

Questions and Answers for Cavalry Non-Commissioned Officers

(Questions and Answers for Cavalry Non-Commissioned Officers, 1904)

Stable Management , Feeding, Forage, Saddlery &c.

Lance-Corporals (Constables) and Corporals:

Q.-What is the Government forage ration and how is it distributed in feeds?

A.-Hay 12 lbs., oats 10 lbs., straw 8 lbs. Morning feed, oats 3 lbs. Mid-day feed, oats 3 lbs., hay 6 lbs. Evening feed, oats 4 lbs., hay 6 lbs. (K.R. 860)

Q.-How often should horses be watered every day?

A.-At least four times a day. (K.R. 860)

Q.-How long before or after feeding?

A.-Always before feeding, and not under any circumstances until some time after feeding (1 ½ hours). (K.R.860)

Q.-What precautions should be taken to prevent horses being hurried over watering?

A.-Officers and N.C.O.'s should be on the watch to prevent horses being taken away from the trough when only half satisfied; when they pause in drinking, it may be because the water is cold, or to breathe. When a number of horses are watered at the same time and from the same trough, no horse should be taken away until all have finished drinking.

Q.-When are horses taken off and put on the rack chain?

A.-They are put on the rack chain when feeding and taken off when all have finished.(K.R. 862)

Q.-What is the best kind of straw for bedding and why?

A.-Wheaten straw is the best; barley straw is likely to cause skin diseases, and oaten straw is readily eaten by horses. Straw should be clean, bright, long and tough. (K.R. 863)

Q.-How should litter be treated daily?

A.-The old bedding, when removed from the stalls at morning stables, should be well shaken up and only the dung and very short refuse taken to the dung heap. In fine weather it should be placed in wind rows in the open and frequently turned over. In wet weather it should be placed under the litter sheds, or in an empty stall or the centre of the stable. During the morning the whole of the new straw should be thoroughly mixed up with the old. By this means the old bedding is better opened out and dried, and the horses will not eat so much of the straw. (K.R. 864)

Q.-When should horses be bedded down in the day time?

A.-By careful management the ration of straw will admit of bedding down at least twice a week in the afternoon. Where wheaten straw is used, and there are twelve horses in a stable, they can be bedded down every afternoon. (K.R. 866)

Q.-How do you make a bran mash, and how often should it be given to horses in health?

A.-To make a bran mash, first put three double handfuls of bran into half a bucket of boiling water, then sprinkle dry bran on the top and leave standing for a couple hours covered over with a rug. Before giving the mash, have it well stirred with a clean stick, not with a mans hand, for in this, as in everything about a stable, cleanliness is of the utmost importance. Salt or treacle may with advantage be added to the mash. Bran once wetted soon becomes sour, so that the manger should always be well cleaned after giving a mash. The mash should be given once a week, usually on Saturday evening.

Q.-What is the object of mixing chaff with the horse's corn?

A.-To make him eat it slowly and prevent him bolting it.

Q.-How can you tell if a horse is bolting his corn?

A.-The whole grains will be noticed in the droppings.

Q.-How can you prevent a horse bolting his corn?

A.-Sometimes a horse bolts his corn because his back teeth are sharp; in this case get them filed smooth by the farrier, who has a rasp for the purpose. But if he does it from sheer greediness, give more chaff or add a handful of dry bran to the oats, or he may be fed from the ground so that he cannot swallow the grain to quickly.

Q.-On what points should a N.C.O. instruct a recruit in grooming?

- A.-
- (a) The correct action for grooming the various parts of the horse.
 - (b) The proper order in which to work.
 - (c) How to stand well back from the horse, with his legs apart, so that he can put his weight into his work.
 - (d) The way in which to use the curry comb, so as not to drop the scurf on the horse.
 - (e) How to work through the mane and forelock.
 - (f) How to comb the tail from underneath, and not break the hairs by combing down the topside.
 - (g) How to pick up the feet with safety, and wash them without wetting the heels or slopping water about the stall.
 - (h) How to wisp a horse
 - (i) Not to put cleaning things and brickdust on the manger, or knock the curry comb on the bail or post, but tap it on the floor in a heap near the drain.

Q.-What length should the horses tail be cut?

A.-Not less than 21 inches in length. (K.R. 851)

Q.-May horses be clipped or singed?

A.-Horses may be clipped or singed either in part or all over except the legs. Clipping should be completed by the middle of November; Horses should neither be re-clipped or re-singed after January 1st. Saddle patches should be left. (K.R. 850)

Q.-How is the ventilation of stables attended to?

A.-As soon as the horses have been taken out, every door and window should be opened, and kept so until they return. Orders are issued daily as to what windows and doors are to be left open while the horses are in the stable by day and night. (K.R. 882)

Q.-Give the general instructions for grooming.

- A.-
- (a) Pick out the feet and examine shoes and clenches.
 - (b) Take off saddle and dry back.
 - (c) Sponge eyes, nostrils and dock.
 - (d) Dry and clean legs and belly with straw.
 - (e) Turn horses head around and groom head, neck, shoulders, and forelegs.
 - (f) Put on head collar, rack up horse, and groom body, quarters and hind legs.
 - (g) Wisp with damp wisp and brush out main and tail.

Q.-How should horse's heels be trimmed? Should they be washed?

A.- The practice of washing legs and heels is forbidden. The heel should not be clipped, the long hairs only need to be removed. (K.R. 859)

Q.-What care should be taken to prevent throat and chest diseases?

A.-Leaving horses when hot and sweating unattended to, especially in a draught and when the harnesses and saddles are removed, produces sore backs and heels, and causes throat and chest diseases, such as pneumonia, pleurisy, coughs, and catarrhs. (K.R. 859).

Q.-When should stables be thoroughly swept out?

A.-The stables should be thoroughly swept out clean either before the horses are taken out to exercise, or immediately afterwards when the stablemen do not go out with the horses. (K.R.881)

Q.-How long ought a man to take to groom his horse and clean his saddle?

A.-A good groom ought to be able to clean the hottest and or the dirtiest horse in an hour, and the saddlery in three-quarters of an hour. No horse is well cleaned unless he is quickly cleaned. (K.R. 872)

Q.-Why is salt given to horses?

A.-Salt tends to prevent indigestion and often assists in freeing a horse from worms.

Q.-How would you set about discovering why a horse was thin and poor, when it ought apparently to be in good condition?

A.-First find out if his teeth are in good order, then if he has lampas, is his tongue sore, does he bolt his oats, does the horse next him bully him or steal his oats, is he a "spare horse." Has he worms, and does he get his ration?

Q.-How often should a horse be shod?

A.-Not more than a month should pass without his being shod, or having his shoes removed.

