

## INTRODUCING A NEW BOOK:



# The Arabian Horses of Abbas Pasha New Discoveries: The 1860 Abbas Pasha Sale List and Other Original Documents

Authored by Edouard Al-Dahdah • Published by Ansata Publications

Introduction by Judith Forbis • Story by Edouard Al-Dahdah

Abbas Pasha I (1813 – 1854), Viceroy of Egypt and the Sudan (r. 1848 – 1854), is undoubtedly the most legendary figure in Arabian horse history. His collection of desert-bred Arabian horses acquired from the Bedouin tribes of the Arabian Peninsula is unmatched. For serious breeders his horses still remain on a pedestal as the highest standard of excellence. Arabian horses were his passion. They became his main purpose in life, and he pursued acquiring them at any price. Their classic beauty, nobility and unique characteristics inspired him to breed horses close to perfection prior to and during his reign as Viceroy.

### Passion, Purpose and Pursuit

As I contemplate a lifetime of breeding Arabian horses and authoring numerous articles and books, it is a passion to express ourselves and to exalt that which touches our souls that drives us to create something memorable. Purpose is the reason for our journey; passion is the fire that illumines the way.

Passion is critical when it comes to making your dreams a reality. If you have a strong purpose in life, your passion will drive you to fulfilling it. It was passion for Arabian horses that caused Walter Farley to write *The Black Stallion* that inspired - and still inspires - horse lovers of all ages. It was this passion that led Gülsün Sherif and myself to translate and publish *The Abbas Pasha Manuscript and Horses and Horsemen of Arabia and Egypt During the Time of Abbas Pasha 1800-1860*. And, it was this passion that drove Edouard Al-Dahdah in pursuit of the Abbas Pasha documents that culminated in his remarkable new book.

We can also look to Lady Anne Blunt whose passion for horses led her to the Arab world where she became enamored of the Arabian breed. Her books *Bedouin Tribes of the Euphrates* and *Pilgrimage to Nejd* attest to her adventuresome spirit, artistic talents and love of learning. Eventually the Blunts founded Crabbet Stud in England and Sheykh Obeyd Stud in Egypt whose worldwide influence is obvious and invaluable to this day.

While living in Egypt, Lady Anne became obsessed with the Abbas Pasha bloodlines and on Friday March 6, 1891 she recorded in her journal “I don’t know what it is, or rather I don’t know how to put into words that indescribable air of distinction which marks the horses and mares of Ali Pasha Sherif’s, or rather I would say of Abbas Pasha’s breeds, the breeds collected by him.... So it is, however – the moment one sees other horses beside them – when moving one sees the style of the Abbas Pasha collection”.



*The Ruins of Dar El Beyda, February 17th, 1908, painting by Lady Anne Blunt, one of Abbas Pasha’s former stables.  
Collection of Judith Forbis*

When she learned about the Abbas Pasha documents and manuscripts, and found they related to the strains of horses upon which Crabbet and Sheykh Obeyd were founded, she was determined to locate them. Her search was not in vain and on Monday January 28, 1889 her journal notes that Ali Pasha Sherif “...has ten books of Abbas Pasha’s stud with full account of the origins of all the mares when and where and from whom bought in the desert.” Although she had the opportunity to buy the documents, she considered them “too expensive.”

Nevertheless on January 25, 1911 she records that on a visit to Prince Mohammed Ali’s, “I was shown copies of some of the Abbas Pasha books, which as I had advised, the Prince had got from his brother.” [Khedive Abbas Hilmi II]. Fortunately she was able to borrow certain documents from him long enough to translate them. Then on February 6, 1912 during a visit to the Prince she notes: “Before saying goodbye was shown the new mss. book in which the Prince is having written out copies of each mare’s history in the Abbas collection...” On February 25, 1916 she wrote that “Prince M. Ali left with some of the Abbas Pasha I papers.” There are no further mentions of the Abbas Pasha documents in her journals.

On December 15, 1917 the “Lady of the Horses” as she was affectionately called, passed away and was buried in Egypt at the cemetery in Abbasieh. Some of her translations were later incorporated in Lady Wentworth’s book: *The Authentic Arabian Horse* while the Prince published some of the histories in his book, *Breeding of Purebred Arab Horses, Vol.2*.

And so the passion for further knowledge about the Abbas Pasha horses lives on. Here in his own words is how Edouard Al-Dahdah came to write his remarkable new book, and why the search for another Abbas Pasha manuscript continues!

# Hiding in Plain Sight — New Discoveries of Original Documents on the Horses of Abbas Pasha

by Edouard Al-Dahdah

The Arabian horse collection of Abbas Pasha I, Viceroy of Egypt and the Sudan (r. 1848–1854), heralded by its European and Oriental contemporaries alike as the choicest and largest of its time, continues to fascinate to this day. It has been the subject of countless books and articles over the past century and a half. In general, these tend to recycle bits and pieces of information from first or second-hand accounts by European visitors of the studs of Abbas Pasha, like the German stud master von Hugel or the French veterinary Hamont. Even Lady Anne Blunt, to whom we owe the survival of a majority of the Abbas Pasha bloodlines available today, only managed to obtain scattered and partial information about the horses she and her husband acquired from Ali Pasha Sherif (themselves from Abbas Pasha lines), despite a twenty-year long quest for original documentation.

Indeed, only a minority of the books and articles ever written about the horses of Abbas Pasha are based on original sources – i.e., Arabic language sources produced by the main people concerned about these horses: their breeders, buyers, owners, and sellers. For the longest time, *The Abbas Pasha Manuscript* was the main exception. Translated into English by Gülsün Sherif and Judith Forbis and published in 1993 by Ansata Publications, it is based on an Arabic language manuscript copy owned by Gülsün's father, Ahmed Bey Sherif, a great-grandson of Ali Pasha Sherif. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia later acquired this manuscript and published limited numbers of fac-similes.

*The Abbas Pasha Manuscript* is essentially a compilation of the histories of horses acquired (or about to be acquired) by the envoys of Abbas Pasha to the Bedouin tribes of Arabia. The original was produced in 1852–53, and remains to this day the



*Ibrahim Ilhami Pasha, son of Abbas Pasha, and heir to the horses of Abbas Pasha, died unexpectedly in 1860 resulting in the famous dispersal Sale of priceless Abbas Pasha stock.*

most comprehensive record of the histories of dozens of strains of Arabian horses acquired by Abbas Pasha. Amazingly, another original document is now available:

## The Abbas Pasha Sale List

When Abbas Pasha was assassinated in 1854, his son Ibrahim Ilhami Pasha inherited his father's stud. Ilhami Pasha died in September 1860 at the young age of twenty four, when his boat capsized over the Bosphorus. At the time of his death, he was heavily indebted to the Bank of Egypt and private bankers, who organized the sale of his estate in an attempt to collect debt. Part of Ilhami Pasha's estate was constituted of the remainder of his father's stud



*"That indescribable air of distinction."  
Lady Anne Blunt on the horses of Abbas Pasha lines*

of Arabian horses. Advertisements about the sale of some two hundred and eighty stallions, mares and foals appeared in German, French and British newspapers, and attracted wide attention across Europe and within Egypt's elite. A sale list was drawn, and a public auction was held in over eleven days between December 10 and December 30, 1860.

This sale list is the centerpiece of my new book, with Kate McLachlan and Moira Walker, *The Arabian Horses of Abbas Pasha — New Discoveries: The 1860 Abbas Pasha Sale List and other Original Documents*, with a Foreword by Judith Forbis, a design by Joe Ferriss, and the generous sponsorship of Sheikha Sarah Al Fahad Al Sabah of Kuwait.

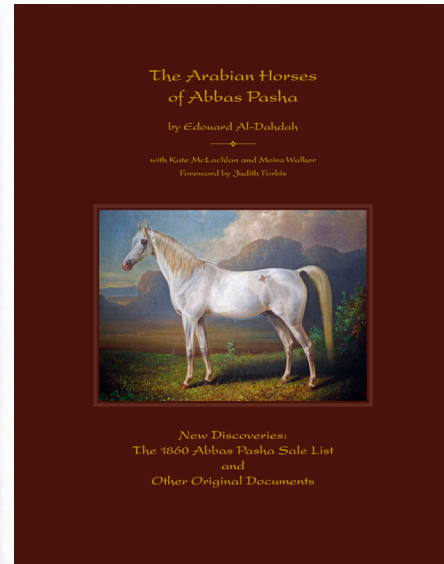
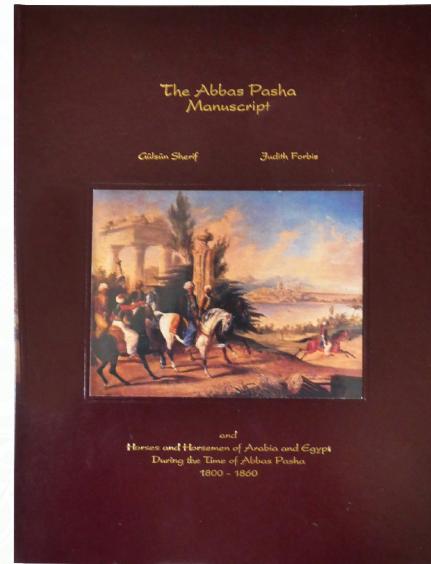
To be fair, the Abbas Pasha Sale List is not exactly a new discovery. When I stumbled upon it in the summer of 2016, it had been hiding in plain sight for some sixty years in the form of thirteen photocopies of an Arabic document tucked in every edition of Carl Raswan's *The Raswan Index and Handbook for Arabian Breeders*. This precious document was just lying in the middle of one of the breed's most widely known publications, with hardly anyone paying attention to what it contained. Its original title is "Account of the horses sold from the bequest of the late Ilhami". The dense Arabic text consists of two hundred and

seventy eight entries for every horse sold at the sale, including its price, gender, coat color, markings, strain, the name of its original Bedouin owner if the horse was imported from Arabia, its dam's and sire's name, color, and the name of their original owners, and the name, title, and occupation of the buyer of the horse at the auction.

In many ways, my book *The Arabian Horses of Abbas Pasha – New Discoveries: The 1860 Abbas Pasha Sale List and other Original Documents*, and Gülsün Sherif's and Judith Forbis's *The Abbas Pasha Manuscript and Horses and Horsemen of Arabia and Egypt During the Time of Abbas Pasha, 1800–1860* are like two bookends! Just like *The Abbas Pasha Manuscript* documented the horses Abbas Pasha bought from Arabia at the onset of his reign, the Abbas Pasha Sale List sheds an unprecedented light on this collection a decade later.

## Classifying the Abbas Pasha Horses

The book's first chapter classifies the horses in the Abbas Pasha Sale List in three different ways: by mare line, by stallion line, and by buyer. The mare section confirms Abbas Pasha's predilection for the Dahman and Saqlawi strains of Arabian horses, while recording the dozens of other strains he owned, most of which have vanished. The stallion section of this chapter



Bookends: left is *The Abbas Pasha Manuscript* (1993), right is *The Arabian Horses of Abbas Pasha* (2022)

highlights the preeminence of his senior stallion Ghadir, a Saqlawi which at the time of his acquisition by von Hugel, had seventy nine descendants in the Sale List, far more than any of the other twenty reference stallions. The buyer section shows the outsized role Egypt's Viceroy Ismail Pasha, and one of its noblemen, 'Ali Bek Fahmy (the future Ali Pasha Sherif) played at the Sale, amidst many smaller Egyptian and European buyers.

The second chapter goes through the European purchases as they appear in the studbooks of France, Germany, and the Austro Hungarian empire among others.

The book's third chapter showcases six other smaller original Arabic documents, including a scrapbook of the future Ali Pasha Sherif from a period that preceded the 1860 Sale, two surviving entries from Ali Pasha Sherif's studbook now lost, and three documents from Lady Anne Blunt's archives.

The fourth chapter analyzes breeding patterns at the stud of Abbas Pasha drawing on the information in the Sale List, including his use of desert-bred versus home-bred stallions and mares, and the choice of certain strains over others for breeding. It shows that Illhami Pasha had been actively breeding up until his untimely death, with at least one in four horses in the Sale List being attributed to him.

All these original sources come together in the fifth chapter, which features revised pedigrees for a

number of foundation horses of modern Arabian horse breeding from Abbas Pasha bloodlines. The original documents yield a number of surprising revisions to long-accepted genealogies. In a nutshell, this fifth chapter fills a critical forty year gap that has long eluded researchers and students of the Arabian breed at large, by directly connecting the horses Lady Anne Blunt acquired from Ali Pasha Sherif in the 1890s with the original desert-bred Abbas Pasha horses imported from Arabia in the early 1850s.

Finally, the last chapter features a verbatim translation of the Sale List, the way it was originally drawn, by day of sale, allowing future researchers to draw their own conclusions.

**The Other Abbas Pasha Manuscript — Still Missing!**

Rarely since Rosemary Archer and James Fleming published excerpts of Lady Anne Blunt's *Journals and Correspondence* in 1985, and Judith Forbis and Gülsün Sherif published *The Abbas Pasha Manuscript* in 1993, has a book brought to light so much new information on the horses of Abbas Pasha. Hopefully the discovery of other missing pieces of the puzzle, like the elusive studbook of Ali Pasha Sherif and another different original copy of *The Abbas Pasha Manuscript*, (once known to be in the possession of a Saudi Arabian diplomat) will bring forth more knowledge about this legendary collection. So the never-ending search for the other original Manuscript continues!

**NEW BOOK!**

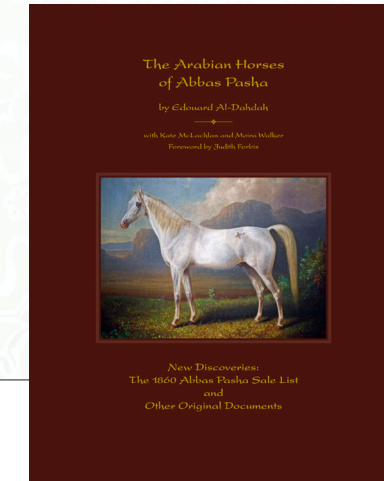
*The Arabian Horses of Abbas Pasha*

*New Discoveries: The 1860 Abbas Pasha Sale List and Other Original Documents*

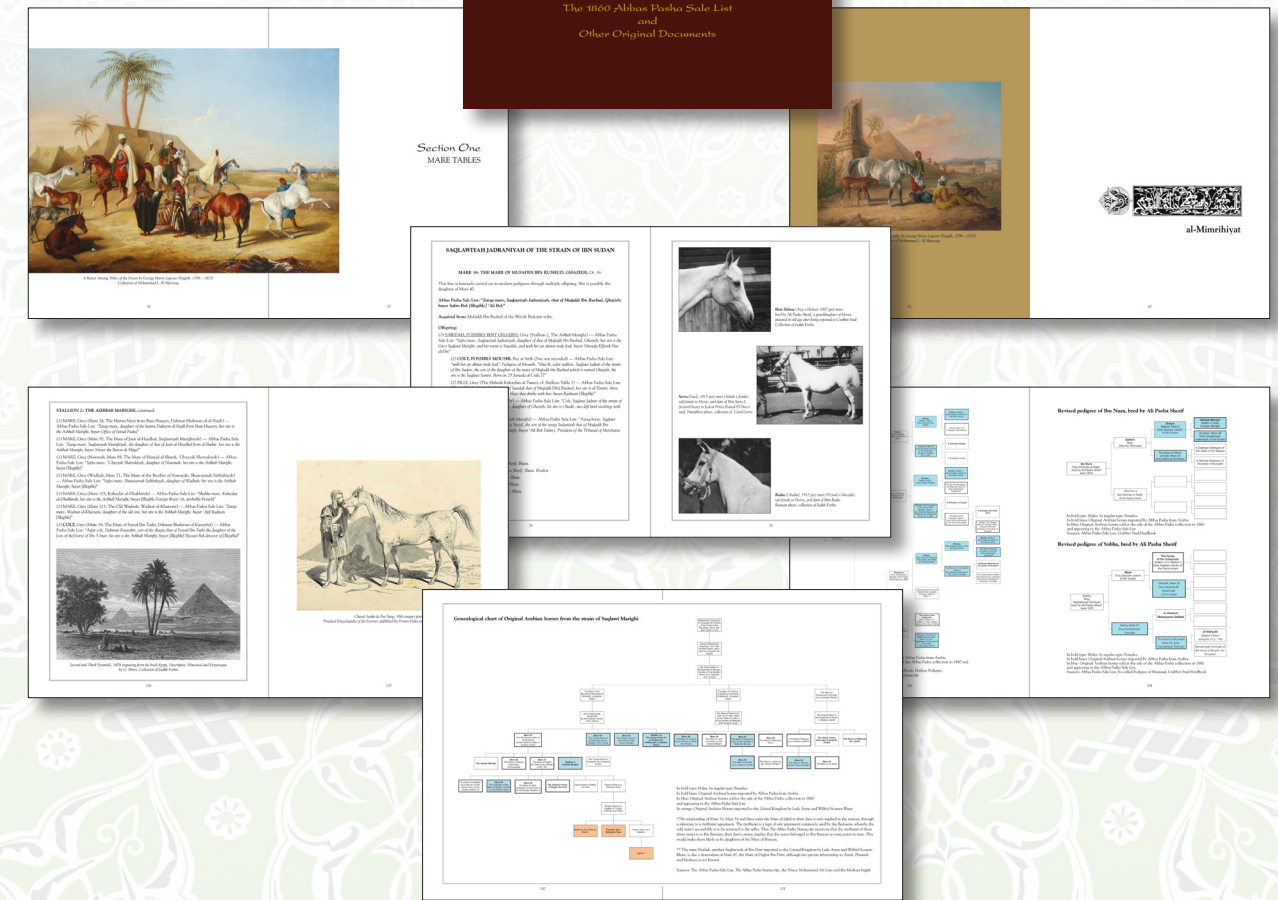
*Authored by Edouard Al-Dahdah · Published by Ansata Publications*

**The most significant publication on the Arabian horse since *The Abbas Pasha Manuscript***

Hardbound with gold foil lettering, the cover is graced with a painting of the renowned Abbas Pasha stallion Ghadir. The book is 336 pages in color and illustrated with nineteenth century art throughout as well as historic photos of descendants of Abbas Pasha horses. It is an ABSOLUTE MUST for any complete book collection on Arabian horses.



This book reveals new discoveries from the translation of the Sale List of the famous 1860 dispersal sale of Abbas Pasha's legendary collection of Arabian horses, as well as an examination of several other original documents, resulting in a great deal of new information about the ancestors of most of today's Arabians tracing to the stock of Abbas Pasha I.



**Publication price: \$175**  
**Plus shipping and handling**  
**Contact: [horsesofabbaspasha@gmail.com](mailto:horsesofabbaspasha@gmail.com)**

**LIMITED EDITION!**  
**Take advantage of this opportunity to add this beautiful reference book to your library.**