

# THE LITERARY DIGEST

September, 1916: p. 75

## DOGS OF BATTLE AND DOGS OF MERCY

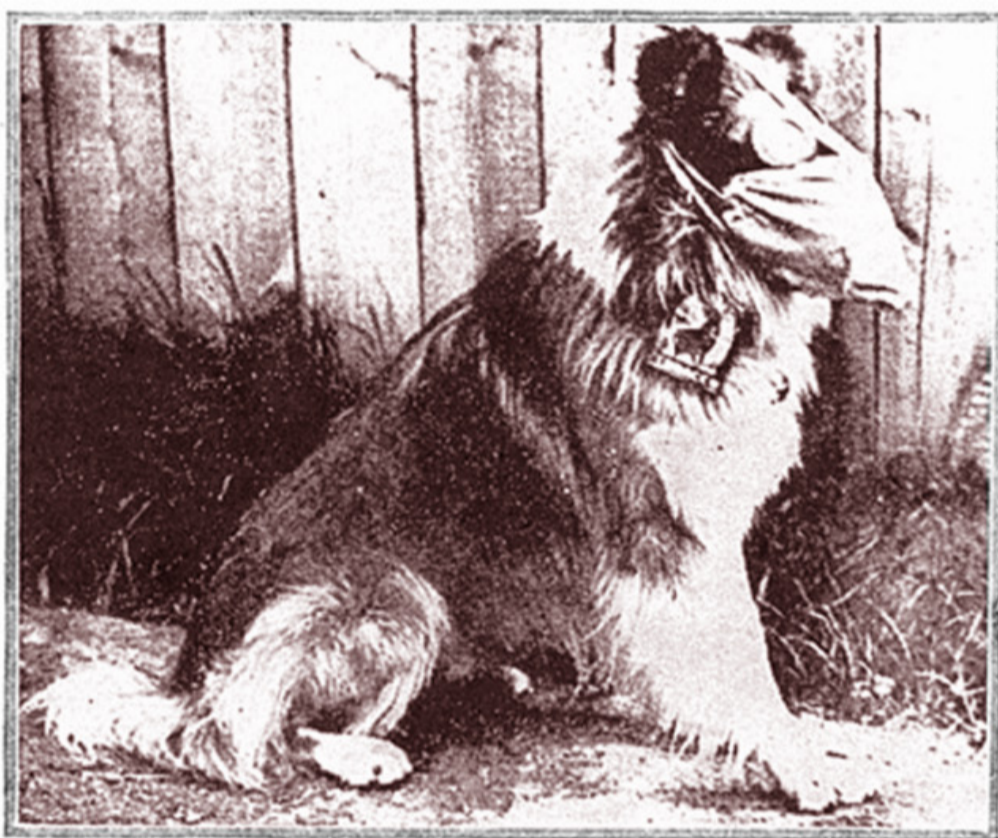
*Thousands Are Now in Use Along  
the Fighting Lines of Europe*



**I**T may truthfully be said of the conflict now raging in Europe, that the belligerents have, not only figuratively but literally, loosed the dogs at war. During the progress of hostilities, much ingenuity has been shown in turning to account the natural aptitude of dogs for the various duties and emergencies of war, with the result that an increasing use of them is being made in military operations.

It is no longer a matter of the mascot of the regiment performing some special act of heroism or devotion, as was the case with "Bob" in the Crimean War. This famous collie, attached to the Scots Guards, saved a guardsman's life at the battle of Alma, and in other fights carried brandy to the wounded. For his services he was awarded a miniature Victoria Cross and the Crimean medal. But Bob's case was an isolated example. The work of the dogs to-day shows what intensive training will accomplish.

**T**HE French war dogs are divided into five classes, each of which performs a special type of work. There are sentinel dogs, patrol dogs, ambulance dogs, dispatch bearers and draught dogs. In all these departments of military activity they have proved their worth. The development of this branch of military preparedness is a recent one, for the first of the French "chiens sanitaires" was trained in 1907 and took part in the grand manoeuvres of that year. At the outbreak of the present war there were not more than one hundred of these useful dogs thoroughly trained. At present there are thousands of them serving with the French troops in the field. One of the experts whose business it is to train the



A COLLIE WITH A GAS MASK

Dogs have been trained to carry tobacco and bandages down into dug-outs after advanced trenches have been battered by heavy artillery fire; like the men, they are protected against the poisonous fumes and murderous gases so frequently used by the Germans



## *Dogs of Mercy*

war dogs recently said that hunting dogs in general made poor war dogs, but that many



breeds of the non-hunting type are represented in the French army. Except for the draught animals, French breeds are in the majority. Many come from the region of the Beauce; other excellent types, capable of standing any amount of rough going, are shepherd dogs and mountain dogs from the Pyrenees. Some of the best of the war dogs seem to be the mongrels.

**A** VERY special kind of training is necessary for the ambulance dog. He must first be taught to seek rather

than to trail the wounded men. In the early stages of the war he was taught to bring back the cap of any wounded man he might find; but experience has shown this to be unwise, for, in many instances, the dog could not perform his task if the injured man had no hat, or if he were wearing the new steel helmet so tightly held by the chin strap that the dog could not remove it. For this reason the ambulance dog is now taught to be less particular as to what he brings back, and he often returns with a tobacco pouch, a handkerchief or any other small article that he can find in the pockets of the wounded soldier. His task then is to lead the stretcher bearers to the spot where his find is lying. In this work the keen nose of the dog has been the means of saving many lives, for wounded men not infrequently crawl into a thicket or other hiding place to get out of the way of shells or snipers, with the result that, hidden from sight, they are overlooked. Usually the ambulance dog carries at his collar or in small saddle pouches, a first-aid kit, by means of which the wounded man can succor himself, if conscious, stimulants, and a pocket collar to receive any message that the soldier is able to write. Dogs in the trenches are sometimes provided



The French have been using dogs in the trenches to watch through small peep-holes, and give the alarm if any activity develops in the enemy lines

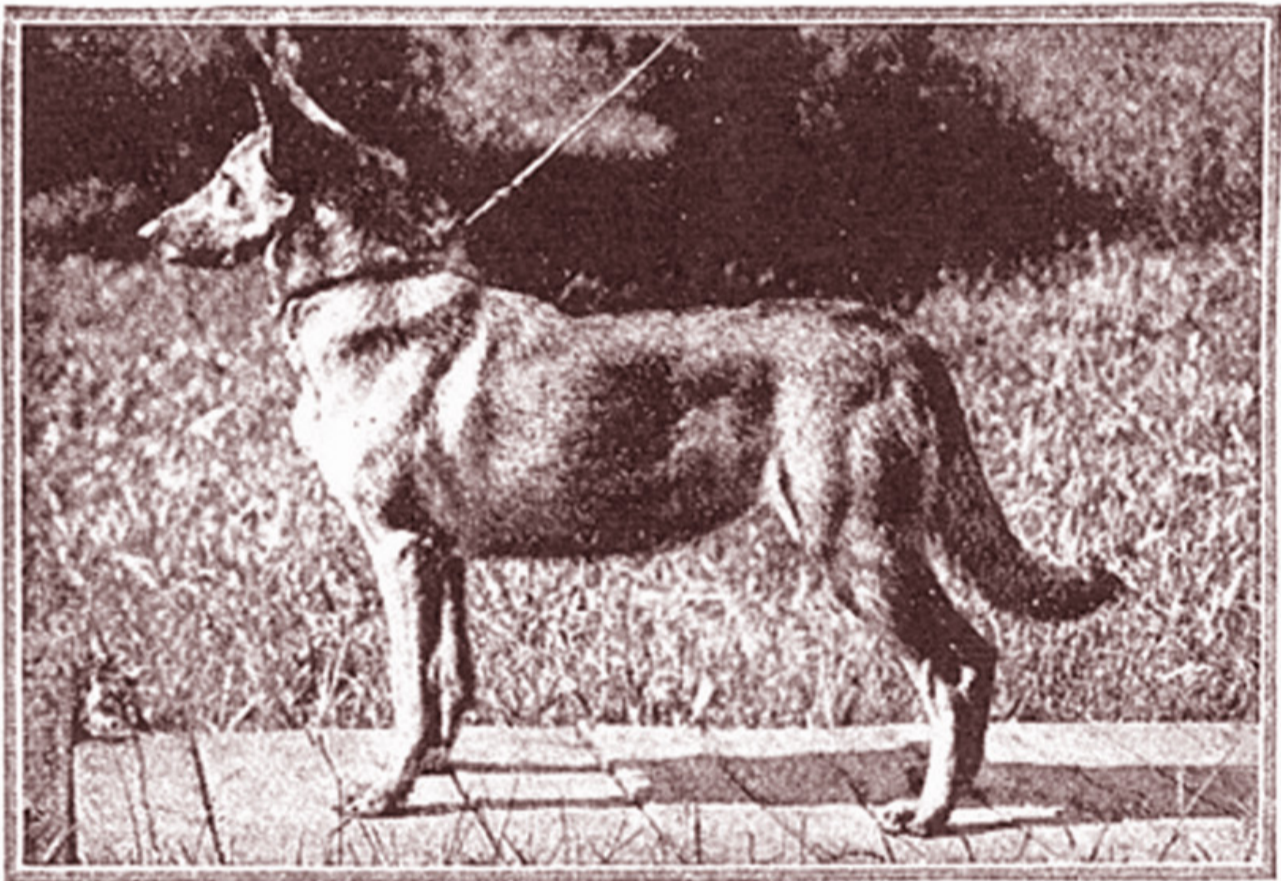
*Dogs of Mercy*

with gas masks.

CASES of remarkable sagacity displayed by dogs have been recorded from every front. In Flanders, for instance, a sentinel dog by his continued low growling and a display of nervous interest in one angle of a trench, prevailed upon the officer in charge to send up some flares, which revealed the heads of three Boches, and thus located a listening post for which the French had been looking for many weeks. In the work of carrying dispatches, dogs have delivered their precious messages over a distance of three miles between posts and have returned to the point of departure apparently quite undisturbed by shell fire and in no way confused by the upheaval all about them.



ALTHOUGH their specific use in war was quite as new to the Belgians as to the French, two years ago the dogs of King Albert's country were already highly mobilized for use in peace, and have since then given the greatest assistance at the front. The Belgian military authorities found plenty of material at hand, for approximately 175,000 dogs were in daily use in their country drawing the small carts which are a characteristic feature of Belgian streets. There was, furthermore, a National Federation of Draught Dogs, subsidized by the government and having some two thousand members divided into nine syndicates, one for each province. About a dozen years ago a society was formed in Belgium to promote the breeding of larger and more powerful dogs for draught purposes. It undertook to replace all animals that died for the modest insurance premium of two francs a year. This dog population quickly proved its usefulness to the military authorities, and the animals have been widely used by the Belgian Army to draw ma-



Champion Oak Ridge Frigga von Magdeburg, a pure-blooded German-bred police dog owned by Luke H. Swank

chine guns and to do sentry duty. They are chiefly of large size, short coated and have a strong admixture of Great Dane blood, although they usually show a less graceful build and a heavier head than the pure Dane. Not a few of the achievements and examples of mobility of King Albert's light artillery have been due to these dogs.



THE British troops in France and in Belgium are making great use of dogs also. The British seem to

[OldMagazineArticles.com](http://OldMagazineArticles.com)

## Dogs of Mercy



place their greatest dependence on the Airedale terrier, although several other breeds of working terriers, collies, bloodhounds and even other varieties may be found with Kitchener's army. The Airedale with his hardy constitution and gameness, coupled with intelligence and a coat that helps him resist the rigors of trench life, has made a record for himself among war dogs. It is probably well within the facts to say that hundreds of Tommies owe their lives to the inquisitive

grizzled muzzle and staunch disposition of an Airedale ambulance dog.

**T**HE Germans, with characteristic efficiency and thoroughness, are well to the fore in the use of war dogs. It is estimated that not less than 8,000 dogs are being used in the military operations of the Central Powers, and there are more than 4,000 on the special war register which was prepared by the Verein für Deutsche Schaferhunde (the German Shepherd Dog Club) for use at the time of mobilization. It is carefully kept up to date. This organization has a stud book with about 45,000 entries, each entry showing briefly whether the dog in question has been trained for ambulance work, police duty, patrol work or domestic occupation. Another body interested in war dogs is a club for ambulance dogs which works with the Shepherd Dog Club. Ever since the military authorities attached a team of dogs to every rifle battalion, the employment of dogs in the German

*(Continued on page 110)*

army has steadily increased, and in this progress the practical dog men of the Empire have been of great assistance. The dogs kept by members of the two organizations already mentioned form the reserve units for the German army. The rifle battalions specialize in dogs for sentry and patrol work, and sometimes as many as ten dogs are attached to a battalion. With every regimental ambulance detachment there are four ambulance dogs that go wherever the stretcher bearers are sent. The breeds which the German experts prefer, in addition to the Shepherd Dogs, are Airedales, Doberman Pinschers, the Rottweiler, a sort of cattle dog, and the Boxer, which has, of course, a good deal of the bulldog in him. A few Dachshunds, which have almost come to be symbolic of German dogdom, are also used.

**D**R. MAX OSBORN, the German war correspondent, recently described the work of the 2,500 "Sanitätshunde" with the hospital corps in one section of the West front. He witnessed a drill of these dogs in the Verdun district, which consisted of feats in which the dogs were called upon to distinguish between prostrate living men and figures representing dead men; in passing by men still able to stand by themselves, and indicating to stretcher bearers where men were lying down or leaning in a state of semi-collapse.

The Russians likewise are using dogs for outpost duty in the marshes that form parts of their front, and some of the famous shooting dogs

### *Dogs of Mercy*

of the enthusiastic Russian sportsmen are having their chance at bigger game than ever before. Big dogs, many of the St. Bernard type, are being used in the Czar's army for light transport work and to haul machine guns. In all the armies the dogs, especially the terriers, add to their usefulness by a private war on that trench plague, rats.

It will be apparent from this brief outline that dogs are in demand for many purposes of war in Europe. As yet we have heard nothing of the use of war dogs by the Turks, but it would be strange if they had not taken a leaf out of the German book of military efficiency. Doubtless some of the despised Pariahs of the Constantinople streets have attained a more glorious destiny on the field of battle.



German police dogs are used by the German Ambulance Corps for rescue work in the field



BRITISH FIELD AMBULANCE DOGS

[OldMagazineArticles.com](http://OldMagazineArticles.com)

### *Dogs of Mercy*

**T**HERE is no sign of diminution of interest in the outdoor dog show season as yet, although some of the larger fixtures have come and gone. One of the best was the third annual benching of the Southampton Kennel Club, held at the Meadow Club. Once more the wire haired fox terriers were to the fore, Mrs. Roy A. Rainey getting the award for best in the show with her Conejo Wycollar Boy and also the best for same sex with Conejo High Brow. A fine greyhound, Ben Lewis' Lansdowne Sunflower was reserve. The English judge, Mr. Samuel H. Crabtree, who has had the placing of ribbons in all corners of the world, judged a number of classes, including bulldogs, in which he is a specialist. He was much pleased with the benching and spoke particularly well of the fox terriers, Airdales, Irish setters, and Pomeranians. He also thought highly of Mrs. A. McClure Halley's Pekingese, Ouena of Llenrud, which won her championship at the show, and of the true French poodles' shown by Henry G. Trevor. Mr. Crabtree had the distinction of setting aside a ruling of the American Kennel Club that he could not judge, by proving to the satisfaction of the officials that he was not a professional handler.

**A**T the recent show of the Westchester Kennel Club at White Plains the black cocker spaniel Durbar, owned by H. K. Bloodgood, was adjudged best dog in the show with Wycollar Boy, the Southampton winner, in reserve. This exhibition was also a real success, both quality and quantity of entries considered. One unfortunate incident which should lead to better protection was the killing of a little Griffon Bruxellois, Cedar Bambino of Sunnymeade, by a Great Dane. The little dog, which got out of leash, doubtless was mistaken for legitimate prey their chance at bigger game than ever before. Big by the Dane. A picturesque touch was added to the events by the appearance in the ring of Miss Mercedes Crimmins, M.F.H. of the Fairfield County Harriers, in full hunting costume at the head of her pack of beagles. Her five couple of little hounds won handily. The Hudson County Kennel Club made its debut as a benching organization late last month and the annual show of the Atlantic City Kennel Club was this year a two-day fixture.



A Dutch machine gun drawn by dogs. These dogs are so well disciplined that they will not bark when in action and show no fear or excitement under fire