

## **The Sorby Line: A Very Fine Line**

**The pedigree of the Sorby family can be traced back to the reign of King Henry VIII, and was derived from the town of Sowerby, Yorkshire. The late Walter Sorby was born in Sheffield, Yorkshire, England, on August 7th 1804, and was there raised and educated. On arriving at manhood's estate, he and his brother, Richard, entered into co-partnership and became possessed of a colliery near Sheffield, which they ran successfully for some years. In 1846, the late Walter Sorby took a trip to the United States for the purpose of enjoying some recreation from business, and whilst in Michigan, he met Mary S. Talbot, to whom he was married in 1847. She was a descendent of the English and Irish Talbot family. In 1848, they returned to England and lived there for about ten years, whereupon he sold out his interests in England and came to Canada, purchasing the Puslinch farm in 1863. Here, he lived until his death in 1890. The late Walter Sorby was well educated and a man of refined taste, possessed of means, and practically lived a retired life in Canada. He had the following issue: Walter D., Alfred T. (deceased), Harold, and Oswald.**

**Son Walter D. married Mary C. Howitt, daughter of the late Alfred Howitt. Their issue are Mary H. and Dorothy. He is retired and lives at his beautiful home on the Waterloo Road in Guelph Township. He also owns an island in Muskoka, where he and his family spend a portion of their time each year. For some years before his retirement, he was connected with his brother Oswald in the breeding of Clydesdale and Hackney horses.**

**Son Harold married Florence B. Bate and settled in the Canadian northwest.**

**Son Oswald married Agnes Evans, daughter of Smith Evans. Their issue are Gertrude, Walter, Phyllis, and Muriel Talbot Sorby. Oswald carries on the breeding of Clydesdale and Hackney horses on his farm in Puslinch.**

**Wellington County Historical Atlas 1906.**

## **Sorbys' Fine Horses**

**August 30th 1897.**

**Messrs. D. & O. Sorby are to make a large exhibit of their well-known horses at Toronto and London this year, and today Mr. David Sallows is out at the farm shoeing them. At the above shows they will exhibit 14 horses. Among them are their champion sweepstakes stallion, Grandeur, and a lot of choice youngsters got by him, also the stylish young stallion, Lord Charming, bought last winter from Colonel Robert Holloway of Alexis, Illinois, and several fine mares. The exhibit of Hackneys will include the prize-winner, Miss Baker, bought from the Hon. M. H. Cochrane of Hillhurst, Quebec, and several youngsters. The Messrs. Sorby, as usual, will no doubt carry off the majority of the honours in their classes.**

**from the Guelph Mercury newspaper**

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## **Douglas Sorby Married**

**September 15th 1898.**

**On Wednesday afternoon, at Wingfield Farm, the old Howitt homestead, near Guelph, Mr. Douglas W. Sorby, of "The Woodlands", the well-known horse raiser, and Miss Howitt, the eldest daughter of the late Alfred Howitt, C. E., were married. The bridesmaids were Miss Maud Howitt and Miss Aggie Evans. The bridegroom was assisted by Mr. Oswald Sorby and Mr. Fred Anderson. The Rev. Prof. Wm. Howitt, of Clarenceville Quebec, was the officiating clergyman, assisted by the Revs. Mr. Terryberry and Mr. Henders.**

**from the Guelph Mercury newspaper**

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# **Sale of Clyde Stallions**

**December 25th 1902.**

**Mr. Oswald Sorby, of Woodlands, has sold to Messrs. Bean & Son of Ailsa Craig, the Clydesdale stallion "Black Rod" (10509), a horse of strong individual merit in form and action. Among his premium winnings in Scotland was the third prize at the Highland Society show in Edinburgh in 1899. His foals are selling at higher prices than have been got in the past seven or eight years. At the Western fair, London, last year, he got the sweepstakes for the best Clydesdale horse on the grounds.**

**Mr. Sorby has also sold the Clydesdale stallion "Pedestrian" to Arthur Johnston of Greenwood, the well-known Shorthorn importer. Pedestrian was sired by Black Rod and is a grandson of the famous "Baron's Pride". Since being imported, he won second prize at the western Fair, London, for two-year-old stallion.**

**from the Guelph Mercury newspaper**

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## **Mr. Sorby's Clydes**

**December 20th 1906.**

**"An Exceptionally High Class Shipment Say Glasgow Papers"**

**Under the heading "High Class Canadian Shipment", "The Glasgow Farmer" of Glasgow says, "Messrs. I. J. Turner, Calgary, Alberta, and Oswald Sorby, Guelph, Ontario, sailed per the Donaldson liner Mavina for St. John, N.B., with an exceptionally high class shipment of Clydesdale stallions and fillies. Of the Clydesdales, twenty-eight stallions and fillies were bought in one deal from Messrs. A. & W. Montgomery, Netherhall and Banks, Kirkcudbright. During the past season, Mr. Turner won two of the Clydesdale Horse Society's gold medals at fairs in the Northwest, and he has the material for repeating the performance in this shipment.**

**There are two horses in the shipment that are perhaps the best animals of their age shipped this season. One, by Royal Edward, is rising three years old, and another is a black colt of the same age got by the noted Acme (10485), out of a mare by the Glasgow premium horse, The Summit. Acme is now Mr. Sorby's stud horse. His thick, heavy cart horse proportions will make him as big a favourite in Canada as he was in this country, where he gained many district premiums, and was frequently in the prize lists of the Highland and Agricultural Society shows.**

**Another very good colt is by the Dumfries premium horse Baron Romeo (11366). Rozelle (10638), sire of the winning three year old at Peebles Highland Show this year, is also represented by a half brother of the great young horse, Dunnydeer.**

**There is a great colt by the unbeaten Everlasting out of a daughter of the \$5,000 mare, Queen of the Roses. Other sires represented are Prince Thomas (10262), Moncrieffe Marquis (9953), Rathillet (11870), Pride of Blacon (10837), Argosy (11247), Drumflower (10537), Royal Favourite (10630), Baron Lothian (12461), Enigma (10739), Lord Harry (11097), Sir Harry (9411), Boreland Pride (10318), and finally, the champion breeding horse of them all, Baron's Pride (9122).**

**Among the fillies is a full sister to Pyrene, the champion mare of 1906. A Baron Romeo filly was second at New Cumnock. Others by Baron Houdston, King's Crest, and Woodend Gartly, make up an exceptionally high-class lot of fillies.**

**Mr. Turner has also a very promising prize filly, bred by Messrs. Walter and Robert Scott, Boghead, Girvan, Ayrshire. Altogether, this makes up one of the grandest shipments made during this eventful year.**

## **Stallions for Service**

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### **Clydesdale Stallions**

**Lord Charming (2284)**

**King's Seal (6733)**

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### **Hackney Stallions**

**Warwick Model 304**

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**Service fee to insure a foal, \$15.00.**

**These horses will stand at their own stables,**

**Lot 7, Concession 5, Puslinch Township.**

**William Dugind, Manager.**

**O. Sorby, Proprietor.**

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**from the Guelph Mercury newspaper**

## **Big Shipment of Horses Received**

**October 26th 1910.**

**Imported Clydesdales from the Old Country for Sorby Bros. of Puslinch**

**Mr. O. Sorby, the well-known horse breeder and importer of Puslinch Township received a big shipment of 53 well-bred Clydesdale horses from Scotland this morning. The animals were all yearlings and mostly all stallions. The total value of the shipment would be about \$50,000, and they are imported principally to be sold in the Canadian west. They will, however, be taken out to the Sorby farm in Puslinch Township to be kept there for a time, and when in fine condition, will be shipped west where there is great demand for good horses of this kind.**

**When the horses are shipped west, they will likely be disposed of by Mr. Turner of Calgary, who is a partner with Mr. Sorby in this particular deal.**

**The large shipment of fine animals was the object of much comment and a good deal of admiration at the station where they were unloaded this morning.**

**from the Guelph Mercury newspaper**

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## **Valuable Shipment of Horses**

**October 27th 1910.**

**One of the finest shipments of horses ever imported into the Dominion of Canada arrived at the C.P.R. Station, Guelph, at seven o' clock on Wednesday morning, consigned to Messrs. J. A. Turner of Calgary, Alberta, and O. Sorby of Puslinch Township.**

**The consignment consisted of 63 horses, all of them Clydesdales of the finest breeding that Scotland produces. They are all stallions with the exception of eight, and arrived here in splendid condition.**

**Mr. Sorby deserves a great deal of credit for the spirit that he has displayed in assisting to build up such a fine horse stock as this country can now boast of. He has been connected with the importation of thoroughbred horses for the past 25 or 30 years and possesses a splendid reputation among the horse dealers of the east and west for his good judgement and fair dealing.**

**The horses were unloaded and taken out to Mr. Sorby's farm where they will be conditioned. The cost of the consignment unloaded in Guelph after the payment of all expenses in connection with the shipment and the value of the horses will be in the neighbourhood of \$60,000.**

**from the Guelph Mercury newspaper**

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## **Generous Gift for Muskoka Consumptives**

**October 22nd 1910.**

**A pleasant aftermath of the summer season at Muskoka is in evidence today in the form of a cheque for \$70 that has been contributed to the Muskoka Free Hospital for Consumptives by the Methodist Church at Mortimer's Point, Muskoka. This church, being out of debt, felt that it would like to help the needy consumptives in the Muskoka Free Hospital for Consumptives, and through the action of the trustees, supported by many visiting friends, a very delightful entertainment was held at the forest home of the Sorby brothers of Guelph on Sky Island. Much sympathy and interest was expressed in the work being done for the consumptives in Muskoka, and after the payment of expenses, the sum of \$70 was handed over to the Treasurer of the Hospital.**

The night was a delightful one, and friends of the work were present from many different parts of Muskoka. Much credit is due to the trustees of the church for their generous action, and to Mrs. Douglas Sorby, Mrs. Oswald Sorby, and other ladies who assisted. The church at Mortimer's Point is in the charge, during the summer season, of the Reverend C. O. Johnston, the well-known pastor of Queen Street Methodist Church, Toronto. The trustees are James Fairhead, Oswald Sorby, Douglas Sorby, Mr. Mackie of Buffalo, Mr. Howarth, Reverend Dr. Geo. Armstrong, and Miss Annie Shaw of Toronto, and Principal Ferrier of the Mimico Industrial School.

Globe & Mail Newspaper

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## **Oswald Sorby Farm Sold**

**January 25th 1912.**

### **Famous Property Changes Hands – A Word About Reciprocity Deal**

The Oswald Sorby farm, which is partly in Puslinch and partly in Guelph Township, and which contains 355 acres of some of the best land to be found in Ontario, and which is known not only all over Canada but also in Great Britain, owing to the reputation of Mr. O. Sorby as a horse exporter and breeder, has been sold to Mr. Ralph Ballagh, who comes from near Port Huron, Michigan. The price paid was \$30,000, which is considered a fair sum, though the buildings on the farm are valuable ones, in addition to the land.

The new purchaser formerly resided in Bruce County, leaving there some 35 or 40 years ago to farm in Michigan, where he has since resided, being known as one of the best farmers in that state. He desired to end his days on the land under the old flag, and with his family will take up his residence here on the first of April.



**Mr. O. Sorby will retire to the city, at least for a time, though he will spend the summer in Muskoka, as usual. Mr. Sorby gave as his reason for selling that he had found it practically impossible to get domestic help and for this reason was giving up. He will sell his stock and effects in March by public auction, these to include his famous Clydesdale brood mares.**

**Real estate men look for a considerable influx of American farmers to Ontario as the land here is considerably less in price than in the United States, in some places being only half as dear, while the price of farm produce is high. Mr. Sorby, when seen by the Mercury today, stated that, in his opinion, if reciprocity had carried there would have been a great influx of Americans, for the farmers there can sell their land for twice as much as they can buy land, every bit as good, in Canada.**

**from the Guelph Mercury newspaper**

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## **Clearing Auction Sale**

**March 19th 1912.**

**The undersigned has received instructions from Oswald Sorby to sell by public auction, on the premises, Lot 10, Concession 5, Township of Puslinch, two miles from the end of the street car line on Waterloo Avenue, on Tuesday, 19th of March, at ten o' clock sharp, the following:**

**Horses: Imported Clydesdale mare, 5 years old, in foal to Lord Charming/ imported Clydesdale mare, rising three years old, sire Silver Cup/registered Clydesdale mare, ten years old, sire Lord Charming/ registered Clydesdale mare, \_\_ years old, sire Lord Charming/ registered Clydesdale mare, 4 years old, sire Prince of London/ registered Clydesdale mare, 4 years old, in foal to Lord Charming/ registered Clydesdale mare, rising three years old, sire Moncrieffe Marquis/ registered Clydesdale mare, rising three years old, sire Lord Charming/ registered Clydesdale mare, rising 1 year old, sire Lord Charming/ registered Clydesdale mare, rising four years old, sire Prince of London/ Clydesdale mare, not registered, 3 years old, sire Acme/**

**Imported Hackney mare, 7 years old, in foal to Warwick model/ driving mare, sired by a Hackney, perfectly quiet and suitable for a lady to drive/**

**Registered Hackneys — 4 aged, registered brood mares, all in foal to a registered Hackney stallion/ stallion, rising 4 years old/ 2 stallions, rising three years old/ stallion rising two years old/ The above mares are all from imported stock and are the dams of many prize winners in the United States and Canada. The stallions are all prize winners at Toronto, Ottawa, and Guelph. Pedigrees will be produced at the time of the sale. A catalogue with full particulars of pedigree will be mailed upon application.**

**Cattle — 13 cows in calf, or will have calves at foot by sale day/ 13 head of young cattle/ registered Jersey bull, 2 years old/ A number of cattle are fat and fit to kill.**

**Pigs — 11 pigs**

**Poultry — 100 hens**

**Harness — Set of double harness for show purposes, all nickel mounted, as good as new/ set of brass mounted double harness, all English leather, nearly new/ 5 other sets of double harness/ single set carriage harness, silver mounted, as good as new/ other sets of buggy harness.**

**Implements et cetera — Sawyer Massey traction engine in perfect repair and has not been on the road at all/ Waterloo separator, with straw carriers, as good as new/ wagon with water tank on it/ rubber driving belt 8 inches wide, 120 feet long/ 3 rubber belts, 35, 40, and 37 feet long, 6 inches wide/ mill rollers, Goldie and McCullough make, size 24 inches by 8 inches, with elevator and bagger mounted on low wheels, and with tongue to hitch to engine/ turning lathe for wood with full set of chisels and tools, also emery wheel attached/ saw table, Gourlay and MacGregor make, with 2 saws and countershaft/ Jardine iron drilling machine with full set of bits/ Maple Leaf grinder, Brantford make/ straw cutter with 14-foot carriers, Massey-Harris make/ new cider press/ 7-foot mower, Massey-Harris make/ 7-foot mower, McCormick make/ 5-foot mower, Massey-Harris make/hay loader, Massey-Harris make/ side delivery rake, Massey-Massey Harris make/ 12-foot sulky rake, Massey-Harris make/ 3-horse broadcast drill and cultivator, Massey-Harris make/ press seed drill/ turnip**

sower/ 2-horse broadcast drill and cultivator, Massey-Harris make/ low down flat wagon/ 7-foot binder, with fore-truck and sheaf carrier, Massey-Carrier make/ land roller/ horse cart for two horses/ horse cart for one horse and harness for same/ 2 wagons wit boxes, Adams make/ 2 double-furrow riding plows, Perrin make/ 3 Gowdy plows/ 2 Tolton centre draft plows/ double mouldboard plow/ heavy set of harrows, 4 sections/ 2 bobsleighs, flat boxes/ bobsleighs with stock-rack/ light set of harrows, 4 sections/ 2 hay racks/ 2 turnip cutters and pulper/ stone-boat/ fanning mill/ 2 road scrapers/ platform scales/ cream separator, Mellotte No. 1/ galvanized feeding carts on wheels/ feed cart with shafts/ open buggy/ top buggy/ 2-seated carriage, rubber tyres/ road cart/ 2 cutters/ 2 buffalo robes/ circular saw for cordwood/

No reserve, as the farm is sold.

Terms: \$10 and under, cash/ over that amount, 12 months credit will be given on approved joint notes, 5 per cent off for cash

**Jas. McDonald, Auctioneer**

**G. M. Crawley, Assistant**

from the Guelph Mercury newspaper

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## **Land for Soldier Settlement**

**February 8th 1923.**

An important real estate transaction has recently been concluded by which, what has been known for a great many years as the old Sorby farm, on the Waterloo Road, passes into the hands of the Dominion Government for the purpose of putting returned soldiers on the land. This movement has been contemplated for some time past, and it has been known in some circles that negotiations have been in progress for the purchase of this property for several months. In addition to the Sorby farm,

which was purchased a number of years ago by Mr. Ballagh and which continued in his ownership until the recent purchase, it is understood that options have been obtained on some 35 acres belonging to Mr. George McAllister, and which is situated on the property adjoining the Sorby place, as well as a small section to the south of it belonging to a gentleman at Hespeler. There are some 329 acres in the Sorby or Ballagh farm, and it is understood that the purchase price was close to \$30,000.

from the Guelph Mercury newspaper

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## **Major Alice Sorby Receives Promotion**

**June 24th 1944.**

Major Alice Sorby, daughter-in-law of Mrs. O. Sorby of this city, has been promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, according to a recent announcement from Canadian Military Headquarters in London.

The wife of Captain W. Sorby of the Royal Canadian Artillery, the two were reunited in March of this year after three years separation, when Captain Sorby was also posted to Canadian Military Headquarters. Lieut-Col. Sorby is the former Emma Alice Higgins and taught at the Guelph Collegiate for a short time.

A graduate of the University of Toronto, Lieut-Col. Sorby enlisted in the C.W.A.C. at the time of its inception in September 1941. She was given the rank of Junior Commander, equivalent to captain. In July 1942 she was promoted to the rank of major and proceeded overseas from Winnipeg to make arrangements for the initial draft of C.W.A.C. in England.

Since her arrival overseas she has held a staff appointment at Canadian Military Headquarters, first as Senior Officer, C.W.A.C., and then as Deputy Assistant Adjutant General, C.W.A.C.

**Previous to proceeding overseas, Col. Sorby held the appointment of C.W.A.C. Staff Officer in Military District No. 10, with headquarters in Winnipeg.**

**In January 1944, the King awarded Col. Sorby the M.B.E., in the New Year's Honour List.**

**Col. Sorby's promotion brings the total number of Lieutenant Colonels in the C.W.A.C. to four, the other three being Lieut-Col. Isabel Cronyn of Toronto, Lieut-Col. Joan Kennedy of Victoria, and Lieut-Col. Mary Dover of Calgary. Highest rank is held by Colonel Margaret C. Eaton, who was recently appointed Director General of the Corps.**

**from the Guelph Mercury newspaper**

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