

SUFFOLK PUNCH REPRINT

AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF THE BREED

Edward Hart

The Suffolk Punch is among the noblest of our British breeds of horse and yet it has come perilously close to extinction. Characterised as containing all the physical attributes essential to a good working horse – Style, Symmetry and Strength – its good nature and placid temperament allowed one observer, writing in the 1860s, to record a scene then common in our country lanes of 'a great Suffolk cart-horse as big as an elephant, conducted by a tiny thing of a boy who can scarcely reach the horse's nose to take hold of the rein'.

That such a magnificent beast can disappear entirely from our world is unthinkable and this book provides a historical overview along with a current status of the Suffolk Punch.

The Suffolk Punch Trust was set up in 2002 to take the Colony Stud at HM Hollesley Prison into private charitable ownership. The Trust's primary aims are to expand the Suffolk Punch breed, make the horses more accessible to the general public, to continue the therapeutic, rehabilitation and training programmes for prison inmates, and to undertake conservation and heritage education.

It is almost a hundred years since the last comprehensive history of the Suffolk Punch was written. The principal aim of the original publication was to provide an up-to-date illustrated study of these handsome animals and to bring to the attention of the wider public an appreciation of the breed, its historic importance as a working horse, and the current work being done to ensure its survival. Members of the Suffolk Horse Society have been instrumental in revising and updating this expanded second edition which also contains a completely rewritten account of the Suffolk Horse in Australia and New Zealand, provided by stud owner Andrew Lucas, along with new photographs.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Edward Hart (1925–2011) recalled that his first memories were of the horses of the Scots Greys, a regiment from the nearby Strensall Barracks, York, which were exercised daily past his home. One of his grandfathers was a noted breeder of Hackney horses, the other a village joiner and wheelwright, and Edward remained fascinated by the working horse. He became a farm worker on leaving school, counting himself lucky to have caught the tail end of the big farm staffs and the horse age on the land. He spent a year at Askham Bryan Agricultural College, York, where he was awarded the Yorkshire Agricultural Society's Gold Medal.

After farming on his own account, Edward Hart became a full-time agricultural journalist and author, and wrote over thirty books, among them books on heavy horses, one of his last being *Showing the Heavy Horse*.

As a writer for *Horse and Hound* and *Heavy Horse World*, he reported on major shows, and visited the leading studs.

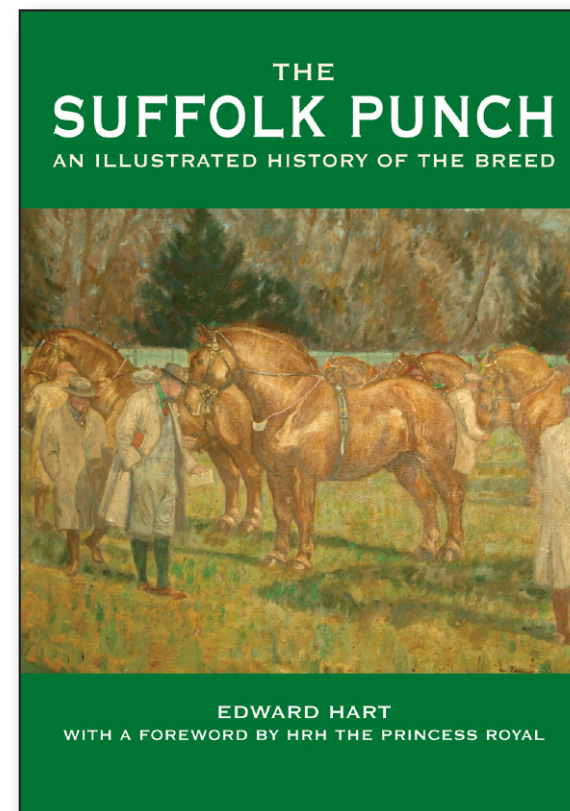
Edward Hart also wrote regularly for *The Daily Telegraph*, *Country Illustrated* and *The Yorkshire Post*, and welcomed the chance to spread the gospel of the Suffolk Punch in this, one of his last publications.

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