



Mondays with DAVID ALLAN



Remembrance — the horses as well

THERE was a reference in or about this publication last week to there being no Silence this Sunday, a play on the name of the famous stallion.

Sunday Silence's parentage (Halo – Wishing Well by Understanding) no doubt inspired the naming thought process. A Sunday Silence is observed by millions, particularly but not exclusively in the UK, around the Commonwealth and the USA on Remembrance Sunday. It refers to all conflicts but with the 100th anniversary of the Armistice, the enhanced World War One focus magnified events in France, Belgium and elsewhere in Europe.

This is not the province only of the older generations. In recent years, young people have responded strongly to the concept of remembrance – one might say powerfully in terms of the impact their respect and eagerness to learn has on their parents and grandparents. Through those elders with family histories and experiences, through schools and other organisations, and because of the ubiquitous poppy, a huge numbers of youngsters nowadays "get it".

Yesterday's ceremony at The Cenotaph in Whitehall saw the usual parade of veterans but in addition this year 10,000 people of all ages with World War One connections also marched to recognise the 100th anniversary of the actual Armistice. It could have been 100,000+, so many are the families that treasure their parents, grandparents and great-grandparents medals.

It is not often that the nearest Sunday is not

"nearest" but is actually on the day, thus allowing the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month to be marked precisely.

During the laying of the wreaths, immediately after the leading politicians have followed the Royal family, it is not disrespectful to listen hard – to a TV or with an earpiece if present – to David Dimbleby listing the Commonwealth countries as their High Commissioners step forward in groups.

Of course ceremonies are going on in their own countries, but here the Commonwealth is represented by these officials reminding everyone of the three million Commonwealth citizens who came in WW1 and 5 million in WW2.

It's a good way of teaching young children about that family of nations that some of us think is immensely important – especially those of us who attended schools in London and had to visit the Commonwealth Institute regularly.

A word in the commentary struck me when the first five High Commissioners offered their wreaths: Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and India – the *senior* Commonwealth countries. It meant in the provision of people to the war efforts. It is to be hoped that governments and civil services of those countries are using that colossally respected status as leverage **(to page 2)**



Royal Scots Greys in France (left); horses at Ypres (right).

DAVID ALLAN (fm p1)

to strengthen special trade and diplomatic arrangements with the UK, like many that were cancelled or watered down during the period of EU membership.

In the SA thoroughbred world, we have more than half an eye on export/import arrangements with the UK post-Brexit. One of the key freedoms voted for is the facility to make the UK's own arrangements with whomever the UK (and the partner) wishes. However, there may be temporary strangulation of such sovereign independence because of the difficulty in agreeing how the Irish/Northern Irish border will work.

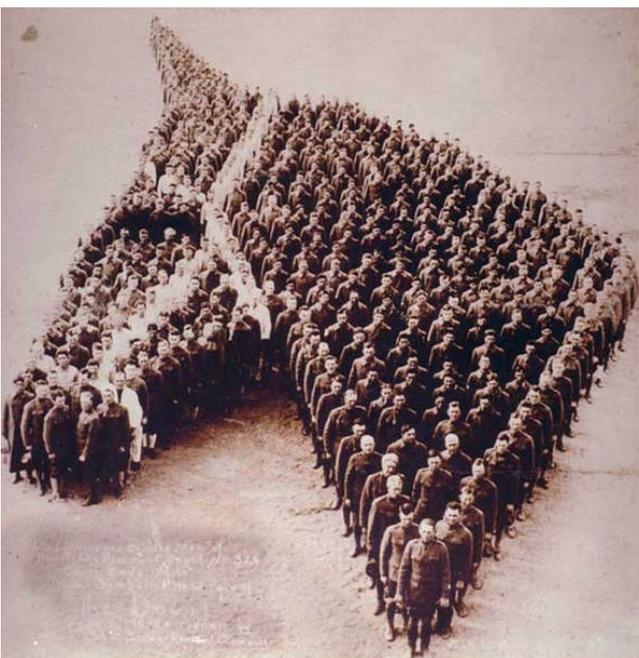
South Africa did not only give people to the British war efforts. She sent horses. Thousands of them. It would appear, on the evidence, that none of them carried AHS with them and therefore did not wipe out themselves and the entire population of cavalry, artillery, riding, and supply horses, not to mention the countless donkeys and mules pressed into service. Regrettably, many met a different fate.

Lee McKenzie is an extremely accomplished and charming TV presenter and interviewer, particularly of Formula One but also at Wimbledon and Equestrian events. She has been known to respond on twitter to racing tweets.

She tweeted today reminding us that *"8 Million horses, donkeys and mules lost their lives in World War One and countless more continued to support families and businesses back home....."*. Under the hashtag #lestweforget, the universally recognised line from Kipling, Miss McKenzie explained that a sculptor – Tom Hill *"has crafted 100 stunning hearts from horseshoes kindly donated by the King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery....a name tag of an individual horse...tied to each to commemorate their life"*.

Of course some of those "back home" were being racehorses, even though they ran on muted occasions with, by 1918, countless racegoers no longer able to be there. In 1915-1918, The Derby was run at Newmarket not Epsom and the last WW1 running was won by Gainsborough. He won an adjusted Triple Crown and was a good sire – most brilliantly of Hyperion, six times champion sire.

Gainsborough was named – not for Thomas Gainsborough the portrait and landscape artist – but for the town in Lincolnshire that his owner liked. He could not have been so named in South Africa because the NHA rules preclude the **(to page 3)**



650 men stand in tribute to the horse - USA - 1915.



Hundreds of horseshoe hearts sculpted in memory.

names of famous people, or are supposed to.

This would mean that neither Galileo (Galilei) nor (Bobby) Frankel would have been accepted. Frankel was a special case in the Juddmonte empire, but Coolmore names dozens of their hundreds after famous people.



Galileo Galilei.

Churchill is a recent example, few names being more famous. But then perhaps they meant Churchill on the Hudson Bay in Canada, or Churchill the advertising dog who looks like Churchill.

The first yearling I ever bought in South Africa many years ago at Germiston had been given a horrible name which I changed to Selika (the heroine in an opera L'Africaine – The African Girl). In the opera, she was a highborn Indian princess, enslaved to South Africa, who became the lover of Vasco da Gama.

When proposing to name her first colt foal Vasco da Gama (when he went into training, I stress), the name was available but refused. I might have sympathised if they hadn't liked naming the mare's son after her lover, if you see what I mean. Oedipus would have been better. Or that Vasco da Gama is a football club in both Brazil and South Africa. That would be like naming her Chelsea. Chelsea FC? Chelsea Clinton? Chelsea the place? Oh well. We named him Vasco which was apparently ok. He won, but only once, perhaps annoyed by his name.

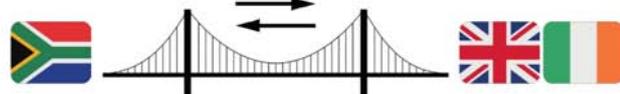
Another "perhaps" is that you haven't really read these last six paragraphs and have been distracted by the millions of four-legged friends in WW1. Such distraction, as an important appendage to the remembrance of human sacrifices, would be fine with me. - **tt.**



Not Churchill, but Churchill in the saddle during WW1



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