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THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN HORSE EXPOSITION. 1870

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From earliest times man has relied on horses for transporting themselves and their possessions from place to place. Without such a resource, expansion and travel was limited. The early settlement in Australia had to rely on convict labour, to perform the tasks usually employing horses or oxen, until stocks could be shipped into a country where they did not naturally occur.

The First Fleet, arriving in New South Wales in 1788, brought horses to the Colony. One stallion, three mares, one colt and two fillies[1] were loaded at the Cape of Good Hope. Their chances of survival being greater over the shorter distance from South Africa than from England. These Cape horses originated from mostly Spanish stock. It was not long before more horses were being imported from England with Arab and Persian breeds coming into the settlement from India and the Cape of Good Hope.[2]

As the Colony of New South Wales developed and expanded, the need for horses became more essential. Exploration could only be carried out on foot or by water and without horses the inland could not be conquered. By the time Governor Macquarie arrived in 1810 an assortment of horses numbering one thousand one hundred and thirty four had been procured or bred in the Colony and when he departed in 1821 the number had increased to four thousand five hundred and sixty four.[3] Later still, by 1878, there were some nine hundred thousand including draft, saddle, coach and race horses.[4]

As the pastoral settlement expanded, along with sheep came the breeding of good horses. From the farms of the Macarthurs, Lawsons, Wentworths and others there developed an 'Australian Breed', a horse suitable for the harsh conditions. This breed was to be known as 'Walers', named after the Colony of New South Wales.[5]

Many of the horse breeders and owners had come from a horse racing environment in Britain and it was not long before the idea of competitions between the locally bred and the imported horses became a reality. It is recorded that on the 15th , 17th, and 19th of October 1810 in Hyde Park, Sydney, the first organised race meeting was held by the Officers of the 73rd Regiment.[6] Annual race meetings were run from about this time and by 1825 the Sydney Turf Club had been formed.[7]

The founding of the Colony of Victoria in 1834 started a movement of people with horses, taking up land. As early as 1838 horse races were held in Melbourne. On the 6th and 7th of March of that year the Melbourne Race Club, running its main race, "The Town Plate," presented a prize of twenty five sovereigns to the winner.[8] By 1857 the popularity of horse racing in Melbourne attracted horses from Sydney to test the ability of the 'southern breeds'. This lead to the founding of the most famous Australian horse race - the Melbourne Cup, in 1861.[9]

As well as on the race tracks, horses' abilities in the field were important to the farmers and station owners. Soon 'man and horse' contests were being held. Although the first *Agricultural Society of Australia Felix* in March 1842[10] was important, it was the ploughing matches held in the fields around Flemington (Victoria) which attracted so much interest and helped to influence the *Moonee Ponds Farmer's Society* to form in 1848.[11] Many medals were given for these contests-not only for horse drawn vehicles but bullock drawn as well.

The universal need for horses required Melbourne to have a concentrated area set up to service the horse and horseman. Established together were the ancillary needs such as saddlers, blacksmiths, livery stables and horse traders. In 1840, James Bowie Kirk set up as J.B. Kirk & Co., Auctioneers and Livery Stable Keepers, in Bourke Street, Melbourne (between Queen and Elizabeth Street). Known as *Kirks Bazaar* it passed through a number of hands until the 1860' when the organisers of the Horse Exposition, Messrs Goyder, McCaughey, took over the lease.[12]

The Sands & McDougall's Melbourne and Suburbs Directory for 1871 lists (p 460) the firm in the following style.

Goyder, McCaughey & Co.
(Goyder,F.C., McCaughey, John;
Lindsay, John.)
KIRK HORSE BAZAAR
47 Bourke Street West

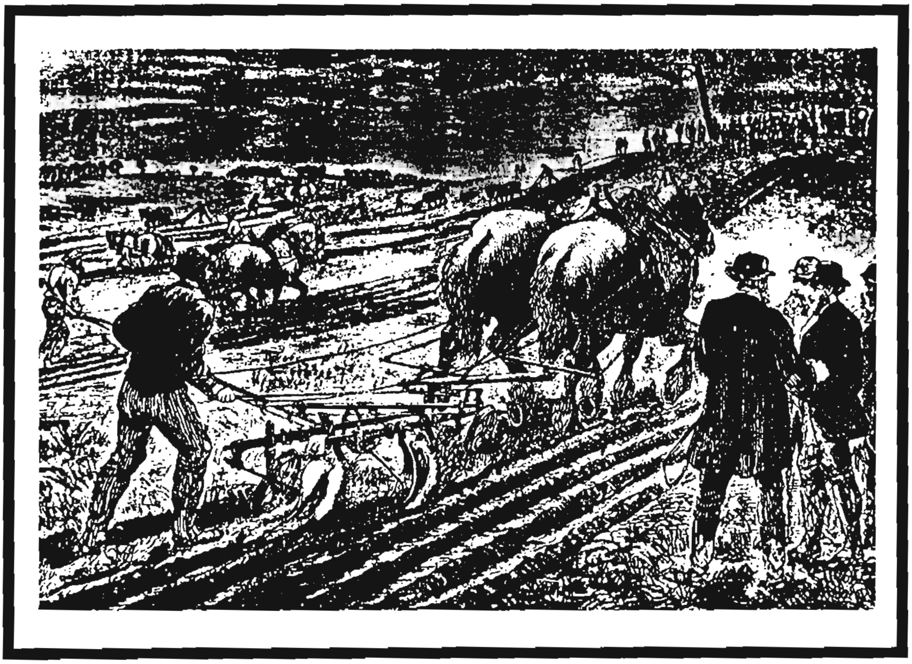
The discovery of gold at Bathurst in New South Wales and Ballarat in Victoria in the 1850s caused a set back in Australian horse-breeding and the general state of agriculture. 'Not only was farming neglected' but the need for first class horses abandoned in an 'attempt to develop small draught horses, then much in demand'.[13]

There was a lack of interest in Agricultural Shows as an active, entertaining and educational medium.

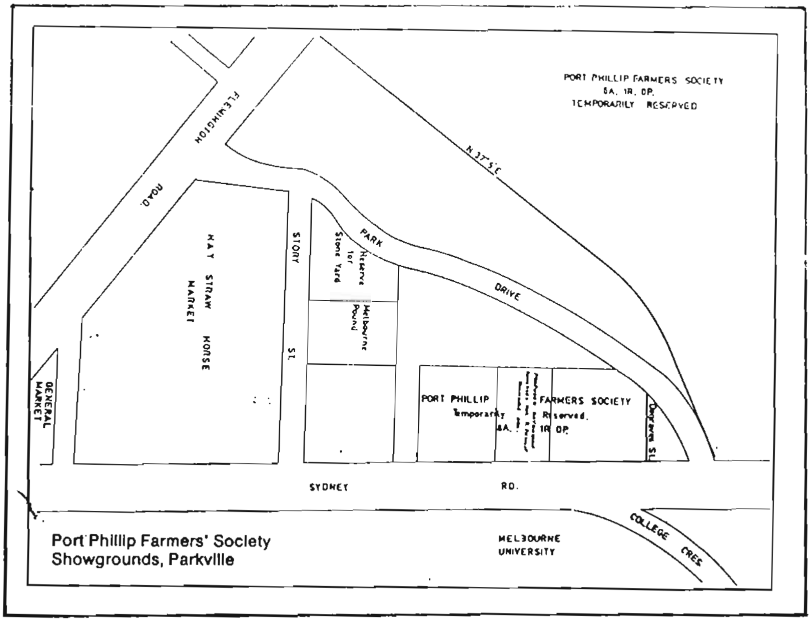
The *Port Phillip Farmers Society* was formed after the demise of the *Moonee Ponds Farmer's Society* in 1848 and by 1870 had been granted a temporary showground in Sydney Road opposite the Melbourne University. 'Government committees encouraged improvement, around this time made possible by the re-introduction of pure bred stock from the studs which had maintained quality.'[14] It was on the Sydney Road Showgrounds that Goyder McCaughey & Co held their "Horse Exposition" of 1870.

On Monday the 7th of November 1870 the *Melbourne Argus* reported the following:

"The first Victorian Horse Exposition to be held at the Port Phillip Farmers Society Show yards will be opened this day at half past 1 o'clock by H.R.H. Duke of Edinburgh, whence a parade of all classes of horses will take place shortly before 2 o'clock, and at 3 the hunters will be put to their trial. Every arrangement has been made by the projectors to the comfort and convenience of the visitors. Arrangements have been made with the Omnibus Company to run their vehicles to the ground at short intervals during the day. Prior to the formal opening the yards will be accessible to the public from 11 o'clock for the purposes of viewing the horses." Obviously organised by forward thinking people to bring attention to the horse and horsemanship with the hope of increasing interest and business; an invitation to view the best horses



From Speed the Plough[15]



Port Phillip Farmers' Society Showgrounds, Parkville

PORT PHILLIP FARMERS SOCIETY
8A. 1R. 0P.
TEMPORARILY RESERVED
N 37° S.E.
FLEMINGTON ROAD.
HAY STRAW HORSE MARKET
STORY ST.
PARK DRIVE
Reserve for Stone Yard
Melbourne Pound
GENERAL MARKET
PORT PHILLIP FARMERS SOCIETY
Temporarily Reserved.
8A. 1R 0P.
Degraves St.
SYDNEY RD.
MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE CRES.

From Speed the Plough (15)

performing practical tests to qualify in hunting, field and road use. The first of the three day show attracted about five thousand people to view the spectacle as well as displays of carriages, agricultural implements. Even cattle and sheep were included in displays.

The attendance of His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh escorted by the Victorian Volunteer light Horse commanded by Major Anderson and seated in a special enclosure was an added attraction. Many displays of horsemanship including jumping, trotting and harness events, with waggons drawing full loads of wool were on the program. Although the second day's attendance was low, the full day of events went towards the total in assessing the awards at the end of the three days. A higher attendance on the third day was possibly due to the awarding of the prize medals[16] by Governor Sutton.

The medals, one of which is illustrated, were struck by the then fourteen year old firm of Thomas Stokes[17], located at 100 Collins Street East, Melbourne, from dies cut by the masterful Julius Hogarth. The result, one of the most attractive small medals produced in Australia. Julius Hogarth had only recently arrived in Melbourne from Sydney where he, with Erichsen, had produced token coinage, jewellery and silver plate.[18] Hogarth was later to produce a number of medal dies for the firm of Stokes besides free-lance work for others.[19]

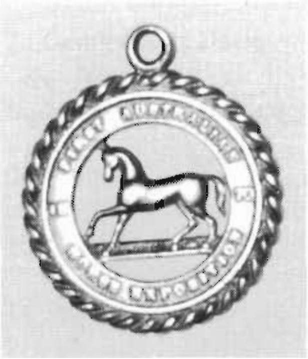
This 35mm medal was issued in gold for first prize and silver for second and showing a nicely proportioned prancing horse fretted out -a rope surrounding a circular frame, with appropriate wording, and a looped suspension.

Stokes had twenty-six gold and the same number in silver medals ready for Goyder McCaughey & Co by the 31st October 1870 in time to be presented on the 9th November. The record in Stokes' Day Book lists the cutting of the dies by Julius Hogarth charged out at seven pounds ten shillings, the gold and silver medals at one hundred and thirty-six pounds ten shillings, 8 yards of ribbon and pendants at two pounds nine shillings-a total of one hundred and forty-six pounds nine shillings, (two hundred and ninety two dollars and ninety cents).

On the 4th November 1870 another striking of one gold and one silver as a special order was made this time for Stevenson and Elliot, carriage builders. The inscription "Presented by Stevenson and Elliot" inside and outside the lid of the presentation cases at a cost of seven pounds. On the 28th of December 1870 Goyder McCaughey & Co had another pair of medals struck costing five pounds five shillings.

In all twenty-eight gold and twenty-eight silver medals were struck but only twenty six gold and twenty five silver were officially presented. It is possible that those not noted were presented to official guests.

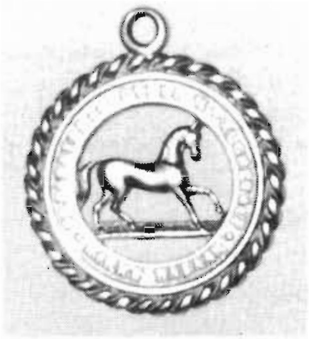
It appears that this Horse Exposition of 1870 was a once only event. In 1870 the *Victorian Agricultural Society* was formed and it could be expected that the Society would have conducted organised and integrated horse events such as this into its future show programs. *Kirk's Bazaar* had shown the horses in all its diversity of uses as an entertainment with prizes for the participants.



Obverse:

FIRST AUSTRALIAN HORSE EXPOSITION 1870 I H on bar between horse's rear hooves.[20]

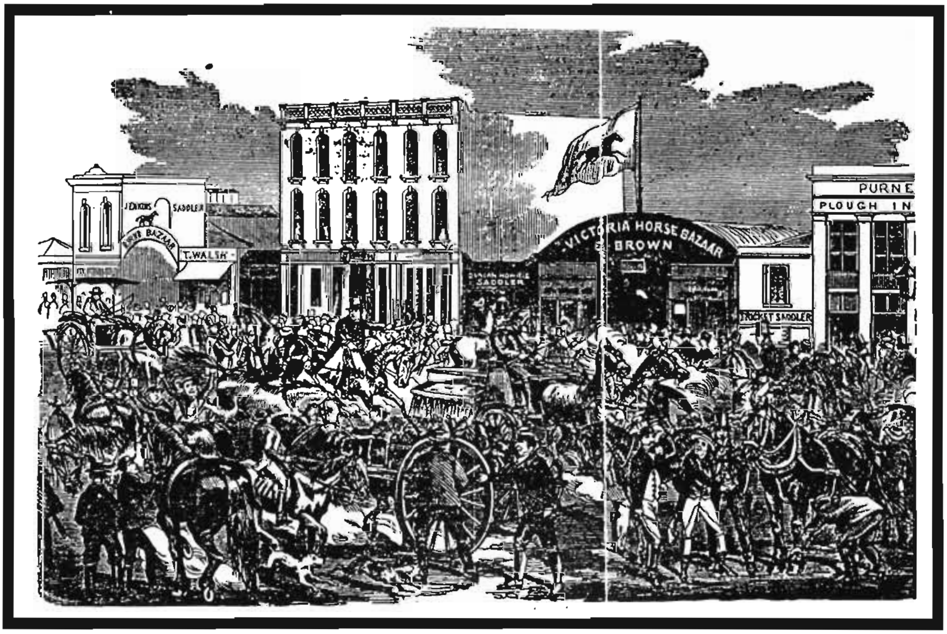
Size: 35 mm
Metals: gold and silver
Number struck: 28 of each metal



Reverse:

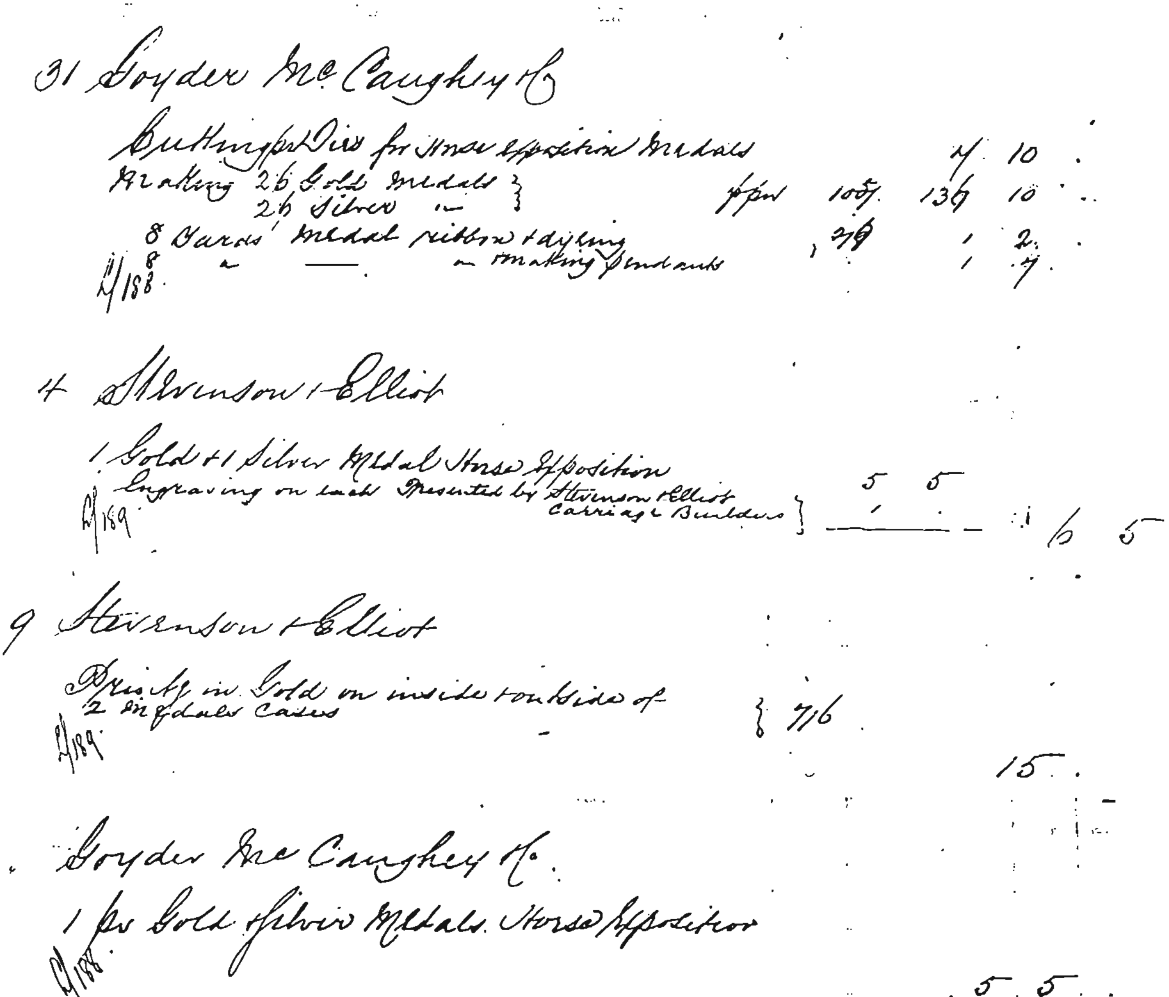
PRESENTED BY GOYDER McCAUGHEY & CO KIRK'S BAZAAR I H on bar between horse's rear hooves.

Engraver: Julius Hogarth
Mint: Thomas Stokes


JENKINS SADDLER
KIRK'S BAZAAR
T. WALSH
VICTORIA HORSE BAZAAR
BROWN
PURNE
PLOUGH IN
SADDLER

Horse trading! A scene in Melbourne's horse Market in Bourke Street West. ILLUSTRATED MELBOURNE POST, 13 SEPTEMBER 1862; La TROBE LIBRARY

EXTRACTS FROM THOMAS STOKES DAY BOOK



31 Goyder McCaughey & Co
Cutting Dies for Horse Exposition Medals 4 . 10
Making 26 Gold Medals } @ per 10/- 136 10
26 Silver " }
8 Yards Medal ribbon & dyeing , 2/6 1 2
8 " — " making Pendants 1 7
L/188

4 Stevenson & Elliot
1 Gold & 1 Silver Medal Horse Exposition 5 5
Engraving on each Presented by Stevenson & Elliot Carriage Builders } 1 —
6 5
L/189

9 Stevenson & Elliot
Printing in Gold on inside & outside of 2 Medals Cases } 7/6
15
L/189

Goyder McCaughey & Co.
1 pr Gold & Silver Medals. Horse Exposition
5 . 5
L/188

PRIZE WINNERS (As recorded in the *ARGUS* 10th November 1870)

SADDLE CLASS

1	Thoroughbred Entire[21]	Gold	Mr. W. Gerrard
		Silver	Mr. A. Tobin
2	Thoroughbred Colt	Gold	Dr. Jas Batbe
		Silver	Mr. W. Gerrard
3	Thoroughbred Filly	Gold	Mr. J. Darby
		Silver	Mr. W. Craig

4	Heavy-weight Hunter	Gold	Mr. M. Buckley
		Silver	Mr. F.C. Goyder
5	Light -weight Hunter	Gold	Mr. P. Glenister
		Silver	Hon. J.G. Francis
6	Cavalry Charger	Gold	Serg. Smyth
		Silver	Capt. Moorhead
7	Gentleman's Hackney	Gold	Mr. G. Glasscock
		Silver	Dr. J.P. Murray
8	Lady's Hack	Gold	Mrs Goyder
		Silver	Hon J.G. Francis
9	Trotter	Gold	Mr.P.G. Dixon
		Silver	Mr. W. Bennett
10	Cob	Gold	Messrs E Latham & Co
		Silver	Mr. James
11	Pony	Gold	Mr. S. Strettle
		Silver	Mr. Christian

LIGHT HARNESS CLASS

12	Phaeton or Brougham Horse	Gold	Co. W.A.D. Anderson
		Silver	Mr. A. Michie
13	Carriage Pair	Gold	Mr. Michie
		Silver	Mr. Clarke
14	Buggy Horse	Gold	Mr. D. Jones
		Silver	Mr. James
15	Buggy Pair	Gold	Mr. Garton
		Silver	Mr. D. Jones
16	Trotter	Gold	Mr. D. Jones
		Silver	Mr. P.G. Dixon
17	Pony	Gold	Mr. Darwent
		Silver	Mr. Pitche
18	Pony Pair	Gold	Mr. I.R. Coleman
		Silver	Hon.- Stewart
19	Four-in-Hand Team	Gold	Messrs Garton & Kelly
		Silver	Mr. S. Strettle

HEAVY HARNESS CLASS

20	Draught Entire	Gold	Mr. J. Bookless
		-----	(no other entry)
21	Draught Two-year old	Gold	Mr. A. Watson
		Silver	Mr. J. Kernan
22	Dray Horse	Gold	Mr. W. Morley
		Silver	Mr. Palmer

23	Lorry Pair	Gold	Mr. W. Morley
		Silver	Mr. W. Morley
24	Plough Pair	Gold	Mr. W. Morley
		Silver	Mr. W. Morley
25	Six Horse American-Waggon Team	Gold	Mr. W. Morley
		Silver	Mr. W. Morley

SPECIAL PRIZE

26	Best Pair Horse Turn-Out	Gold	Mr. T.B. Payne
		Silver	Mr. Garton

This prize presented by Stevenson & Elliot.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

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[1] Grolier Society, *The Australian Encyclopaedia,* 10 vols. Vol iv, Sydney, Halstead Press, p550

[2] Bladen F.M., Ed. *Historical Records of New South Wales,* Vol.iii, Sydney, Gov. Printer, 1895, p.286

[3] Grolier, op.cit., p. 550

[4] Heaton, J.H., *Australian Dictionary of Dates and Men of the Time,* Sydney, Robertson, 1879, p.121

[5] Grolier, op. cit., p. 550

[6] Grolier, op. cit., p. 537

[7] Grolier, op. cit., p. 538

[8] Ditto

[9] Grolier, op. cit., p. 540

[10] Noble, F. H. Morgan R., *Speed the Plough, A History of the Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria.* Australia, Wilkie, 1981, p. 3.

[11] Ditto

[12] Sutherland, Alexander, *Victoria and Its Metrolpolis,* 2 Vols. Vol.ii, Melbourne, Mc Carron Bird & Co., p. 566.

[13] Grolier, op. cit., p. 551

[14] Ditto

[15] Noble, F.H. Morgan, R., *Speed the Plough, A History of the Royal Agricultural Society,* Victoria, Wilkie, 1981, p.3.

[16] The Argus, November 10th 1870.

[17] In 1873 the firm traded as Stokes and Martin, and has subsequently had a number of name changes and now trades as Stokes (Australasia) Ltd. from Ringwood an outer suburb of Melbourne.

[18] Cavill, Cocks, Grace, *Australian Jewellers, Gold and Silversmiths, Makers & Marks.* Sydney, CGC Gold Pty Ltd, 1992, p.124.

[19] Ditto

[20] Note. Julius Hogarth's intials, IH or JH or J Hogarth.

[21] The term 'entire' means not castrated.