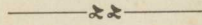
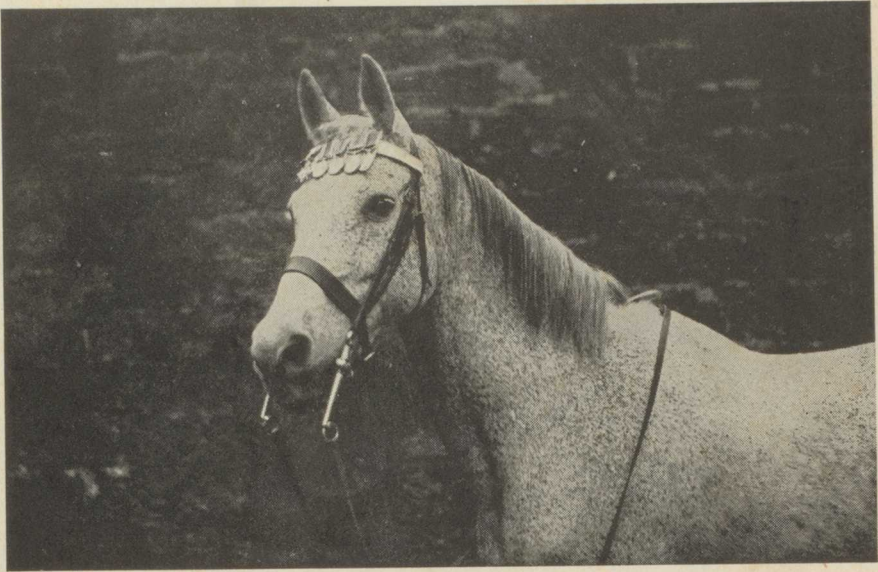




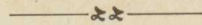
"RAGGIE,"



the War Horse.



An Autobiography.



FOREWORD.

"Raggie," whose friendship I have enjoyed for over 17 years, has invoked my aid in recording the story of his life. The literary style may be indifferent; but it should be remembered that those who joined the Army 25 years ago were better thought of if they could fill in Army forms correctly (and generally in quadruplicate) than if they cultivated the facile pen or the persuasive tongue. That is why Soldiers have always had ten to one the worst of it in contests with Politicians and others whose trade is in dialectics and whose battlefield is the platform.

The object of this venture is to assist certain funds. Should it meet with success there may be a second edition, rather fuller and with many illustrations.

MIDDLETON.

June 1st, 1931.

Birdsall, Yorks.

"RAGGIE," the War Horse.

An Autobiography.

CHAPTER 1.

Great things happened in the year 1910. King George V. came to the Throne, and—I was born.

As one grows older memory for recent events becomes cloudy, but all the events of one's youth and prime stand out fresh and clear as the Birdsall beeches in early summer after rain. My first experience of life was on a farm in the Punjab of India, where I ran with my mother through one glorious summer. My mother's name was "Gladrags," and she was very beautiful. She told me that her mother had the best Indian blood in her veins and that her father was an English thoroughbred horse named "Caught-up."

My father was "Geneva," an Arab, and from him I inherit my fine silky coat, thin tail—carried as only Arabs know how—and ability to keep health and condition even when food is poor and scanty.

We lived in a large paddock with a bunch of mares and foals. Many of the latter were my half brothers and sisters. What fun we had galloping round together in the early mornings and evenings.

My mother taught me early to keep clear of the mares. Bad tempered as some horses may be they are never as dangerous and uncertain as mares, who kick with lightning rapidity and use their teeth when least expected.

It was a desperately hot summer, but we did not seem to mind it. There was ample shade, and we lazed and dosed in the heat of the day and chivied one another about in the hours of coolness. By June the country was dry and burnt up and there was not much grass in our paddock. However, the Indian soldiers who looked after us used to bring green fodder from the irrigated land and we never suffered like the villager's wretched bullocks that we saw dragging heavy carts along the roads, poor gaunt skeletons with hollow flanks and seemingly far too weak to pull anything. I was sorry for them. At the end of June we had dust storms, which filled the

