

With more than 300 breeds to choose from, why should anyone choose an Egyptian Arabian over any other breed of horse or strain of Arabian? If your intent is to become involved with a rare, living historical treasure, and you wish to experience a sense of awe inspired by a magnificent creation cherished for thousands of years by countless generations before, there is not other choice.

Egyptian Arabian horses, unlike any other breed of horse or other strain of Arabian, can boast a genetic purity that has been guarded and preserved for more than 3500 years. This means that the modern day Egyptian Arabian is very similar in conformation, temperament, and ability to its ancient ancestors... The prized animals who were bred in the desert sands of Egypt and the Middle East. No other strain or breed of horse can make this claim.

Since the time of Tuhotmos III's reign in Egypt, through the rule of the Roman empire, ancestors of the modern day Egyptian Arabian carried forth the advancements of civilization. Pharaohs, kings and warriors could not have wielded power and built empires without the aid of these swift and courageous war steeds. Even King Solomon had "horses brought out of Egypt: and had "forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots and twelve thousand horsemen" according to Josephus. Also according to Josephus (an ancient historian) "they were at once the most beautiful of all others, and their swiftness was incomparable also." During the time of the Mameluke dynasties, which started around 632 A.D., great celebrations and horse festivals were held that chroniclers found "impossible to describe." Racing and other equestrian sports were the passions of the Mameluke sultans, who built magnificent hippodromes for these festivities, and who had great breeding farms where they brought the finest horses they could find in Egypt and the surround desert. They bred these horses striving for beauty, swiftness, agility, and endurance.

The Mameluke's reigned and continued breeding their horses for 1000 years, until the time of Napoleon, who conquered them at the battle of the Pyramids in 1798. Napoleon, like those who came before and after him, immediately fancied the Egyptian horses of the Mamelukes. His historians wrote of "the beautiful Arabians horses, richly harnessed, snorting, neighing, prancing gracefully and lightly under their martial riders..."

The French rule of Egypt was short lived; in 1798 the British forced them out and paved the way for the rise of Mohammed Ali the Great, an Albanian who brought about the renaissance of Egypt and who established the beginning of the finest Arabian stud the world had ever known. A horse lover since childhood, he used his position to acquire from friends, allies and foes alike the best horses he could find. When his son, Ibrahim Pasha, captured the last stronghold of the Wahabbis in Nejd, the finest and largest group of Bedouin horses said to ever exist in Arabia became his.

Mohammed Ali and his son Ibrahim built huge ornate stables, reputedly even more expensive and elaborate than his own palace, where special "fantasias" were held to show off his priceless steeds. Mohammed Ali placed his grandson, Abbas Pasha, in charge of his breeding program. Abbas carefully studied the pedigrees and offspring of particular stallions and broodmares, and from time to time he obtained some of the best individuals and their foals. He is reputed to have paid the equivalent in today's money of over \$3,900,000 for one of his best mares.

Abbas Pasha kept meticulous records. He recorded in books the verbal and written histories of each of the horses in his care. He learned the differences between the different strains (each tribe and area had their own strain of Arabian, each with different attributes, body styles, etc.) He learned that the strain of Dahman Shahwan traced to the horses of King Solomon; that the Kuhaylan Mimreh strain was from the ancient horses of the first tribes; the Saklawi Jedran originally belonged to the horses of al Muwalli, the foundation mare having been taken in a raid by Suleyman ibn Jedran. Hundreds of the histories of the horses and their strains were penned.

By the time he became Viceroy of Egypt, the reputation of Abbas Pasha's horses had spread all over the Arab and Christian worlds. Poems and paintings were inspired by their beauty. His horses were the envy of kings and princes in Europe and Asia, and emissaries arrived from various parts of the globe offering almost any price for just one of his "living masterpieces." By this time, Abbas Pasha owned over one thousand purebred Arabians, the like of which had not been seen since the days of King Solomon.

In the last century, the famed stud of Abbas Pasha became the Royal Agricultural Society of Egypt, which after the Egyptian Revolution became the Egyptian Agricultural Society, which still carries on the breeding traditions of Abbas Pasha at the El Zahraa Stud outside Cairo, Egypt. The same bloodlines bred centuries ago continue to be bred at this stud today.

In testimony to its greatness, almost all modern day Arabians, with a very few exceptions, have some measure of Abbas Pasha's bloodlines in their pedigrees. From the time of the Crusaders, then Napoleon, a few of these horses made their way into Europe—some as the prizes of war, some purchased, and some given as gifts to European Royalty. In fact, the Thoroughbred breed traces back to three of these horses, the most prominent being the well known Darley Arabian.

After the death of Abbas Pasha, his breeding program was upheld by Aly Pasha Sherif. At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Lady Ann Blunt developed the Sheyky Obeyd and Crabbet Arabian Stud based on bloodstock obtained from the stud of Aly Pasha. They brought the Arabian into prominence in the Western world.

The first Egyptian Arabians imported into the United States were a gift to President Grant. Later a few more were imported for the \_\_\_ World's fair. At the time of the Egyptian Revolution in the 1950's, the king of Egypt \_\_\_ smuggled twelve of his family's personal horses into the U.S. by way of an arduous boat trip to Europe, then to England and New York. In New York they were put on a train and shipped to a doctor friend of the king's family in Northern California. Later, more horses were bought by a Dr. Brown and shipped into this country. After the revolution was over, particularly in the 1960's and later several well-known Egyptian Arabian breeding farms were established in this country and elsewhere.

Today, even though almost all Arabian strains, and many breeds of horses including the Thoroughbred, Andalusian, and Quarter Horse, have Egyptian Arabian blood in their pedigrees, pure Egyptian Arabians are quite rare. In fact, less than 2% of all the Arabians in the world are pure Egyptian. These horses are sought after by breeders of other strains, and even other breeds, such as the European Warmblood, for the genetic purity, and for the strength and endurance.