



Zaafarana

A Saqlawi Queen



Horses of the Desert by Harrington Bird courtesy of the Forbis collection

■ by **Joe Ferriss**

*photos by Jerry Sparagowski, Gigi Grasso, Jeff Little,
Johnny Johnston, Javan Schaller, Polly Knoll.*

*Other photos courtesy of Judith Forbis collection
unless otherwise noted.*

Legend has always had
wonderful things to say about the strain
of Saqlawi Jidran of Ibn Sudan.

I recall as a young man hearing the story
of how Abbas Pasha, ruler of Egypt
was so enamored with this strain
that he paid a fortune for just one
crippled old mare of this strain and
had her transported back to his stables
in a special cart.

*As it turns out the lovely white, swift running mare Za-
afarana (Balance x Samira) was of this strain and in fact
she traces to the mare Ghazieh, one of Abbas Pasha's belo-
ved Saqlawi Jidran of Ibn Sudan mares. The manner in
which her illustrious family is handed down is interesting.
Ghazieh was obtained from the Bedouin tribes for Abbas
Pasha prior to his untimely death. Sometime there after she
bore a daughter Horra about 1870 by the Saqlawi Jidran
stallion Zobeyni who was also at one time in the stud of
Abbas Pasha. Horra was then a producing mare for the
great Egyptian breeder Ali Pasha Sherif who was one of
the main buyers of stock from the Abbas Pasha studs. Horra
was then mated to Ali Pasha Sherif's stallion Shueyman,
resulting in the grey mare Helwa foaled 1875. Helwa then
produced in 1887 the lovely grey mare Bint Helwa sired
by Ali Pasha Sherif's chestnut Dahman Shahwan stallion
Aziz, who also sired the famed stallion Mesaoud. Wilfrid
and Lady Anne Blunt had established their Sheykh Obeyd
stud in Egypt and also their Crabbet stud in England.
When the time of dispersal came for most of Ali Pasha
Sherif's stock the Blunts had taken particular interest in
the Saqlawi Jidrans of Ali Pasha and wanted very much*

to have the lovely Bint Helwa among others. She arrived at Sheykh Obeyd with her filly Ghazala (x Ibn Sherara). Later on Bint Helwa would be shipped to Crabbet in England to be a brood mare for that stud. Shortly after being at Crabbet, there was a running incident where a group of mares rushed through a fence area and Bint Helwa broke her front legs. A special sling was created and she was saved. She was always referred to thereafter as the "broken legged mare." Photos show her to be a very beautiful mare even with her wrapped front legs. Looking at the photos, I cannot help but be reminded of the legend of the old crippled Saqlawi mare for which Abbas Pasha paid a fortune.



*The "broken legged mare"
Bint Helwa, female line
of Zaafarana.
Forbis collection photo.*

Bint Helwa

[1911] who was important in the Irshass stud, and Bint Radia, the dam of Hamdan, Shahloul, and Samira. Samira then produced Zaafarana (x Balance) in 1946. Though not as prolific as the celebrated Saqlawi Moniet El Nefous line, the Zaafarana family is nonetheless a wonderful one. I often think of many of the greys of this family looking very much like their far distant female ancestors such as Radia, Bint Radia and so forth. This family now comes in all colors but it still seems to have a tenacious hold on the admired qualities of its roots.

Bint Helwa left some influence at Crabbet but her daughter Ghazala who remained in Egypt at Sheykh Obeyd produced two daughters, Jemla and Ghadia [Radia]. Later Ghazala was exported to the U.S. The result of this is that the line of the "broken legged mare" is strongest in Egyptian and American lines. Jemla produced the lovely Serra who established a strong line of her own via Mr. Babson's import Bint Serra [See Desert Heritage n. 14/2008: Serra The Beautiful White Mare]. Radia produced two daughters, Zareefa



Bint Radia

The lovely Bint Radia (Mabrouk Manial x Radia out of Ghazala out of Bint Helwa). Bint Radia is the grand dam of Zaafarana. Forbis collection photo.

Zaafarana

(Balance x Samira out of Bint Radia) at the EAO. Forbis photo.



What was Zaafarana like? Fortunately she was photographed on numerous occasions by Judi Forbis who imported her daughter Ansata Bint Zaafarana in 1959. In her book Authentic Arabian Bloodstock II, Judi offers some insight on Zaafarana with descriptions by stud manager General Petko Von Szandtner and also her own reflections. To quote Von Szandtner's notes:



Zaafarana

*"good tail carriage,
excellent movement
and prideful carriage."
Judi Forbis photo.*

*"Zaafarana... Grey,
noble. Noble head,
large lively eyes,
well set on ears, well set on
but not very long neck, good withers, sufficiently
good back, moderately strong loins, good nice croup, tail set
on high, unequal hooves, a little bit weak legs, cannons tied
in under the knee, wide and deep, moderately turned out
hocks, very slightly toed in, good ground covering gait."
Judi Forbis notes her impressions.*

*"At maturity, an attractive and refined mare, long rather
ordinary head with good expressive eyes, long well-set
neck, long lines, good tail carriage, excellent movement and
prideful carriage."*

By any standards Zaafarana proved to be a great broodmare. Out of eight foals, three daughters and two sons bred on in Egyptian breeding. What is remembered of her produce is that they were classic Arabians, often of better quality than her and some were great athletes. Her two breeding sons Amrulla (x Sid Abouhom) and Talal (x Nazeer) both enjoyed successful racing careers. Amrulla is sire of the great and beautiful EAO sire Akhtal (x Hagir).

Ansata Bint Zaafarana

*(Nazeer x Zaafarana) imported
to the U.S. from Egypt in 1959,
a beautifully proportioned mare
and an excellent producer.
Jerry Sparagowski photo.*



Talal was imported to the U.S. and as an aged stallion and remarkably won U.S. National Top Ten. Zaafarana's three producing daughters, El Ameera, Ansata Bint Zaafarana (both by Nazeer) and Nahid (x Sid Abouhom) have continuing families.

Talal was preceded to the U.S. by eight years in the form of his full sister Ansata Bint Zaafarana, imported by Don and Judi Forbis. Everyone who knew Ansata Bint Zaafarana remarked on her beauty and quality. She was one of Don Forbiss favorites and she was a very good producing mare. She produced ten foals all sired by Ansata Ibn Halima (Nazeer x Halima). Most were quite similar in type proving the consistency of Ansata Bint Zaafarana's influence. Unfortunately a few of her produce died young before having a chance to add to her legacy. But several daughters and sons deserve mention.

Ansata Aziza was a beautiful mare in the tradition of her Radia female line and was very successful in the show ring in both halter and performance. She was also a producer of champions. Her handsome son, Ansata Ibn Aziza (x Ansata Halima Son) became an important sire for Zandai Arabians. Her daughter GA Moon Taj Mahal (x Imperial Imperor) was a celebrated show mare. Not to be outdone, Taj Mahal's full sister the beautiful chestnut GA Moon Taj Halima produced the famed Egyptian Event Supreme Champion stallion, Farid Nile Moon (x Anaza El Farid) exported to the Ruler of Sharjah. His full sister Emerald Moon became an important broodmare in the Arabian Horse Center of Kuwait.

*(Ansata Ibn Halima x Ansata Bint Zaafarana) everyone fell in love with her.
Jerry Sparagowski photo.*



Ansata Aziza

Ansata Zariefā

*The lovely Ansata Zariefā,
full sister to Ansata Aziza.
Jerry Sparagowski photo.*



GA Moon Taj Halima



Farid Nile Moon

*The magnificent
Farid Nile Moon
(Anaza El Farid x GA
Moon Taj Halima).
Javan Schaller photo.*

Ansata Aziza's full sister Ansata Zariefā was also a beautiful mare. However she was not blessed with the bounty of many foals. Her only daughter Ansata Azalia (x Maard) fortunately had a number of daughters and sons. Azalia's daughter Ansata Zaaḥina (x Ansata Mourad Bey) became a broodmare for Zandā Arabians, while Azalia's daughter Ansata Zahra (x Ansata Halim Shah) went to Nejd Stud in Saudi Arabia. Her son Razal Ibn Azalia (x Raadin Inshalla) doubles the Halima blood and also brings in the other Bint Helwa female line via Bint Serra.

*The stylish GA Moon
Taj Halima (Imperial
Imperor x Ansata Aziza)
pictured one month
before foaling
Farid Nile Moon.
Johnny Johnston photo.*



Pictured at left is Ansata El Nisr and at right is Ansata El Alim, full brothers by Ansata Ibn Halima and out of Ansata Bint Zaafarana. Forbis archive.

Ansata El Nisr L with Ansata El Alim R

Ansata Bint Zaafarana's sons were all classic type individuals. All were full brothers sired by Ansata Ibn Halima. Ansata El Nisr was shown to U.S. National Top Ten by Don Forbis and became a respected sire. Ansata Abu Nazeer became a sire at Glorieta Ranch and his daughters quickly gained admiration as great producing mares resulting in his blood found in many countries now including the Middle East. Ansata Ali Pasha was a very beautiful young stallion with a promising career at Glenglade Arabians. Unfortunately he died young without leaving Egyptian get. Ansata El Alim lived a long life in Arizona. Though he was not available to a large number of mares, he sired some beautiful Egyptians.

In Egypt remained two other daughters of Zaafarana, El Ameera (Nazeer x Zaafarana) and Nahid (Sid Abuhom x Zaafarana). Nahid produced a son and daughter that came to the U.S. Her daughter Nathela (x

Ansata Abu Nazeer



*the classic Ansata
Abu Nazeer
(Ansata Ibn
Halima x Ansata
Bint Zaafarana).
Polly Knoll photo.*

Nasralla) was a classic mare with beautiful action owned by American actress Jennifer C Neill. Nahid's son Mazin was imported to the U.S. by Lancer's Arabians as a young horse. I saw him shortly after importation and I was struck by his classic type and very fine skin and clean bone. He was later exported to Morocco. Nahid's other daughter Kalthoom was sired by the ethereal Farazdac, sire of Ikhnatoon, and she remained a good broodmare at the EAO.

El Ameera became a foundation mare for Al Badeia Stud in Egypt. She was very prolific with 10 foals, nine of them were daughters and



El Ameera

*(Nazeer x Zaafarana)
pictured as a very old mare at
Al Badeia. She and her daughters
are the most prolific branch of
Zaafarana's line. Forbis photo.*

only one son. Such a large family extends from her that a separate article could be written about her extended family. She was a full sister to Ansata Bint Zaafarana but was chestnut in color instead of grey and produced all colors. Because she was bred to a diversity of stallions such as Anter, Alaa El Din, El Araby, Abdoun, Kayed and Seef, she has a more diverse representation. Some of her daughters, such as Ferial (x Anter), also had many foals. El Ameera's daughter Sabra (x Alaa El Din) was exported to Germany producing 14 foals.

Perhaps it is El Ameera's last daughter that has regenerated this family world wide. Hasna El Badia was foaled when El Ameera was 26 years old. She came to the U.S. as a yearling and from her daughters added considerable recognition to the Zaafarana line. Her daughter Alia-Zenobia



Belle Staar

*The lovely Belle Staar
(The Minstril x Alia-Aenor)
dam of The Vision HG.
Jeff Little photo.*



Al Lahab

*Multi-international
Champion and sire of
champions Al Lahab
(Laheeb x The Vision HG).
Gigi Grasso photo.*

(x Imperial Imdal) was exported to Morocco. Her daughter Alia-Aenor (x The Egyptian Prince) produced Lilly Langtry HG (x The Minstril) dam of BJ Thee Arabella (x The Desperado) U.S. National Top Ten and Egyptian Event Supreme Champion mare. Alia-Aenor also produced the full sisters Cheyenne HG (x The Minstril) and Belle Staar. Belle Staar is the dam of Isabella HG (x Hadidi) multi-Egyptian Event champion and Egyptian Event Supreme Champion. Belle Staar will be forever remembered for her magnificent daughter The Vision HG (x Thee Desperado), dam of international champion stallions Al Lahab (x Laheeb) and Al Maraam (x Imperial Imdal).

It is remarkable really that all the way from the middle of the 1800's to the present day, one man's passion for the Saqlawi Jidran of Ibn Sudan strain has spread to so many who continue to enjoy this long legacy carried forward by the mare whose name begins with the last letter of the alphabet "Z", but is first in so many hearts, Zaafarana. □



Isabella HG

*Egyptian Event
Supreme Champion mare
Isabella HG (Hadidi x Belle Staar).
Gigi Grasso photo.*