

# THE LITERARY DIGEST

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## RED-CROSS DOGS

**T**HE "DOGS OF WAR" in these days are not ferocious, but helpful. It is estimated by Ellwood Hendrick, writing in *The Red Cross Magazine* (February), that the various combatants now have in training some ten thousand dogs doing Red-Cross work. Prior to the war the number could probably have been written with two figures. Many breeds are used, but the best physical type seems to be of medium size, strong, gray or black, kind, and of good eyesight. A cross between bulldog and mastiff is said to be desirable; so are sheep-dogs, retrievers, pointers, large Airedales, and many "out-and-out curs." Character and training outweigh ancestry every time, just as they do on the human side of the war. Says Mr. Hendrick:

"These army, or Red-Cross, or sanitary dogs, as the Germans call them, are first trained to distinguish between the uniform of their country and that of enemies. Then the dog must learn the importance of a wounded man as being his principal business in life. News of the wounded must also be brought to his master. He must not bark, because the enemy always shoots. There are various ways in which the dog tells his master of his discovery. One method is, if no wounded have been discovered, to trot back and lie down, whereas if he has found a wounded man he urges the master to follow. United States Consul Talbot J. Albert, of Brunswick, tells of a method

in use in the German Army in which the dogs have a short strap buckled to their collars, and they are trained, when they find a wounded man in hunting over the battle-field at night, to grasp the straps in their mouths and so return, thus signifying that there is a man in uniform alive out there. Then they lead the way back to him. This invention was necessary to overcome an evil that became evident among dogs taught to retrieve; that is, to bring back some piece of clothing belonging to the wounded man—his cap, glove, or something from the neighborhood, such as a piece of cord, a stone, or a bunch of grass. The trouble with the method was that the dogs, in their abundant zeal, never returned without something from the injured man, and usually they took that which first struck their eyes. This was most often a bandage, which the dog would tear off. If taught to bring back a cap and the soldier had none, the dog would very likely seize him by the hair. . . . .

"Dogs are never trained to scent out the dead. Their business is to assist the wounded. Each one carries a first-aid package strapped about its back or neck and knows that when a wounded man is found he may take the package.

"They are trained to carry letters from post to post and they learn to distinguish the various posts by name. They are also of aid to soldiers on the watch. A French officer tells of one night while on watch as a private in one of the front trenches, when every dog became suddenly uneasy, continually growling



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and very excited. This was enough for the soldiers; they knew their army dogs and believed in them; so they telephoned to the main entrenchments for support. Fully twenty-five minutes after the reinforcements arrived, a German attack was made from the trenches opposite, which was turned back because of the superior numbers that answered the telephone call. The distance of the German trenches opposite those of the French is not given, but that does not stand in the way of a very interesting question: By what sense did these dogs know of the approaching attack? . . . . .

"In the Belgian Army dogs have largely displaced horses for rushing machine guns from one location to another, according to a correspondent of the *Boston Post*. Officers claim that under fire they are more dependable than horses and may be relied upon to keep the gun out of the hands of the enemy even tho the entire escort be killed. And they can be kept in trenches safe from hostile bullets, which is impossible with larger animals.

"In Russia dogs have been used to carry ammunition to the firing-lines and by the quickness of their work, which was formerly done by crouching and creeping men, have kept the soldiers well supplied from the ammunition-wagons which are always likely to be far in the rear of advancing files.

"There are canine sentries on duty on both sides in the Great War, and dogs that are dispatch-bearers. Marquis, a French dog, fell dead from a bullet-wound almost at the feet of a group of French soldiers to whom he bore a message across a shell-raked stretch of country. But the message

was delivered! And there are Stop, of the Fifteenth Army Corps, the savior of many wounded, and Flora of the Twelfth Alpine Chasseurs—merciful dogs of war with reputations for distinguished service. There are many Stops and Floras actively engaged in humanitarian service, and it is quite unfair for me to single out individual animals—a conference of dogs of war would doubtless so decide—except as a means of giving typical stories of what are every-day exhibitions of intelligence, devotion, and self-sacrifice on the part of dogs of numerous breeds in the vast zone of battle.

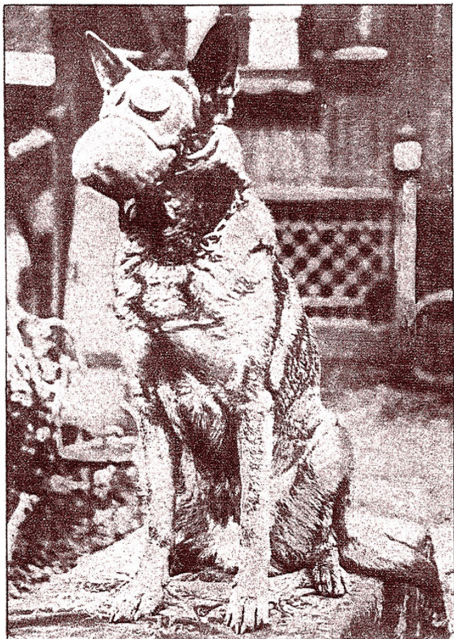
"The people in the warring countries are called on for many and varied contributions. The French War Department has on record a communication from the father of a family which poignantly illustrates this, for he wrote: 'I already have three sons and a son-in-law with the colors; now I give up my dog, and *Vive la France!*'"

"Other stories of the heroism of dogs are likely to come to us when the war is over, and from them we may gain more wisdom about dogs. We are likely to become informed—but whether we learn it or not rests with us—that a chance for education and training is important for a dog if it is to lead a useful life, and that in the economy of a better order of things there is a great deal of work for dogs to do. . . . .

"In dealing with dogs we should be philosophical and remember that misplacement is a cause of disorder; that dogs as well as men, women, and even boots and shoes, are most useful in those places where they can do most good. Unfortunately, we do not employ much philosophy in our dealings with dogs. We use them for our left-over emotions. I know an excellent woman who ruins every dog she owns by sheer spoiling; by



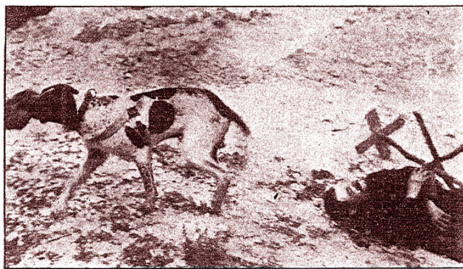
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**A RED-CROSS DOG WEARING HIS GAS-MASK.**

letting it have its own way without restraint. And I know a man, a good citizen, who strives to deal justly with his kind, but who is disposed to kick dogs if they bother him. Both take out their emotions on dogs. This does not give the dog a fair chance.

"However, we do not have to go killing people to make dogs worth while."



### IN ACTION.

This Red-Cross dog is carrying the cap belonging to the helpless soldier at the right, who will thus be identified, and to whom aid will at once be brought.