

Sam Loyd's Pony Puzzle

I WAS returning from Europe many years ago in company of Andrew G. Curtin, the famous war Governor of Pennsylvania, who was returning from his post in Russia as prospective Presidential candidate. We were walking on the deck of the steamer, discoursing on the curious White Horse monument on Uppington Hill, Berkshire, England. If you know nothing about that weird relic of the early Saxons then the accompanying sketch will afford an excellent idea of its appearance.



It represents the figure of a colossal white horse, several hundred feet long, engraved on the side of a mountain, about a thousand feet above the level of the sea, so that it can be clearly distinguished at a sight of some fifteen miles. It is more than a thousand years old, and is supposed to have been carved by soldiers of Ethelred and Alfred after their victory over the Danes, as a white horse was the emblem of the Saxons.

It looks like a patch of snow on the side of the mountain, but it is in reality produced by the green turf being removed so as to show the white chalk beneath in the form of a

horse. I am thus prolix in the description of this piece of ancient history, because it is but fair that Ethelred and Alfred should receive their share of anathemas generally hurled at the inventor of the Pony Puzzle by those who have seen the answer.

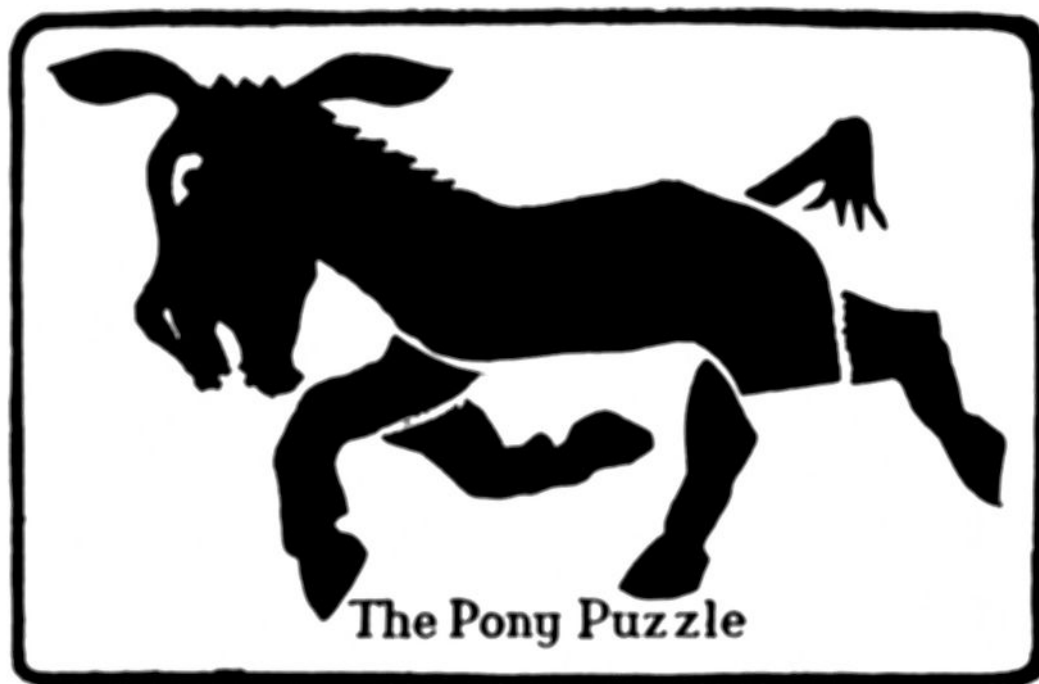
After the white horse had been thoroughly discussed, the governor banteringly exclaimed:

“Now, Loyd, there would be a capital subject for a puzzle.”

Many a good puzzle idea has come from such a tip; so, with such a capital theme, I should have been supremely stupid if I had not evolved something in response to the challenge. So, with my scissors and a piece of silhouette paper, I speedily improvised the accompanying figure of a horse, which we have christened “The Pony Puzzle.”

It would be a simple matter to improve the parts and general form of the old horse, and I really did modify it in the version published, but somehow I love the old nag best as first devised, with all its faults, so I now present it as it actually occurred to me.

Trace an exact copy of the figure, as shown, and cut out the six pieces very carefully, and then try to arrange them together as to make the best possible figure of a horse. That is all there is to it.



[Above is Loyd's Pony Puzzle; there is no need to trace it as he suggests, simply print this page and cut out the pieces. What Loyd does not make clear is that the six pieces, if positioned correctly, will show the shape of a horse similar, but not exactly the same, to the one in the first picture.]