



Animals in War & Peace Nomination Form Distinguished Service Medal

The *AWP Distinguished Service Medal* is awarded to recognize distinguished and exceptionally meritorious service in the performance of his or her duties.

This Medal is awarded to any animal who distinguished themselves by extraordinary heroism, not justifying the Medal of Bravery award.

To justify this award, exceptional performance of duty, clearly above that normally expected during day-to-day operations, which has contributed materially to the success of a unit, command or department is required.

The Medal is also warranted for sustained superior performance throughout the course of their duties.

Name(s) of Individual(s) Submitting the Award: Emily J. Dulin
Brooke USA

Address: 1040 Monarch Street, Suite 300

City: Lexington State: Kentucky Zip Code: 40513

Daytime phone number: 305.505.6170

Email: Emily.Dulin@BrookeUSA.org

Are you over 18 years old: Yes No

What type of animal: Dog Horse Pigeon Other Please Specify:

Nominated Animal's name: Old Bill Age: Unknown
If deceased, provide date of death: Unknown, in the 1930s

What branch of service (USA, USAF, USMC, USN, USCG, USSPACECOM), public safety (law enforcement, fire department, etc.), or private sector service is animal affiliated with:

Served in the Cavalry of the United Kingdom during World War 1 yet his impact is universal.

If the animal is a personal service animal, what is its main duty:

Are you the Owner/Handler? Yes No

If you're not the Owner or Handler, you will need the permission of the animal's Owner to submit. If there is no Owner/Handler, please explain why:

Name of Owner/Handler:

Address:

City: State: Zip Code:

Daytime phone number: Email:

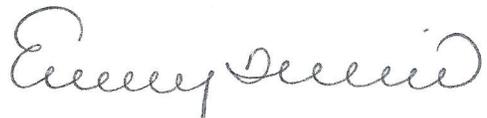
By submitting and signing this nomination form you agree to full unrestricted use of the details of your nomination (and/or award if you are successfully selected) and your image and that of the animal nominated in this form to be utilized in all forms of publicity, including but not limited to, social media platforms indefinitely.

Signature of Owner/Handler:

Date:

Signature of Individual Submitting the Award:

Date: March 5, 2026



Animals in War & Peace Service Medal

Dorothy Brooke

Brooke USA

Nomination Statement: Old Bill

Old Bill, a weary former British Army cavalry horse discovered in Cairo in 1931, exemplifies the courage and endurance of animals who serve in human conflict. Having fought in the First World War, he was abandoned after the war and sold into grueling labor on Cairo's streets. By the time he was found, Old Bill was emaciated, with swollen, trembling legs, a shadow of his former strength and dignity.

When Dorothy Brooke first encountered Old Bill, she was so moved by his suffering that she purchased him to relieve his pain and humanely euthanized him. This pivotal moment ignited a movement to rescue thousands of abandoned war horses in Egypt, leading to the founding of Brooke – Action for Working Horses and Donkeys in 1934. His story also directly inspired the establishment of Brooke USA which continues to advance Dorothy Brooke's mission by supporting working horses, donkeys, and mules in vulnerable communities worldwide.

Although the Animals in War & Peace Service Medal traditionally honors American animal heroes, Old Bill represents the beginning of the modern movement to protect working animals and serves as a symbol for all animals who have borne the burdens of human conflict. His legacy catalyzed global awareness and humanitarian action that continues to save millions of equines to this day. For embodying courage, resilience, and sacrifice—and for sparking a worldwide movement—Old Bill is profoundly deserving of this honor.

Narrative history of Old Bill

Old Bill: The Horse That Inspired a Global Movement

Old Bill, a chestnut cavalry horse of remarkable endurance, was one of thousands of horses who served the British Army during the First World War. Like many of his comrades, he carried soldiers across battlefields, hauled supplies, and endured the chaos, exhaustion, and harsh conditions of war. When the guns fell silent in 1918, the human soldiers returned home—but countless war horses, including Old Bill, were left behind in the Middle East. Many were sold into hard labor, abandoned, or neglected, their loyalty repaid only with suffering.

By 1931, Old Bill had been working on the streets of Cairo for over a decade. He was thin to the point of emaciation, with trembling, swollen legs and a body marked by the years of unrelenting labor. His once proud stature was reduced to a shadow of strength and dignity. It was in this state that Old Bill came to the attention of Dorothy Brooke, a compassionate British woman determined to help the abandoned war horses. When she first encountered him, she was struck by the depth of his suffering. He had been a symbol of service and endurance, and yet now he stood fragile, barely able to support himself. Dorothy purchased Old Bill from his owner, ensured his suffering ended humanely, and laid the foundation for what would become a landmark humanitarian campaign.

The story of Old Bill became the catalyst for the Old War Horse Campaign of Rescue, which Dorothy Brooke launched in Britain. Through a public appeal, she raised funds to purchase and care for thousands of abandoned war horses still enduring hardship in Cairo. The campaign's success inspired the founding of Brooke – Action for Working Horses and Donkeys in 1934, an organization dedicated to protecting working equines around the world. Old Bill's story also inspired the establishment of Brooke USA which continues to support the welfare of working equines today.

Old Bill's legacy extends far beyond his own life. He symbolizes the courage, endurance, and sacrifices of animals in human conflict, and his suffering sparked a global awareness that has transformed the lives of millions of working equines. Although he lived in the Middle East, and the Animals in War & Peace Service Medal traditionally honors American animal heroes, Old Bill represents the beginning of the worldwide movement to recognize and protect animals in war and peace. His life and story remind us of the profound bond between humans and the animals who serve alongside them, and the responsibility we bear to care for them.

Old Bill may have been a single horse in Cairo in 1931, but through Dorothy Brooke's compassion and the movement he inspired, he continues to embody hope, courage, and the enduring call to action for animal welfare worldwide. His story is not merely historical; it is a living legacy, celebrated through the ongoing work of Brooke USA and its global partners, ensuring that the suffering he endured will never be forgotten.

February 10, 2026

Robin Hutton
Animals in War & Peace
6 Archer Glen Court
Greensboro, NC 27407

To the Awards Selection Committee,

It is with great respect and deep personal conviction that I submit this letter in support of the nomination of *Old Bill* for the AWP Distinguished Service Medal.

I have had the privilege of being associated with Brooke USA and Brooke Action for Working Horses and Donkeys for more than fifty years, including serving as Chairman Emeritus of Brooke USA and Past Chair of the Board of Trustees of Brooke Action. Over these decades, I have witnessed firsthand the evolution of the organization, its mission, and the enduring values upon which it was founded. At the heart of that history stands Old Bill.

During my years of service, I had the opportunity to work with members of the Brooke family who shared with me the profound mark Old Bill left on Dorothy Brooke herself. Old Bill was not merely one of many former war horses encountered in Cairo following World War I; he became a powerful symbol of the suffering endured by animals who had served humanity and were then forgotten. His condition helped crystallize Mrs. Brooke's resolve to act, transforming compassion into action and action into a lasting institution.

In the earliest years of the organization, Old Bill's story embodied the very reason Brooke existed. He represented countless working horses, donkeys, and mules whose lives depended on humane care, dignity, and respect. His legacy inspired the creation of the Old War Horse Memorial Hospital and laid the foundation for what would become a global movement in equine welfare.

More than a century later, Old Bill remains woven into the fabric of Brooke's identity and history. His life and service continue to remind us why this work matters and whom it serves. Honoring Old Bill with the AWP Distinguished Service Medal would be a fitting and meaningful recognition of an animal whose service—and whose suffering—changed the course of animal welfare forever.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Jones", with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Jones
Chairman Emeritus, Brooke USA Foundation
Past Chair, Board of Trustees, Brooke Action for Working Horses and Donkeys

Jo Ellen Hayden
350 New Street
Lexington, KY 40507

Robin Hutton
Animals in War & Peace
6 Archer Glen Ct.
Greensboro, NC 27407

To the Awards Selection Committee,

I am pleased to submit this letter in support of the nomination of *Old Bill* for the AWP Distinguished Service Medal.

As the historian who authored the section on horses at war for the World War I Centennial Commission website, my research has focused extensively on the indispensable role horses played during the First World War. Millions of equines were deployed across multiple theaters of conflict, serving in cavalry units, hauling artillery, transporting supplies, and carrying wounded soldiers. Please see <https://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/brookeusa-home-page.html> for extensive information. The contribution of horses and mules was fundamental to military operations, yet their fate after the war was often overlooked.

Old Bill's story is emblematic of this broader historical reality. Like countless other war horses, he served faithfully during the conflict and was later abandoned, left to endure unthinkable hardship as a working animal in Cairo. His experience reflects the systemic neglect faced by former military horses once their service was deemed complete. From a historical perspective, Old Bill provides a tangible, personal lens through which we can understand the cost of war borne by animals.

Importantly, Old Bill's legacy extends beyond history into lasting impact. His discovery by Dorothy Brooke, wife of a British Army officer stationed in Cairo after the war, helped draw attention to the plight of ex-war horses and inspired the establishment of the Old War Horse Memorial Hospital. This initiative marked a pivotal moment in the development of organized, international equine welfare and directly influenced how working animals are treated to this day.

In my professional assessment, Old Bill represents not only an individual animal's service, but also the collective experience of the millions of horses whose labor and sacrifice shaped the outcome of World War I. Recognizing Old Bill honors that shared history and ensures these animals are no longer relegated to the margins of the historical record.

For these reasons, I strongly support Old Bill's nomination for the AWP Distinguished Service Medal.

Sincerely,



Jo Ellen Hayden
Historian, World War I
Contributor, www.WorldWar1Centennial.org

February 6, 2026



Empowering
equines.
Empowering
people.

Robin Hutton
Animals in War & Peace
6 Archer Glen Court
Greensboro, NC 37407

Dear Robin,

I am honored to submit this letter in support of the nomination of *Old Bill* for the AWP Distinguished Service Medal.

While Old Bill did not serve in the United States military, his significance to the recognition of animals in war cannot be overstated. Old Bill represents the countless horses who served during World War I—animals whose strength, endurance, and sacrifice were essential to military operations, yet whose suffering after service was largely ignored. It was through Old Bill's story that global awareness was first brought to the plight of war horses abandoned after conflict.

Old Bill became the symbolic catalyst that awakened public conscience. His condition, witnessed by Dorothy Brooke in Cairo, inspired the creation of the Old War Horse Memorial Hospital and ultimately led to the founding of what is now Brooke Hospital for Animals. Through this legacy, Old Bill helped ensure that the hard work and sacrifice of war horses would no longer go unseen or unacknowledged.

Today, Brooke USA—headquartered in Lexington, Kentucky—continues this mission by funding programs that improve the lives of working horses, donkeys, and mules around the world and here in the United States. Our work includes direct support for animals and communities across multiple countries, as well as programs serving five Native American reservations in Montana, South Dakota, and North Dakota. This global and domestic reach is rooted in the same awareness first sparked by Old Bill's story.

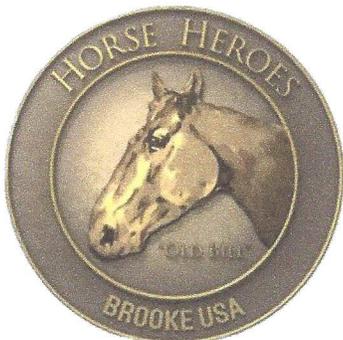
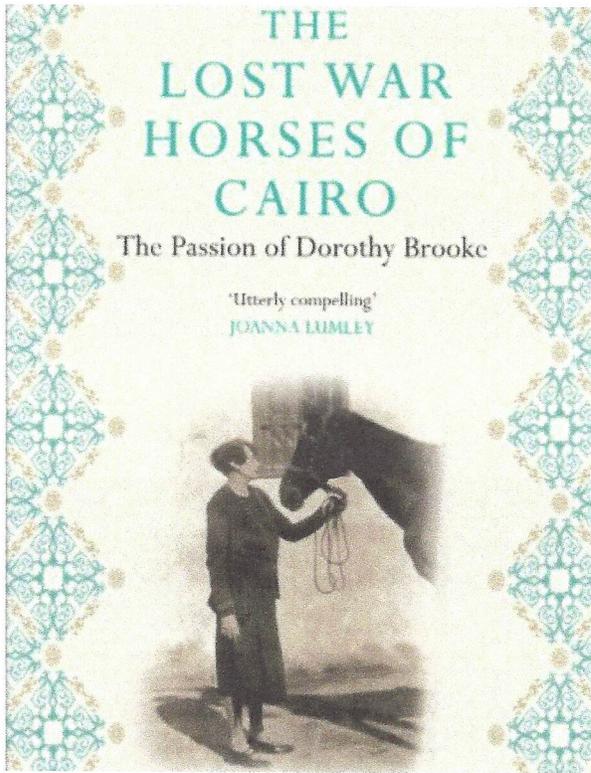
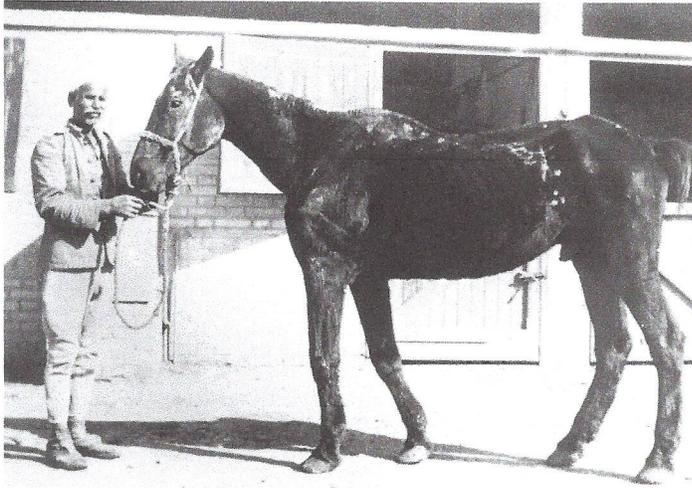
For these reasons, I respectfully request that Old Bill be considered an honorary recipient of this distinguished award and that an exception be made in recognition of his profound symbolic impact. Honoring Old Bill would acknowledge not only one horse, but the millions of animals whose service in war laid the foundation for today's understanding of animal welfare.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Marquez-Dulin
Chief Executive Officer

(New Address: 1040 Monarch Street, Suite 300, Lexington, KY 40413)

ONLY A HANDFUL OF CONFIRMED IMAGES OF OLD BILL EXIST.



The Searight Collection
(family archive of Dorothy Brooke)



Social News & Social Media, and Bibliography Sources

This list includes primary sources, nonprofit websites, academic references, books, news/media, blogs, and social media channels that discuss Old Bill or the founding story connected to him.

1. Primary Sources (Brooke organizations & historical materials)

- Brooke – History of the charity
<https://www.thebrooke.org/about-us/our-history>
Describes Dorothy Brooke finding an **“emaciated old chestnut horse... whom she named Old Bill,”** which launched the rescue campaign.
- Brooke USA Foundation – Dorothy Brooke feature
<https://www.brookeusa.org/dorothy-brooke-june-2023>
Describes Old Bill’s condition and the beginning of the Old War Horse Campaign of Rescue.
- Brooke USA Foundation – June Newsletter
<https://www.brookeusa.org/june-newsletter>
Narrative describing Old Bill as the first ex-war horse Dorothy Brooke found in Cairo.
- Brooke – “Remembering War Horses” article
<https://www.thebrooke.org/news/remembering-war-horses>
- Brooke – 90-year anniversary announcement
<https://www.thebrooke.org/news/brooke-recognises-90-years-giving-working-animals-life-worth-living>
- United States World War I Centennial Commission – Brooke USA page
<https://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/brookeusa-home-page.html>
Contains Dorothy Brooke’s description of meeting Old Bill.
- Brooke historical newsletter archive
<https://www.thebrooke.org/sites/default/files/Brooke%20News/2014-winter-brooke-newsletter.pdf>

2. Academic / Historical Reference Sources

- Dorothy Brooke biography – Wikipedia
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dorothy_Brooke
- Brooke – Wikipedia entry
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brooke_\(charity\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brooke_(charity))
- Unbound Project – historical feature
<https://unboundproject.org/category/history/>
Story describing Dorothy caring for Old Bill before euthanizing him to end his suffering.
- Great War Forum – discussion of war horse brands
<https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/301295-horse-brands-is-each-one-unique/>
Historical discussion referencing Old Bill as a symbol of abandoned cavalry horses.

3. Equine & Animal Welfare Media



- Equine Chronicle
<https://www.equinechronicle.com/rescuing-abandoned-warhorses-after-wwi-dorothy-brooke/>
Mentions Old Bill as the first rescued war horse.
- Veterinary Medical Research & Development blog
<https://www.vmrtd.com/post/proudhorsevet-also-in-egypt>
Discusses Dorothy Brooke's rescue campaign.
- Horse Journals – Founding Brooke Hospital for Animals
<https://www.horsejournals.com/popular/history-heritage/founding-brooke-hospital-animals>
- Your Horse Magazine – Brooke anniversary article
<https://www.yourhorse.co.uk/news/brooke-marks-90-years-helping-working-equines>
- World Horse Welfare historical references to war horses
<https://www.worldhorsewelfare.org/blog>
- Light Horse & Field Artillery Museum
<https://www.lighthorsemuseum.com.au/fundraising>

4. General News & Cultural References

- The Guardian – article discussing Brooke and war horses
<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2011/dec/11/war-horse-charity-boost>
- BBC features on war horses and Brooke history
<https://www.bbc.co.uk>
- The Telegraph (historical reference to the original appeal letter)
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk>
- National Army Museum – war horses in WWI
<https://www.nam.ac.uk>

5. Books (Bibliography – many reference Old Bill)

- Dorothy Brooke and the Fight to Save Cairo's Lost War Horses
Author: Grant Hayter-Menzies
<https://www.nhbs.com/dorothy-brooke-and-the-fight-to-save-cairos-lost-war-horses-book>
- For Love of Horses: The Diaries of Mrs Geoffrey Brooke
Edited by Glenda Spooner
- For Love of a Horse
Author: Geoffrey Brooke
- War Horse
Author: Michael Morpurgo (contextual references to war horses and charities)
- The Animals' War
Author: Jilly Cooper
- The Horse in the First World War
Author: David Kenyon

6. Blogs & Historical Commentary



- Superseded blog – “Old Bill: One of the first war horses rescued”
<https://supersededotcom.wordpress.com/2012/01/16/old-bill-one-of-the-first-war-horses-rescued-by/>
- Animal History Museum blogs discussing war horses
- Equine History Collective posts referencing Brooke’s founding story

7. Social Media Sources (frequent mentions of Old Bill)

Official accounts regularly referencing Old Bill during anniversaries or historical posts:

- Brooke Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/TheBrookeCharity>
- Brooke Instagram
<https://www.instagram.com/thebrookecharity>
- Brooke X (Twitter)
<https://x.com/TheBrooke>
- Brooke USA Foundation Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/BrookeUSA>
- Brooke USA Foundation LinkedIn
<https://www.linkedin.com/company/brooke-usa>