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Title: THE SAVIORS OF THE HORSES– ENGLISHMEN IN PAINGENI

Subtitle: For five years, the Romanian horses will be taken care of and will be shod in "the British" style.

Intro: Gyuri looked out of the slanted window of the room above the stable, and saw people and horses, horses and people heading for the centre of the village. Hearing the bustle of the village getting to his courtyard he decided to go downtown to see what was going on. "Is it something good, or is it something bad?" Gyuri wondered. Curiosity pushed him to the centre of the village where the House of Culture is. He could see tens of horses and their owners. He could hear the noise of horses being shod, and lots of quarrelling voices.

Text: He was greeting everyone around: "Jo napot kivanok" ("Good day" in Hungarian) and "Ziua buna" ("Good day" in Romanian), but when a tall man said "Hallo!", in return to his greeting, Gyuri remained speechless for a second and stared at him. He looked the tall man up and down, dropped the cigarette he held in the corner of his mouth and crushed it on the pavement with his foot. "What's going on here? Hey you, Gheorghe, what's going on here?" asked Gyuri, looking at his neighbor who was holding the bridle of a black stallion. "It's a horse market", answered Gheorghe with the look of a prankster. "Are you serious?" "Yes, I am, dear Gyuri, Englishmen have come here to shoe our horses. They shoe them for free," added Gheorghe while stroking his horse. "But do you think they know how to shoe a horse?" asked Gyuri. "They do, yes, they do. Actually, they know it better than the guy from the neighboring village. It's no problem for them", said Gheorghe. Gyuri looked around at the horses of the other villagers, and suddenly made up his mind: "Well, I'll go back home and fetch my mare. It hasn't been shod for six months". Gyuri rushed home.

THE ENGLISHMEN AND THE APPRENTICES

"No, this is not good!" Barry shouted in English, his apron girded around his waist with all the tools needed for shoeing a horse. Three drops of sweat were trickling down his forehead, by his eyes. Barry removed them with his sleeve. He took the hoof of a horse from the hand of one of his pupils and began to hollow it out. "You have to...Cristi!", shouted Barry in English to the young veterinary surgeon from Mures, who would act as a translator from time to time. "He says that you should keep it like this", translated Cristi to the pupil. "I know what he says", replied the pupil who had come from Bistrita county. The pupil removed the sweat from his face, sighed out, but continued his work under Barry's attentive surveillance. He took the hoof of the horse between his legs and began again to file it. He had to work alone at that hoof, without any help. Doru was quiet. The horse allowed itself to be stroked and shod. From time to time it would get

bored and pull the hoof. The owner of the horse was very happy that his animal was the first to be shod. He had been on his way to the mill, when he found out the Englishmen came to shoe horses for free. "We were very lucky", said Doru's owner. He hadn't shod his horse for months. However, last time when he shod his animal he did it in a sloppy manner. He had no means and possibilities to do it in the proper way. In the past, he would shoe his horse at a so-called farrier - who lived a couple of kilometers away - or in his own farm, using the techniques that he had learned from his grandparents and neighbors. One of Doru's old horseshoes was a real invention. The Englishmen decided jokingly to take that horseshoe to a museum. Two pieces of rubber filled in the empty spaces of the dented horseshoe. The owner had no idea why that was so, neither had he ever suspected that his stallion was in danger of dislocating its tendons at any time, in case it lost its balance because of that "ingenious improvisation". "How calm and quiet my horse is!" wondered Doru's owner, while his animal allowed to be cleaned, filed, and shod. The horse is not nervous as long as it remains in good balance on three legs. This balance can be obtained only if the farrier works alone in a proper position, very close to the horse. Doru's owner couldn't stop wondering how lucky he was. And nothing compared with that man's huge smile an hour later, when his horse had finally received new "boots".

CIMLOK AND THE DENTED HORSESHOE

Istvan is twisting his arched moustaches and is straightening his straw hat on his head. He kisses Cimlok between its nostrils, while the animal moves its ears to capture every sound. The horse would snuffle noisily when it feels nervous or uneasy. It's a huge, gray, powerful stallion which emanates force through every pore of its body. It's very young and very well looked after. His owner knows these things very well, and he's very proud about it.

"This horse has eaten more than I have ever eaten in my entire life, but it's worth it!" says Istvan while stroking his horse. Istvan is an impetuous and proud man, and he doesn't want the horseshoes offered by the Englishmen. It's not a matter of nationality, because he is used with the mixture of Hungarian and Romanian cultures so he doesn't reject the perspective of a British "interference". But, he claims that his dented horseshoes are better. "I don't want those horseshoes. They are no good. I climb up hills and mountains with my horse. The horse will slide if the horseshoes have no dents. So, what am I supposed to do? No, no, I don't want those horseshoes. I would rather have my horseshoes, even if they are worn-out", says Istvan. He is told that this is a false problem, and that, with or without dented horseshoes, the situation doesn't change. But Istvan doesn't want to listen. He sticks to his idea. Therefore, the Englishmen give up and let the man have his way. Cimlok - the stallion of the stallions in the area- leaves the scene with its old dented horseshoes but with a new look, making everyone stare at him with envy and admiration. Istvan is even more proud than his horse. He puts the harness and the bridle on his horse; he twists once again his long moustache, spits sideways, and gets into his cart urging on his horse.

The only farrier one can find within a 10 to 12 kilometer range is walking now among the people. He proudly displays his well-trimmed beard. He eavesdrops while the Englishmen teach their apprentices, hoping to learn new things. He slowly chews a straw and holds a horsewhip. He doesn't talk too much. Actually, he's afraid to communicate. Most of the horses in Paingeni are shod by him, but the Englishmen are not satisfied with his work, which they consider sloppy. "This is not good...Get them off", gesticulates Barry after he examines the legs of a shod horse. He is not happy and asks his pupil to take off all the horseshoes and to try again. The front horseshoes are bigger than the hoof, and must be changed.

The pupil sighs heavily, takes passionately a puff from his cigarette, and swears in a low voice. After a while he throws his cigarette away and starts to work again. After two hours of hard work, he doesn't look too happy and the horse doesn't look happier either. It starts to snuffle and to rise to its back feet, getting very nervous. "Keep quiet", shouts its owner while pulling the bridles. The other horses are neighing and pulling their bridles, as they are trying to pull out from the carts or from the places they have been tied on. Some of them even manage to escape, running along the street, bored after waiting so many hours in the heat of the sun.

"Look at it. They put the horse's leg on a tripod", a voice could be heard in a corner, where a horse hoof is prepared for "chiroprody".

A huge file files the hoof in just a few seconds, after some rebel outgrowths have been removed, and the mud from the hoof has been cleaned off. The owner, who continuously strokes the animal, keeps on praising his horse he loves as much as his own children.

THE SADDLE-MAKERS IN THE CULTURAL CENTRE

The workshop for saddles and harnesses processing was arranged in the hall of the village's cultural centre. Here, the atmosphere is in strong contrast with the one outside the cultural centre. Inside it is quiet. Outside, one has to make himself listened to or understood by overcoming the neighing of the horses, as well as the vivid noises of the carts, and the loud voices of the villagers wondering about the British techniques.

The voice of the British instructor can be heard in the hall, from time to time. Eleven young men are willing to become good saddlers and they want to learn how to work with leather. They intend to return to their own villages and to spread their knowledge, after learning the new techniques. They will explain to everyone that a horseshoe which is improperly fixed or a harness that rubs off the horse skin could dramatically reduce the efficiency of the animal. One of the young apprentices loves horses, because he has spent all his childhood among horses. This young man learned that unlike human beings a horse never kicks a human being who is on the ground and it always helps a human being as long as it is well taken care of. Some of the apprentices were kicked by horses, but they have never blamed the animals. Moreover, they consider themselves guilty for doing wrong gestures while being around agitated animals. "A horse never kicks, unless he is instigated or annoyed. You must know how to speak with a horse. I love horses, and I said to myself that I could learn something that might be useful for the animals and that might also bring me some money. Later, maybe I will be able to share my knowledge with other people", says one of the apprentices, while manufacturing the harness of a horse which is being shod outside. A tall young man with playful blue eyes and with his hands, face, throat and clothes covered with soot, smokes heavily in front of the cultural centre, while Barry evaluates his work. "Good job! Today, he was number one. He will become a good farrier. Bravo!" says Barry.

Blondy, a young mare, is waiting for Barry. Blondy is owned by a British lady who is married in Romania to a Romanian. They have been living in Paingeni for many years. She mangles Romanian, but she loves horses very much. Blondy is her "soft spot". The young mare is going to be used by Barry for a demonstration in front of his apprentices. Barry handles the tools with an incredible speed. He cleans the hoofs, performs their chiroprody, adjusts the horseshoes on the hoofs, and fixes them. This demonstration of craftsmanship lasts for only 25 minutes.

It's past afternoon, and tiredness can be read on everyone's faces; both human beings and horses.

"These Englishmen did a good job. You wouldn't have expected. They came here to teach us lessons and we didn't mind, for in the end they did a good job. Let them come again", says Gyuri on his way back home.

Title: PROJECT "MADE IN GREAT BRITAIN"

Text: Early in the morning, three British experts in saddlery and farriery have taken their apprentices from Targu-Mures, heading for Paingeni, a village located 24 kilometers away. There are 20 apprentices, who gathered from all over the country. The experts have picked a way that leads them to a mountain region. They have carried with them horseshoes, horseshoe nails, and leather for harnesses and saddles. The experts want to teach the Romanians how to shoe horses and how to manufacture harnesses in a "British" style. The International League for the Protection of Horses (ILPH), a British organization, is developing in Romania a five year project, in order to teach the Romanians how to better take care of their horses, and to become better farriers and saddle makers.

ON HORSEBACK THROUGH ROMANIA

The project was launched in March. ILPH will spend one million pounds over the next five years for courses that will train veterinary surgeons, farriers, saddle makers and animal nutritionists. Money will also be spent on courses for implementing the horse legislation, as well as for informing campaigns. Andre Bubear (expert in saddlery and the head of the British team) knows Romania pretty well. In 1989, he left the Romanian capital on horseback and reached Sibiu city. He tells me that fun wasn't the only reason for his trip. He also wanted to prove how horses might be used in the Romanian environment. Andre worked 18 years with horses used by the Royal Cavalry and by the Metropolitan Police. Last year, he wandered through all of Romania, discovering new people and new things. He picked some of the people he met, in order to bring them to the ILPH courses, and to teach them a trade. He gave them toolboxes, horseshoes, and leather for harnesses, and he asked them to come to school. At the end of the course, the toolboxes will remain with the "apprentices". In this way, they will work with professional tools in their country. The best pupils will be recruited, and will accompany the British in other Romanian regions, where other courses will be organized.

The organizers of this course also intend to ask the Romanian Ministry of Labor to officially introduce the professions of farriery and saddlery, so that the persons who are interested can work with a recognized diploma. Andre Bubear, John Perrin, and Barry Ward have developed this kind of project all over the world. Romania was the only European country which has been chosen for this project. Asked about the reason for this choice, Andre replies simply, with a laugh: "Because Europe is here!"

Title: the Horse's Life

Text: Horseshoeing is essentially for prolonging the life and the working capacity of the horse. The horse lives maximum 40 years. When the animal is 8 years old, the horse's working capacity reaches the top. At the age of 15-20, the process of getting old starts, and the horse cannot be used in difficult activities anymore. The statistic above works in case the horse is properly well taken care of and shod once in six up to eight weeks. Things are different in Mures County. There

are people who haven't shod their horses for years. The legs of those horses are weakened. Therefore, although most of the horses are strong, they are getting old earlier, when they reach 10-12 years old. Their owners keep them in the farms just for fun or they are sent to the slaughterhouse.

