

## 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 1<sup>st</sup>. 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.

*Q.-If you find that your horse has cast a shoe and there is no farrier at hand, what should you do?*

A.-Dismount, and, with your hoof pick and a stone, either pull out or hammer down the clenches, so that they may not injure the opposite fetlock.

*Q.-What is forging, and how can it be stopped?*

A.-Forging is a clicking noise caused by the horse striking the toe of the fore shoe with the toe of the hind shoe whilst trotting. The shoes should be placed well back, and the inner edge of the hind shoe rounded.

*Q.-What is brushing? How can you improvise a brushing boot?*

A.-Striking the inside of one foot against the other fetlock. A boot may be made by tying a piece of thick rug round the fetlock with tape and folding over the upper edge.

*Q.-How should the horse's feet be cared for?*

A.-A horse's feet should be washed as little as possible; greasy dressings are forbidden. A man should watch his horse's feet very carefully, and report clenches up, any smell about the frog, loose shoe, broken horn, ragged frog, &c.

*Q.-If a horse constantly slips his head collar in the stable, how may he be prevented from getting loose?*

A.-Slip the throat lash out of the ear loops, leaving it attached to the head collar by the crown piece only; or put a hobble on one foreleg and attach it to the upright of the manger with about four feet of rope.

*Q.-How may a horse be prevented from kicking in the stable?*

A.-Place him in a corner stall and suspend a sack of straw so that it will intercept his kicks. The horse should have plenty of hard work, and the effect of hobbling, or removing the hind shoes, may be tried.

*Q.-What are stable guards responsible for?*

A.-That every horse is properly fastened up and uncracked after feeding. That nothing is removed from the stables. That the stables are kept clean and the orders for ventilation are carried out. That any casualty is immediately reported.

*Q.-What do sore backs come from?*

A.-Bad riding, lolling about in the saddle, constant passing of pipes and lights backwards and forwards, resting the hand on the butt of the carbine, and anything wrong in the fit of the saddle, slack girths, saddle not placed properly on the horse's back, men remaining too long in the saddle and not taking every opportunity of dismounting, &c.

*Q.-How are simple cases of sore back treated?*

A folded rubber soaked in salt and water may be laid over the swelling directly it is noticed; but if matter has formed, it is best poulticed with linseed, bran, or, bread, or failing this, to foment the sore area with hot water; when the sore is clean, apply a dressing of iodoform, simple starch and carbolic powder, or oxide of zinc powder. Continued poulticing does more harm than good. A slight swelling or heat lump can usually be obviated by a different folding of the blanket.

*Q.-How can girth galls be prevented?*

A.-Dismount early in the march, after trotting up a slight rise, and tighten the girths; the saddle will then be well set back from the withers and elbows. Directly a girth gall is noticed, let the surcingle be taken off and put on behind the saddle, across the fantails, and buckled tight, then draw the girths, which should be loosely buckled, back to it by means of a short strap.

*Q.-How do you tell if a horse is suffering from colic?*

A.-The horse keeps looking around at its belly and kicking at it. He lies down from time to time apparently free from pain. If a farrier is not at hand, give him a tepid water enema. Then keep the horse walking about with a rug on. A pint of linseed oil with a spoonful of turpentine can be given as a drench.

*Q.-What care should be taken of the back of loins if the horse is hot while the legs are being cleaned?*

A.-If the saddles have been ordered to be taken off, a sack or numnah would be thrown over the loins.

*Q.-What is the use of hand-rubbing the horse's legs?*

A.-It excites the circulation of the blood in those parts farthest away from the heart-that is, in those parts where the circulation is most feeble.

*Q.-When should hand-rubbing the legs be resorted to?*

A.-When the horse is unable to exercise by reason of wet, frost, &c., and when the legs are filled at all from overwork.

*Q.-What should be done if a fire threatens the safety of the horses?*

A.-Each man should immediately blindfold his horse with a rubber or a cloth, lead him out to a place of safety, and there await orders. If horses are not blindfolded they are liable to rush back to their stalls through nervousness.

*Q.-What should be done if a horse suddenly goes lame?*

A.-Get off and examine the foot to see if there is a stone in it, or if a nail has been picked up. If no apparent cause can be seen, apply a cold water bandage above and on the fetlock on arrival in stables, as the injury is most likely a sprain.

*Q.-Suppose a horse gets kicked, what treatment should be used?*

A.-Well cleanse the place and keep fomented with hot water.

*Q.-Name the various parts of the military saddle-tree?*

A.-Front arch, rear arch. The side bars, of which the front part is called "front points" or "burrs." and the rear part "fantails."

*Q.-What length should the sidebars be?*

A.-As short as possible, though of sufficient length to allow a cloak or pack behind.

*Q.-How should perfect side bars fit?*

A.-The side bars should touch the part on which they rest with even pressure. The front points of the burrs and rear points of the fantails and the upper and lower edges of the side bars, which are bevelled off, should not bear on the horse.

*Q.-If you place a saddle tree with straight bars on the back of a horse with a hollow back, how does it fit?*

A.-It rests on the horse at the burrs and the fantails with no bearing at the back. The saddle will be pushed forward by the action of the lions. The sides of the front arch will not be bedded behind the shoulder, owing to the pressure on the burrs, and the saddle will slip forward.

*Q.-If a saddle-tree with too much of a curve is placed on a straight-backed horse, how does it fit?*

A.-It bears too much on the centre of the side bars, and the saddle will rock.

*Q.-How should the side bars be fitted to a horse with high withers when no panels are used?*

A.-There should be sufficient space to admit of one finger between the withers and front arch.

*Q.-How should the rear arch fit?*

A.-It should be sufficiently high to keep the kit off the spine.

*Q.-How should the saddle be placed on the horse's back?*

A.-The saddle should be placed in the middle of the horse's back; the front of it about the breadth of the hand behind the play of the shoulder.

*Q.-How should the numnah be put on?*

The numnah or blanket should be raised well into the fork over the withers by putting the arm under it.

*Q.-How should the girth fit?*

A.-The girth should admit a finger between it and the horse's belly. In saddling a horse the girth must be tightened gradually, and not with violence.

*Q.-How should the surcingle fit?*

A.-The surcingle should lie flat over and not tighter than the girth.

*Q.-How should the breastplate fit?*