

# The AMERICAN LEGION Weekly

AUGUST 22, 1919: P. 16

## HERE ARE THE DOGS of WAR

*They Fought as Bravely  
as Their Soldier Comrads*

by George S. Wheat



*Dispatch dog taking back messages for reserves. This picture was taken from a dead German officer.*

**E**VERY day the big transports are bringing the fighters home—the war men and the war dogs!

We know what the war men did. The Marne is as well known as the Delaware; Chateau-Thierry as the Battle of Yorktown. The Somme, Soissons, Belleau Wood, St. Mihiel and the Argonne flash in the same channels of thought with Bunker Hill, Lexington, the Brandywine, Shiloh, Bull Run, Gettysburg, San Juan Hill and Cavite.

What did the war dogs do? What part did they play in the fight for civilization?

1. They served as sentinels in the advance listening posts and they detected enemy patrols more quickly than the soldier with whom they watched.

2. Patrol dogs reconnoitered in No Man's Land with small detachments of troops and at night they could quickly scent enemy patrols on the same mission.

3. Dogs acted as couriers in carrying messages. They saved the scouts from fatigue and the very great dangers of going and coming between the posts of command and the front line trenches in the sectors under heavy bombardment.

4. The Red Cross dogs carried first aid kits to the wounded. They scented the injured when they had crept beneath undergrowth or brush to die and told the stretcher bearers where they were.

5. They served as draft animals. But for their faithfulness, their energy and their intelligence, the French would have been driven out of the Vosges mountains and the Italians could not have withstood the Austrians in the Alps.

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*"Frenchy" is a veteran of four years' service.*



6. As guards about storehouses the dogs released thousands of men from the front. They kept marauders away from valuable stores and prevented German spies from destroying thousands of dollars worth of munitions.

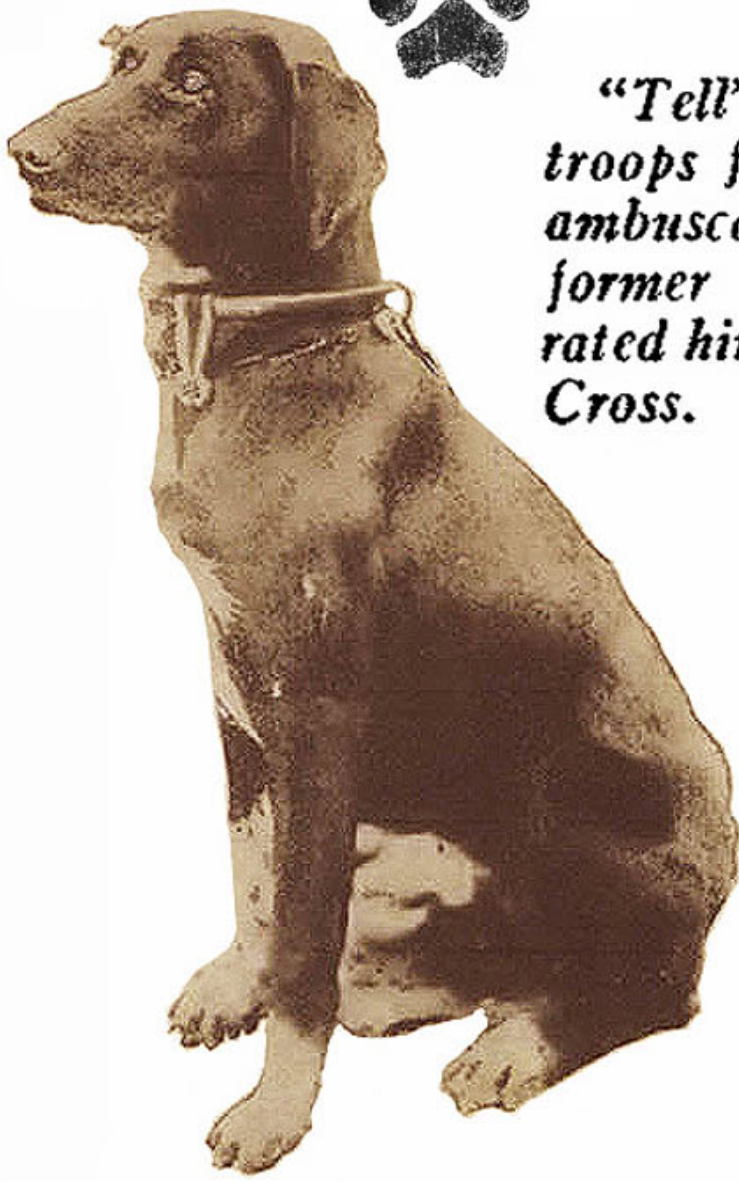
7. As ratters, as destroyers of vermin, they were expert sanitation "officers" and contributed to the health of the troops in the trenches.

**T**HOSE are seven of the many things the war dog in service did, the war dog under discipline and under orders. The mascot was equally a war dog and served in the same dangerous places, but to him fell pleasanter tasks, for he brought to the men friendship and sympathy. Sometimes, too, he heard enemy patrols and gave warnings, but more often his ears were filled with the whispering of some doughboy who couldn't tell comrades of his longing for home, his yearning for a sight of the young wife, his heartache for the baby he had never seen! These mascots were real morale builders, too. Their quick generosity and kindly sympathy made many a zero hour less cold!

The trained war dog was a highly disciplined animal. He had been put through a course of "sprouts" that made one Plattsburger say he had never before appreciated the ease of his own schooling in the arts of war. The old rule of animal training—punishment for not doing what was ordered, and reward for obedience and quick intelligence—was strictly followed.

The training of dogs for war purposes began in a limited way a number of years prior to the outbreak of the European war, the Germans being particularly interested in it. There were some trained war dogs in both the French and Belgian armies, but the British had none to speak of, nor did the United States. The dog began his general usefulness in the late war as a beast of burden. He had been so used in Belgium and northern France for scores of years, and when the Germans were pounding brave Liege it was not an uncommon sight to see the favorite breed of Belgian dog—the cross between a mastiff and great Dane—drawing wagons loaded with household goods, children and old men and women.

Then their use extended to the drawing of small gun carriages and, owing to scarcity of automobiles and horses



*"Tell" saved German troops from a Russian ambushade, and the former Kaiser decorated him with the Iron Cross.*

at the outset of the conflict, the dogs drew small one-man ambulances, taking the wounded from the extreme front line to the field hospitals.

**T**HERE is some innate instinct in animal and man which makes them seek cover when badly hurt. The dogs could find them! Horses and motors began to arrive in profusion and the ambulance dog turned his never-failing scent to errands of mercy.

Gradually their use in the war extended to the fields of endeavor previously mentioned and training camps were established all over France. Dog training began in January, 1918, in the various training camps of the United States. The dogs were killed off so rapidly in France that the public pounds were put in charge of the military and all the stray canine in the republic were, like all its sons, trained and sent to the front. In fact, one of the first appeals made by the French Minister of War to the United States after we entered the conflict was, "Send us dogs." High bred dogs were for the most part undesirable. Some very good dogs were obtained, however. Airedales, terriers, shepherds; dogs of all sorts and conditions, provided they had "staying power" and endurance, were sent over.

When a complete history of the dogs of war is written, perhaps the first chapter will be given the story of Fuzzy Wuzzy of the Yankees. It would be hard to decide whether to give him the place of honor or to let Old Brigade have it. Then there are Dick of the Somme, Bill of the Yser, Mirko and Marquis, Archie-Never-Afraid, Frenchy and Cognac and Loost, who helped to save Verdun from the Crown Prince. And since we are getting into names and claimants for honors, perhaps the men of the 165th Infantry—the old 69th of New York—might claim the place for Di Donc, who was thrice wounded; while the candidate of the Twenty-seventh Division undoubtedly would be Hans Hindenberg, a German who, with keen second sight, deserted the Kaiser long before the remainder of the Fatherland did, and who served Uncle Sam in general and the Twenty-seventh in particular, long and well.

**F**UZZY WUZZY had no blue blood in his veins, but he had in his heart a yearning for adventure, so one day he walked aboard a transport at Lambert's Point, a coal pier near Newport News, when the officer of the deck wasn't looking. He hid himself



*"Di Done," mascot of the 165th Infantry, was wounded at Chateau-Thierry.*

to the galley and there he stayed until a soldier adopted him. The soldier was Sergeant Harry Holowitch, a replacement man, who, two weeks after he landed at Brest, was in the front line trenches with the First Army. With him was Fuzzy. Fuzzy never went to a training camp because he was a born soldier-dog. He learned rapidly. Harry, who was assigned many times to a listening post, taught Fuzzy to be an advanced sentry, too. That is, when Fuzzy heard anything he didn't bark. He only growled very softly or else just let the hair on his back ruffle up a bit. All good sentry dogs were taught that. Fuzzy saved an entire battalion once by his keen scent, because when he growled Harry sent for reinforcements and when Fritz came over expecting to find a few dozen men he found hundreds instead. Fuzzy got his name on the company rolls for that!

Then came the great day for the Americans, July 18. The advance along the Soissons road began. Harry was advancing and so was Fuzzy and that's when it happened. "It" was a big German shell! When it burst it buried Harry completely, wounding him badly, and Fuzzy was partly buried and also wounded. The advance continued. All of Harry's buddies had to leave him, except Fuzzy. In fact, they didn't know Harry was buried alive. They thought he had "gone west." But Fuzzy knew it and despite a hind paw that was badly smashed this Virginia mutt set to work to dig Harry out. He dug until both forepaws were raw. Night was coming on and the task seemed hopeless. So Fuzzy howled the long, lonely, dreary howl that his wolfish ancestors used when they wanted the moon. Unlike them, Fuzzy got what he wanted. It was a stretcher bearer. He dug Harry out and placed him on the stretcher and Fuzzy tried to hobble alongside, but it was too much. He just couldn't, and then, for the first



time, the hospital orderly saw that the dog was wounded.

Fuzzy and Harry occupied the same ward in the hospital and each got the same careful attention. Each got well and each landed at the same old Newport News from the transport *Konin-gen der Nederlanden* not long ago. When they left the ship someone asked Harry what he was going to do with Fuzzy.

"Take him back to Montana with me and give him my ranch," came the prompt answer.

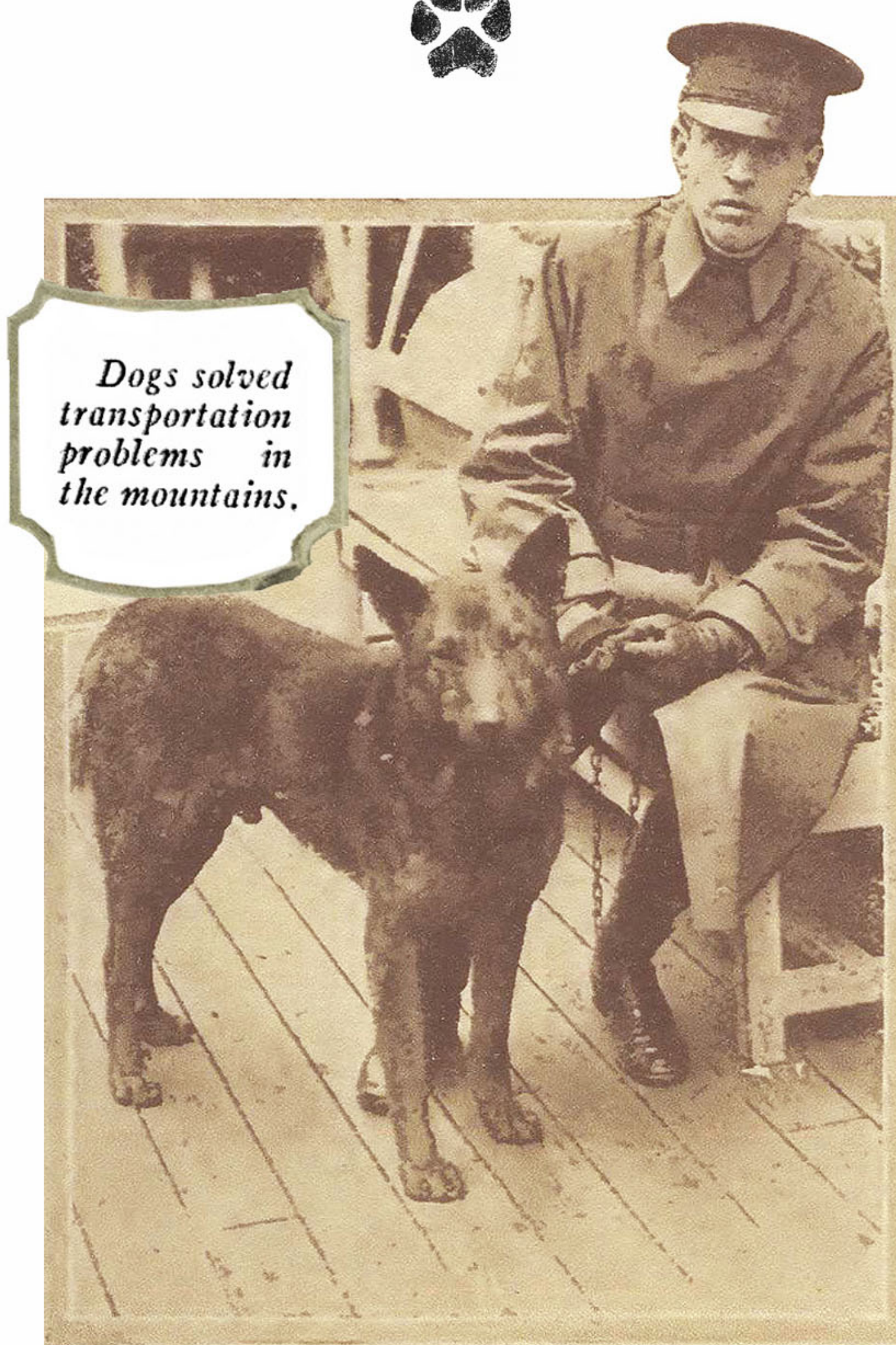
**MIRKO** was a police dog and was the companion of a poilu at an advanced listening post. He had been carefully trained and like Fuzzy he wouldn't bark when he heard the enemy, only bristle. During the long watches of the night the poilu used to whisper to him the innermost secrets of his heart and Mirko would sympathize with him and nestle closer. The poilu's most treasured possession was a small bundle. It contained two photographs: one of the poilu's wife and the other of his infant.

"Maitresse," he would whisper to the dog, because since the photograph was of the poilu's wife it was also that of the dog's mistress. And the dog would look at the photograph sympathetically.

One day a Boche sharpshooter shot the poilu. By clinging to the strong body of Mirko, the poilu succeeded in reaching a dressing station and was sent down to a base hospital. To the soldier's dismay he discovered he had lost the tiny bundle and while he bewailed the fact he sank into unconsciousness. Fever set in soon and in his delirium the poilu would call, "Mirko, Mirko," and would ask for the bundle. One day his pleadings were frantic and the surgeon sent for Mirko. The dog was brought and he quickly nestled his head under the poilu's pillow. "Mirko, Mirko," the poilu crooned. "Maitresse, Mirko. Maitresse, Mirko." Quickly the dog left the hospital and before any one could catch him, set off at a gallop for the listening post. He found and returned with the lost bundle and the poilu got well.

**WHAT** did Old Brigade do? He is said to have found a brigade of wounded men during the war while serving with the British. And Dick of the Somme and Bill of the Yser? Dick jumped into the river which is coupled with his name and rescued a wounded Tommy, who, badly wounded, was floundering in the water. As he reached the bank the dog was wounded and later his leg was amputated. Bill balked a surprise attack of Germans on the Yser and from that incident took his name. He was decorated with the Croix de Guerre.

And Archie-Never-Afraid? Once when a London yeomanry regiment took a French town they found Archie, "a mutt of a dog," bleeding in the streets. Some Hun, true to the name, had deliberately bayoneted the little



*Dogs solved transportation problems in the mountains.*

*"Loost" served two years with the poilus on many fronts.*

dog just before the retreat. A Tommy dressed his wounds and the dog went along with the regiment. According to the story, Archie would climb over trenches in the day and sometimes he would romp in No Man's Land. Sometimes he would sleep on the parapet. Many a German sniper took a shot at him, but the "ping" of the bullet nearby would only cause Archie to look up sleepily, just as though a fly had buzzed too near his ear. Another characteristic of Archie was his undying hatred of all Teutons, probably because one had wounded him, and it was to this trait that he won lasting fame by spoiling a "Hindenburg circus."

Almost any man of the A. E. F. in its early days will tell you about this performance. Germans who spoke English fluently would dress in American uniforms and during the night sneak into the American lines. Then they would talk to each other and otherwise appear to be American troops either relieving or being relieved in the trenches. Soon the undisguised Boches would come over and the disguised men would attack the Americans and cause confusion by giving fake orders, etc. Germans who spoke with a pure Oxford accent or a cockney twang would attempt the same trick on the British while the French had a taste of the same game.

"'Arry, 'ere's your 'at," a fake "cockney" shouted one night in a communication trench where Archie and his company were stationed. Archie "smelt a Hun" and before his fellow soldiers knew it, he had the speaker by the leg, growling and biting furiously. Archie was so good-natured that the Tommies were amazed at first. Then they recalled the dog's hatred of Germans.

"'Ere's a circus, the bloody blighters!" shouted one of the Londoners. And then the fun began. They caught most of the disguised Germans.

Every one knows what it means to be caught in an enemy's uniform



within the enemy's line. Next morning after the firing squad had done its work, a hundred grateful Londoners shook Archie's paw, and one of them let the dog wear his Victoria Cross all that afternoon.

**N**O poilu, Tommy or doughboy died a more glorious death than did Marquis, a dog who served the French with great distinction throughout most of the war. Who hasn't thrilled over the old story of the boy who brought a message to Napoleon.

"You're wounded," the great emperor said as the lad fell at his feet.

"Nay, sire, killed," was his reply.

On his last errand Marquis was carrying a message of great importance to the safety of Verdun. The wireless, the telephone and other lines of communication had been destroyed, and the dog was the last hope of one of the outer fortresses. Just as he reached his destination with the message he fell. No less a person than a French general dashed to the brave animal's assistance. He had been shot through the right lung as he crossed a shell-torn field, but he had struggled on until his mission had been fulfilled and then died.

The French commander, General Gouraud, officially cited two dogs and two dog conductors, as their keepers were called, for extreme gallantry at the second battle of the Marne. Like Dick of the Somme, the two dogs crossed the Marne with the conductors on their back, being the last to retreat before a powerful attack by German shock troops. This swim was accomplished under a terrific bombardment.

**L**IKE Hans Hindenburg, Cognac was a German. He arrived in America recently on the transport *Ohian* and was listed "Cognac, P. W.," the P. W. meaning prisoner of war. However, Cognac is such a gentle, kindly little spaniel that he was allowed every possible freedom, and in fact most of the men on the transport said it would take a "darned good doughboy" for an exchange of prisoners in his case. At Chateau-Thierry, Private Fred Williams of the 155th Infantry was badly wounded. He crawled into a shell hole for safety. Not long afterwards Cognac crawled into the same hole, likewise wounded. Cognac had been the mascot of a German infantry regiment, and he must have been specially cared for by the surgeon for he proved to be quite a good one himself. Williams' wound grew very painful as evening set in and Cognac would lick first his own wound and then Williams'. Surgeons said afterwards that the dog probably had prevented gangrene from setting in and saved Williams' life.

**A**NOTHER canine hero recently arrived in the United States is Loost. Loost has two citations for having saved French troops. After two years' faithful service before Ver-



dun the dog was placed for comfortable keeping in the hands of the Societe du Chien Sanitaire et Des Chiens de Guerre. He now belongs to Mr. Robert H. McKelwey, of New York, a "Y" worker who promised him a good home. Loost would scout through No Man's Land and then sneak back and by growling let the French know of any advancing Germans he chanced to scent, according to one story told of him. Once after he saved a large number of French troops from ambushade he was paraded before the entire regiment.

Dogs solved the problem of transportation in the Vosges Mountains for the French. "Scotty" Allen, champion Alaskan dog racer, was employed by the French Ministry of War to go through that territory and buy up all the best malamutes. He obtained several thousand and they were shipped to the Vosges. Some of them were later given to Italy and did their bit in the Alps. The French and Italians built small, narrow-gauge railways and the dogs hauled the cars. In summer the heights were too dizzy and the shells flew too thick and fast about these railways to enable horses or mules to be used. In the winter they were clogged with snow and the dogs hauled sledges up the same paths. It is related that two dog brigades moved fifty tons of provisions and ammunition within two or three weeks, enabling the Italian Alpine troops to subsist and fight a vastly superior force of Austrians. Determination, energy, endurance and courage were the attributes necessary to carry on this work and the dogs had all of them.

**T**HE dogs of the Allies were not the only heroes of the war. German war dogs performed wonderful feats of courage and daring and one of them was awarded the Iron Cross personally by the former Kaiser. His name was "Tell" and he was honored because he saved a German brigade from ambushade by Russians in the early part of the war.

Some of these war dogs were on exhibition at a recent bench show at Madison Square Garden in New York City and aroused intense interest. "Frenchy" occupied a prominent place in the "receiving line" and wore a sign which read as follows: "This is a Red Cross Dog Hero. He was in the Battle of the Somme and is the property of a Canadian officer." This veteran "begged" for the Bide-a-Wee Home for Friendless Animals in East 38th street. A great many war dogs have been kept in this home while their owners were in the hospitals here or "seeing the sights." A representative meets all transports and offers to care for any such animals or "strays," just plain dogs like Fuzzy, who may have a liking for adventure and stow away on a transport.

Many a doughboy owes his life to these dogs that did the work Frenchy performed so well in the Battle of the Somme. Many a soldier owes his life to the keen scent, intelligence and





energy of those sentry dogs which he may have thought unfriendly because they were "one man dogs" and business-like. Many a youth owes a part of his splendid spirit to the "buddy-dog" who gave him a friendly lick on the hand when his spirits were low. Many a sweetheart, wife, sister and—but it's so much better said in Edward Peple's book, "The War Dog":

"And many a mother who knelt  
and prayed

At the Cross for her battling  
son,

May ever thank God that his  
death was stayed

By the grit of a dog that was  
unafraid

In the cause of a Cross that  
won!"



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