



War Horse: A History of the Military Horse and Rider

Louis A. DiMarco

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For more than four thousand years, the horse and rider have been an integral part of warfare. Armed with weapons and accessories ranging from a simple javelin to the hand-held laser designator, the horse and rider have fought from the steppes of central Asia to the plains of North America. Understanding the employment of the military horse is key to understanding the successes and the limitations of military operations and campaigns throughout history. Over the centuries, horses have been used to pull chariots, support armorladen knights, move scouts rapidly over harsh terrain, and carry waves of tightly formed cavalry. In *War Horse: A History of the Military Horse and Rider*, Louis A. DiMarco discusses all of the uses of horses in battle, including the Greek, Persian, and Roman cavalry, the medieval knight and his mount, the horse warriors—Huns, Mongols, Arabs, and Cossacks—the mounted formations of Frederick the Great and Napoleon, and mounted unconventional fighters, such as American Indians, the Boers, and partisans during World War II. The book also covers the weapons and forces which were developed to oppose horsemen, including longbowmen, pike armies, cannon, muskets, and machine guns. The development of organizations and tactics are addressed beginning with those of the chariot armies and traced through the evolution of cavalry formations from Alexander the Great to the Red Army of World War II.

In addition, the author examines the training and equipping of the rider and details the types of horses used as military mounts at different points in history, the breeding systems that produced those horses, and the techniques used to train and control them. Finally, the book reviews the importance of the horse and rider to battle and military operations throughout history, and concludes with a survey of the current military use of horses. *War Horse* is a comprehensive look at this oldest and most important aspect of military history, the relationship between human and animal, a weapons system that has been central to warfare longer than any other.



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