

HORSES IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

In 1914 people depended on the horse for their own movement, for the handling of goods and in farming the horse was still "king."

FORWARD!



5th August 1914, Mr R B Barrett of Skipton Castle and Mr Joseph Mason of Thorlby were appointed by the Government to purchase horses for the army in the East Staincliffe Division (the parish of Thornton-in-Craven was in this district). They were authorised to take any horses they thought fit for service and offer a suitable price. By Monday 10th, 65 horses had been purchased in the area around Skipton. Some first class animals were among them and as one officer remarked 'almost too good to waste in warfare'.

Troopers could be seen on the district's roads in charge of three or more horses, whilst in the fields one could see fluttering white labels fastened to the animals' heads signifying that these had already been fated to leave the green fields for war's grim business.

All the major combatants began the war with cavalry horses. Although eventually replaced by tanks, horses still played a significant role throughout the war.


Their role included:

- Logistical support and transport (moving artillery, ammunition and supplies to the front line).
- Reconnaissance.
- Carrying messages and evacuating casualties to the dressing stations.

G. R.

ARMY SERVICE CORPS

(REMOUNT BRANCH)



MEN ACCUSTOMED TO HORSES.

Duration of War. Age 25 to 40 years.
General Service on Army Form B2505
endorsed "Enlisted under 116 Gen. No. 6030 A.G. 28, 4th March, 1915."

PAY-9/11 to 11/8 per week. ALL FOUND.

Separation Allowances with Allotment of Pay:

Wife	-	-	-	12/6	per week.
" and one child	-	-	-	17/6	"
" and two children	-	-	-	21/-	"
" and three children	-	-	-	25/-	"

2/- for each additional child. Motherless child 5/- per week.

Liberal allowances for Dependents. Prospects of Promotion.
Increased Pay to Men sent to Expeditionary Force.

Apply for any further particulars and Enlistment at any
Recruiting Office of Regular Branch of the Army.

Horse and man shared a bond and partnership like no other amid the horrors of the 1st World War trenches as depicted in paintings by local artist Herbert Hogg in 1916.

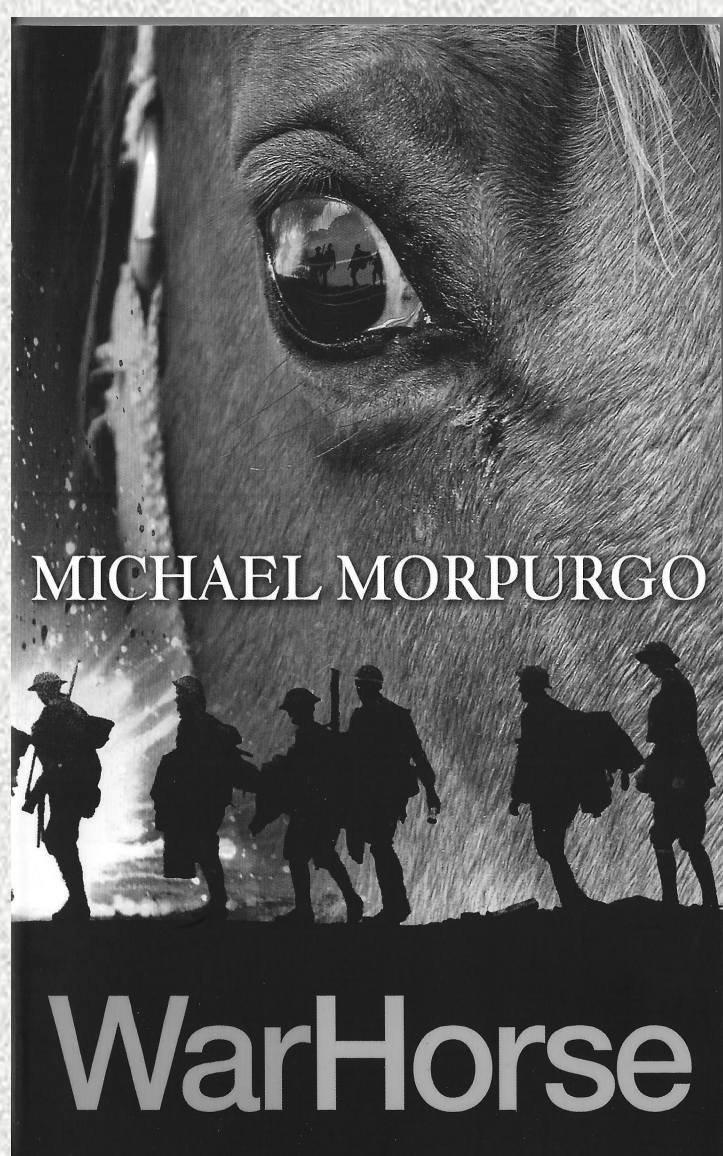
The conditions under which horses lived and worked and the terror and pain they felt was appalling.



The Army Service Corps Remount Services were responsible for the provision of horses to army units.

The horses were obtained by a compulsory purchase order and stabled, cared for and trained by staff before being shipped abroad.

The British Remount Department spent around £67.5 million on buying and the transporting horses abroad.



Michael Morpurgo's 1982 book 'War Horse', made into a film by Steven Spielberg, in 2011 has highlighted the role played by horses in the First World War.

Up to a million horses were killed serving with Allied troops.

Pictured right 'Warrior' "the horse the Germans couldn't kill" and General Jack Seely

Of the 1 million horses which left Britain for the Western Front only 60,000 returned.. They died caught up in wire, mown down by machine-gun fire, gassed or stuck in the mud



Above pictures by kind permission of Simon Butler from his book "The War Horses- the tragic fate of a million horses sacrificed in the First World War"



Of the vast number of horses which left Britain for the Western Front only 60,000 returned to be sold at auction The forgotten tragedy of the Great War