth-century training relating to exercise, such as horses being exercised throughout the week with two days of speed work being included, had some resonance for contemporary trainers. In this respect, there were similarities with modern training methods since interviewees also applied these approaches in their training as well as the nineteenth century practice of training sessions lasting for one to one and a half hours. Furthermore, the nineteenth-century notion that horses which sweated profusely after a gallop should not be seen as unfit but were actually often fitter than those not sweating, was still understood by trainers in modern racing, although they often consider this as an individual characteristic, which was dependent upon the particular horse and their stress levels. On the other hand, the feed of horses has changed. Diet was closely monitored during the nineteenth century, with specific oats being central to the feed and those of English origins preferred in order to provide

the animal with the maximum amount of nutrients. Horses would be fed five times a day with as many oats and hay they could eat and, in certain cases, delicate feeders were additionally given old white peas or split beans. In some instances, raw linseed oil was also added to feed to perk up the coats and the look of the horse. This method of feeding has changed dramatically over the centuries due to technological advances in the manufacturing of feed. Horse feed is now readily available and it includes all of the protein and essentials that the horse needs without adding other elements such as white beans or linseed oil. Stable management has also developed considerably. Previously one stable lad would take care of two or three specific horses, caring for their feeding and health. Within the stable, their work included presenting the horse each night for inspection by the trainer, along with reporting any changes in feeding habits. However, in modern racing stables, a shortage of staff and an increase in wages means that one stable lad or lass now takes care of ten to fifteen animals and this has accompanied significant changes in the overall processes of stable management. Improvements in modern technology have led to the introduction of mechanical equipment such as the horse walker to aid the stable lad. Now, instead of strapping a horse's muscles in preparation for morning exercise a horse will be put onto the horse walker for a certain amount of time, while the stables are cleaned, so one stable hand has a more effective way of using their time. In addition, especially in larger stables, there is now a greater management tier in the stable, with barn manager, assistant trainer, head lad, sometimes more than with a senior head lad and up to three below him, stable jockeys, and apprentices. This is a great deal more than was normal in the management of nineteenth-century training stables. However, in general, training programmes and philosophies would have been familiar to all trainers of the nineteenth century and this highlights the longevity of training practices in the way training was organised. It seems that much of the content of the training day remains relatively unchanged, although this was not the result of any communication between these men and the scientific community but the result of experience and the 'practised eye' of the trainer.

Communities of practice are rarely static in nature and innovation and changes in horseracing have altered the way training is now undertaken in ways that a nineteenth-century would not recognize. In this respect, exercising the horse displays both continuity and diversity because, while the rationale behind certain practices has stayed the same, technological advances have changed the techniques of training practices. All-weather gallops were developed to assist trainers with their exercise routines, the gallops providing an area for exercise when bad weather had previously stopped training owing to the gallops being on grass. The all-weather enables training to continue under any conditions underfoot, many of which will be similar to racing conditions. Other advances in training technology include the equine swimming pools, which provide variety to the training regime and many find this an enjoyable experience. The water provides buoyancy for the horse and this relives pressure on the joints, bones and ligaments as well as providing enough resistance to ensure a thorough workout, a similar rationale to the idea of taking horses to the river for the water to wash against their legs to help

relax them. The swimming pool also keeps injured horses fit without damaging the affected area. Equine solariums can also be very therapeutic for the horse, in that they provide a warming effect that improves circulation and helps to relax tense muscles, while also providing a valuable source of vitamin D, essential for joint and bone health. A nineteenth-century trainer would let the horse go into the field on a hot day to achieve the same effect but using the solarium means this can be useful all year round. It is especially important for National Hunt trainer since the majority of their season is during the winter in bad weather. Therapy bays are also a modern advancement in training racehorses. They involve pulsed magnetic field therapy, which helps improve recovery from injury and reduces conditions such as inflammation. The therapy is used on arthritic joints, orthopaedic conditions, and fractures, along with wounds and circulatory problems, soft tissue problems, sore backs and muscle tightness. It includes ice or heat therapy combined with massages for the general maintenance of horses' legs and backs for the prevention of injury and healing of existing injuries. Horse walkers allow horses to be exercised regardless of weather conditions and the regular use of a horse walker improves the horses' fitness. It also enables recovery, since the animal is able to build up strength without the fear of working too hard, and the horse walker is useful in cooling horses down after rigorous exercise.[275] In the past, this would have been carried out by stable lads walking the horses until they had sufficiently cooled down.

Since training advances are ongoing, contemporary trainers were asked to reflect on developments in technology and to look forward, if they could, to potential developments in the future. Martin observed that,

> Well these swimming pools, and walkers and things..treadmills and things like that they are all just a little bits of things you can do with them so it's different if your horse had bad legs swimming it's a good thing if he's a bit shouldery.[276]

Jonjo has tried and tested certain pieces of modern technology but often found some methods are better the old-fashioned way,

> Certain technology such as heart monitors, which I tried but dropped on the basis that they didn't tell me anything, I should not be seeing for myself and taking up valuable time. It keeps going back to the old ways, technology and new ideas come and go. It's noticeable that ground conditions at racecourses, particularly at the major meetings, are slowing down to reduce risk of injury. That is having an effect on how horses need to be prepared for the races and on the type of horse best suited. The recent era of French-breds which are lighter framed being favoured appears to be coming to an end. They tend to mature earlier and do not have the same ability as traditional Irish-breds to take training over a longer career.[277]

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[275] See Jonjo O'Neill training at Jackdaws Castle; www.jonjooneillracing.com
[276] Martin Todhunter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 15, 2014.
[277] Jonjo O'Neill, email to Laura Westgarth, May 22, 2014.

John thinks that future developments in technology in racing may not actually help, 'It's going to keep going but it will go to another level and it's not necessarily for the better and it's going to be getting more and more mechanical…it's not human anymore'.[278] Finally, Nicky suggested that 'I don't think anything stands still training wise'[279] recognizing that everybody looks for an advantage 'be it feed wise, fitness training methods wise, you know, somebody might just change something slightly and that'll be a new fantastic way of doing it'.[280]

In summary, then, the longevity of training practices and the rationale behind these training practices does not appear to have changed dramatically over the periods discussed here and reinforces the notion of continuity, rather than diversity, in the training of racehorses. The role of the trainer continues to emphasize the importance of craft, rather than science, in training, while knowledge continues to be gained by experience and transmitted through close-knit racing communities. This craft and the skill of training has not changed radically and the central elements of training practices continue to be handed on informally from person to person, with no need for formal exams in the training of horses, since the education of the next generation of trainers remains in the hands of its experienced practitioners.

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[278] Stephen John Leadbetter, in discussion with Laura Westgarth, April 27, 2014.
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