

# The McCurdy Plantation Horse

A Legacy of the Old South

by Colleen Cates

Down a winding road lined with statuesque oak trees and Spanish moss draped limbs, comes a horse and rider out of the past, like a scene from 'Gone with the Wind.' The scene has changed from the late 1800's of the Deep South into present day 21st century, but the horse has remained the same.

McCurdy Plantation Horses have acquired esteem and respect throughout central Alabama during the past 100 years. In the late 1800's the Ed S. McCurdy family of Lowndesboro, Alabama (located between Montgomery and Selma), began breeding a line of gaited saddle horses suitable for using on their vast plantation in Lowndes County.

McCurdy's *De McLain*, a gaited gray stallion and two of his gray sons, *John McCurdy* and the famous *McCurely's Fox*, were the foundation sires. In the 1930's, the McCurdy family horses were registered as foundation stock into the newly formed Tennessee Walking Horse Association. The McCurdy line remained true to type as a using gaited horse. Neighboring land owners and workers bred their unregistered line gaited mares to the proponent McCurdy stallions, thus creating the line of gaited horses known throughout the region to the day as "McCurdys."

People who spend long hours in the saddle - trail riders, field trialers, hunters and ranchers - treasure the McCurdys' unique qualities and speak of them in revered terms.

The McCurdy Horse is known for its intelligence and calm disposition, fortitude of mind and strong body, plus a natural smooth 4 beat gait. They are keen to the task at hand, sure-footed, and willing to help their rider accomplish the objective.

The McCurdy Horse has a common sense work ethic and does not waste energy in a frivolous manner. It is the horse that stands quietly while the dog is on point as the field judge makes his decision, and then the birds are flushed with gunfire. Outside the rigorous world of field trialing, other owners use their McCurdy Horses as the perfect trail mount, for working cattle, under harness, for endurance riding, and gaited dressage.

The McCurdy Horse averages 15 hands, is generally refined in appearance, athletic with a muscular rounded hip, a broad chest, short back, heavy manes and tails and good bone.

The McCurdy "lick" is a 4 beat lateral gait with a smooth over-striding back end and stylish breaking of the knee in the front, just as naturally gaited plantation horses traveled of yesteryear. The gait executed by a

McCurdy, depending on its conformation, may be a running walk, a single foot, a natural rack, or the foxtrot. The McCurdy is noted for giving a safe, secure, smooth ride in any terrain or conditions and for having an easy canter.

The color gray is prevalent among the breed, along with bay roans, red roans, and blue roans. Solid colors of bay, chestnut and black complete the palette of colors.

Interest in the historic McCurdy Plantation Horse breed is rapidly growing on the national level. Presently, there are McCurdy horses in all 4 corners of the United States. The breed registry is small, with less than 600 registered horses in the association. Some are double registered as Tennessee Walkers and Commissioned Racking Horses. Several have been shown successfully at sanctioned gaited show in both English and Western Trail Pleasure classes.

The McCurdy Plantation Horse Registry and Association hosts 2 trail rides per year in early April and October in beautiful Lowndes County, Alabama. The rides are open to all breeds and are popular events with an average of 150-200 riders. Please visit our website for more information: [www.mccurdyhorses.com](http://www.mccurdyhorses.com).

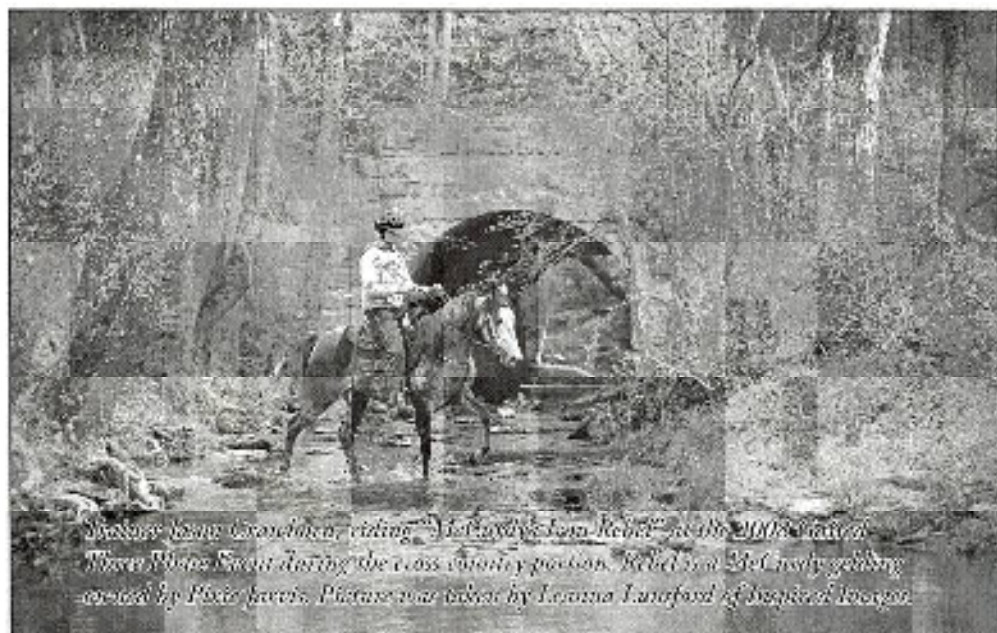
If you desire a naturally gaited versatile horse with a calm disposition -- easy to train and a joy to own and ride - "Make It A McCurdy!"

For More Information visit:

[www.mccurdyhorses.com](http://www.mccurdyhorses.com) or call 334-872-5412.

Or Contact Matt Ulrich:

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*Master team combination, riding "McCurdy's Rebel" in the 2008 season. Three photos shown during the class victory position. Rebel is a 20 year old gelding owned by Peter Jervis. Photo was taken by Louisa Langford of Inspired Images.*