

FADL

The great equalizer

■ by Joe Ferriss

photos Arabian Horse News archive, Charles Craver, Erwin Escher, Ferriss archive, Sharon Ferriss, Forbis archive, Foster, Diana Johnson, Johnny Johnston, Susan Mayo, Nasr Marei, Carl Raswan, Rik Van Lent, Stuart Vesty, Robin Weeks



Fadl, 1930 grey stallion bred by Prince Mohammed Ali and imported from Egypt to the U.S. in 1932. He was described as “all things for all reasons.” Here he is being ridden as a Polo horse by George Cason. Ferriss archive photo.



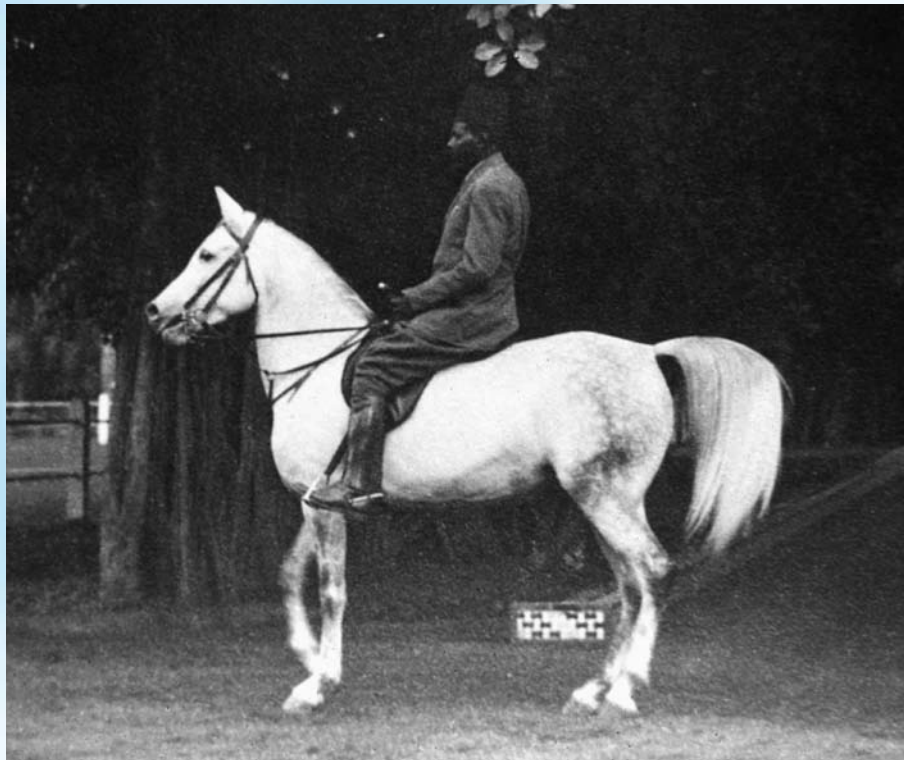
Ibn Rabdan, 1917 dark liver chestnut stallion, the senior sire at the R.A.S. He is the sire of Fadl. Forbis archive photo.

Why would anyone care about an Arabian stallion born in Egypt 80 years ago? It seems like such a long time ago. Yet certain Arabian ancestors become a key ingredient in today's Arabians over a longer period of time, more so than many people realize. So it seems only fitting that we celebrate in this feature, the Egyptian stallion Fadl.

One cannot fully appreciate this stallion's contribution without also taking a brief look at his American importer, Henry Babson. Mr. Babson grew up in an era when horses were still embedded in American everyday life. So their value was first and foremost for their usefulness and secondly for their appearance. While the Babson family was entrepreneurial in a variety of interests, their ties to agriculture were strong. Henry Babson's exposure to Arabian type horses was quite by accident while as a young man participating on a long trail drive of cattle. Each man was provided seven or eight horses for the cattle drive but one man showed up with only 4 part Arabians and Henry was amazed at how they worked the entire drive finishing in better condition than they started. They were good looking horses. This made a strong impression on him and later after years of success in business, Mr. Babson at age 57 decided to establish a farm to raise Arabian horses. While he had traveled to

a number of foreign countries, only the horses in Egypt seemed to fit his ideal of the type of horse he wanted to raise. The result was the now famous 6 Egyptian imports to the U.S. in 1932. He did also later import some Arabians from Poland and England, though he is most remembered for his Egyptian bred Arabians.

Of the original Egyptian imports only one of them was a stallion. His name was Fadl. He was born in 1930 being bred by Prince Mohammed Ali Tewfik from the Prince's famous Bint Yamama line. She was considered the key to all the real Arabian horse quality in the Prince's program. Fadl was sired by Ibn Rabdan, a very dark liver chestnut Hadban Enzahi stallion used considerably by the Egyptian Government stud (R.A.S.). The Prince was interested in breeding to Ibn Rabdan because he tended to sire very dark colors and the Prince had a desire to produce an Arabian that was black in color. However, Bint Yamama's line was very powerful for her look and as a result the Prince got grey horses, usually resembling more the dam line. This was good however because of the inherent beauty and quality of the Bint Yamama line which had become admired by foreign visitors. Ibn Rabdan could be counted on for overall good body quality and conformation but the true head quality came from Fadl's dam, the lovely Mahroussa a grand daughter of



**Mahroussa, 1920 grey mare bred by Prince Mohammed Ali.
Shown here being ridden by one of the Prince's grooms in his gardens at Manial Palace.
She is the dam of Fadl and was a beautiful example of the Prince's breeding. Forbis archive photo.**

Bint Yamama. In a way Mahroussa was almost like Bukra at the R.A.S. years later, admired by visitors for a special kind of beauty that radiated from her.

Fadl was a very handsome grey stallion. He seemed to have just the right amounts of everything desirable from each parent. His body was strong and balanced with good neck, powerfully arched, excellent shoulders, and good depth of body, excellent legs and strong gaskins. His head was masculine but very handsome. In the old days of Arabian breeding stallions were always distinctively masculine and mares clearly feminine. His eyes were large and well placed out on the corners of his head. His jaws were round and deep, his ears were short and shapely, the overall impression was one like that illustrated in 19th century engravings and paintings of Arabian horses which no doubt was pleasing to Mr. Babson. To him it was the ideal, the picture of both strength and beauty. There was also a little detail about Fadl's descendants which was an added touch, they tended to carry their tails naturally up in a sweeping arch like a palm branch, even when walking, and this touch gave a very flowing impression when walking. I experienced this personally when I saw Fadl's last living straight Egyptian son Lothar (x Habba by Fadl) who was 75% Fadl. Lothar carried his tail in a wonderful arch and when he walked

he looked just like those old engravings, flowing graceful curves everywhere. Also to Mr. Babson's liking, Fadl's offspring were athletic horses, blessed with great agility and the most wonderful temperaments. They were intelligent, easy to train animals. For this reason Fadl was referred to as the horse who was "all things for all reasons." He was used in Polo competitions, he was used in harness, he was a trustworthy pleasure mount for the Babson family and he was even used as an Arab sire in the improvement of some local draft stock. But most of all, he was Mr. Babson's ideal image of that "old world" type of Arabian as depicted in 19th century art.

In Fadl's lifetime in America there were scarcely any other Egyptian mares outside of Mr. Babson's own importation. Nonetheless Fadl sired 74 get in America, a considerable number for his era from a private farm that did not generally stand its stallions to outside mares. Of Fadl's get, 34 were from the Babson Egyptian mares. The other 40 were from mainly additional Babson imports from other countries and a few private breedings from American breeders acquainted with Mr. Babson.

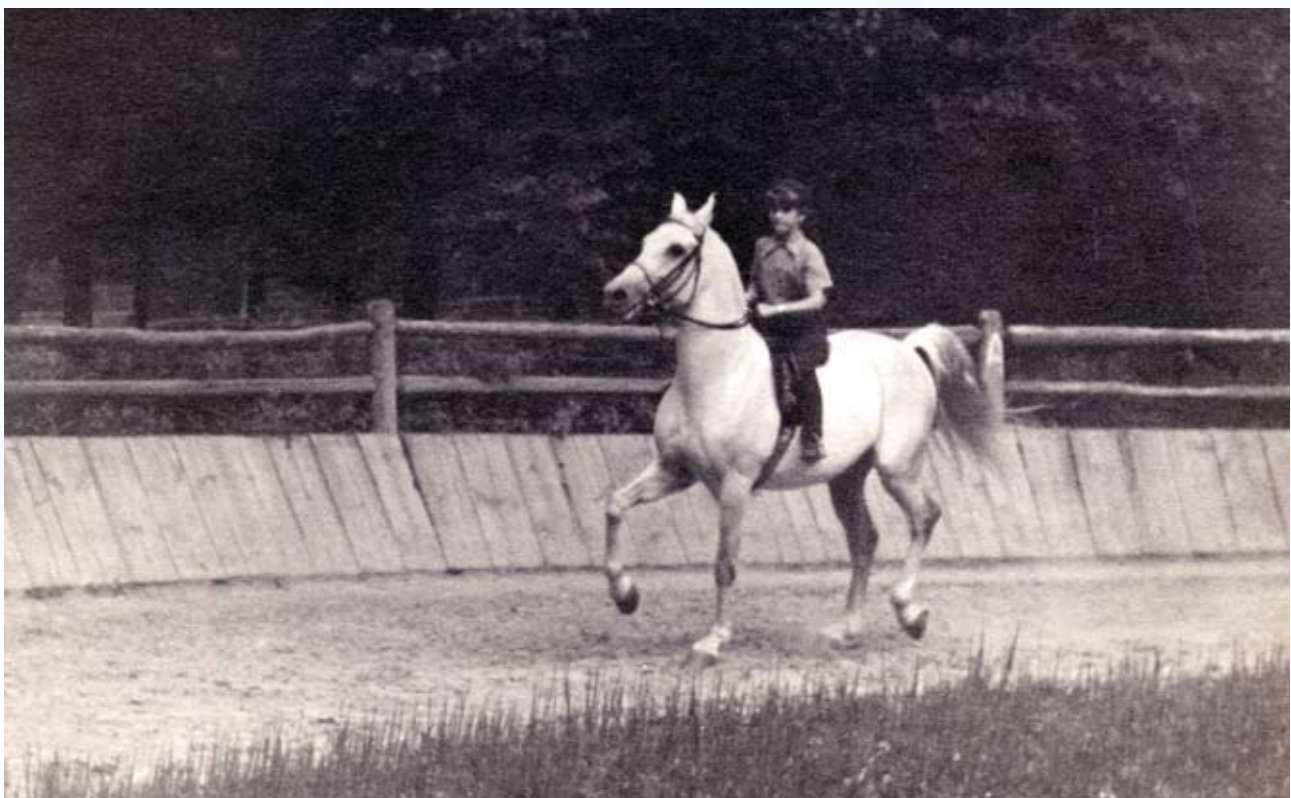
Among the non-Egyptian imports by Mr. Babson was the lovely Saudi desert bred mare Turfa, bred by the Saud Royal family, who crossed very well with Fadl,

a very impressive cross which remains popular today among devotees of the desert Arabian. A number of U.S. National Performance winners trace to the Fadl x Turfa cross since she was also a superior moving horse and, like Fadl, was known for her wonderful temperament.

Mr. Babson also imported several mares from Poland that included Azja IV, Kostrewza, Rybitwa and Kasztelanka. These were of the old pre-war Polish lines and his importation took place just before the invasion of Poland. These mares were bred to Fadl and eventually became broodmares for other farms when Babson returned to his Egyptian-bred focus. However, one particular mating from this group would turn out to be a breeding that spread Fadl's blood worldwide. The excellent Polish import Kasztelanka was bred to Fadl producing the handsome and noble stallion Fadheilan. Fadheilan in turn sired the legendary and charismatic stallion Fadjur who for many years was the all time leading sire of Arabians in America with 839 get. In turn Fadjur was bred to his half sister Fadneeka, producing the beautiful multi-champion mare Jurneeka, a double Fadl mare. It must be remembered that a great mare spreads her influence farther if an excellent son of hers is heavily used. Jurneeka in turn produced the beloved stallion Khemosabi, who even now 12 years since his last foal was born (before widespread use of frozen semen), is the

world's leading sire of Arabian horses with 1264 get. Not even taking into account Fadl's role in straight Egyptian breeding, just through the widespread use of Fadjur and his grandson Khemosabi, Fadl appears in tens of thousands of Arabian pedigrees around the world.

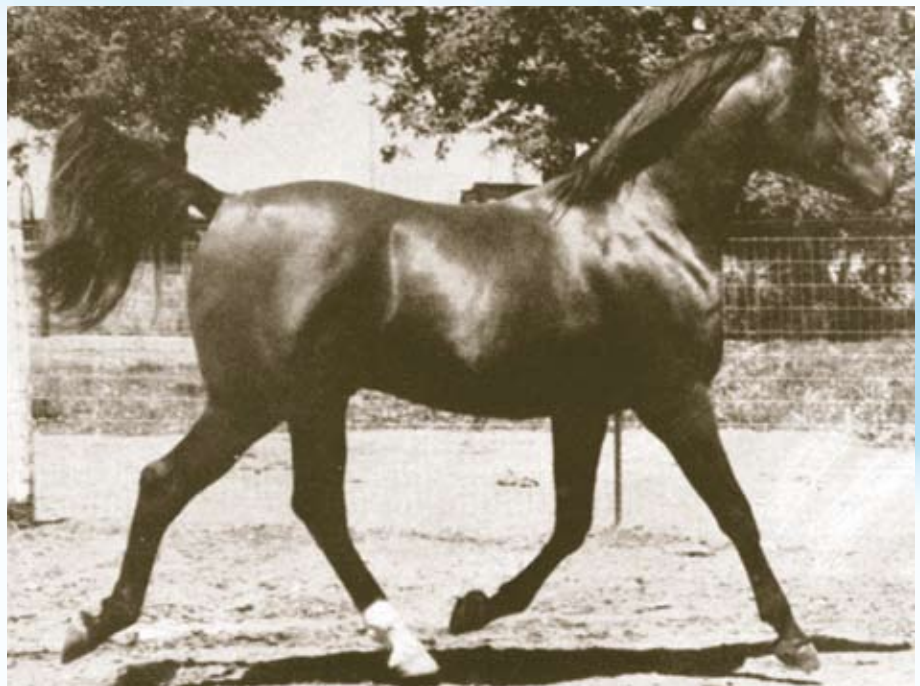
Fadl's role within straight Egyptian breeding is also much more pervasive than people realize. He was the only straight Egyptian stallion in the original group of imports so he appears multiple times within the Babson Egyptian program. One of the imported mares, Maaroufa, was also his full sister, so between Fadl and his sister their ancestry was a significant factor. Yet over the years an interesting generality developed in the kinds of Egyptian horses bred at Babson's. Each of the imported mares had their own strong influence which emerged over time, so there was considerable diversity of type in Babson Egyptians, not all of them looking like Fadl or Maaroufa. When grey horses were produced they seemed to resemble more the type of horses bred by Prince Mohammed Ali, like Fadl and Maaroufa, and one can see the look of Fadl's dam Mahroussa in some of his descendants. When black or dark bay horses were produced they sometimes seemed to show the influence of Fadl's sire Ibn Rabdan or Bint Serra's sire Sotamm, or Bint Bint Sabbah's grandsire Kazmeyn, with pleasant but not beautiful heads. When chestnuts were produced they were sometimes



Fadl being ridden at the Babson farm by Mr. Babson's grand daughter. Ferriss archive photo.



Fadl overlooking the Babson farm in old age. Note the dramatically curved neck, large prominent eyes, deep jowls and beautifully shaped ears - the "old world" look of 19th century artists. Charles Craver photo.



Fadjur
(Fadheilan by Fadl x Bint Sahara)
1952 bay stallion. A very charismatic stallion and great sire, Fadjur was the dream horse in America and for many years the leading sire of Arabians. Arabian Horse News archive photo 1958.

reminiscent of Ibn Rabdan's influence and sometimes a bit more refined like Bint Saada. The mares Bint Serra and Bint Saada tended to add height, more withers and longer forearms if line-bred. The grey stallion Ibn Fa-Serr (Fa-Serr x Fa Deene) a Saqlawi inbred to Bint Serra, was a sire of superior movement, giving powerful shoulders and higher neck set. His greys tended to show more refinement in the head, like his dam Fa Deene while some of his blacks were more masculine like his sire,

Fa-Serr. Generally Ibn Fa-Serr added a bit more height, but in the long run, Fadl seemed to be the great equalizer, maintaining an overall balanced body, with graceful curvy lines, great athletic ability, charismatic, intelligent personalities and superb dispositions.

In straight Babson Egyptian breeding, Fadl was already a natural ingredient for blending with later E.A.O. bred Egyptians. It is interesting to point out his relationship



Khemosabi (Amerigo x Jurneeka)
still the leading sire world-wide
in terms of number of foals.
He is double Fadl.
Johnny Johnston photo.

Fay El Dine (Fadl x Bint Serra)
1934 grey stallion,
Fadl's first born Egyptian son,
and a great broodmare sire.
Ferriss archive photo.





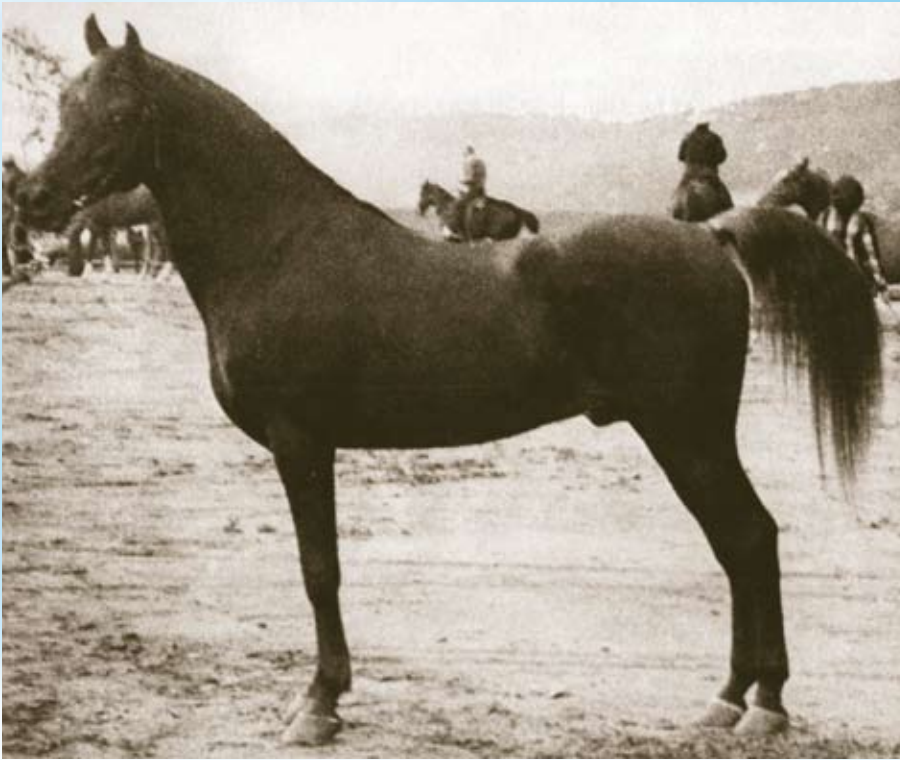
Fa-Serr (Fadl x Bint Serra)
1947 black stallion, the full brother to Fay El Dine and the most heavily used of Fadl's sons at the Babson Farm. Ferriss archive photo.



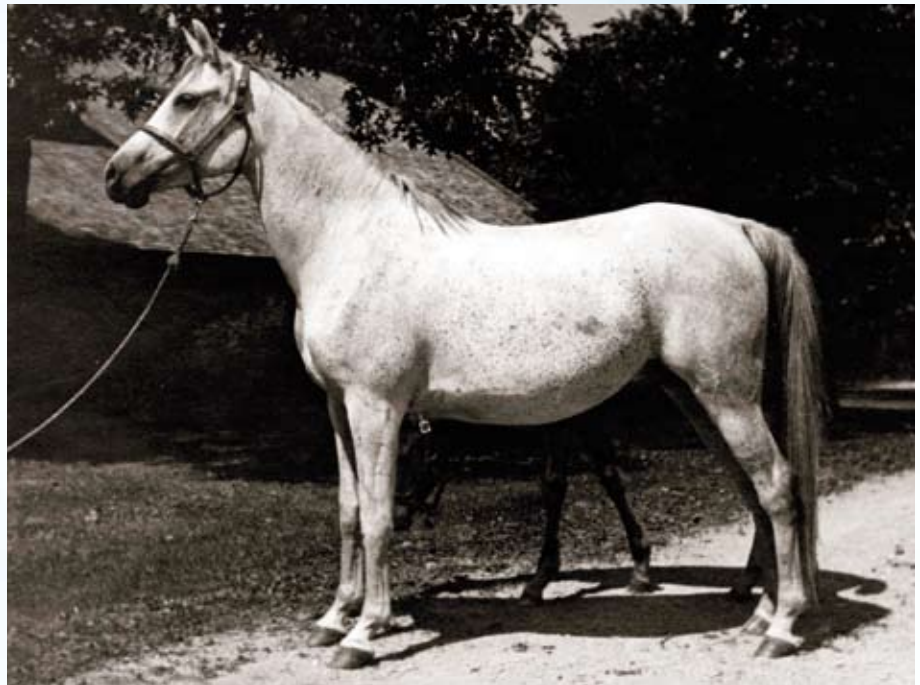
Faddan (Fadl x Bint Saada)
1935 chestnut stallion, the only source of Bint Saada's blood. He was closely related to Moniet El Nefous. Ferriss archive photo.

to other famous Egyptian ancestors. Because Fadl was a son of Ibn Rabdan and out of a daughter of Mabrouk Manial, he was already a three quarter brother to both Hamdan (the sire of Anter) and Shabloul who sired the great mares Moniet El Nefous and Bukra. Mr. Babson's imported mare Bint Saada was closely related to Moniet

El Nefous's grandmother, so when Babson bred Fadl to Bint Saada, he came close to replicating the pedigree of Moniet El Nefous. Take for example the superior sire Prince Fa Moniet (2 crosses to Fadl). He is the result of intense line breeding to Moniet El Nefous on the upper part of his pedigree while his female line goes to the



Khebir (Fadl x Bint Bint Sabbah) 1942 chestnut stallion, a popular sire on the west coast.
Foster photo.



Fa Deene (Fadl x Bint Serra) 1937 grey mare. A lovely mare who is the dam of Babson sires Ibn Fa-Serr and Hadbah and also the female line of the excellent sires AK El Sennari and Fa Daalim.
Ferriss archive photo.

Faddan (Fadl x Bint Saada) daughter Fada from the female line of Maaroufa, Fadl's full sister. All ingredients here are related in a way that reinforces Prince Fa Moniet as a dominant sire. When Fadl was bred to Mr. Babson's imported mare Bint Bint Sabah (out of the same mare that produced Bukra), he came close to replicating the

pedigree of Bukra. In fact 63% of this cross was identical to the pedigree of Bukra. In turn the Fadl x Bint Bint Sabbah cross is the basis for the famed Ansata Nile family. It all makes sense then when one realizes the great success of Prince Fa Moniet crossed on both horses of the Bukra and of the Nile families, producing such magnificent



**Ibn Fa-Serr (Fa-Serr x Fa-Deene) 1960 grey stallion pictured here in old age.
A sire of National winners and a sire of excellent movement. Sharon Ferriss photo.**

examples as legendary *Ansata Sinan* (Prince Fa Moniet x *Ansata Nefara*) and *Ansata White Nile*, dam of *Ansata Nile Echo*. Just these few examples serve to show why the Babson breeding adding Fadl is a very compatible choice for many later E.A.O. bred horses.

The Fadl x Bint Bint Sabbah cross has been a key contributor to many excellent Arabian horses worldwide. The previously mentioned renowned Nile family from Fa-Habba (Fadl x Bint Bint Sabbah) is one of those. Another is the exceptional sire Fabah (Fadl x Bint Bint Sabbah). He sired British National Champion *The Shah* (x Bint Fada) also a sire of champions. Fabah's son *Hadbah* (x Fa Deene) is found in numerous Egyptian champions such as Paris World Champion, Royal Colours. Fabah sired the exceptional producing Babson mare *Sabrah* (x Serrasab), dam of two famous sisters by *Ansata Ibn Halima*, *Ansata Sabiha*, a celebrated female line in the Middle East, and *Fa Halima* U.S. National Champion and Paris Reserve World Champion. Fabah's full brother *Fasaab* sired the stunningly beautiful

producing mare, *Maar Ree* (x *Maarou*), founder of a beautiful and prized line of Egyptians as well as being the grand dam of the leading Egyptian dam of champions, RDM *Maar Hala* (El Hilal x *Maar Jumana*).

Many who knew her said that the grey mare *Habba* (Fadl x Bint Bint Sabbah) was the most beautiful of Bint Bint Sabbah's daughters. Judging from the look and legacy of her progeny, this is certainly believable. Her son *Lothar*, the last-born straight Egyptian son of Fadl, was a classic and typy horse. He was chestnut-roan in color and in the summer he shimmered like an unusual gem. He was very charismatic and stylish, dancing with arched neck and tail held out like a palm branch. I can't help but think this must have been the same kind of presence that made the "Fabulous Fadjur" so popular in his day. In his younger years he competed in endurance and only saw an Egyptian breeding opportunity later but his is found in both Babson and other Egyptian lines.



Ansata Sinan
(Prince Fa Moniet x Ansata Nefara)
1992 grey stallion, a legendary sire
whose blood is highly sought after. A
fine example of the blending of Faddan
(Fadl x Bint Saada) with Moniet and
Bukra blood.
Erwin Escher photo.

Ansata Blue Nile
(Prince Fa Moniet x Ansata Stari Nile)
1990 grey mare. An exquisite example
of the Nile family, blending of Fadl
with Moniet and Bukra.
Rik Van Lent photo.



Atiq Haleeb (Laheeb x Hila B) grey stallion bred by Idan Atiq Egyptian Stud in Israel. A Supreme National Champion of Namibia and Supreme West Cape Champion at Worcester, South Africa. He traces to Fadl through both Fa-Habba of the Nile family and Habba, the dam line of Laheeb. Stuart Vesty photo courtesy of Tzviah Idan.



Fabah (Fadl x Bint Bint Sabbah) 1950 bay stallion pictured here in old age at the Babson farm. An excellent sire found internationally in champions. Ferriss archive photo.

Habba's daughter Sirhabba (x Sirecho) was a beautiful chestnut mare who founded fame for her sons Al Karim Sirhalima (x Ansata Ibn Halima) and Char Echo (x Negem). Al Karim Sirhalima became one of the most popular Egyptian sires in Australia with many champions to his credit. Char Echo was a sire of U.S. National winners and also of South African National Champion Anchor Hill Omar. Char Echo had that same kind of charisma and presence as Fadjur and Lothar.

Habba also produced Sirhabba's full sister, the high quality grey mare Asal Sirabba who is famous for one of the most successful female lines via her granddaughter, AK Latifa, dam of the celebrated international champion sire Laheeb, and grand dam of unforgettable Paris World Champion mare Loubna.

In retrospect, Fadl became "all things to many" given his pervasive influence in Arabian breeding today throughout



Fa Halima
(Ansata Ibn Halima x Sabrah by Fabah), 1970 grey mare, the full sister to Ansata Sabiha. Fa Halima was U.S. National Champion and Paris Reserve World Champion as an aged mare. Johnny Johnston photo.



Maar-Ree (Fasaab x Maarou) 1957 grey mare. She founded a dynasty in Egyptian breeding with many beautiful descendants. She is grand dam of RDM Maar Hala, all time Egyptian dam of champions. Johnny Johnston photo.

**Lothar (Fadl x Habba by Fadl)
1955 chestnut roan stallion, a classic
and charismatic representative
of Fadl.
Susan Mayo photo.**



**Laheeb (Imperial Imdal x AK Latifa)
1996 grey stallion, a world famous sire whose
get include Al Lahab. Laheeb is tail female to
the exquisite Habba (Fadl x Bint Bint Sabbah).
Nasr Marei photo courtesy of Tzviah Idan.**



Mah Deluque (Mahrouf x Bah Habba) with Babson farm manager John Vogel. The handsome Mah Deluque was one of the last senior stallions at the Babson farm after nearly seven decades of breeding. Diana Johnson photo.

the world. Famous stallions such as Ali Jamaal, Versace, Afire Bey V and Stival carry crosses to Fadl. Even modern legend Marwan Al Shaqab traces to Fadl twice through the Babson Egyptian stallion Sabdaan (Faddan x Fay Sabbah). Horses associated with Fadl's influence number in the many tens of thousands. They have been

classic, charismatic Arabian horses with that special "old world" look depicted by 19th century artists, and most importantly fine athletes, contributing to the true versatility of the Arabian horse well into the future. We are indeed fortunate that Mr. Babson began his new adventure in 1932 that has continued to this day. □



An interesting comparison: Mahroussa, dam of Fadl on the left, and Matara Sireffa born 71 years later with 20 crosses to Fadl. One can still see the look of Fadl's dam. Left is Carl Raswan photo, right is Robin Weeks photo.

