

Dyrons Boys

Freddie's story (Horse)

Picture of Freddie projected

(Lieutenant Smith is hoof picking to start with)

Look at those stars tonight, who would ever think that there is a war on; it's so calm, so peaceful. Peace, how I long for peace. Peace in this world of brutal murder and terror. That's the Northern star, and there is Cassiopeia. My father loved the stars, he would take me out to look at the moon and join the stars up like dots. He would hold my hand and etch them out in the inky blue night sky, just like tonight, not a whisper of a cloud. There's one for you my friend: The Plough. Is that what you did when you were at home in Blighty? Ploughed the fields with your strong flanks, and yet you are doing the same now, ploughing through gun fire, shells and bombs. You are a brave, brave stallion. When the sun comes up I will take your courage, and together, courageously we will fight our foe once more, wishing and hoping for another starlit night, like tonight.

Chloe: It seems like soldiers and their horse companions were inseparable.

Imogen: It certainly seems true for Alex and Rajah. I never realised how important horses were in the war. It says here:

Film about horses on the frontline projected

Chloe: Without horses the British army would have failed. The horse was vital to the war. They fell into three general types:

Firstly, the light draught animals to draw the large artillery guns across the land. Across broken country, 6 horses were harnessed in pairs.

Jasper's scene (Horse)

Imogen: The horse is the only certain means of transport.

(To develop with improvisation. To include horses suffering/ muddy conditions, the horses bringing up the ammunition and food and taking soldiers back to the ambulances.)

Chloe: They served at the front line, stumbled through the tangle wire of No Man's land. In the mud, rain and terror of the trenches they supplied their human comrades with food, water and ammunition, even though they themselves were hungry, sodden and exhausted. *(Bring to life)*

Jasper and Captain Deacon centre spot

(Gun fire going off/Everyone else in battle -the whole stage covered, Jasper and horses pulling up the guns)

Captain Deacon: Come on Jasper, we need that artillery, quick boy, quick!

(Others shouting: we need more ammo/ the Hun are getting closer/medic)

Come on boy, you can do this! I know, I know, this bloody weather, you're slipping all over the place; come on lad, dig those hooves in, dig, dig, you've never let us down yet. Come on Jasper, not far to go now.

(Jasper is slipping and sliding)

Jasper: *(Remains in the centre spot, the rest of the cast move around him in slow motion)*

Why are they asking so much of me? I can barely walk in the gutter of these muddy tracks and gully's. My flanks are sore and tired, and I can barely pull this heavy load, for this will be the ninth time up this treacherous valley. I have already slipped and sliced into my flesh, and the wounds from the tangle wire previously have not healed despite my captain tending to them with such loving kindness. Where is the milk of human kindness now? Oh the futility of one man against another man, both men, equal in their own rights and yet they knock nails into each other's coffins in the mud and gore... they forget their herd as one race, the same species, the same blood that trickles from the blackness of charred bullet wounds, whilst we simple herd animals have to shoulder the responsibility of protecting the lost causes of conflict. Not only the outer brutal conflict I am now a part of but the inner conflict of men wrestling with their own guilt of taking another's life, of playing God and deciding who will live and who will die at the throat by the bayonet. Whilst we, the serving pack animal, die at the mercy of the humans we try to protect. I am not sure I am going to make this. I will try for my captain...

Sharon Godfrey

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