

## Those Were the Days

*by Suzy Hopkins*

Before cars were invented trains got people from one city to another. In the cities and in rural areas, horses were THE mode of transportation.

Farmers brought their produce to market in a wagon drawn by horses.

Every time a person wanted to go to a distant location, not on the rail line, they used their horse or called a cab which was pulled by one to four horses depending on how long the trip was. The third and fourth horses were in front to save their energy as the work was being done by the wheel horses who were harnessed directly in front of the coach wheels. At the half point of the trip the horses exchanged positions.

Even in cities like London, Boston and Sacramento every wealthy household had a carriage house. If the resident wanted to go to the opera or a customary Sunday drive the expensive looking carriage and teams of two horses with matching markings was brought around front to receive its passengers.

All freight was transported by train and then transferred to horse drawn wagons utilizing teams from six to ten horses depending on the weight of the load. That's where the term 'teamsters' comes from to describe the men who mastered up to ten horses on reins 20 feet long. These teams delivered everything to the cities and towns just like trucks do now. The wheel horses of these rigs were massive as they were the brakes when needing to slow down or stop these heavy loads.

Fire engines were pulled by horses and police men rode the calmest steeds.

I would love to have lived in those times when the streets were filled with working horses.