



By BROUGH SCOTT
TV racing commentator

A BRAVE horse is wonderful. From today filmgoers will marvel at Steven Spielberg's War Horse. But in our family we treasure the memory of a real war horse called Warrior.

Warrior was a small sturdy bay thoroughbred, born in April 1908, a couple of miles from my grandfather General Jack Seely's home on the Isle of Wight.

On August 11, 1914, Jack led Warrior off the boat in Le Havre, France, and for the five years of the First World War the pair cheated death a thousand times culminating in leading one of history's last ever cavalry charges, against the Germans near Amiens, on March 30, 1918.

By then they said "the bullet has not been made that could finish Warrior" and when he died in 1941 at the grand age of 33, he was granted an unprecedented obituary in The Times under the title "The Horse The Germans Could Not Kill".

As a jockey I rode brave horses over the Grand National fences and at places like Cheltenham, Ascot, Haydock and Sandown. But what Grandpa and Warrior did was way off that scale.

As early as August 30, 1914, as the British Expeditionary Force retreated from the Battle of Mons, a cluster of shells fell within yards of them. Any normal thoroughbred would have bolted in terror. But not this one.

"To my amazement," Jack Seely later wrote, "Warrior made no attempt to run away."

"I could feel him tremble a little between my legs, but he pretended to be quite unperturbed. He was pretending to be brave and succeeding in his task."

In almost every way Warrior was



THRILL Benedict Cumberbatch rides into battle in the film



Horse the Germans Could Not Kill

Lord Mottistone's famous old war horse Warrior, which he and Sir John

HORROR The Battle of the Somme, left, the Times obituary

TRUE-LIFE STORY OF HERO THE GERMANS COULD NOT KILL

The real



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the exact social opposite of the fictional Joey who will steal so many hearts in Spielberg's new film.

Joey was Albert the farm boy's horse, bought at auction to pull the plough before being conscripted into the army and heading for the front line.

Warrior was a horse the general had bred and rode throughout his life in peace and war. But if Warrior had grooms and often stables on the

Western Front he never shirked danger and considering Grandpa was galloping around wearing a red general's cap he must have often been nothing less than a bullet magnet.

With his bold head and fearless eye he became a symbol of indomitability. "Here's old Warrior" would be the cry and soldiers would crowd round to touch him in the hope some of the magic would rub off.

On one occasion the horse beside him

was cut in half by a shell, on another the horse whose nose he was touching was shot through the neck.

Three times his stable was shelled and he escaped. He was waiting behind the lines for the never-to-happen breakthrough on the first day of the Somme, he sank in the mud in the horrors of Passchendaele and he was behind the lead tank in an ill-fated attack near Cambrai.

Seely said: "Down the main street we

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