

# Arabians—Finest Horseflesh God Ever Made!

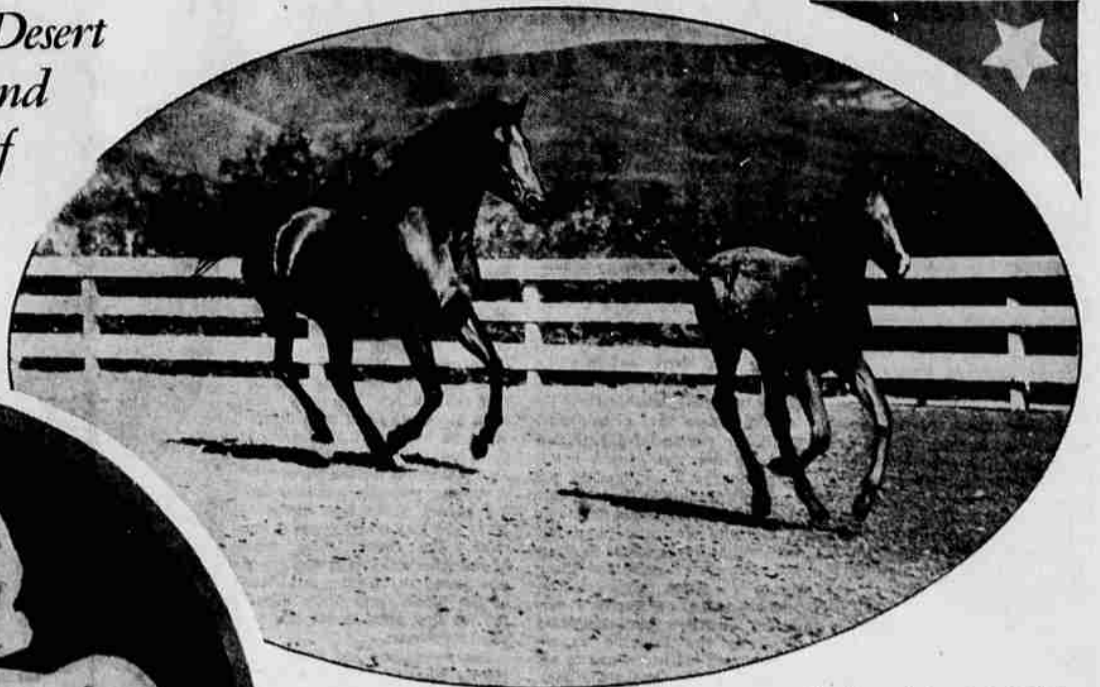


Raseyn, an Arabian of the finest type, taking the hurdles at the Kellogg Institute, near Pomona.

*These Proud Steeds of Desert  
Sbeiks Will Out-Last And  
Out-Run Any Breed Of  
Horses In World,  
Assert Breeders*



King John, proud descendant of a long line of purebred Arabians. This splendid stallion is frequently seen on the screen, being greatly in demand for motion pictures.



Ferdisia and her foal Ilmilad. "Ilmilad" is the Arabic word for Christmas, the colt having been foaled on that day.



Patio of the main stable at the Kellogg Institute of Animal Husbandry, where many of the finest Arabian horses in the world are bred and trained.



W. K. Kellogg, the wealthy Southern Californian, to whom is due the credit for having popularized the famous Arabians in America. It is on his ranch, near Pomona, that breeding of the strain is still carried out under the directions of the University of California.

By Peter Wolff

"IF YOU haven't seen an Arabian, you have not seen the finest animal God ever made!"

That's what breeders say, men who know horses—with a certain mild tolerance for 99 out of 100 saddle and racing horses in the country.

When you see a horse you think of turf-racing, polo playing, cowboys, or the wagon the Chinese laundryman drives down the avenue. Few people think of horses at all except at the race track, and then their interest is chiefly whether their pick comes in first—an animal with four legs which is represented by a pari-mutual ticket.

The result is rapidly approaching disaster. Unless something is done about it, those who have traced horse breeding over a number of generations are convinced that racing enthusiasts will be confined to races that grow shorter and shorter, and riders who weigh even less than they do today. Stamina, endurance, and intelligence in American horses is on the down grade. Their vitality is gradually dying out, caused by breeding for limited and specialized purposes.

Trains, automobiles, airplanes have made most of us forget that horses ever existed. What few horses are bred suffer from the same modern tendency of college athletes. We have sprint champions, weight champions, pole vault champions—specialists of every description. Where is the athlete who does well at everything? Sports have almost no place for him, because we worship achievement in one line rather than general accomplishment.

But a strong protest began a number of years ago, and the West will not be allowed to forget its horses. An experiment is taking place at the Kellogg Institute in Pomona, California.

HERE is the finest horse farm in the world for the breeding and training of the world's finest all-around horse—the Arabian. Several million dollars have been spent for buildings and stock, and \$600,000 has been given to perpetuate the work.

The object of the Institute, which since 1932 has been under the direction of the University of California, is to increase the number of pure blooded Arabians in America, and to improve their blood. The result, made possible by the yearly sale of stallions, will be to immensely improve racing and saddle horses throughout the country. The Arabian will give the vital spark to better horse breeding, and arouse interest in a horse as a species rather than as an over-specialized animal.

At the Kellogg Institute, the Arabians have regular schooling by capable instructors. Every Sunday afternoon crowds come to see the horses go through their tricks in the show ring—under saddle, in harness, and more adult accomplishments, such as running backwards, walking on their hind legs, dancing, opening and closing boxes, picking up handkerchief, selecting between various colored rags, and operating a cash register. There is no admission charge.

The ranch manager is not an Arab. He is Herbert H. Reese, graduate in animal husbandry of Purdue University, and his life has been spent in raising and breeding horses for the United States government.

Horses, he said, will always play some part in war, and recalled the case of Maj. Frank Tompkins, when he went into Mexico after Villa. His steed was a seven-eighths Arab, Kingfisher. This horse was the smallest in the troop, weighing only 925 pounds. Yet it survived the worst of campaign conditions across nearly 1,000 miles of desert and mountains, when 40 other horses died. No other breed of horse rivals the Arabian.

MEN who know Arabians believe they will conquer any horse in an endurance contest. Arabs have been known to run for 48 hours without water, and one made a record of 48 miles a day continuously for over three months. Still another ran 522 miles in six days, rested three days, then made the same distance again in five days—rested again for nine days and repeated the feat for a third and last time in seven days! It sounds almost impossible, but the record book proves the fact.

A few years ago two horsemen made a bet, one on his thoroughbred and one on his Arabian. The distance was a desert cross-country race of 90 miles. Both horses carried riders of 160 pounds. The Arabian finished the course in seven

hours and 52 minutes—the thoroughbred never came in!

In several endurance contests held for the benefit of the United States Army, the Arabian has been a consistent winner. The first of these competitions was held in 1913, and Arabians placed first, third, and fourth. The test was a run of 154 miles and 160 pounds for each horse. The second test was held in 1919 and was held for five years with almost identical results each year. The prize for these tests was to be awarded to the stable first to win three of the races. The rules called for 60 miles a day for five consecutive days.

Conditions the first year were rather stringent, and credit was given for low food consumption. Arabian horses took the first five places. This was encouraging for Arabian backers, but discouraging to everyone else, so the rules were changed—no horse in the army could compete with an Arabian on low food consumption.

The changes made were as unfavorable as possible to Arabian entries, and in spite of this, these powerful horses won three out of five tests. Its rival horses were chosen from 4,000 Morgans and 16,000 thoroughbreds, while the Arabians were selected from the 300 of their kin in America.

IN THE early days of racing when longer distances and heavier riders were in vogue, Arabians were constant winners. For over a century Arabians were almost invariably winners of the three great races in England: the Oaks, the St. Leger, and the Derby. Each of these winners was the direct descendant of one horse, the Darley Arabian. In the Derby alone, pure or part Arabians won first place every season for more than a century and a quarter.

Thousands of years ago, in pre-historic times, there were four varieties of the horse which can be traced. The first was the Russian horse from which came those later used by the Huns, Scythians, Tartars, and the hordes which tried to conquer Europe. The second was the Steppes horse of Central Asia, an ancestor of the Korean, Japanese and Mongolian ponies. From this branch came the Celtic horses of Britain and Norway. The third was the so-called Great Horse of Europe which carried the Crusaders to the Holy Land and the nobles in the War of the Roses. These were powerful, huge animals, bred to bear men wearing heavy armor. The fourth variety was the Indian or Arabian horse.

All horses are believed to be developments of these four types, but none has come through the centuries with so little change as the Arabian, which looks today very much as he did in the days when the Arabs swept the world with religion and armies—on horseback.

We have no evidence that any other blood has ever been mixed with the Arabian. Hittite ruins in Asia which date from 4,000 years ago show pictures identical in appearance with the Arabian of the Kellogg farm. Scholars say that the

first verses in the Bible about horses refer to this same breed.

WHAT gold was to the pioneers of 1849, the horse was to his Arab owner. The animal was more valuable than a wife—and could be traded for several wives. In times of famine, the horse was fed first of all, next the children, then the rest of the family. The Koran prescribed rules for the marriage of humans, and in turn the Arab made as strict regulations for the breeding of his horses.

Legend has it that Mohammed himself selected the mares from which the modern Arabian has come by a unique test. A herd of the finest mares was not permitted water for a number of days, then were taken to a river. As the mares made a dash for the water someone sounded a bugle. Five horses stopped instantly, then turned and pranced into military formation. These mares were rewarded by being named the progenitors of the finest strain of horses in the world.

There is no doubt that the Arabians have been more carefully selected for breeding purposes than any other horse, and have thus maintained their pure blood.

It has been difficult to import Arabians, but since their fame spread hundreds of years ago, men have traveled half across the world to acquire them. Today their blood accounts for the improvement in all of the fine saddle horses of Europe and America—the Orloff horse of Russia, thoroughbreds and Hackney of England, and

the Morgan and Kentucky horse in the United States. A strange mixture is the immense Percheron, the work horse of France, which weighs twice as much as the Arabian—but which was crossed with Arabian blood centuries ago.

History is repeating itself through the work of the Kellogg Institute, where Arabian colts are produced at the rate of some 25 every year, and then distributed by sale. This necessary leaven of Arab blood will prevent American saddle horses from gradual degeneracy, and indirectly stimulate interest in riding and exercise.

WHEN Hollywood demands the finest horse available, it goes to the Kellogg Institute, as it did to borrow the magnificent gray stallion, Jadaan, used by the late Rudolph Valentino in his final picture, "The Son of the Sheik." Later this horse appeared as the lead in the picture, "Beau Ideal," and was selected to head the Tournament of Roses parade in 1931.

In one of the stalls, marked with his own name, is the great Raseyn, a gray Arabian of the best type, which came from Crabtree Park Stud of England. This animal, Reese explains, has all of the finest qualities of the sturdy Arabian, and its chief characteristics. It is comparatively small, about 15 hands high (a hand being four inches). But this is no handicap, for Raseyn will carry as much weight as any heavier horse, and endure even better on a long race. This is partly due to several factors: the Arabian has two less vertebrae in its tail, one less in its

backbone, a close-coupled body, and its slender legs contain bones of density and power, together with strongly muscled thighs and withers.

The greatest difference is in its head—with a large "brain case" and rather slender muzzle, giving a triangular shaped head and widely spaced eyes.

It seems possible that the qualities of Arabian horses were responsible for winning the Boer war in Africa. The British had imported more than 300,000 horses in a final effort to catch General De Wet, who had a small force of 2,700 men—mounted on cross-bred Black Dutch and Armenian Arab horses. This General escaped again and again from the English because of his horses' endurance and speed. At last the British secured 100,000 cow ponies from the United States, ponies which had descended from Spanish horses, which were in turn crossed with Arabians. The American cow ponies with Arabian blood brought the campaign to an end.

Other intensely interesting studies besides the breeding of horses are being carried out by scientists at the Kellogg Institute.

For a number of years the investigation of hormones has held the attention of research laboratories throughout the world. Hormones are a strange chemical substance, an internal secretion found in the blood of mares which have been in foal for 45 days or more—and from this blood stream a powerful hormone produced by the pituitary gland is taken.

AT THE Kellogg farm they have extracted from the blood serum of the mares this valuable substance and reduced it to powder form. This powder, it has been found, will distinctly influence the sexual development of other animals. It is so greatly concentrated that a few thousandths of a gram when injected into immature white rats will bring them to a precocious sexual maturity within a few days. This opens a new and important field in overcoming many breeding difficulties among useful domestic animals.

Fortunately, this experiment in Arabian horses and related biological investigations is supported by a perpetual endowment, since the genetic studies of horses must be continued for generations—beyond the life-span of the investigators. The reproductive cycle of large animals, especially horses, is slower than that of the vinegar fly or the guinea pig, upon which previous genetic studies were based. Endowed funds permit continuous, uninterrupted effort, where public funds might be cut off at any time upon the whim of the state.

On a warm Sunday afternoon it is worth a trip to Pomona to see the remarkable results of this unusual experiment. You drive through the imposing front gate up a circling road and through beautiful gardens before reaching the model stables. Along the drive is a pool guarded by white swans, a magnificent rose garden and cactus garden. The stables are set on top of a low hill, commanding a view of the Pomona valley and the nearby San Jose mountains, for the enjoyment of the visitor and some 100 trained horses of pure Arabian blood.