

Mules

By Cicely Fox Smith

I never would 'ave done it if I'd known what it would be;
I thought it meant promotion an' some extra pay for me,
I thought I'd miss a drill or two with packs an' trenchin' tools,
So I said I'd 'andled 'orses — an' they set me 'andlin' mules.

An' 'orses they are 'orses — but a mule 'e is a mule
(Bit o' devil, bit o' monkey, bit o' bloomin' boundin' fool!).
Oh, I'm usin' all the adjectives I didn't learn at school
On the prancin', glancin', rag-time dancin' Army Transport Mule!

If I'd been Father Noah when the cargo walked aboard
I'd 'ave let the bears an' tigers in an' never spoke a word;
But I'd 'ave shoved a placard out to say the 'ouse was full,
An' shut the *Ark* up suddent when I saw the Army mule.

They buck you off when ridden, they squish your leg when led;
They're mostly sittin' on their tails or standin' on their 'ead;
They reach their yellow grinders out an' gently chew your ear,
An' their necks is indiarubber for attackin' in the rear!

They're as mincin' when they're 'appy as a ladies' ridin' school,
But when the fancy takes 'em, they're like nothin' but a mule,
With the off-wheels in the gutter an' the near wheels in the air,
An' a leg acrost the traces, an' the driver Lord knows where!

They're 'orrid in the stable, they're worse upon the road,
They'll bolt with any rider, they'll jib with any load;
But soon we're bound beyond the seas, an' when we cross the foam
I don't care where we go to, if we leave the mules at 'ome!

For 'orses they are 'orses, but a mule 'e is a mule
(Bit o' monkey, bit o' devil, bit o' bloomin' fool!)
Oh, I'm usin' 'eaps o' adjectives I never learned at school
On the rampin', raw-boned, cast-steel jawboned Army Transport Mule!