

**WAR HEROES TOO: MILITARY MASCOTS OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR
AND THEIR LEGACY**

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Abstract

As many historians write about the deeds and sacrifices of soldiers during the recent centenary celebrations of the First World War, it is important to also remember the contributions of soldiers of a different kind. During the First World War a menagerie of animals became honorary soldiers in all armies, including New Zealand and Australia. Whether for the sake of comfort, combat or ceremonial occasions many regiments adopted all types of species from the domestic canine to exotic primates. There has been a recent surge in academic acknowledgment of animals during warfare and their importance in our history. I am especially glad to have explored this topic on mascots which has left many doors open for further historical examination. Animals have always been a vital part of military campaigns, yet the role of the mascot, also known as soldiers' pets, has often been overlooked in the historiography.¹ I will create a brief hypothesis by exploring issues such as what purpose did mascots both official and unofficial serve? How many Australian and New Zealand units in the First World War had mascots? How were they selected? Finally, what legacy have they left?

¹ There is a fine line between the understanding of a 'Pet' and a 'Mascot' which I will explain in this thesis. In many cases they are one and the same. Such as explained in Mascots and Pets: <https://www.warmuseum.ca/firstworldwar/history/life-at-the-front/trench-culture/mascots-and-pets>. Military units identified themselves with adopted animal mascots, including goats, dogs, and birds. The animals lived in the field alongside the soldiers, many soldiers had pets they helped soldiers normalize the harsh world of combat.

Preface

I would firstly like to thank Glyn Harper and David Littlewood who guided me through this process and Geoffrey Watson also of Massey University who gave the opportunity to take the project on. I would like to further acknowledge the assistance of many individuals and museum staff in Australia and New Zealand who made the process of research much easier than it could have been. I have listed these in my bibliography.

When I started this project, I was initially concerned that I might not be able to find enough material for a thesis on mascots restricted to, firstly, the First World War and secondly, Australia and New Zealand. However, the more I investigated and researched the subject the more I realized I have opened up studies for others post the First World War as both countries increased mascot use in the Second great war and Australia in particular has more official mascots in service today than at any previous time.

I dedicate this Thesis to all the animal warriors that have served their nations in war and peace. Mahatma Gandhi once wrote, “The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated.” If this sentiment is true one wish of mine is that whatever your opinion in their use in war, next Remembrance Day when we think of all our soldiers who gave their lives in war, please spare a thought for the four-legged or winged heroes that fought and died alongside them. Hopefully one day we can not only stop sending our sons and daughters to war but our pets too.

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Abbreviations

AAMC	Australian Army Medical Corps
AANS	Australian Army Nursing Service
ADJ	Adjutant
ADF	Australian Defence Force
AFC	Australian Flying Corps
AIF	Australian Imperial Forces
ANZAC	Australian and New Zealand Corps
AWM	Australian War Memorial
BC	Dates of events before Christ
CO	Commanding Officer
Coy	Company
DD	Department of Defence
Div	Division (Army formation)
EDD	Explosive Detection Dog
Establishment	A number of personnel on a unit
FEDD	Firearms & Explosive Detection Dog
Field	In the Field means serving in the actual battle zone
Hawk	Bird of Prey
L/Cpl	Lance-Corporal-Rank
HMHS	Her Majesty Hospital Ship
HMNZS	Her Majesty New Zealand Ship
MWD	Military Working Dog
NZDF	New Zealand Defence Force
NZEF	New Zealand Expeditionary Force
NZET	New Zealand Engineer Tunnelling Coy
NZGH	New Zealand General Hospital
OC	Officer in Charge
Pte	Private- Rank
POW	Prisoner of War
PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
RAVC	Royal Army Veterinary Corps
RNZAF	Royal New Zealand Air Force
WWI	World War One
WWII	World War Two
WRNZNS	Women's Royal New Zealand Nursing Service

Introduction

“All quiet on the Western Front” apart from the neighing of horses, barking of dogs, miaowing of cats, chirruping of grasshoppers, hissing of geese, chattering of monkeys and even growling of bears.²

The quotation above outlines the topic of this thesis, the vast collection of animals used as mascots by Australian and New Zealand troops during the First World War.

If there is one Anzac mascot that many people have heard about it is Digger, a dark brown and white bulldog, who accompanied his owner, Sergeant James Harold Martin, during his service overseas and is said to have served three and a half years with the AIF. Martin, an electrician from Hindmarsh in South Australia, enlisted on 18 September 1914, at the age of 22. Digger seems to have been a stray dog that attached himself to soldiers training at Broadmeadows and followed them down to the troopships. Martin adopted him as a mascot or pet, and they sailed from Melbourne on 20 October 1914. Martin served initially with 1st Division Signal Company on Gallipoli but transferred to 2nd Division Signal Company in July 1915. He remained with the company, attached to the Engineers, during his service on the Western Front in France and Belgium.

Digger ‘went over the top’ 16 times and experienced some of the worst battles in Gallipoli and the Western Front. He was wounded and gassed at Pozieres in 1916, shot through the jaw - losing three teeth -, was blinded in the right eye and deaf in the left ear.³ At the sound of a gas alarm, it was reported that Digger would rush to his nearest human companion to have his gas mask fitted. There are also accounts of how Digger would take food to wounded men stranded in no man’s land, sometimes bringing back written messages. Martin returned to Australia on 12 May 1918 and was discharged medically unfit. Digger accompanied him as strict quarantine regulations relating to the arrival of dogs from overseas did not come into force until June 1918. He and Digger settled in Sydney. Digger had been wounded and gassed at Pozieres in 1916 and needed cod liver oil for his burns. This was expensive so a photographic postcard of Digger, wearing the inscribed silver collar made for him on his return to Australia, with patriotic red,

² Richard Van Emden, *Tommy’s Ark: Soldiers and their Animals in the Great War*: Bloomsbury, 2011,p.90.

³ Article: A dumb digger. Over the top 16 times. *Bendigonian Vic.* 12 December 1918. p.23.
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/89097089?> Digger state library of Victoria.

white and blue ribbons attached to it, was produced and the money raised from its sale used to buy the oil. It is said that the dog was also presented with a free tram and rail pass so that he could accompany Martin. Digger died, as an old dog, on Empire Day (24 May - year not known) when he was frightened by the celebratory fireworks. Thinking he was under fire again, he attempted to jump the fence but failed and fell back with a burst blood vessel. Digger managed to crawl back into the house and died on Martin's bed.⁴



Figure 1: Photograph of members of the NZ Rifle Brigade with Caesar a Bulldog. Auckland War Memorial Museum - Tāmaki Paenga Hira. WW1 488. The first military working dog recorded as being used by the New Zealand Army was Caesar, A Company, 4th Battalion, New Zealand Rifle Brigade A dog could carry maps and larger reports than a pigeon. They were, however never, as successful in these tasks as pigeons.

Both New Zealand and Australia share a love of animals directly inherited from Colonial times, when their geographic isolation and relatively sparse populations relied on the horse as an essential component of New Zealand's social, environmental, economic and military history. It was the mainstay of personnel transportation in New Zealand and the horse population grew as the settler's population grew. The horse acted as an agent of colonisation for their role in shaping the landscape and fostering relationships between coloniser and colonised.⁵ In the early twentieth century both countries were emerging with national pride and sought national symbols to identify themselves. Australians used native animal mascots to do this, New Zealand not so much due to lack of mammals.⁶ New Zealanders did however have domestic dogs and agricultural animals. They have been part of the social fabric since early times.⁷ So,

⁴ <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C1246162>. I attended the AWM research collection myself and gained details. I further had an interview with Sgt Martin's Grandson, Mr Rex Hoskins on 2 June 2019, who was able to give me photographs and letters from Sgt Martin referring to Digger.

⁵ Carolyn Jean Mincham: 'A social and cultural history of the NZ horse'. PhD Thesis, Massey, University, 2008.

⁶ Digger mascots: kangaroo gives morale to WWI troops The first Australian troops to arrive in Egypt were proud to be serving Australia and the Empire, <https://www.australiangeographic.com.au/topics/history-culture/2015/04/digger-kangaroo-mascot-world-war-i/>

⁷ Dogs were brought to New Zealand for both companionship and work. They were vital sometimes the only, companions for shepherds. The Kuri was a domesticated animal to be successfully introduced by the Polynesian settlers. But this died out as a distinct breed. <http://www.newshub.co.nz/home/new-zealand/2015/10/researchers-find-details-on-nzs-first-dog.html>. Otago University PhD student Karen Greig has

it was hardly surprising that soldiers from both countries adopted a variety of animals as mascots, as they represented both the spirit of a regiment and a reminder of home and better times. An indication of the Anzac soldiers' fondness of them was revealed in 1915, when a London newspaper correspondent commented that: 'you could almost stack a menagerie with the numerous animals that are treasured as mascots by the New Zealanders and Australians'.⁸ Photographic evidence backs this statement up, although often not referred to the ubiquitous mascot was readily seen on images, posters and postcards.

In 2017 when the National Archives in America completed a massive scanning project, digitizing 63,000 First World War photos for its records. The extensive collection took two years to place online. While a majority of the collection contains images of soldiers participating in various stages of military life, archivists noticed something else in the photos: animals. Upon further research, it was discovered that many of the animals captured in black and white served as military mascots.⁹ This in turn resulted in public access and educational resources on the relatively unknown history of mascots within the armed forces. Their presence in the wars throughout history show that their capabilities and actions have a significant importance to a conflict's outcome. There has been a recent emergence in academic studies, acknowledging the combative role of animals in warfare.¹⁰ Their importance in history has been recently highlighted in the public arena due to the film *War Horse* which portrays animals in leading roles.¹¹ There has been an animated film on a mascot, Sergeant Stubby, which provides a heavily anthropomorphised account of a stray dog found by the American forces who saved them from disaster in France during the First World War. The film is targeted towards an audience of children.¹² Finally, Charles Worman wrote on the subject of mascots and pets of the American Civil War.¹³

been able to analyse the genetic make-up of kuri using bones found at Wairau Bar - one of the country's most important archaeological sites.

⁸ Article: Nancy Swarbrick, 'Dogs of war', 2014. Accessed 1 May 2019. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/world/europe/63856860/the-dogs-of-war>.

⁹ Article: Jennifer Nalewicki, *The Animals That Helped Win World War I*, Accessed 1 May 2019. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/animals-that-helped-win-world-war-I>. 2017.

¹⁰ Marcus J Wilson, 'A History of New Zealand's military horse: the experience of the horse in Anglo-Boer War and World War One', MA Thesis. University of Canterbury 2007. See also Onur ÇİFFİLİZ, Hacettepe University; School of Social Sciences English Language and Literature British Cultural Studies, 2019.

¹¹ Movie Steven Spielberg Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures USA 2011. Book: Michael Morpurgo, *War Horse* 2nd edition, Egmont publishers, UK, 2007 'The Real Story' aimed to boost the war horses' history as a priority for new scholarly research.

¹² Ann Bausum, *Sergeant Stubby: How a Stray Dog and His Best Friend Helped Win World War I and Stole the Heart of a Nation*, National Geographic, 2015.

¹³ Charles Worman, *Civil War Animal Heroes: Mascots, Pets and War Horses*, Schroeder Publications, 2011. p.57.

Whereas much research has been conducted on the animal mascot history of Britain and the United States, this is not the case for Australia and New Zealand.¹⁴ It is essential to fill the gap, as it appears there is a lack of understanding of the value and role mascots played. Unlike Digger, many of these animals never received any recognition for their wartime service and were largely forgotten.¹⁵

The limited literature on ANZAC mascots that does exist includes Maria Gills 2018 book on ANZAC Animals, which highlights how combative and mascot animals have always been a vital part of military campaigns.¹⁶ Several other books have a chapter on mascots within them such as Barry Stone`s book *The Diggers Menagerie*.¹⁷

This thesis aims to enhance the existing historical data on Australian and New Zealand mascots, showing their contributions to warfare and individual soldiers during the First World War. It does so by answering several key questions: What purpose did mascots serve? How common were they in New Zealand and Australian units and how were they selected? Finally, what legacy, if any, have they left behind?

What is a mascot? The word mascot originates from the French term *mascotte*, which means lucky charm such as an animal, person or thing adopted by a group as its representative symbol.¹⁸ For this thesis the term mascot animal is an all-encompassing phraseology given to an entire spectrum of animals with whom interaction and companionship was enjoyed by soldiers during the First World War. The term mascot encapsulates all official regimental animals as well as the numerous unofficial mascots of a military unit. The former were paid for by the armed forces, this type of mascot was not an individual`s pet, which still comes under the definition of a mascot, but were members of a military establishment, chosen for symbolic or historic significance and expected to carry out specific ceremonial roles and duties.¹⁹ Like

¹⁴ Library of Congress cataloguing division, Subject Headings: Mascots in US military service 12th edition Volume 1. 1989. British Army Radio Forces Net, articles and video titled: *The British Army's Menagerie of Mascots* posted by David Urban April 2015. Fairfax Downey, *Mascots: Military Mascots from Ancient Egypt to Modern Korea*, Coward-McCann, 1954. The National Army Museum, London has a display on army mascots which is also available on internet. <https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/army-mascots>. P.D. Griffin, *Encyclopedia of Modern British Army Regiments*, Sutton Publishing ,2007.

¹⁵ Jill Lenk Schilp, *Dogs in Health Care: Pioneering Animal-Human Partnerships*, Jefferson Publishers, Carolina 2019.p.13.

¹⁶ Maria Gill, *ANZAC Animals 20 Animal Friends from WWI and WWII*, Scholastic New Zealand Limited, 2018. See also Jilly Cooper, *Animals in War*, Corgi, 1984.

¹⁷ Barry Stone, *The Diggers' Menagerie: Mates, Mascots and Marvels - True Stories of Animals Who Went to War*, ABC Books, 2012. Also see: *Animal Heroes* by J. J. Kramer discusses mascots in the Second World War.

¹⁸ *Australia's National Dictionary Sixth Edition*, Macquarie Dictionary Publishers Pty Ltd, Sidney, Australia 2013 p.905.

¹⁹ Unlike other mascots these animals such as dogs and horses are trained for formal parades.

the soldiers they served alongside these official mascots had a regimental number, were fed and quartered from public funds and were a great source of pride to a regiment.²⁰

The unofficial mascots included those donated to a regiment but not paid for by the taxpayer, quite often gifted to a unit by a patron as a symbolic gesture to a regiment. Additionally animals acquired by units or individuals on the way to war or in-situ were regarded as mascots or also known as trench pets. This group of mascots during the First World War made an invaluable contribution to New Zealand and Australia's troops as companions and dependable comrades in the trenches. This group consisted of a virtual Noah's Ark of animals ranging from dogs and cats, rats and insects to bears and primates.²¹

Information to answer the key questions has been gathered from various primary sources. These include a combination of qualitative biographical research, photographic analysis and interviews with military dog handlers and veterans from recent conflicts who have witnessed mascots in war zones. Newspapers are also central to this study; information was derived from both New Zealand and Australian newspapers (Papers Past and Trove) such as letters from the front and announcements made by the papers themselves of troop departures and arrivals.²²

Another important source is postcard collections. There had already been a tradition of photographic postcards before the First World War, and it was only natural that this type of popular postcard imagery be adapted to new circumstances. Many mascots appeared on postcards as soldiers often found ways to creatively photograph them so that mascots at the front were not always easy to distinguish from studio shots taken back at home.²³

Information was also sourced from original documents, artefacts created during the First World War for mascots and extracts from soldier's diaries. Crucial details have been gleaned from defence department photographic evidence and original battlefield film footage from the First

²⁰ RSM Ceremonial WO1 Michael Bates "When the mascot is due for a promotion or reduction in rank, the unit just has to fill out an AC-162". <http://defence.gov.au/publications/newspapers/army/editions/1417/1417.pdf> In Australia mascots were considered part of the unit and eligible for promotion and veterinary treatment or demotion, depending on their behaviour. Possible causes for reduction in rank could include insubordinate behaviour, or an absent without leave charge.

²¹ Connie Goldsmith, *Animals Go to War: From Dogs to Dolphins*, Minneapolis Twenty-First Century Books 2018, p.3.

²² National Library, Papers Past Newspaper search site. <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers> and <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/>

²³ A high proportion of soldiers were literate, so writing postcards and letters home made a vital contribution to the maintenance of morale. Letters from friends and family kept soldiers in touch with the life that they had left behind.

World War. Defence department files and government documents are a decisive source for this thesis. Lastly physical uniforms and equipment used by mascots or made for them by soldiers' have been collected.

Chapter one begins by examining the types of mascots and the historical role of mascots in the armed forces leading up to the First World War.

In chapter two the focus is on mascots taken to Egypt and Gallipoli by New Zealand and Australian forces and how they effected morale and identified a nation`s soldiers.

Chapter three looks at mascots on the Western Front and examines the differences to other campaigns, the extent of their numbers and variety of species.

Chapter four discusses mascots on the home front and globally. It reviews how people`s outlook towards animals in warfare has changed compared to 100 years ago.

Chapter five asks what happened to the mascots post the First World War and what, if any, legacy, they have left behind. This includes analysis of the overall contributions of mascots, if they were a useful addition that helped soldiers during combative environments and if they have any future in the modern battlefield environment or a post conflict role in rehabilitation.

The findings of this thesis enhance a great deal of existing historical belief showing that people alone did not win the First World War. Attitudes have begun to change towards the role of animals in war not only in the combative role but also how they comforted troops.

This study also highlights a relatively unknown chapter in military history, one that can be expanded on in consequent post First World War studies. Further investigation could be conducted into the subject of what right we humans have in exploiting animals during war and why it is important to research and consider the status of many of these species as sentient beings.

This thesis examines the role of mascots in the First World War. It asks three key questions about the Anzac experience of mascots and analyses any legacy they created. This thesis attempts to place animal mascots at the centre of both countries' First World War experience. They have been neglected for far too long.

Chapter 1: History of mascots up to the First World War

Historically the human-animal bond is a mutually beneficial and dynamic relationship between people and animals that is influenced by behaviours essential to the health and wellbeing of both.²⁴ This includes, among other things, emotional, psychological, and physical interactions of people and animals. It is therefore hardly surprising that soldiers have sought their companionship in war.

This thesis focuses on New Zealand and Australian mascots, however one cannot begin this topic without some reflection on the British Forces historical use of mascots as it directly influenced the Anzac traditions of their use.

One of the first mascots associated with New Zealand was when Captain Cook famously voyaged to the Pacific aboard HMS Endeavour in 1768, onboard was the ship's goat. She was onboard for three years and for her service was given a silver collar. Cook was so fond of her that he took her home with him.²⁵ In the British army the custom of having a mascot appears to have begun during the American War of Independence. At the Battle of Bunker Hill in 1775, a wild goat is thought to have strayed onto the battlefield and led the Royal Welch Fusiliers' colour party from the field. A goat has served with the regiment ever since. Other sources suggest the first mascot of the Welch Regiment was a pet goat owned by Major Thomas Gore-Brown of the 41st Regiment. It was killed at Bolan Pass in the first Afghan War 1839-1842.²⁶

In many ways customs are the valuable foundation of a unit or a corps; they are the esprit-de-corps, and they cannot be counted in terms of dollars; they are far more important than that. In the words of a famous general of the 1990s Colin Powell: '....customs and traditions install a sense of belonging in the lives of young soldiers'.²⁷

How these mascots were selected and what purpose they served included the conscious recognition of the unit's heritage, for example the selection of an exotic animal might stand for

²⁴ American Veterinary Medical Association journal: R. Scott Nolen, *Bonds that last a lifetime*, 2006.

<https://www.avma.org/KB/Resources/Reference/human-animal-bond/Pages/Human-Animal-Bond-AVMA.aspx>

²⁵ Alison Sutherland, *No Ordinary Goat – The story of New Zealand's Arapawa Goats*. New Zealand Arapawa Goat Association 2016. <https://www.captaincooksociety.com/home/detail/no-ordinary-goat-the-story-of-new-zealand-s-arapawa-goats-alison-sutherland-2016>.

²⁶ Robert Graves, *Goodbye to All That*: Penguin Books, London 1969.p.154.

²⁷ Colin Powell, *A Soldier's Way*, Cornerstone, New York p.57.

the journey or deployment a unit has taken in the past. In the British Fusiliers the tradition of antelope mascots dates back 140 years, from when the Warwickshire Regiment was stationed in India in 1871. This name *Bobby* remained unchanged for all subsequent animals inducted into the regiment.²⁸

Likewise, the Royal Welch has a long tradition of goat mascots. In 1884 Queen Victoria presented the regiment with a Kashmir goat from her royal herd. Subsequently, the Royal Welch have obtained all their goat mascots as a gift from the monarch.²⁹ Technically, this means they're not really mascots at all, but ranking members of the regiment. All the 1st Battalion's goats are named William Windsor (Billy for short) and march at the head of the battalion in ceremonial events.³⁰ Clearly the purpose of a goat in this case as a mascot is to uphold a tradition.³¹ It was initially used as a food source, as during the Crimean War the goats were eaten by the soldiers.³²

The first mascot goat photographed in New Zealand service appears in an image from the A and C companies of the 18th Royal Irish Regiment on parade at the Rutland Stockade, Wanganui, circa late 1860s.³³ This is a perfect example of our connection as both New Zealand and Australian forces frequently used this species as a mascot, with Nan being the mascot of the New Zealand Engineers in France during the First World War.³⁴ This close New Zealand connection with British mascots like the goat would appear again in the First World War.

²⁸ As their traditional Regimental Mascot, an Indian black buck, is now an endangered species, the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers have adopted a British Otterhound as their stand-in Regimental Mascot; he holds the rank of Fusilier. <http://www.fusiliers-association.co.uk/Bobby/Bobby.htm>

²⁹ <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1185019>. Billy-goat-retires-Royal-Welsh-Regiment-mascot--military-honours.html

³⁰ Other Battalions used other names 2nd Taffy-3rd Shenkin. <http://historypoints.org/index.php?page=the-goat-major-pub>.

³¹ <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-35371670>

³² Robert Graves, *Goodbye to All That*, Penguin 1960 p.38.

³³ Soldiers from the 18th Royal Irish Regiment at Rutland Stockade, Wanganui. Ref: 1/1-000095-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. /records/23101538

³⁴ Goat mascot of the New Zealand Engineers, URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/goat-mascot-of-the-NZ-engineers>, Ministry for Culture and Heritage, updated 17-May-2017

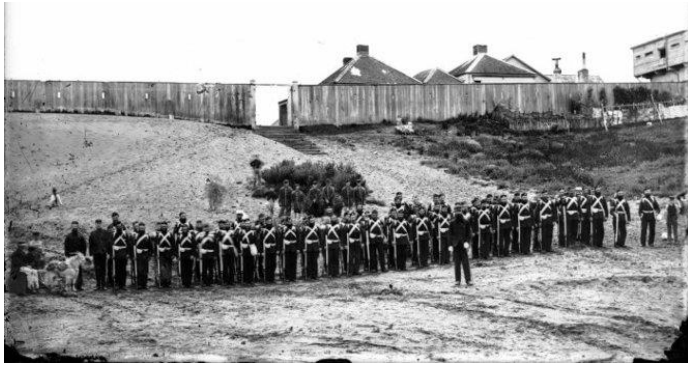


Figure 2: Photograph taken by William James Harding from the book 'The Colonial New Zealand Wars' by Tim Ryan and Bill Parham, 1986, p. 144.

Yet another tradition connected to the type of mascot chosen is shown by British historical representation of Home County Regiments. As an example, Irish Regiments are connected to the Irish Wolfhounds whilst the agricultural regions of Derbyshire are connected to mascot sheep.

Other historical reasons are based on more practical traditions such as two Ferrets adopted by the 1st Battalion the Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own).³⁵ Their original purpose comes from the First World War when soldiers used ferrets to forage for food using their carnivorous habits to hunt rabbits for the soldiers to eat.³⁶ These same animals are still traditionally used in both regiments today.³⁷

Within Australia and New Zealand, the keeping of mascots in Militia, Reserve and Volunteer and Regular formations in both countries prior to the First World War was not an issue- there was not a military camp or installation that did not have its quota of mascots- they went on manoeuvres, lined up on parades and rode on everything from planes or to sitting by Generals in staff cars.³⁸

³⁵ Article: Kristen Allen, British Army deploys ferret forces to Münster, 2008.accessed, 29April 2018. <https://www.thelocal.de/20080925/14529>

³⁶ Today's ferrets are purely symbolic and travel with the regiment. In 2018 they went with their human comrades to Southern Iraq the purpose is to provide moral and humour to the troops. army.mod.uk/YORKS

³⁷ In Australia several mascots are adopted by units as a representation of the regimental badge, the 2nd Cavalry regiment is an eagle and as such a Wedge Tail eagle is its mascot.

³⁸ Hediger. Ed. Ryan & Leiden Brill, *Animals and War*. Springer Nature publishing. 2013.pp.77-88. Also see Alger, Janet M, and Steven F. Alger. *Canine Soldiers, Mascots, and Stray Dogs in U.S. Wars: Ethical Considerations*.pp.77-104.

A photograph in a Queensland newspaper shows that the fondness for native animals as mascots in the Australian army existed not just in wartime but in peacetime armies too.



Figure 3: 5th Light Horse and the Koala Mascot, at Enoggera Camp in 1914. The 5th Light Horse Regiment latter sailed to Egypt and disembarked on 1 February 1915. From: *The Queenslander*, 19 December 1914, p. 23.

As previously mentioned, Irish Wolfhounds were the favoured mascot of Irish units. Residents of New Zealand raised funds in 1915 for an Irish wolfhound for each of the three Irish Brigades based in the United Kingdom.³⁹ It featured in a New Zealand newspaper article titled mascots for the Irish Brigade and displayed a connection with colonial descendants to the Irish homeland.

Mascots were an integral part of both Australian and New Zealand Forces well before the First World War. They had been present on ships and with colonial forces in both countries, both domestically in Militias and taken to the Boer War all be it in fewer numbers. During the Boer War the first official dog ever sent to South Africa was a mascot collie and a regimental dingo. The mascot was for propaganda as after it had finished in South Africa it was to be gifted to the Queen.⁴⁰

They were not the only Australian mascots to go, an opossum and a black swan went. During the voyage the swan flew away, while the possum climbed up the rigging never to be seen again. The dog, however, was used to entertain the troops in shows during the trip. Upon arrival the dingo ran off, however, the mascot dog *Bushie* did get to England but was returned to Australia after all. It was noted that *Bushie* had therapeutic value visiting hospitals and nursing homes when in England.⁴¹

³⁹ *New Zealand Tablet*, 5 August 1915.

<https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/periodicals/NZT19150805.2.16?query=mascots&snippet=true> Irish Wolfhounds have served as the mascot of the Irish Guards since 1902, when the Irish Wolfhound Club presented the first dog to the force. The dog was named Brian Boru after an Irish king, and since then, the 14 dogs that followed were also named after kings or chieftains.

⁴⁰ R.L. Wallace, *The Australian Boer War*, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 February 1900, p.7.

⁴¹ Don Pedler, *Dogs and other mascots*, *Journal Sabretche*, Vol XXXVI, 1995. p.30.

Even before the First World War the use for morale, regimental pride and therapeutic value to injured troops was evident. Nurses such as Nellie Gould, Penelope Frater and Julia Bligh Johnston arrived in South Africa in February 1900, Johnston and Frater also worked in Egypt, France and England during the First World War.⁴²



Figure 4: Buller the mascot dog. AWM image C1302466. Sourced Australian War Memorial.



Figure 5: A kangaroo being given a drink on board a ship carrying Australian troops bound for the South African war 1899-1902. AWM 129018

Leading up to the First World War New Zealand and Australian regimental traditions still ran deep from the British army, so it is perhaps understandable that many of the animals we have used as mascots are the same as the “Mother Country” namely dogs, cats, mules, goats, horses and birds. Many New Zealanders prior to the First World War still looked upon England as the Motherland with this traditional British icon such as the British Bulldog still featured on war posters.⁴³

It was therefore natural many Australian and New Zealand units initially adopted Bulldogs as a mascot.⁴⁴ An abstract from the Miners` Battalion newspaper stated:

⁴² A.D. Carbery, *New Zealand Medical Service in the Great War 1914–1918*. Auckland, Whitcombe & Tombs, 1924. Nominal roll of Colonial Medical Officers (1845-1860) appendixes. p.560.

⁴³ Peter Shaw Baker: *Animal war heroes*, London: A. & C. Black, 1933.p.83.

⁴⁴ *The Brisbane Courier* 13 April 1916 p.7.

It is notified that a brindle bulldog, 2½ years of age, the mascot of the 42nd Battalion. Thompson's Paddock has been lost. The animal answers to the name *Colonel Stone*, and a reward is promised for his return to the battalion at Thompson's Paddock.⁴⁵

Further evidence of the Bulldogs' popularity is seen in a newspaper article dated 1916 reflecting a Miners' unit marching off to war. An inspection of troops was held by the District Commandant whose comments were reported in *The Brisbane News*:

on Saturday after-noon ... In the march past the Miners' Battalion had the pride of place. When the crowd caught sight of marching just behind the last company, a special round of cheering was accorded. The Miners' Battalion Band had the regimental mascot, "Puncher," a fine bulldog ... and a huge mastiff mascot, of another unit, took up its position at the head of the next band during the march past.⁴⁶



Figure 6: Showing a group portrait of New Zealand Expeditionary Force machine gun section, Auckland Mounted Infantry. Ref: *Auckland Weekly News*, Auckland Mounted Infantry members of the NZ Expeditionary Force with bulldog mascot, 1914, Sir George Grey Special Collections, AWNS-19141008-36-1

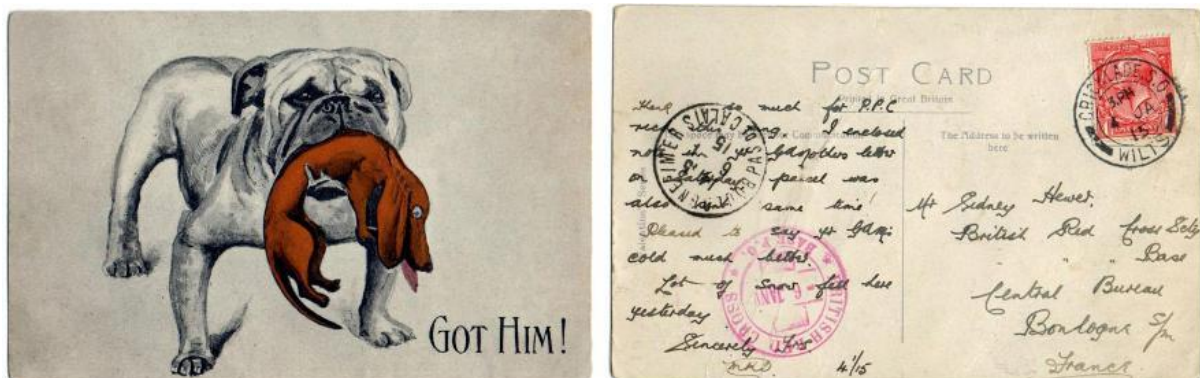


Figure 7: Images of patriotic dogs played an important part in the postcard propaganda war directed against Germany. Britain, Australia and New Zealand was often portrayed by artists as a Bulldog and Germany as a Dash-hound. (Known also as a sausage-dog because of its shape and the perceived German taste for sausages.) On anti-

⁴⁵ *The West Australian*, Mon 21 Feb 1916. p.8.

⁴⁶ *The Brisbane Courier*, 13 April 1916 p.7.

German postcards the British Bulldog was frequently seen chasing the sausage-dog or standing with it firmly held within its mouth.⁴⁷

New Zealand has only one land mammal unlike Australia who has ample native mammals suitable as mascots.⁴⁸ This is a possible reason that New Zealand troops seem to have adopted the dog so many times as their mascot. Perhaps, due the country's isolation and sparse population, animals frequently became companions, this maybe one area where a love for mascots developed. The interdependence of animals and humans in extreme situations cemented ties between them. A dog was vital – sometimes the only companion for an explorer and sheep farmer. On arrival in New Zealand, both Māori and Europeans needed domestic dogs for survival, Māori brought with them *kurī* (Polynesian dogs) they was also used for food, clothing, to make tools and the *Kurī* also helped with hunting and exploration.⁴⁹ Europeans needed them for farming.⁵⁰ During the New Zealand Wars of the 1860s some British regiments had animal mascots. Organisations such as fire brigades, brass bands and sports clubs also often had mascots. It is only natural that when New Zealanders went to war dogs were often used as mascots in Anzac military units. The dog might be an officer's dog, an animal that the unit chose to adopt, or some canines were employed in unofficial roles such as a rat catcher.⁵¹



Figure 8: In the Otago newspaper the headline the Maori contingent's mascot called "Tipperary," Presented to the Maoris by the people of Avondale, while in Avondale Camp, Auckland.⁵²

⁴⁷ Picture Postcards of the Great War. sourced 1 Nov 2018. <https://www.worldwar1postcards.com/ww1-war-dogs-on-postcards.php>.

⁴⁸ Department of Conservation, TePapa Atawhai. <https://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/native-animals/bats-pekapeka/>

⁴⁹ <https://teara.govt.nz/en/kuri-polynesian-dogs> Māori certainly regarded some animals as companions the explorer Kupe and his pet *kurī* (Polynesian dog) are depicted in a carving on the roof of the wharenuī (meeting house) at Victoria University's Te Herenga Waka Marae. By definition could this symbolism be regarded as a tribal mascot. Dogs remain most popular with Māori households with ownership rates increased from 33% to 35% from 2011 to 2015. The percentage of European households with dogs has remained consistent with the 2011 figures at 29%.

⁵⁰ Clive Dalton, *The Encyclopedia of New Zealand, Settled landscapes*. Accessed 1 November 2018. <https://teara.govt.nz/en/farm-dogs>

⁵¹ Patent Dorothy, *Dogs on Duty: Soldiers' Best Friends on the Battlefield and Beyond*, Walker Publishing, 2009.p.14.

⁵² *Otago Witness*, issue 3228, 26 January 1916.

There are several ways mascots are selected. By the First World War right up to the current day practice most Commonwealth armies retain two classifications of mascots, those officially recognized animals that held regimental status, or a mascot that could have a semi-official status- known as a regimental pet. Some were never selected as such. These unofficial mascots were animals that frequently attached themselves to an individual soldier or unit (such as a stray dog) on the way to war or similarly one that adopted itself to a soldier as a consequence of the war.⁵³ Unlike the official mascots of a regiment the selection of the unofficial mascots may have simply come down to an animal being able to keep up with him such as a dog or a smaller creature he could carry. It would also come down to a personnel preference.

An interesting reoccurring theme with mascots is their names, British mascots frequently had names from their home counties or Regimental battles. Australian and New Zealand troops often adopted masculine or military phrases as names like Major, Digger, Courage and Gunner. Many of these names appear multiple times and the latter “Gunner” is no exception. One of the first was illustrated in a Postcard of 'Gunner' the dog. It is part of a 1914-18 collection at the Australian War Memorial. The message on back reads, ‘Gunner went from Broadmeadows with B Coy 14 Battalion December 22nd 1914’. He is pictured on board HMAT *Ulysses*.⁵⁴

Prior to First World War, there was no Australian air force or similar body. The Australian Flying Corps was established during the War, as a corps in the army (the Australian Imperial Force or AIF). Its squadrons served under the British Royal Flying Corps. Many served within the Royal Flying Corps having joined in the United Kingdom prior to the war.⁵⁵ The ‘squadron dog’ has always been a part of military aviation culture, particularly during wartime. They had an important role to play; at a time when the future was far from certain for many young airmen on active operations, their canine companions offered some comfort and distraction from the grim realities of war.⁵⁶ Through their unwavering devotion and boundless affection, they kept

⁵³ Many animals especially cats and dogs on the Western Front found themselves after severe shelling of a village both ownerless and homeless. Blue Cross at war 1914-1945. <https://www.bluecross.org.uk/blue-cross-war-book>.

⁵⁴ The series contains souvenirs relating to animals during the First World War. Published Collections, Research Centre, Australian War Memorial item RC03932.

⁵⁵ State Library Victoria. Accessed 11 Nov 2019. https://guides.slv.vic.gov.au/wwone_soldiers/flyingcorps

⁵⁶ Colin Pateman, *Airborne Animals and Cockpit Companions: Air Force Mascots of World War II*, Colin Woodfield Publishing, 2011.p.14.

spirits high and provided a temporary link to normality and peace. With no flying corps in New Zealanders many served during the First World War with the Royal Flying Corps.⁵⁷



Figure 9: Pilots of No. 85 Squadron RAF pose with their assorted mascots and pets, including four dogs and two goats, at St. Omer, France, in June 1918. In the group are three New Zealand pilots, “Mac” MacGregor, Euan Dickson and Donald Inglis. Photo exhibition at the Air Force Museum of New Zealand, titled “Pooches and Pilots” ALB920382A029.

Not only did mascots change lives in adversity they raised the troop`s spirits and in so doing these animals had to adjust to the demands we placed on them in war. This they did willingly, trusting that we provided in return security, love and their essential needs.⁵⁸

As war commenced how many Australian and New Zealand units in the First World War had mascots? This question is almost impossible to answer- Major General Sir John Moore, Director of Veterinary Services, B.E.F. 1914-18 states that:

A considerable number of animals took part in the war many in private ownership (mascots) who served their owners through the storm of battle.⁵⁹

It is impossible to know the true number of animals during the First World War. Of the 9 million animals that died during the First World War, at any one time over one million served on all fronts. The British and Dominion Forces alone were over 500,000. The total number employed by all belligerents has been estimated at over 16,000,000 this includes combative animals, such as cavalry mounts, animals pressed into service, such as a farm oxen used in logistics and mascots.⁶⁰

We do know by photographic evidence that many individual soldiers in every conceivable unit in every geographical location where they served are seen holding an animal of some type. A

⁵⁷ By war’s end some 800 had served with the Royal Flying Corps (RFC), Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) or Royal Air Force (RAF), and a further 60 with the Australian Flying Corps (AFC). The War in the air Page 4 – New Zealand’s air war 1914-1918. <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/war/war-in-the-air/new-zealands-air-war>

⁵⁸ Manatu Taonga Ministry for Culture & Heritage. Viewed 21 Nov 2019. <https://mch.govt.nz/news-events/press-releases/animal-mascots-wartime>.

⁵⁹ Peter Shaw Baker, *Animal War Heroes*, A&C Black, London, 1933 Forward p.xvi.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

further indicator can be seen by various animal rescue organizations who assisted soldiers in returning their mascot back to England after the war. The Blue Cross alone assisted in the repatriation of 5,000 dogs to England.

The First World War would see a quantum leap in the number of mascots taken to war. In the Australian War Memorial Research Centre, the reference guidebook to the animals, souvenir collection 1914, contains information relating to Australian military animals during the First World War. It states: ‘Animals have played a significant role in Australian military history from assisting in battle to providing company and building comradeship within a unit as mascot’.⁶¹

As the war commenced some unusual examples of animals have been seen on ships at sea or on battlefields. Several Allied armies in both world wars took to using bears as mascots, an unlikely companion in the trenches for several reasons apart from their vulnerability and roaming nature, they soon grew to a size that became quite unmanageable. As such they were all eventually handed over to local zoos for the duration. Sadly, some animals that started life as a cute mascot but became large and destructive, such as several pigs, headed for the cook house when they became too large. Mascots were regularly reported in New Zealand newspapers throughout the war, be they articles by reporters themselves or, more frequently, quoting letters from servicemen on the front lines, to their loved ones and family.

Many Australian units adopted animal mascots on the way to Egypt, the most popular was the dog, but some units took Kangaroos, while other units adopted animals such as monkeys, goats, birds and cats.⁶² Thus, by their actions, it displays conclusive evidence that mascots were entrenched physically and psychologically in Australian and New Zealand military units prior to the First World War. Pride of a national identity especially for Australian troops manifested in opting for native animals such as marsupials. New Zealanders have a history of adopting canines in particular, one favourite breed the bulldog was a symbol of the Motherland.

Whether the mascots reminded the troops of their homeland or the normality of peace time, the practice continued when both nations deployed for the First World War.

⁶¹ Viewed by author, 24 Feb 2019. Animals Souvenirs Collection, Australian War Memorial, Souvenirs 12.

⁶² Ernest Harold Baynes: *Animal Heroes of the Great War*, McMillan, London, 1927.p.230-35.

Chapter 2: Egypt and Gallipoli

Egypt

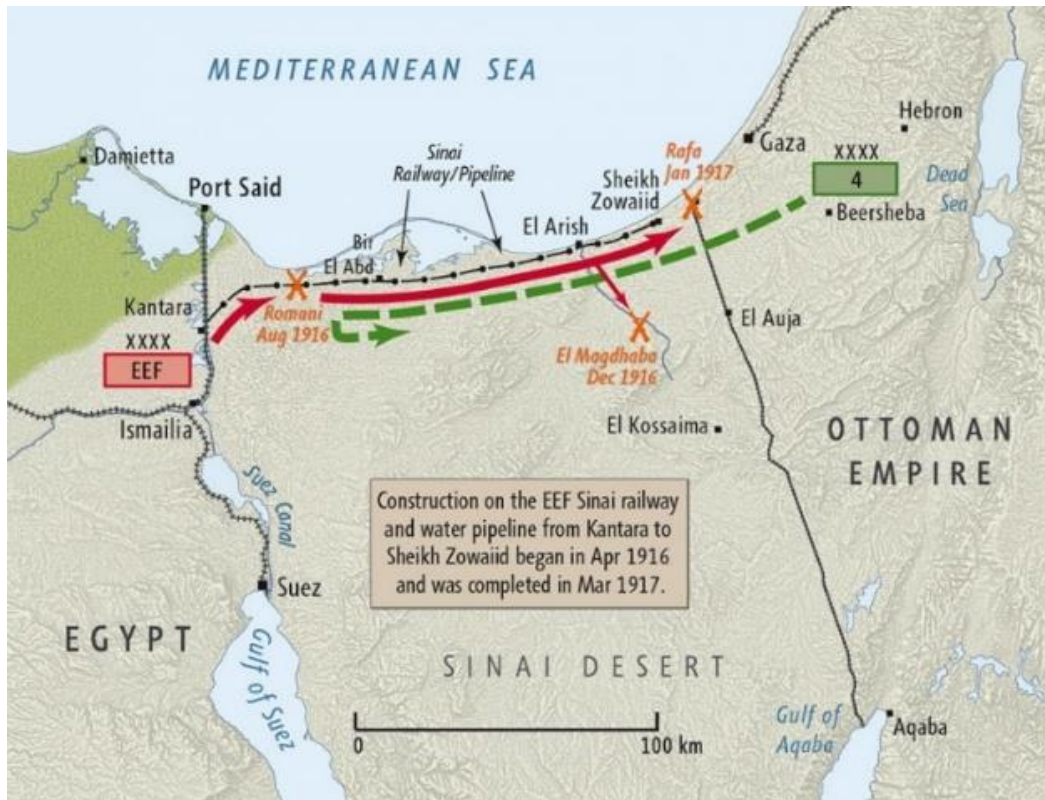


Figure 10: Map of the desert campaign area. Sourced: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/>

In this section it is seen many animals arrive in-situ from both Australia and New Zealand with their regiments some of the mascots had been with the units in peacetime whilst others had been picked up on the way. Dogs being one mascot that seemed to have adopted themselves to a unit or an individual at a training camp. When initially in Egypt mascots were sited around training camps. Once the campaign commenced, due to its rapid movements most native animals (Australian) remained behind. Canine mascots being more mobile and adaptable to eat what the troops ate accompanied some troops in the field. Later in this chapter ANZAC troops then deployed to Gallipoli only a few mascots accompanied troops, but several would be adopted whilst there.

When you see images of the desert campaign Anzac soldiers are frequently mounted on horses or camels. Some in the rear echelon areas are seen riding locally hired donkeys, but there was

a menagerie of animals that entertained the troops, ranging from birds to native animals they had brought with them.

Early in the war patriotism was shown by the use of native animals. Australian and New Zealand had many unique creatures. One might wonder why it appears only one Kiwi (genus *Apteryx*)- the bird was recorded as serving as a mascot prior to the First World War.⁶³ Apart from an inability to easily feed them, they were also difficult to find, unlike the kangaroo. Before the First World War New Zealanders did not refer to themselves as Kiwis, the tradition and use of a kiwi emblem came between the wars.⁶⁴

Kangaroos were a particularly popular choice of mascot at military hospitals, presumably to help cheer up the wounded soldiers and remind them of home.⁶⁵ There are many historical photographs and letters from troops holding Australian native animals.⁶⁶ In a letter from Australians in Egypt.

Our troops have tents to hold 30 men, and we live eight in each. Gardens are numerous about them, but no flowers stones, bottles, and glass in the form of kangaroos, emus, rabbits, sheep, etc. We have alive 'roo' and two terrier pugs close handy in the regiment; in our squad we have three opossums".⁶⁷

An abstract of a letter which has been passed by the censor from the pen of Lance-Sergeant J. W. Kerr and appeared in a Victorian newspaper.

One would not class the average, devil-may-care, venturesome Australian soldier, as a sentimentalist, but if you saw him in the Zoological Gardens in Cairo you would speedily come to the conclusion that he was. Although there are many weird, unshapely, tropical animals he prefers to stand and gaze in happy approbation at the silly antics of a youthful kangaroo and is moved to ecstatic and thoughtful delight when he hears the shrill call of the magpie, the chattering of a parrot or cockatoo, or the gee-haw of a kookaburra, and no wonder. You seem to be living amid all these wonderful relics of antiquity, in some long gone-by age, and the musical notes of our native birds recall home and friends and kindred ties in a manner that is hard to describe.⁶⁸

⁶³ When *HMS Hood* during a 1923-24 world tour visited Australia and New Zealand it acquired numerous mascots, wallaby, kangaroo, ring tailed possum, cockatoo and a Kiwi known as *Miss Apteryx Australis*. View-Taylor Bruce, *Hood an illustrated biography*, Chatham Publishing, London, 2005 p.145.

⁶⁴ New Zealand History *Nga Korero a ipurangi o Aotearoa*.p.2. <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/war/mascots/first-world-war-mascots>.

⁶⁵ Years later dogs are used in military hospitals to aid comfort to veterans suffering from PTSD. <https://diannewolfer.com/tag/wwi-mascots/>

⁶⁶ The Manor, *Mercury Advertiser* (NSW: 1862 - 1931) Monday 22 March 1915 p.3. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/902016>

⁶⁷ Australian National Geographic. Accessed 1 Sept 2019.

<https://www.australiangeographic.com.au/topics/history-culture/2015/04/digger-kangaroo-mascot-world-war-i/>

⁶⁸ *Cobden Times and Heytesbury Advertiser*, Vic. Saturday 27 March 1915. p.2.

When analysing this letter, it is clear that many young soldiers, for the most part overseas and away from Australia for the first time, missed their homeland, what it represented and the ones they left behind. This is the start to identifying themselves as Australians. Although some Australians went to war with a sense of England as the "Motherland", they started to develop their own culture, were known for their easy-going natures, their ability to enjoy themselves heartily when on leave, as well as their reputation for a relaxed attitude to discipline.⁶⁹ The relationship between Australian and English soldiers could perhaps be characterised by a friendly rivalry. Working and fighting together during the war, both similarities and differences between the two groups were highlighted. British soldiers were called "Tommys" by the Australians. A cartoon by Frank Dunne shows this friendly rivalry.



Figure 11: Australian War Memorial cartoon Tommy: Australian soldiers' relations with the British. <https://www.awm.gov.au/soldier/tommy>.

A report on the various regimental mascots which had been adopted by the Australian mounted troops during the desert campaign noted:

There is not a unit which has not a pet of some kind. Dogs of many breeds and diminutive monkeys. The Anzac have purchased donkeys and chickens to a rate that camel food had to be diverted to the poultry.⁷⁰

Australians also brought mascots with them not just for tradition but for companionship. If you just take a look at these men, they were all volunteers were young with not much thought about

⁶⁹ Australian War Memorial. Tommy Australian soldiers' relations with the British. 1918 exhibition.

⁷⁰ Papers Past *New Zealand Northern Advocate*, 23 July 1917.p.7.

the future”.⁷¹ Many after the initial excitement of adventure in new lands simply got bored and homesick. The mascot especially one from their homeland reminded them of family and their roots. The colonial culture of the Anzacs tended to adapt via a combination of indifference and masculine pride however soldiers still showed a tenderness towards animals. They identified, remarked on it and then accepted it.⁷²

The type of mascot Anzac troops adopted at the early stages of the war was also initially based on national pride. New Zealand troops found taking native animals as mascots somewhat more difficult especially the Kiwi (*bird -genus Apteryx*) as its insectivorous diet was difficult to duplicate. The Australian troops however took the Kangaroo as a mascot to every campaign they partook in. One letter from the front by Private McAlister No 941 C Company 20th Battalion described to his children how the voyage to Egypt was most favourable except that they lost their mascot wallaby on the way over.⁷³

Mascots have been a long-accepted part of the Army since at least the First World War. As one of Army’s great traditions, unit mascots vary in shape, size, and animal class. They date back to when we took kangaroos and koalas over to Egypt when the troops were training, and they would provide a morale boost for the units.⁷⁴

The first Australian troops to arrive in Egypt brought at least one kangaroo, famously pictured by the pyramids in Cairo. They were not the only mascots, Australians also brought Wallabies, Possums, reptiles and even Koalas.⁷⁵



⁷¹ Peter Stanley, *principal historian at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra*. Article: <https://www.australiangeographic.com.au/topics/history-culture/2015/04/digger-kangaroo-mascot-world-war-i>.

⁷² G.S. Willmott, *Red lights on the Somme*. 2014, Chapter 37.

⁷³ *Wellington Times*, 2 September 1915. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/143389582?>

⁷⁴ Interview with RSM Ceremonial WO1 Michael Bates, Australian Army: <http://defence.gov.au/publications/newspapers/army/editions/1417/1417.pdf>

⁷⁵ Article: Jay Hemmings, *Australian Mascots*, May 12, 2019 <https://www.warhistoryonline.com/instant-articles/mascots-get-kangaroos-in-wwi.html>.

Figure 12: Photo: snapped by Chaplain Ernest Merrington. Image credit AWM CO2588



Figure 13: Postcards were popular ways to send images home. ⁷⁶<https://www.warhistoryonline.com/instant-articles/mascots-get-kangaroos-in-wwi.html>

There have been many speculative debates about how many kangaroo and wallaby mascots eventually arrived in Egypt and that they interbred as a new hybrid species of marsupial.⁷⁷ Given the movement of troops and the attrition of war, their fate is largely unknown. However, one source about the Cairo Zoo states there was a disproportionately large collection of Australian animals.⁷⁸ The zoo finally ran out of kangaroos in 1990.⁷⁹

The animals were popular with the locals as well, with well-to-do English people and French residents visiting the camp to see the kangaroos. So much so the population grew out of control with many being rounded up and sent to the Cairo zoo, it is believed this died out a few years after the war. Similarly, those Australian troops taking Koalas to Egypt found the same difficulty sourcing the correct gum leaves, as of the more than 900 species of gum trees which make up one hundred percent of a Koalas dietary requirements, a Koala only eats from 50-60 species, none of which were in Egypt at the time.⁸⁰ A leaflet announcing the death of *Tommy Brown*, a Koala that was the mascot of the motor transport section of the Third Division supply column was circulated to the troops. The leaflet claims the he was the only Koala brought alive to England.⁸¹

⁷⁶ Article: Jay Hemmings, 2019 War History online. Accessed 12 Oct 2018.<https://www.warhistoryonline.com/instant-articles/mascots-get-kangaroos-in-wwi.html>

⁷⁷ Interviewed by author, 26 Feb 2019. Mark Williams of Taronga Zoo

⁷⁸ In the 1950s, it was said to have had the largest collection of Australian native animals outside Australia! M is for Mates Animals in Wartime from Ajax to Zep. Australian War Memorial book p.20.

⁷⁹ John Simons, *Kangaroo*, Reaktion Books, London 1955, p.121.

⁸⁰ Kola Hospital Port Macquarie, NSW. <https://www.kolahospital.org.au/education/koala-faqs> Paragraph 12.

⁸¹ Sighted by author, 24 Feb 2018. File 1/1/1 First World War 1914-1918, Souvenir collection, AWM.



Figure 14: The significance of this image is that several Kolas were smuggled on ships to Egypt and survived on the same rations as the horses. Image AWM. Image Right: First World War, Egypt, 1916. Patients in an Australian hospital with their nurse and her furry friend M is for Mates Animals in Wartime from Ajax to Zep. Australian War Memorial book p.21.

The following is an abstract of a letter which has been passed by the censor from the pen of Lance-Sergeant J. W. Kerr and appeared in a Victorian newspaper. The letter from Kerr in Cairo, to his wife back home was printed in the newspaper titled *Australians in Egypt* in 1915. It would seem to support the notion that Kangaroos were plentiful enough in Egypt to have them in the local zoo.

We had an afternoon at the Cairo Zoo. It is simply grand and makes our Adelaide one seem just a toy affair. I saw a grey kangaroo presented by the 1st Field Ambulance and met a couple of South Australian infantry men who had been sent by Col. Weir to see it. It was the one that was presented to Col. Weir by Mr. Ware of Ware's Exchange, Adelaide. The Field Ambulance 'pinched' it and made a present of it to the Zoo.⁸²

Soldiers would occasionally buy an animal for companionship. An extract of a letter from a soldier to his family on observing the local beautiful grey Arab ponies, “they are lovely creatures and would be worth a small fortune in Australia. You can buy one here 20 piastres. Some of the lads buy small donkeys. Olive's donkey is as big as three of the average size of the poor little brutes here”.⁸³

Australians were known to buy local donkeys to ride into town and go sightseeing. Another documented story was some New Zealand soldiers bought a small donkey as a mascot while they were on leave in Cairo, Egypt. Then they had to get it back to their camp outside the city. They tried to get on a tram, but the conductor did not want to take the donkey. The soldiers didn't want to leave her, so they paid the donkey's fare as well as their own.⁸⁴

⁸² *The Sydney Stock and Station Journal*, 5 February 1915 p.2. Also see article: Bourne Dorothea T Hill. *They also served*, Winchester Publications 1947. Bourne describes how the animals brought into the zoo or hospital care in Cairo had often been adopted by whole unit and would be accompanied by a deputation of men...

⁸³ Article: *Kapunda Herald*, 12 February 1915 p.3. accessed 3 Oct 2019.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/124980765?>

⁸⁴ National Library Wellington: <https://natlib.govt.nz/photographic-archive-soldier+mascot>

Soldiers gained comfort from observing local wildlife. Soldiers found much comfort in observing birds' nests among shell holes or courting and singing atop barbed wire fences. Rank seemed to make no difference to having a love for animals. Commander-In- Chief General Allenby, during the desert campaign, obtained so much relief from bird watching he even went so far as to station a senior non-commissioned officer at Oasis's that birds frequented so they could inform him of any new arrivals. He would then drop whatever he was doing and proceeded to the oasis.⁸⁵

New Zealanders had their share of mascots, if not natives of their land, initially at least there appears ample evidence that they favoured dogs. A Waihi soldier regimental number 12/416 Private Gerald (Tad) Morpeth of the Auckland Infantry Battalion, the First New Zealand Expeditionary Force wrote in his diary several remarks on his unit's two mascot dogs whilst embarked on the Troop ship *SS Waimana*.⁸⁶ He comments:

The *Waimana* was packed including 550 horses and 1400 men ...we have two dogs aboard. One is the Regimental mascot, a grey staghound, and the other a liver and white animal like a foxhound. The mascot is a sickly-looking dog out here but the other seems to enjoy it fine.⁸⁷

There are numerous diary entries just usually a one liner that mention mascots. But not enough to elaborate their role and function, other than to deduce that they were important enough to the serviceman to mention in a letter to home. One from George Plows 4th Battalion, C Company:

Some of our chaps had smuggled the little nanny goat we had at Kensington (Sydney) on to one of the horse boats and we have it here now. One of our chaps, when we were out on a long march, picked up a little pup and carried it in his knapsack for three hours. It is the pet of the company.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ Richard Van Emden, *Tommys Ark* Bloomsbury Books, 2011 p.173.

⁸⁶ The *Waimana* left Wellington on 16 Oct. NZ troopships at Wellington, October 1914', URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/nz-troops-ships-leaving-samoa>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 16-Oct-2014.

⁸⁷ The Waiheathens brothers, Accession No.2010.1035. Diary and letters of a Waihi soldier Gerald (Tad) Morpeth. One of the six Morpeth brothers from Waihi who served in the First World War. Copy sighted by author -National Museum, 7 June 2017.

⁸⁸ *Mudgee Guardian*, Article: the road to Gallipoli, 2015.

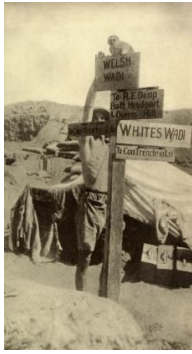


Figure 15: A direction post at the dump behind Burnt Tank Trenches, Palestine, with a monkey, presumably a regimental mascot, sitting on the top. This monkey later went to Gallipoli.⁸⁹

Some of the more unusual animals Anzac troops took were monkeys. It seems they were quite popular. A letter from Private Wilfred Denver Gallwey of the Australian 15th Battalion to his family in 1916, comments on life aboard the troop ship HMAT *Seang* in transit via Durban. On arrival his uncle gave him a live monkey as a mascot,⁹⁰ while another monkey was obtained as the mascot of the First Australian Division in Egypt. Yet another monkey appears in a portrait of a group of men from the 3rd reinforcements, 3rd pioneer battalion, at Seymour camp. The image shows an unidentified soldier holding a monkey on a chain, the animal mascot for the unit.⁹¹



Figure 16: 1914-15 La Guerre, Bulldog mascots of Australian soldiers in Egypt. They were a very popular breed with New Zealand troops as well, reflecting on the British homeland imagery.

It was only natural when Australian and New Zealand troops were sent from Egypt to Gallipoli, they either took existing mascots with them or adopted ones in-situ. Some mascots that had been left in Egypt were reunited with returning troops.

⁸⁹ Forces war records, Trench life in pictures, <https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/blog/2015/12/04/trench-life-in-pictures>.

⁹⁰ Lin MacDonald: *Bud the monkey and other tales of soldier's pets*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1932. p.56.

⁹¹ AWM image accession number PO718.004.

Gallipoli



Figure 17: Map of the Gallipoli campaign. Sourced, <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/gallipoli-invasion-map>

Over 100 years ago the Allies launched an attack on the sun-baked peninsula of Gallipoli in Turkey. The campaign lasted between April 1915 and January 1916 when finally, the allies withdrew. The Gallipoli Campaign cost more than 250,000 casualties, including some 46,000 dead. On the Turkish side, the campaign also cost an estimated 250,000 casualties, with 65,000 killed.⁹² Many more soldiers became sick and incapacitated due to the unsanitary conditions especially from enteric fever, dysentery and diarrhoea. Many Australians and New Zealanders historically will be familiar with the exploits of donkeys at

⁹² A&E Television Networks, *Battle of Gallipoli*, History website, <https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-i/battle-of-gallipoli-1> February 9, 2020.

Gallipoli but may not be aware that a number of animals, including mascots that served during the campaign.⁹³ Many being killed or left behind.⁹⁴

Australian native mascots inspired Australian troops and boosted morale as reflected from the diary of No 1221 Private Harry Victor Turner, 16th Infantry Battalion who was wounded at Gallipoli.

In a conflict that was increasingly savage and bloody and with often horrific living conditions in the camps, maintaining high morale was a vital function, and the simple presence of a kangaroo or wallaby went a good way toward keeping Anzac troops as happy as possible under the circumstances”.⁹⁵

Of course, to New Zealanders and Australians, dogs were a reassuring image of home here too, as many bushmen and farmers within the ranks were used to working alongside dogs. One much-loved New Zealand mascot was a frisky Irish terrier called Paddy. Part of the Wellington Infantry Battalion, which sailed for Egypt in October 1914. Paddy was smuggled on board the troopship *Maunganui*, in defiance of the order prohibiting pets. Once he was found, it was argued by the soldiers that he should become the Battalions mascot as well, which was agreed based on his previous service.⁹⁶ On completion of desert training and manoeuvres in Egypt, including a small skirmish at Suez Canal he then went with his unit to be part of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps in the Dardanelles in April 1915. He landed with his battalion at Gallipoli under deadly fire. He would later go on to serve on the Western Front. During his deployment he was often on the front line, taking part in several charges and even on one occasion reaching the enemy trenches before the New Zealand troops. He was found yapping down at the defending Turks, much to their astonishment. Paddy was also part of the famous bloody battle of Chunuk Bair. It was claimed that by mid-August only he and a Trooper from Levin remained from the original Wellington West Coast Company to be alive on the peninsula

⁹³ Article: Tony James, *Donkeys & Mules on Gallipoli 1915 Simpson and the Zion and Indian muleteers*, http://tonyjamesnoteworld.biz/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Gallipoli_Apr_2010.pdf. Also see: *NZ's First World War horses*, p.5. (Some draught horses accompanied the divisional artillery and transport and supply units to Gallipoli in April 1915 to assist with their work). <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/war/nz-first-world-war-horses/egypt-gallipoli>. Thesis: William G. Clarence-Smith, *Horses, mules and other animals in Ottoman military performance, 1683-1918*, London University, 2003. Thesis: William G. Clarence-Smith, *Horses, mules and other animals in Ottoman military performance, 1683-1918*, London University, 2003.

⁹⁴ Jenny Macleod, *Great Battle, Gallipoli*, Oxford University press 2015, p.51.

⁹⁵ https://www.flickr.com/photos/state_library_south_australia/9366587205 State Library of South Australia Album collection B46230/1.

⁹⁶ National Army Museum Te Mata Toa, <https://www.armymuseum.co.nz/kiwis-at-war/did-you-know/paddy-the-dog>.

at that time departing Gallipoli in September. When the Second Wellington Regiment was formed, Paddy went with them to the Western Front in France. Although a charming tale, the importance of this mascot shows he was a vital part of regimental pride and morale.

There was another mascot dog at Gallipoli also called Paddy owned by Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Lievesley Beeston, a surgeon in the Australian Imperial Forces.⁹⁷ This Paddy, apart from being an emotional support for his master who operated under adverse conditions for five months, cheered up soldiers at the evacuation hospital and was also known to dispatch the odd rat.

New Zealand troops had some exotic animals as mascots at Gallipoli. In a letter from an Auckland soldier at a garrison sports meeting at the Western Front in 1918 reported, “A mascot, called *Mokka*, the monkey, was a great hit entertaining troop. The monkey was brought there from Egypt and was with the New Zealanders on the Gallipoli Peninsula”.⁹⁸

The vast majority of Anzac horses had been left in Egypt as they were not required for this campaign plus the terrain was unsuitable at a beachhead. There were many equines present in large numbers used by Indian cart companies and the Zion mule Corps.⁹⁹ In fact when many reflect on an animal which identifies the Anzac soldiers at Gallipoli, most will think of the donkey. These however were combative animals not mascots. With their horses gone many a Mounted Infantryman or Light Horseman turned their attention to caring for mascots. Photographic evidence shows mascots being cared for irrespective of what side they were on. On the Gallipoli Peninsula, in Turkish museums, photographs show similar First World War images of Turks playing with their small animal mascots in just the same way as Anzac troops. For the adopted dog, cat, or bird, being in a soldier's care meant survival; for the soldier, a mascot meant comfort and companionship.¹⁰⁰

Like all other front's, mascots accompanied Anzac soldiers to Gallipoli. Some originally come from the troops' respective countries via Egypt, whilst others found local and native animals

⁹⁷ Deb Benson: *Gallipoli Dog, The true story of an ANZAC surgeon and his little mate*. Deb Benson Publishers 2013.p.4. Beeston went to Gallipoli in April 1915 at the beginning of the allied offensive and remained there for five months. Within his diary he records his love for his family and his little dog, Paddy, whom he took to Gallipoli.

⁹⁸ *New Zealand Herald*, January 1918 Fun at the front. <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/NZH19180122.2.41.10>

⁹⁹ Cew Bean: *Official History of Australia in the War 1914- 1918*, Angus & Robertson Ltd, 1942, 13th edition. Vol 7.p.13.

¹⁰⁰ National Archives prologue magazine, 1996 Vol 28 p.3 *Buddies* commemorates the heartfelt, enduring relationships between soldiers and animals during WWI.

in-situ. Wherever they came from their purpose was the same to remind the soldiers of their homeland. They helped unify soldiers as many would take turns looking after the mascot needs such as food and water. Some mascots were handed down from soldier to soldier either as the initial handler was either injured, killed or, if lucky rotated to another area. They frequently became a unit's mascot rather than an individual's property.

There may be no old soldiers left alive from that campaign in New Zealand now, but one of their mascots lives on. The last "naturalised" Kiwi survivor from Gallipoli arrived in New Zealand in 1916 with wounded soldiers on the Hospital ship *SS Marama*¹⁰¹. *Torty* as she is called was a tortoise and she is still alive today¹⁰².

During the Gallipoli campaign New Zealand soldiers are quoted in several sources befriending these Greek tortoises as mascots. There are similar cases where soldiers have adopted local tortoises as low-maintenance companions in other forces.¹⁰³

Private Stuart Little from Dunedin was employed as a stretcher bearer taking the wounded to rear area hospitals. Private Little observed a small tortoise being run over by a French artillery carriage which caused extensive damage namely an open wound, where a piece of her shell broke off plus a large dent to the rear her shell and she lost several toes.

Enquires made by Little to local Salonica residents concluded that her age estimate was 100 years old then, remarkably that would make *Torty* around 200 years old today. However, *Torty* was not the only Kiwi tortoise mascot. A New Zealand nurse, Nora Hughes working at the Aotea Convalescent Home in Cairo between 1915-1919, was given a tortoise by a wounded soldier who had found it in a trench in Gallipoli in 1915¹⁰⁴. Soldiers would often give gifts to nurses at aid stations or hospital, a sign of affection or gratitude? Often if badly wounded with the knowledge of being sent home, by gifting their companion away meant its survival too. When Hughes returned to New Zealand in 1920, she brought the tortoise back home. Why? Likely this mascot aided her morale and comfort in a stressful environment, and she did not want to leave him or sever the connection. Perhaps even a reminder like a trinket of the

¹⁰¹ Torpedo Bay Navy Museum, <http://navymuseum.co.nz/hospital-ships-maheno-and-marama/>

¹⁰² A&E Television Networks, *Battle of Gallipoli*, History website, <https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-i/battle-of-gallipoli-1> February 9, 2020.

¹⁰³ National Army Museum United Kingdom -Animals-Army mascots. p.2.Sourced: <https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/pawfect-pals-and-pets-soldiers>. The tradition went back many years even Florence Nightingale had a pet tortoise at her hospital in Scutari during the Crimean War. His name was Jimmy.

¹⁰⁴ Gallipoli tortoise Great War Story, URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/video/gallipoli-tortoise-great-war-story>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 23-Jun-2016.

memories of good times? *Peter* as she had named him lived with the family as a pet until it died in 1994. The tale of *Peter* was written in a book by Shona Riddell- Hughes.¹⁰⁵

Thomas O'Connor another New Zealand stretcher bearer took shelter in a trench at Gallipoli one night when a turtle dropped in.¹⁰⁶ O'Conner made a small ramp for this animal to enable it to get out and return to the sea. To O'Conner's surprise the turtle returned on a regular basis, however, one night the relationship came to a tragic end when O'Conner left his trench as part of his stretcher duties only to find upon his return that Indian troops had made his mate into soup. O'Conner was so upset he carried his mate's shell around until repatriation where it found itself on display on the lounge wall to remind O'Conner of something that had made him happy during a terrible time¹⁰⁷.

Apart from reptiles, canines were ever present as mascots with ANZAC troops. At Gallipoli a spaniel called Pincher had been travelling around the world with a lady when they happened to be wintering in Egypt, they visited the camp of the Australian Expeditionary force at Maadi. The dog transferred his affections to Sergeant Tom Borlase, of the 7th New South Wales Light Horse. Accepting the inevitable, his mistress graciously gave the dog to the soldier and the two soon became firm friends.¹⁰⁸ A few weeks later his company received orders to proceed to the Dardanelles, however army regulations did not permit a dog to accompany a soldier to the trenches. The sergeant did not want to part with the spaniel and disobeyed orders, and nobody saw Pincher jump ashore at Gaba Tepe by the side of the veteran Australian when that memorable landing took place. Like all mascots they soon bonded with other members of the unit who helped keep him out of sight. This would not just have been sentimental compassion, this mascot, like so many, earned his keep by scenting danger quicker than most and giving the alarm.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Shona Riddle: *The Tale of the Anzac Tortoise*, Te Papa Books, 2014.p.2.

¹⁰⁶ The major difference between the two is that tortoises' dwell on land, while turtles live in the water some or nearly all of the time.

¹⁰⁷ Video of turtle at Gallipoli at NAM. <https://www.armymuseum.co.nz/kiwis-at-war/did-you-know/gallipoli-turtle>. See also: Animals Souvenirs Collection <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/accessing-records-at-the-memorial/findingaids/special/souvenirs/animals>.

¹⁰⁸ A veteran of Gallipoli the dog that never barked, 2015, Sourced: <https://www.hepburnadvocate.com.au/story/3019596/a-veteran-of-gallipoli-the-dog-who-never-barked/>

¹⁰⁹ *The Bathurst Times*, 6 November 1915 p. 4.

One of the first to detect Pincher was a Major who held the sergeant in high esteem and in camp had shown a marked partiality for his pet. Alas, not all the officers were as kindly disposed as the major. Another of them had apparently caught a glimpse of the dog and an order for the removal of the dog was conveyed to the sergeant. In fact, a search party was even sent out to locate the dog. However, the search party did not find him, and such was this mascot's effect on morale that a message was passed back along the line to the effect that a large number of Australians would have to go before the dog went. But notwithstanding this 'defiance of devotion', in accordance with instructions issued the dog would be put down at noon the next day. "Sergeant Boriase had an inspiration and the following day was able to take his colonial oath that the dog had gone. Mascots have also been associated with luck, that is another reason Anzac troop had them. Two hours later a shell burst near Sergeant Boriase's trench and a piece of shell lodged in his left hip. He was conveyed to the clearing hospital, a trusty friend brought him a bundle of some sort just prior to his being taken to the hospital ship which was to take him to Malta. Boriase clung tenaciously to that bundle, one end of which had soon worked open disclosing the brown nose and quaint little face of Pincher. On arrival in England, a patient entering a military hospital had to discard old clothing. When a nurse noticed his greatcoat on the floor she stopped to pick it up, she was startled at seeing a slender brown and white spaniel drop out of its folds. Tom pleaded with the nurse not to let them take him away. With great timing, Pincher jumped on the bed and extended his paw to shake hands, what nurse could have resisted such an appeal as that". This mascot did make his way back to Australia.¹¹⁰ There is no doubt this mascot influenced all around him with the soldiers being prepared to risk disciplinary action to save its life. The nurse probably realised the importance of this dog to the mental health of the soldier.

Apart from the official Naval cat mascots, usually on ships at sea or patrolling naval dockyards for vermin, several cats found themselves working in the trenches of Gallipoli. They were found up in the trenches with Anzac troops, the lucky ones occasionally found themselves pampered at rear echelon hospitals and canteen establishments. Apart from their rodent control abilities they often gave much comfort and morale - a reminder of home to troops on rest and recreation.

¹¹⁰ *The Gloucester Advocate*, 17 October 1917, p.3.



Figure 18: Ensnconced in an opening in a sandbagged dugout a mascot cat looks up expectantly at the approach of an unidentified soldier. Gallipoli Peninsula, 1915 Image: *Australian War Memorial*.

A story reported in *The Newcastle Herald & Miners' Advocate* about a cat who lived with the ANZACS at Gallipoli:

Again, when we were in the trenches in the front line a cat came up from the support trench and wandered in and out amongst us, and the most extraordinary thing was that during the day she only wandered about below the parapet- it would have been fatal for her to have appeared above it, just as it was with us....Well, directly it got dark and we were able to look over and fire, she would make no bones about running along the very top.

The story by the soldier underlines two points, one, cats were present at Gallipoli with Anzac troops, either brought from home or locally acquired. Secondly, they may have been selected to aid with rat problems or an easy mascot to carry and look after under those conditions. Finally, such affection and friendship did they give that soldiers took the time to write home about them. They must have had an impact on the soldiers' lives.

In Gallipoli, just like the Western Front, rats were plentiful. However, the constant danger came from smaller creatures like the flies and mosquitoes, these insects caused great numbers of deaths from disease.¹¹¹ It is unknown if any insects were kept as mascots, but it is possible British troops were known to get scorpions to fight camel spiders for amusement.¹¹²

The tenderness of many troops to both pets and wild animals at the front is remarkable, given the slaughter that was all around them. At Gallipoli in 1915, where Allied troops were pinned down for weeks under a murderous fire from the Turks, Sergeant Bernard Gill, saw a skylark suffer a

¹¹¹ Terry Breverton: *First World War Curiosities* Amberley, Scotland, 2014 p.205.

¹¹² Eric Eliason: *Warrior Ways Exploration in modern military folklore*, 2012 University Press Colorado p.84.

shrapnel wound. It was rescued by men within reach of where it fell. They fed it for days on biscuit crumbs moistened in water, until its wing was healed, and it could be released.

The mascots in Gallipoli tended to be less numerous than the Western Front, this maybe in part to the troops being rushed there and unlike Belgium and France local animals were less in number and not displaced by bombardments or destruction of villages causing a mass of strays. It is also true peoples of these regions, due in part to religious beliefs, had fewer pets than European cultures.¹¹³ Notwithstanding this broad statement at least one Turkish dog was captured by members of the Australian 13th Battalion from the Turks in the Aghyl Dere valley on the Gallipoli Peninsula and named 'Joe Bourke'. The photograph shows the dog with a small satchel strapped to it.¹¹⁴ Many mascots were trained in a secondary role such as guard or casualty dogs. Joe likely had this latter role given the harness. Casualty dogs were trained to find the wounded and dying on battlefields, they carried medical supplies so soldiers who were able could treat themselves. If the soldiers were too badly wounded the dogs would stay beside them, giving them comfort while they died. The psychological importance of the comfort animals in the military could bring to soldiers should not be overlooked, which is why mascots were so important during war.



Figure 19: New Zealander soldier W J Batt (left) with a regimental mascot at Walker's Ridge during the Gallipoli campaign in Turkey in April 1915. A Turkish dog captured with three Australian soldiers in the Aghyl Dere, on Gallipoli and named "Joe Bourke." Image AWM JO6494.

One function mascots performed unwittingly was a morale booster to soldiers unlucky enough to be captured and made Prisoners of War (POW). Often the mascot would accompany the soldier into captivity who had been looking after it, providing comfort during the darkest of

¹¹³ Traditionally, dogs have been seen as impure, and the Islamic legal tradition. Viewed 29 April 2019. <https://www.animalsinislam.com/islam-animal-rights/dogs/>

¹¹⁴ A. Thomas White Captain: *Fighting Thirteenth-* The History of the 13 Battalion A.I.F. Naval & Military Press, 2009.p. 80.

times. These animals often saved the lives of fellow POWs both via emotional support and physical intervention.¹¹⁵

Many mascots were regarded as a link with the mates who did not make it back to New Zealand and Australia. The regimental mascot was a symbol of mateship binding all men together, these mascots lived on post war and could remind troops of yesteryears comrades. As far as individual mascots, it may have been shared by a small group of men such as a section or platoon within a larger formation. Soldiers who did return clearly saw these mascots as comrades who had stood beside them through terrible times and suffered too and as a link to their war time friends.¹¹⁶

Military mascots represented the spirit of a regiment and were believed to bring good luck. During the First World War they were more than just symbols, they provided companionship, fun and comfort to men a long way from home. Amid these trying physical and psychological conditions animals soon became a source of familiarity and even hope, they provided comfort, kinship and boosted morale. Historian Tim Cook wrote: The very presence of animals was a key link with ordinary pre-war life for the soldiers of 1914 to 1918.¹¹⁷

Apart from mascots, all animals including combat animals gave the soldier a little bit of comfort and boosted morale in an often-depressive atmosphere.¹¹⁸ As the troops passed by a line of Light horse or donkeys and mules they would frequently reach out, the tactile touch often a gentle reminder of peaceful times. This was especially common on the Western Front where vast amounts of horses were present, equines being a common sight in both rural and city environments.

Many of the mascots in Egypt had originally come from the soldier's respective homelands, usually smuggled aboard the transport ships with and without permission from Commanders. Mascots were less prevalent in Gallipoli as soldiers left them in Egypt due to several factors, one being knowledge of an opposed landing compared to the arrival in Egypt. The operational

¹¹⁵ National Army Museum: 'A man's best friend'. <https://www.armymuseum.co.nz/mans-best-friend/>

¹¹⁶ Nancy Swarbrick: *Creature Comforts: New Zealanders and their pets, an illustrated history*, Otago University Press, 2013.p.43-56.

¹¹⁷ Tim Cook and Andrew Iarocci: *Animal Soldiers Canada's History*, 2013, p.20-27. Also read Reinhardt Viktor: 'The Magic of Touch': Healing Effects of Animal Touch & Animal Presence Animal Welfare Institute, Second edition, 2017.

¹¹⁸ Isabella George: *Animals at war*, London: Usborne 2007.p.123.

tempo of the deployment to Gallipoli and the practicality of doing so. Many soldiers bequeathing their native mascot to the care of the Cairo Zoological Garden.¹¹⁹

Dogs on the other had seemed to have accompanied both New Zealand and Australian troops. Again, several factors would have made this more practical than a native animal. Diet for one, a dog unlike a marsupial will eat what the soldiers do. Dogs have a greater emotional connection to man and vice versa.¹²⁰ Many of the canines that accompanied troops from their homelands travelled to Egypt and Gallipoli and from March 1916 Australia deployed to the Western Front, such dogs as the Australian mascot Digger went with them.¹²¹

These mascots would be joined by others that troops from the 3rd Division had brought directly from Australia, whilst the veterans of Egypt enlisted new mascot companions once on the Western Front.

¹¹⁹ Article: Liz Ginis, 'Digger mascots: kangaroo gives morale to WWI troops', 2015.

<https://www.australiangeographic.com.au/topics/history-culture/2015/04/digger-kangaroo-mascot-world-war-i/>

¹²⁰ Research by US psychologist Dr Chris Blazina suggests that many men find their relationship and attachment to their dog to be more secure than their closest human relationships. <https://metro.co.uk/2019/09/20/men-feel-emotionally-closer-dog-human>.

¹²¹ 1916 Australians in France AWM. awm.gov.au/collection/event/ww1/1916/essay.

Chapter 3: Australia / New Zealand mascots on the Western Front

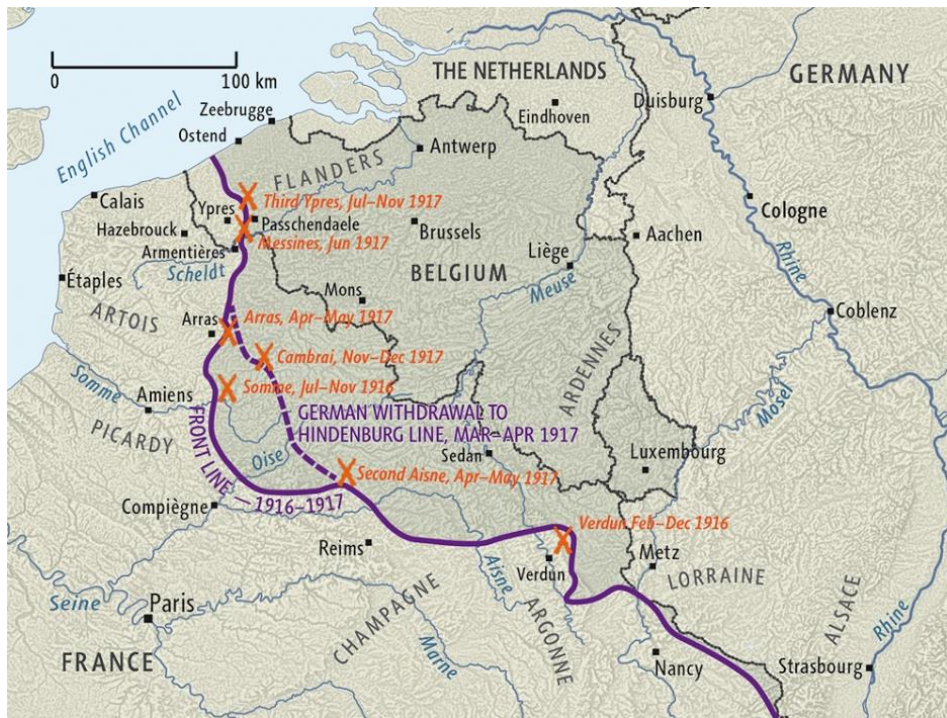


Figure 20: Map of the Western Front campaign area. Sourced <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/western-front-1916-17-map>.

What did a mascot mean to an individual or collective of troops? To the collective, mascots were icons of the respective nations- Australians in particular took great pride in taking native animals including large amounts of wallabies, kangaroos, possums, cockatoos and kookaburras to France. So many mascot marsupials were abounded, on the Western Front, that there is even a persistent rumour that wild wallabies can still be seen in the highlands of France. However, these maybe associated with the village of Emance when in the 1970s a colony of wallabies escaped from a local zoological reserve.¹²²

According to Neil Storey in *Animals in the First War*, in 1916 there were so many wallabies brought over to England by Australians on their way to the Western Front, they had their own paddock in Portsmouth.¹²³

¹²² ABC News article August 2015. www.abc.net.au/news/2015-08-04/wild-wallabies-roam-villages-new-paris/6671558.

¹²³ Neil Storey: *Animals in War*, Shire Publications, London 2014. p.8.

The New Zealanders could hardly take their national native avian to the frontlines. Instead, mainly dogs were given the honour of boosting the morale of New Zealand Expeditionary Force (NZEAF) troops. Whatever species a mascot was, to the individual it gave both physical and emotional warmth to a soldier in the cold trenches of the Western Front. They gave unconditional love never judging or holding malice. They evoked humanity in a unit or individual by taking care of a wounded or malnourished animal that latter became a mascot. What the soldier got in return was physical stimulation, tactile touch and companionship.¹²⁴

Quite often when a soldier was on sentry duty the mascot was his only companion during a lonely vigil, these mascots became a soldier`s or units guardian, giving early warning of attack. There are many things we learn off animals, that ironically you might say keep us human, such as tolerating others in confined spaces such as the trenches. Being able to talk to a living entity has been shown to be therapeutic.¹²⁵

For many New Zealand soldiers animals have brought moments of peace and normality during the hardships and brutality of war. While an individual`s morale varied greatly, there are some common themes that run through soldiers` diaries and letters to home. These reflect the joy of seeing animals and having their companionship, to that of remorse when the sight of their carnage occurred on the battlefield.¹²⁶ They reminded troops of better times, home and family.¹²⁷

A list of every type of mascot that accompanied Anzac troops would not be possible, but it included mammals, reptile, birds, and insects. During the First World War many mascots were selected based on personal taste. Pre-war bird fanciers found comfort in their pre-war hobbies often rescuing and rehabilitating injured birds. This would have been both therapeutic and occupational during long periods of monotony. As soldiers cared for wounded animals both domestic or wildlife, they would have developed empathy and compassion, a reminder in the horror of war what peace time might bring and a hope for wars end. How a mascot was selected may also have simply been that some animals were simply more attractive to a soldier than

¹²⁴ Article: The Military Mutual, 'The role of military animals', August 2017.

<https://www.themilitarymutual.com/news/military/animals-role-military/>

¹²⁵ Aubrey H. Fine & Alan Beck: 'Handbook on Animal-Assisted Therapy' (Third edition), 2010.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/agricultural-and-biological-sciences/human-animal-bond>.

¹²⁶ Article: Matthew Shaw, *Life as a soldier*, Historical debates British Library Published: Jan 2014.

<https://www.bl.uk/world-war-one/articles/how-did-soldiers-cope-with-war>.

¹²⁷ <https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/wars-and-missions/ww1/military-organisation/animals-in-military#5> p45

another. Mammals were more popular as mascots than reptiles or animals void of emotion. The humble cat became one of the most numerous mascots on the Western Front.

At the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914, the German armies invaded Belgium on their way to France and swept tens of thousands of panic-stricken civilians before them. These refugees rapidly enlisted the help of 'man's best friend' to escape from the terror unfolding before them. Once these animals had done their part in helping evacuate their masters many were discarded as food was scarce for humans let alone a pet. This caused many abandoned dogs at a time and place ideal for adoption as mascots by arriving allied troops.¹²⁸ Mascot dogs although not military working dogs employed for a specific war role have frequently been sighted defending the regiment or individual they have befriended by indicating the enemy's approach or detecting gas attacks prior to a human source.¹²⁹ By wars end the most common mascot was man's best friend the dog, not just in Anzac forces but all combatant forces.

For soldiers in the Great War, going over the top was a comparatively rare event; much more frequently they were bored, lonely and missing their families at home. Needing an outlet for their affection, many found it with animals. Paul Cornish the Senior Curator of the Imperial War Museum London in 2014 published an article described the daily life of a soldier in the First World War, of interest is the mention of a dog which clearly indicates they boosted morale.

An ordinary day would be spent in small, dank dugouts, where the soldier would make tea, lunch on bully beef, or 'chat' ... At night, the trenches came alive. Under the cover of darkness, the troops would be replaced; carrying parties would replenish supplies and small parties sent out to conduct trench-raids or repair wires. Daily experience differed, from being sheltered in underground bunkers with the occasional piano! Or playing with the dog.¹³⁰

These animals served, suffered, and died alongside the soldiers not only enduring the same conditions but frequently worse, being exposed to the elements and modern horrors of warfare

¹²⁸ During 1914-18 over 7000 dogs were killed or died on active service.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/nov/07/animal-victims-first-world-war>

¹²⁹ Today within both New Zealand and Australia defence forces, military working dogs are the predominate animal still used in combat. In fact, they are on the increase, more being used today than in WWI.

¹³⁰ Article: Paul Cornish, 'The war machine, Life as a soldier, Race, empire and colonial troops', Published 29 Jan 2014. <https://www.bl.uk/world-war-one/articles/the-daily-life-of-soldiers>.

such as gas, but without a soldier's protective equipment. Many of these mascots were much more than trench pets, some performed tasks using natural instincts such as small terrier dogs or cats catching rats. Others alerted troops of impending gas attack or incoming artillery shells via their natural highly developed senses.¹³¹

It is almost impossible to calculate how many mascots were present during the First World War as individuals may have had multiple animals or they may have been killed or lost or moved on to another trench. Mascots were also known to exchange sides on occasions. Maybe the lure and smell of food was more attractive across no man's land. One such animal was *Roff*. The story from military archives at the Australian War Memorial, reads:

On 3 May 1918, Corporal M Roach and Private R Conway of C Company, 13 Battalion AIF, who were in an advanced post in trenches outside *Villers-Bretonneux* France, enticed a German message dog into their lines by way of food... *Roff* remained with the unit as a mascot from May to September, attached to the Quartermasters Stores. A set of harness and an improvised cart were made for him by the section, and he used to carry stores for the staff, until he became savage and was sent to England with a view to having him transferred to the Sydney Zoo. *Roff* died on the night of 14-15 October 1919. A couple of days later it was decided to have him stuffed and mounted by Roland Ward Ltd, Taxidermist, of Piccadilly, at a cost of eight pounds. The mounting was completed on 26 November 1919 and he was sent to Australia, where he remains on display.¹³²



Figure 21: Colonel D G Marks DSO, Commanding Officer of 13th Battalion, with a German messenger dog, named 'Roff' by the Germans, but christened 'Digger' by the Australians, which was captured at Villers-Bretonneux. The use of messenger dogs by the Australian troops was adapted in this sector, but only as an auxiliary means of communication. Many dogs showed singular intelligence, but the system was not sufficiently reliable.

¹³¹ The olfactory scent gland of a canine is approximately 200 times greater than a human. Viewed by author, RNZAF Manual AP1722, p.177.

¹³² Australian War Memorial: *Roff*. (RELAWM04 369)-viewed on 11 April 2019, <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection>.

This then displays not only how important he was to the troops he served alongside but also important enough to transport all the way back to Australia and finally important enough to display publicly.

As the war progressed so the mascots varied including insects and birds. One has to recall that the terrain was vastly altered by the war and progressively became worse after the major bombardments of 1917 onwards. Not only was the landscape altered vegetation that once housed animals disappeared.¹³³ This in turn caused both wild and domestic animals to seek alternative shelter. Many found the trenches comfortable and in-kind soldiers fed them and made them mascots. Mascots were present on all sides having no malice or concept of side many mascots exchanged sides or were captured and kept by the other side. It was common to see a British fox terrier in the German trenches as a mascot killing rats or on the beds in German hospitals, whilst Allied troops had Dachshund or German Shepherds as mascots.

Pigeons were official combative animals, tasked with message delivery the New Zealand Divisional Signal Company who used them were attached to the New Zealand infantry on the Western Front from 1916 to 1918.¹³⁴ Not all birds carried out their missions.¹³⁵ One of the problems the pigeon service had in respect to the delivery of messages was brought to the attention of the high command early on in the First World War and that was troops fed the pigeons if they landed in the trenches. The pigeons were already tame, used to being handled and fed by humans. On occasions they were enticed, either deliberately or by accident, to seek shelter and food during their delivery messenger mission. Soldiers would often happily feed them turning them into a mascot.¹³⁶

This also happened to some messenger dogs who were enticed to stay in the trenches by food. The companionship of dogs was so highly valued in the trenches that men would often offer to deliver messages in their place. Such was the problem an order forbidding feeding both of these messenger animals was issued.¹³⁷

¹³³ Article: H.H Munro: Birds of the Western Front, *Westminster Gazette*, 1916.p.2.

¹³⁴ L. Barber: *Swift and sure: A history of the Royal New Zealand Corps of Signals and army signalling in New Zealand* Auckland, Published New Zealand Signals Inc, 1996.p.64.

¹³⁵ Lt Col A. H. Osman, *Pigeons in the Great War*. published by the racing pigeon Publishing Company, 1928. pp.17-19.

¹³⁶ Roy Ellis: *By Wires to victory*, Batley Printing, Auckland, c. 1968, p. 42. viewed 2 November 2019. <https://www100.govt.nz/pigeons-of-war>.

¹³⁷ The real dogs (and cats) of war: How British Tommies fighting in France found comfort in their adopted pets during the First World War. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3928372/The-beloved-dogs-trenches-British-Tommies-fighting-France-comfort-adopted-pets-World-War.html>



Figure 22: First World War C. H. Gould, Extracts from Intelligence Report. These soldiers are roasting pigeons for their dinner. Homing pigeons were protected, and there were rules against the shooting of any pigeons during the war, just in case they were carrying vital information.¹³⁸

Mascot dogs as man's best friend seemed naturally able to attach themselves to an individual or group of soldiers. As noted, some even defected from the enemy to accompany Anzac troops.¹³⁹ Dogs show affection and develop a bond with their owners.¹⁴⁰ An example of a unit's affection for their mascot is that a postcard of Digger, an AIF mascot who was gassed and wounded at Pozieres, it was produced to raise funds for the purchase of cream to treat a skin condition caused by the gas attacks.



Figure 23: On the postcard image photograph, Digger lies on the Union Jack with ribbons (most likely red, white and blue) around his neck. Images of animals not only inspired troops but in this case helped raise funds for Diggers own medical treatment. National Library of Australia Archive, (SN:MAS56)

¹³⁸ M is for Mates, Animals in Wartime from Ajax to Zep. Australian War Memorial book p.12.

See also: Mary Small and Vashti Farrer, *Feathered Soldiers*, ANZAC Day Commemoration Committee QLD Inc, 2005.

¹³⁹ Susan, Bulanda: *Soldiers in Fur and Feathers. The Animals that Served in World War I - Allied Forces*. Alpine Publications, 2013.p.40.

¹⁴⁰ One reason dogs were so popular apart from their affection was their ability to multi skilled, so it occurred in the trenches that as rats grew fat on unburied corpses, mascot dogs that were prized for their ridding skills were also used for other functions, one being as a sentry to more skilled work such as carrying a message back to the rear.



Figure 24: Soldiers fighting in France found comfort in their adopted pets during the First World War. Despite bitter fighting, troops loved and cared for dogs they found. Men of all classes adored dogs that loyally stayed beside them at the front.

However, many people find other animals rewarding companions, including horses, fish, turtles, pigs, birds, and so-called ‘pocket pets’ – mice, rats, rabbits and guinea pigs. Some of these became the unit’s mascots whilst others remain an individual’s mascot. Just like in Egypt native animals from Australia were found to be popular mascots on the Western Front. In a conflict that was increasingly savage and bloody and with often horrific living conditions in the camps, maintaining high morale was a vital function, and the simple presence of a kangaroo or wallaby went a good way toward keeping Anzac troops as happy as possible under the circumstances.¹⁴¹

On the Western Front, troops in the front line had to endure many discomforts besides the danger of shellfire and the sniper’s bullet. In the trenches, vermin were a constant irritation. Surrounded by discarded scraps of food and corpses, the rat population increased with amazing speed. Men spoke of trenches and dug outs which were plagued with "rats as big as cats". Isaac Rosenberg a wartime poet, in a hand-written letter describes with humanity and humour sharing life with a rat in the Trenches. ‘*Only a live thing leaps my hand, a queer sardonic rat*’.¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ The human-animal bond is a mutually beneficial and dynamic relationship between people and animals that is influenced by behaviours essential to the health and wellbeing of both. This includes, among other things, emotional, psychological, and physical interactions of people and animals. Viewed 1 May 2019. <https://www.avma.org/KB/Resources/Reference/human-animal-bond/Pages/Human-Animal-Bond-AVMA.aspx>

¹⁴² V Noakes: *The Poems and Plays of Isaac Rosenberg*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.p.112.

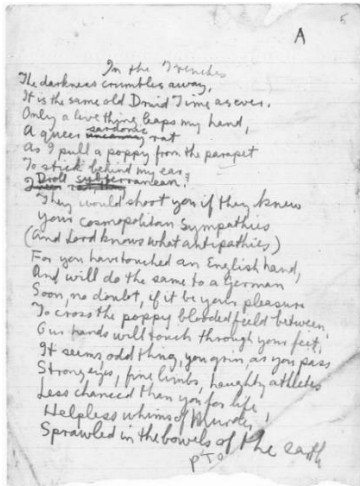


Figure 25: Letter dates July 1916 from Isaac Rosenberg to Sonia Rodker, IWM.

In a more practical way, some dogs such as hardy terriers many of which had become a units mascot were taken into the trenches to act as 'ratters' answering two thesis questions of why were they selected and what purpose did they serve. In the interests of health, regular 'rat hunts' became an essential past-time for troops.¹⁴³ This then was entertainment something to pass the time away and boost morale. Units even had competitions against each other on whose rat catcher could catch the most rats.¹⁴⁴ The Jack Russel was a favourite with Anzac troops. They served as mascots, rat catcher and as living hot-water bottles, keeping soldiers warm in intolerable conditions.



Figure 26: Australian Rupert Sydney Boothey, 43rd Battalion, with Jack Russell terrier. Author viewed 24 Feb 2018 at AWM.

¹⁴³ I Parsonson: *Vets at War: A History of the Australian Veterinary Corps 1909-1945*, Australian Military History Publications, 2005.p.134.

¹⁴⁴ Shaw Matthew, Article Themes: *Life as a soldier*, Historical debates British Library, Published: Jan 2014. <https://www.bl.uk/world-war-one/articles/how-did-soldiers-cope-with-war>

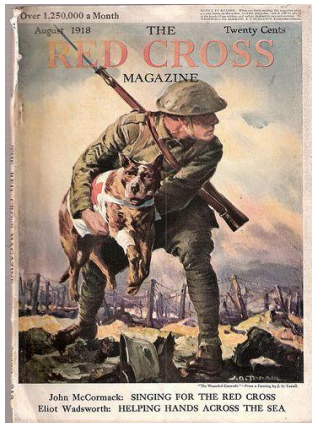


Figure 27: Mascots became the poster image of helping troops whilst at the same time ‘we’ are pictured helping animals all to illicit sympathy and outrage. Also a number of Allied picture postcards depicted soldiers with their ‘trench-pets’.¹⁴⁵

It is of no surprise then that troops turned to cats to aid in the vermin battle. These soon became a favourite mascot to many troops serving on the Western Front. Most were locally recruited, but some did accompany Anzac troops from home. In a photograph taken in 1914 of men of the Canterbury Regiment they are lined up at Lyttelton harbour ready to board a ship bound for battlefields on the other side of the world. In the photograph is a most unwarlike mascot, a cat sitting on a trooper’s shoulder.



Figure 28: New Zealand soldiers line up at Lyttelton in 1914, ready for a journey to the battlefields. A close look reveals that one soldier is armed with a friendly cat.

Countless times, cats were adopted by soldiers who found them left behind in war zones, their previous human owners having become refugees or worse. It is estimated that in the First World War half a million cats were brought to the trenches of Europe and Turkey, again as vermin-hunters but also as loved companions.¹⁴⁶ Again, some became mascots whilst others a pet. For

¹⁴⁵ Picture Postcards from the Great War, War dogs. <https://www.worldwar1postcards.com/ww1-war-dogs-on-postcards>.

¹⁴⁶ Eric Milzarski. US Marine publication, Nov 19, 2018. <https://www.wearethemighty.com/history/cats-perfect-wwi-trench-companion>.

soldiers it goes beyond tucking a cat into the crook of your arm, feeding it, giving it life amid wreckage and danger, it would have been a way of reminding themselves that there was reason for going home, and that they were still human with families, traditions and values.¹⁴⁷ Troops would share parts of their rations with the cats who, in turn, would stick around for the food and attention. The cats would mostly crowd around troops' living quarters, giving them something to play with between conflicts.¹⁴⁸



Figure 29: Soldiers fighting in France found comfort in their adopted pets during the First World War. The War Illustrated emerged in 1914 as an illustrated newspaper dedicated solely to coverage of events during the First World War. This First World War magazines edition 'The Farrier in the Fray', The War Illustrated, 25th September 1914, displayed cats in the trenches as companions.

Not all animals were welcomed by soldiers. With rats able to produce over 1000 young each year they were soon in plague proportions. While the rats fed on rotting corpses spreading disease in the trenches, the rat's close cousin, the mouse, was welcome.¹⁴⁹ 2/Lt George Eager, Second Army Mine Rescue School noted in early mine warfare it became important to find a means to detect carbon monoxide so white mice were used. On many occasions, the mice escaped and found themselves as mascots, hiding in the pockets of soldiers.¹⁵⁰

One of the tactics used in the First World War was to tunnel under no man's land and under the enemy trenches. The tunnels were then filled with explosives and detonated just before an attack. One of the major risks in mining is suffocating from carbon dioxide or methane. Canaries would sing their hearts out while the men worked, but any gas started filling up the mine, these small birds fell silent.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁷ Michele Pich MA, Thesis: *Small Animal Critical Care Medicine* (Second Edition), Chapter 3 p.75.2015.

¹⁴⁸ Article: Eric Milzarski. *Why cats were the perfect companions in the trenches of WWI*, 2018. <https://www.wearethemighty.com/history/cats-perfect-wwi-trench-companion>.

¹⁴⁹The role of animals in World War I, District Historical Society, 2017.

¹⁵⁰ Richard Van Emden; *Tommys Ark*, Bloomsburg 2011 p. 137.

¹⁵¹ Canaries, and birds in general, are suited to this not just because they're small and portable, but because their anatomy makes them vulnerable to airborne poisons, so this gave the miners early warning of gas infiltration into the tunnel giving them time to escape.



Figure 30: Photograph was taken near Loos in France on 31 January 1918 and displays rescue equipment used by the 3rd Australian Tunnelling Company during the First World War. The cages in the foreground were used to carry mice or canaries, which were used to detect the presence of poison gas.¹⁵²

It did not take long for soldiers to adopt spare or injured birds as mascots. Canaries are yet another working animal that could be classified as a mascot and companion. Stories of the bravery of canaries at the front made the national press, the *Daily Mail*, in a piece called ‘V. C. Canaries’, told of a bird called Dick who:

After his job underground would often as not reach the surface again a limp little form lying at the bottom of his cage. He never failed us though.¹⁵³

The sensitivity of canaries to carbon monoxide meant they gave early warning to its presence, not necessarily when they stopped singing, but when they panted for breath or could no longer grip their perch. To ensure their sensitivity as gas detectors, birds were even given pedicures so that their claws could not grip too tightly.¹⁵⁴

Both Australian and New Zealand mine troops made use of canaries. There soon became an intimate relationship between soldier and bird, derived in part from domestic life where they were often kept as caged songsters in working-class homes. In the trenches too, they were sometimes kept simply as a mascot between groups of men. The canary seemed to ignore the shells and sang beautifully.¹⁵⁵ Such tales of cheery endurance clearly echoed popular and propagandist ideals of plucky fighting spirit. In the trench conditions of chaos and the constant threat of death, soldiers could easily fall in love with their canaries.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵² Imperial War Museum, London. <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205357532> Photograph EAUS 1683.

¹⁵³ W. Grant Grieve and Bernard Newman, *Tunnellers* London: Herbert Jenkins, 1936, p.314.

¹⁵⁴ Hugh Gladstone, *Birds and the War*, London: Skeffington, 1919 p.22.

¹⁵⁵ Soldier’s Letters. ‘A Trench Canary’, *Daily Mail*, 1 February 1915 p.8.

¹⁵⁶ Michael Guida: *Birds, bombs, silence. Listening to nature during wartime and its aftermath in Britain, 1914-1945*.p.38, 54,83.

One Company Commander kept a careful eye on his avian tunnelling team. One report said, ‘After a canary had been gassed three times, he classed it as “P.B” and promoted him to the headquarters dugout, where his only duty was to sing to the Commanding Officer’.

P.B. stood for Permanent Base, meaning a soldier was only fit for service at home. Soldiers impressed by the canaries resilience often made them pets after the war.¹⁵⁷

Letters to and from home were an important ritual, but immediate intimacies were needed as well.¹⁵⁸ Camaraderie between men crossed and joined together the social classes of officers and ranks, and as the military historian John Keegan has shown, this was evidenced in displays of ‘fellow-feeling’ beyond conventional class distinctions.¹⁵⁹ There was strength to be gained in these linkages, as there was in cross-species fellowship between humans and birds.¹⁶⁰ A First World War Australian poster depicts the native Australian birds that were taken by AIF troops.



Figure 31: James F. Scott, Some of the birds of the AIF rank and file and others 1914-1918. M is for Mates Animals in Wartime from Ajax to Zep. Australian War Memorial book p.5.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁷ The AHRC Pets and Family Life Project Blog. <https://pethistories.wordpress.com/2018/05/02/love-in-the-air-canaries-on-the-western-front/Canaries on the Western Front>. Canaries on the Western Front, Posted on May 2, 2018 by Elle Larsson.

¹⁵⁸ Soldier’s Letters. ‘A Trench Canary’, *Daily Mail*, 1 February 1915, p.8.

¹⁵⁹ John Keegan: *Face of Battle*, New York: Penguin, 1978 p.196. See also John Laffin, *Letters from the Front, 1914-18* (London: J. M. Dent, 1973), pp.9, 34, 108.

¹⁶⁰ There is a memorial to Canaries and White Mice entitled The Tunnellers Friends, in the Scottish National War Memorial in Edinburgh Castle.

¹⁶¹ See also: Mary Small and Vashti Farrer, *Feathered Soldiers*, ANZAC Day Commemoration Committee QLD Inc, 2005.



Figure 32: Canaries are about fifteen times more sensitive to poisonous gas than people, so were used to detect the presence of poisonous carbon monoxide gas following mine explosions. Canaries and white mice were used to check the air purity in tunnels; their increased heart-beat would indicate a danger point.¹⁶²



Figure 33: Troops of the New Zealand Tunnelling Company play with their mascot, Snowy, near Arras, France, in 1918. Photograph taken by Henry Armytage Sanders on the 16th of July 1918. The New Zealand Engineers Tunnelling Company (NZETC) began recruiting in September 1915.



Figure 34: 2649 Driver Walter Henry Farrell of the 2nd Divisional Signals Company, with the unit mascot, a rooster named 'Jack' or 'Jackie', perched on his shoulder. Members of the unit had brought the animal from Egypt in 1916 when it was still a chick. They found 'Jack' a better guard than a dog, as he attacked any stranger who entered the unit lines.

The historical connection with the goat manifested itself once more in New Zealand in a First World War poster. It showed damage done by shelling to a French village as a Welsh Territorial Division is seen marching off to the Front led by a goat. The quote 'Taffies with their mascot Billy' was reported in a New Zealand newspaper of the time.¹⁶³

¹⁶² Hugh Gladstone, *Birds and the War* (London: Skeffington, 1919), pp.19-22.

¹⁶³ *Free-lance*, volume xv, issue 754, 12 December 1914

<https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/NZFL19141212.2.28.1>

This tradition of goat mascots seems to have stayed with New Zealanders, they appear in photographs of various units on the Western Front. Maybe this was also in part a practical solution to subsidiary rations, as female goats produce fresh milk. Nan, an Egyptian long-haired goat, was the mascot of the New Zealand Engineers, seen in archival photographs standing on a hay bale with a soldier outside a canvas tent she used as accommodation in a wood in Louvencourt, France 1918. Yet another New Zealand Engineer association with mascot goats, was 6 Independent Field Squadron whose goat was named “*Truby King*”, after the originator of Plunket. They went through six versions as the goats used to eat everything and anything and as a result, they tended to die off too regularly.¹⁶⁴

Jack a mascot Dog was also attached to the New Zealand Engineers main body at Bertrancourt and was involved in every action since the New Zealanders arrived in France.



Figure 35: "Nan", an Egyptian goat, a mascot of the New Zealand Engineers pictured standing on a hay bale with a soldier standing behind her. Photograph taken 21 April 1918 by Henry Armytage Sanders. REF:natlib.govt.nz:emu:1/2-013133-G.



¹⁶⁴ Peter Cooke interview, author of *Won By The Spade – How the RNZE Build a Nation*, a history of the Corps of RNZE Exile Publishing, 2019. In 1972-73 Joe Morrison served at 6 Independent Field Squadron and was the “*custodian-general of the goat*” he was accompanied everywhere he went in the unit reconnaissance vehicle, by the mascot in the back seat.

Figure 36: A portrait of Jack the mascot dog attached to the main body of the New Zealand Engineers serving in France during World War I. Jack who is wearing a collar is jumping up against a soldier's leg. Photograph taken at Bertrancourt, France 6 April 1918.¹⁶⁵

During the First World War, stretcher-bearers undertook the dangerous and important role of carrying wounded men to safety. They often did their work under enemy shellfire. Sometimes it could take six men up to five hours to move the wounded to a dressing station. It was naturally unwise to spend a long time in no man's land so one solution was to dispatch a dog to locate the wounded first given their superior scenting abilities over man.¹⁶⁶ Once located the dog would return to the stretcher-bearers with a message or item of clothing the wounded man had given the dog to prove he was still alive. The rescue team would then follow the dog back and retrieve the soldiers. Mascots were frequently used in this role; one was a bulldog



Figure 37: Moses, an Egyptian donkey, was the mascot of the New Zealand Army Service Corps in France. These images were taken at Louvencourt on 20 April 1918. Royal New Zealand Returned and Services' Association Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

An indication that many Australian had dogs in the trenches can be drawn from an order issued by Captain D. Roger 3rd Battalion New Zealand Rifles Brigade He comments about how Australian troops teased the Chinese (referred to as Chows in his letter) with their dogs. After which the order was made that Australia dogs must be muzzled.¹⁶⁷

All these mascots had an effect on returning troops as well as companionship during the First World War. It was soldiers missed them, and post war pet ownership increased to an all-time high. A mascots wartime friendship, especially dogs, contributed to animal acceptance post war by emphasizing the significance of the war as an interspecies moment. They demonstrated

¹⁶⁵ Alexander Turnbull Library image. Scoured: Digital NZ A-Tihi O Aotearoa. <https://ww100.govt.nz/find-ww1-content/war-in-france?category=All224220&page=13>

¹⁶⁶ Dogs are reported to have ten to twenty times the number of receptors in their nose, compared to a human, and the olfactory part of their brain (devoted to smell) is much larger. This gives them the ability to detect very faint odours and to discriminate between very slight differences in chemical composition. Dogs rely on their sense of smell much the same way humans rely on their eyesight.

¹⁶⁷ Accession number 1990.619.1 Viewed by author. National Army Museum archives, Waiouru.

how the partnership of mutual trust forged between companions with its roots in wartime, soldiers often came to regard animals almost as an extension of themselves.¹⁶⁸



Figure 38: In the mist of the horror of war New Zealand soldiers during World War I, care for a wounded dove, at *Mailly-Maillet*, France. Royal New Zealand Returned and Services' Association Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

A blur between a mascot for companionship and one that was a useful addition to the unit was usually identified by species, for example men often kept chickens or ducks for egg production and most French units frequently kept milking goats for fresh milk. There are Anzac references to poultry playing both roles as food provider and sentry guard in the trenches.¹⁶⁹ These were still classified as mascots contributing as food providers as well as kept for companionship.



Figure 39: Seen here with AIF members mascot rabbit, duck, kitten. M is for Mates Animals in Wartime from Ajax to Zep. Australian War Memorial book p.2. Many soldiers having rural backgrounds had mascots that apart from companionship could also supply fresh food such as eggs.

¹⁶⁸ Monika Baar: *First World War Studies*, Journal Volume 6, Department of History University of Groningen, Netherlands, 2015.p.211.

¹⁶⁹ The 2nd Divisional Signals Company mascot Jack, France, 1917 was a better guard than a dog; he attacked any stranger who entered the unit lines. Australian War Memorial accession number P01836.003.



Figure 40: Australian soldiers giving their mascot dog a hot drink outside their corrugated iron dugout at Mametz Wood. <http://nerdalicious.com.au/history/brave-dogs-in-service-in-world-war-i/>

From the individual point of view, the bond appears both emotional and practical, regarding the animal shared feelings and emotional bonds. Whilst in the group mascots encouraged relationships between soldier and animal due to joint care of the animal and used it as a common object to share feelings. Indications showed that the animal served as a means to defuse the tensions and improve cohesion within the group.¹⁷⁰ Mascots act as social facilitators between humans, reducing the risk of social isolation, they were of great interest to not just the handler but all the troops in the trenches. All the men of the unit often felt they each had a stake in the mascot's welfare.¹⁷¹



Figure 41: Four New Zealand army officers feeding swans in the grounds of the officers' rest house at the Chateau La Motte-au-Bois in France during World War I. View from behind the officers towards the swans on the water. Animals have always had a calming effect on humans, today animals are brought into homes for the aged and their soothing effects and lowering of heart rates has been scientifically proven.¹⁷² Photograph taken 18 July 1917 by Henry Armytage Sanders.

Separation from the mascots thus effected the men if injured and evacuated to England, they had to leave mascot dogs behind. This caused such concern to many soldiers the RSPCA

¹⁷⁰ Bioscience Horizons: The International Journal of Student Research, Volume 2, Issue 2, 1 June 2009, p.180–190. <https://doi.org/10.1093/biohorizons/hzp021>.

¹⁷¹ Robert Koffman. *The Battle for Hearts and Minds: Warrior Canine Connection's Mission-Based Trauma Recovery Program*.p.355.

¹⁷² Alexander Turnbull Library - WW100 – New Zealand's First World War Centenary Programme. p.48. <https://ww100.govt.nz/find-ww1-content/war-in-france?category=All&p.48>.

responded by opening temporary kennels in Boulogne, where a soldier could leave his dog until he returned to France. When the war ended, the RSPCA then set up the Soldiers Dog Fund to meet the cost of bringing the dogs over and keeping them in quarantine until the demobilised men were able to take them home. Five hundred kennels were specially built at Hackbridge, Surrey, to house the dogs.¹⁷³

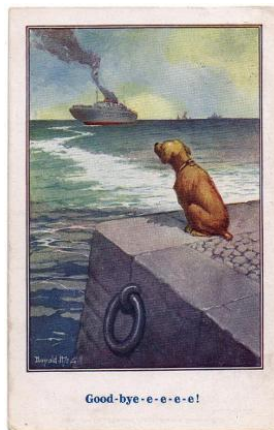


Figure 42: On this card Donald McGill highlighted the problem facing soldiers who had to leave their dogs behind when going on 'Blighty' leave.¹⁷⁴

Many troops would take their mascots with them if transferred from one sector to another, if an individual was injured some would smuggle their mascot if possible to the hospital or rehabilitation centre.

Many nurses and doctors recognised the benefits of animals at these centres and would turn a blind eye or even permit animals in the wards. This would extend to animals on troop ships returning home with the wounded.

As photographic evidence shows many troops took the time during convalescence behind the lines to have an image taken of themselves with their animal companion. Many of these images exist today as they were sent home to loved ones. It demonstrates the connection between man and beast. It must lead to question if these same images evoked strong emotions once viewed at home if the mascot had to be left behind.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷³ Article: Jennifer Nalewicki, *The Animals That Helped Win World War I*, 2017.

www.rspca.org.uk/utilities/aboutus/history/firstworldwar/animals

¹⁷⁴ The card was released by the Inter-Art Company and was number 2465 in its "COMIQUE" Series.

¹⁷⁵ Robert Koffman. *The Battle for Hearts and Minds: Warrior Canine Connection's Mission-Based Trauma Recovery Program*.p.355. Even in more modern times Several interviews with Vietnam veterans caused on this similar subject of them leaving their tracker dogs behind caused immediate emotional distress some fifty years on.



Figure 43: Right: Jimony, a mascot for of the 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital which was based at Harefield Park House between 1914 and 1919. AWM P07771.001 Before Jimmy became the mascot of the No 1 Australian Auxiliary Hospital at Harefield, he was the mascot of the Australian Third Division.

Major General Sir John Moore, Director of Veterinary Services, B.E.F. 1914-18 stated, “A considerable unknown number of animals took part in the war many in private ownership (mascots or pets) who served their owners through the storm of battle”.¹⁷⁶

The fact that mascots comforted troops on the battlefield, it is only natural that troops behind the lines also sought the company of animals. The next section examines the traditions of mascots being on the home front, at sea or on troop training courses prior to deployments. All have one thing in common, they were used for the same reasons as on the battlefield. Companionship, aid moral and homesickness, relieve stress and boredom. Plus, the lighter side of representing a country, good luck charm or a propaganda tool. Some of course like the naval mascot cat had traditional and a practical use.

¹⁷⁶ Peter Shaw Baker: *Animal War Heroes*. A&C Black. London. 1933 Forward p. xvi.

Chapter 4: Mascots in other places

New Zealand and Australian troops had mascots wherever they were, mascots could be seen at home in training camps, at rear echelon areas, aboard naval or transport ships, on military aerodromes or on special missions across the globe.¹⁷⁷ Military mascots represented the spirit of a regiment and were believed to bring good luck. Eustace the mouse was regarded as the lucky member of the crew, on board LCT 947 during the landing operations, June 1944. Eustace, a piebald mouse took part in the Allied landings in Normandy.¹⁷⁸ During the First World War they were more than just symbols, though – they provided companionship, fun and comfort to men a long way from home or whilst rehabilitating behind the lines.¹⁷⁹

The historical use of mascots by both New Zealand and Australian troops on the “Home Front” plays an interesting part in the First World War. Many Reserve and Militia units had mascots but found they were barred from taking them overseas by dockyard or Customs officials. Many were turned away at the gangway as regulations prevented their embarkation, but many troops simply smuggled them aboard. Yet another employment of mascots was to aid the health and recovery of Anzac troops. Many mascots were found behind the lines, some a few miles away in field hospitals, others in such places as England where troops recuperated.¹⁸⁰ Others sailed all the way back to New Zealand and Australia on troop Hospital Ships such as the SS *Marama*.¹⁸¹



Figure 44: ‘Bully’, one of several resident dogs at the New Zealand Flying School at Kohimarama, Auckland, during the First World War, standing on a Walsh-Curtiss flying boat outside one of the hangars, ca. 1917. Bully

¹⁷⁷ Barry Stone: *Secret Army* Allen & Unwin, 2017.p.96.

¹⁷⁸ Sited by author at exhibit, 12 ways animals helped the war effort, at Imperial War Museum 2017.

¹⁷⁹ Article: Jennifer Nalewicki: “The Animals That Helped Win World War I”, 2017. .

¹⁸⁰ From soldier’s letters reprinted in an article by Evelyn Observer and Bourke East Record January 1917 p.3. Abstract: Private C. T. Harris, writing from the and Australian General Hospital at Boulogne, France, under date of 19th August 1917 he noted the presence of possum and kookaburra mascots.

¹⁸¹ <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/Sun, 7 December 1915>.

has a 'Union Jack' flag tied around his neck for the photo, as a show of support for the war effort. photo exhibition at the Air Force Museum of New Zealand, titled "*Pooches and Pilots*" ALB88122713041.

Such was the appeal of a mascot representing home and all associated images, traditions and values, that in Australia a dedicated and appropriately named Mascot Day was often set aside as a focus for fundraising activities¹⁸². Mascot Day was an initiative of the Brisbane Girls' Club, with its aim being the raising of funds for the Australian Army Mining and Engineering Corps. The first Mascot Day appears to have been held on 21 July 1916 and was widely promoted and published across Queensland. For instance, on 4 July 1916, the *Brisbane Courier* reported:

...the members of the Brisbane Girls' Club do not allow the grass to grow under their feet and to their many patriotic ventures they now propose, in conjunction with the Mining and Engineers Comfort Fund to hold a Mascot Day, in aid of the boys on active service.

The sale of Mascot Day "Teddy" badges featuring a Koala emblem was a popular way to raise funds and was used by many groups. In 1916, a donation of twenty farthing coins was used as a special fundraising initiative for Mascot Day. These coins were mounted in gold in the form of a brooch and engraved with the words "Mascot Day – 1916". Newspaper reports at the time show that these Mascot Day badges were offered for sale at £1/1-.

As the symbol of Australia, the kangaroo played a number of symbolic roles during the war. Apart from being mascots at the front they also invoked patriotism in recruiting efforts appearing on various propaganda posters. Even a toy kangaroo was used as a mascot in the Australian Red Cross Hut at the 1st Australian Convalescent Camp at Rouelles, near Le Havre on the Normandy coast during 1917 and 1918.¹⁸³ Residents of both countries were also seen gifting real mascots to the troops about to depart for war such was the symbolic ideals that a unit should have one. Posters and magazine articles in the war frequently showed mascots and servicemen enjoying each other's company such as in official wartime magazines and reproduced on cards as souvenirs.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸² State Library Queensland World War 1 Centenary. <http://blogs.slq.qld.gov.au/ww1/2015/03/05/fundraising-during-the-first-world-war-mascot-day-and-golden-fleece-day>.

¹⁸³ "The 'Roo Behind the Gun" Christmas card, circa 1916.

¹⁸⁴ C.E. Le: *Silent heroes: The bravery and devotion of animals in war*. London: Souvenir 2009.p.63.

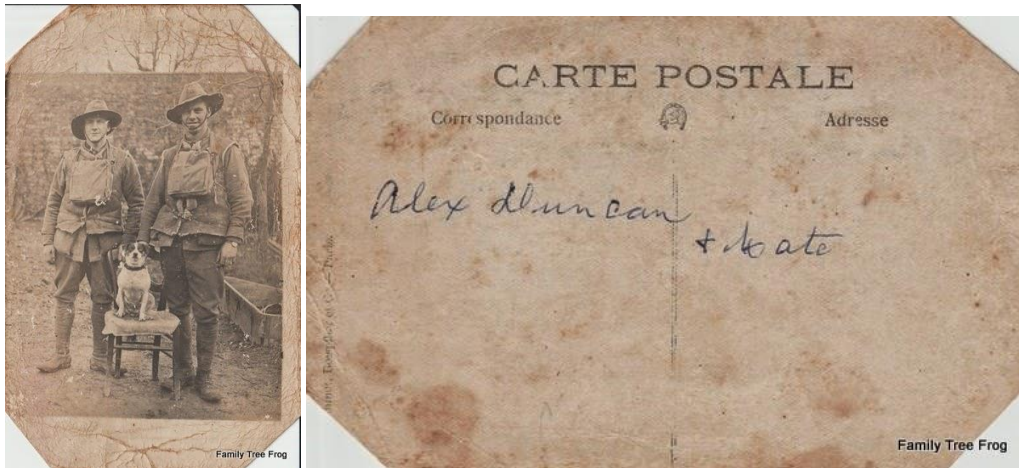


Figure 45: Alex, his mascot and unknown soldier. You can tell it was cold in that photograph by the sheepskin vests that they are wearing.

Picture postcards were often used to send morale messages back home and were a hugely popular form of communication in early twentieth century, carrying illustrations and views of every conceivable subject and place. Cheap to buy and send, once posted, travelled at speed and for soldiers it seems clear it was important for their animal companions to be pictured as part of a unit or friendship group, whether for sentimental reasons, out of pride or for fun.¹⁸⁵

Alex Duncan enlisted 14 February 1916 joining the 2nd Reinforcement of the 42nd Battalion. Alex embarked 16 August (four days after his younger brother Roy was killed in action at Pozieres) on the ship *Boorara* from Brisbane. In 1917, the operations of the 3rd Division were focussed on the Ypres sector of Belgium. Alex Duncan was first wounded on 10 June.¹⁸⁶ The diary entry for the Battalion during that time was:

He was wounded in action for the third time on 24 April with a gunshot wound to the head and left arm. Alex Duncan finally got to go home in May on the *Leicestershire* arriving Melbourne 21 June 1919 and was discharged from the AIF in Brisbane on 7 August.

New Zealand soldiers spent several months in training camps before going overseas to join the fighting. The camp at Featherston was home to a number of animals. They included a goat that followed the men around and a mascot terrier that liked to listen to the brass band. In December 1915, a group of soldiers marched over the Rimutaka hills from the Featherston camp. They were on their way to the ships that would take them to Europe. The newspaper said that the

¹⁸⁵ Dr Rebecca Preston, Department of History, The Centre for the Study of the Body and Material Culture, AHRC-funded project '*Pets and Family Life in England and Wales, 1837–1939*'. From her Abstract.p.iv.

¹⁸⁶AWM4 - Australian Imperial Forces unit war diary, '42nd Infantry Battalion'. Item 23/59/8.

men were “as merry as boys out for a picnic”.¹⁸⁷ They sang all the way up the long, steep hill. The soldiers were led by their mascot, a playful puppy that had been practising drill with them.¹⁸⁸ This being one of many units both Militia and those bound for overseas service that had mascots in New Zealand. Many remained as their unit sailed off due to restrictions from Commanding Officers or Ship`s Captains, but many were also smuggled onto the transports bound for war. Most would never return.



Figure 46: Ref: Auckland Weekly News, volunteers in training including a dog mascot, at Awapuni military camp, Palmerston North, 1914, Sir George Grey Special Collections, AWNS-19140910-39-3.

One mascot in New Zealand service that worked behind the lines was Floss, a fox terrier, who became the mascot of the NZ Army rugby team that toured England in 1917. Floss raised many pounds for rehabilitation of disabled servicemen and women. Floss did not see the front lines (but was exposed to a Zeppelin raid) but still made a major contribution to troop morale by being the mascot of the New Zealand Army Rugby team. The team never lost a game. When in England, Driver Percy (Ike) Lowndes, picked up the dog in Towbridge, and taught her to perform some impressive tricks.¹⁸⁹

At the end of the war, Ike Lowndes ignored a quarantine ban and snuck Floss home with him back to New Zealand, a risk which again shows what the mascot must have meant to the handler and team. Floss was 17 when she died in 1935 her legacy of companionship therefore continued post war.

¹⁸⁷ Alice Hutchinson: Featherston Military Training Camp: The Record of a Remarkable Achievement, Published Aratoi Museum of Arts, Masterton Jul 31, 2016. Exhibition.

¹⁸⁸ Phillippa Werry: *Article First World War mascots*, 2014. Ministry of Education p.14.

¹⁸⁹ Floss, the New Zealand Army rugby mascot, URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/floss-the-nz-army-rugby-team-mascot>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 15-Jul-2013.

Mascots were still essential for morale behind the front lines.¹⁹⁰ One way a soldier ended up with a mascot was many animals found themselves lost or disposed of by previous owners, unable or unwilling to care for them. Similarly, many towns especially in France, were destroyed by bombardment and previous pet owners were either killed or evacuated, often leaving their animals behind. Some animals were victims of economy, many animals in Britain were killed or abandoned due to invasion scares, and when food shortages occurred an animal was a luxury many could not afford.¹⁹¹

For many Anzac soldiers' animals have brought moments of peace and normality during the hardships and brutality of war.¹⁹² To many troops an animal is symbol of home whether owning one themselves or viewing animals working on the land, they are part of both countries' landscape. Animals behind the lines included both domesticated and agricultural. They sought out companionship with humans or the other way around. In the book *Tommys Ark*, Richard Van Emden quotes about the men in the trenches:

Seeking comfort and entertainment in the isolation many found both in the animal kingdom.¹⁹³

Some Anzac troops who came from rural backgrounds back home were adept at milking cows or raising poultry and thus sought mascots that could both provide comfort and companionship and familiarity of home, but also substituted the rations.



Figure 47: New Zealand soldiers seize the opportunity to obtain fresh milk from a cow abandoned by its owners in a village on the Somme. Shows a soldier milking a cow as two other soldiers steady the beast. Photograph taken Courcelles, France 1 April 1918 by Henry Armytage Sanders.

¹⁹⁰ The term mascot or companion animal is an all-encompassing phraseology given to an entire spectrum of animals with whom interaction and companionship was enjoyed by soldiers during WWI. They were responsible for their guardianship including their welfare by humans.

¹⁹¹ Interview in-situ with Curator Museum, Tommys Café Pozieres.

¹⁹² Article: *NZ Herald*, Michael Botur, 100 Kiwi Stories from WW1: *Animal mascots lift morale*, 2014.

<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/>

¹⁹³ Richard Van Emden: *Tommys Ark*, Bloomsbury, UK. 2011.p.255.

Donkeys and mules were highly valued, Anzac troops with one being symbolized in Horace Moore-Jones's well-known water colour depicting a soldier with his donkey, painted around the time of the First World War. Apart from their combative New Zealanders had several mascot donkeys both in the Middle East and Western Front. These animals, even when not owned by New Zealander troops caused interest in New Zealand newspapers back home. The plight of a British mascot *Tiny* was reported in *The Otago Witness* in 1916, the article and photo states:

Tiny walks into all the tents, including the officers' mess, and helps himself to any dainty lying about. He drinks out of a mug and has been known to take nine mugs of tea in succession.¹⁹⁴



Figure 48: Behind the line's aerial attacks in the First World War even though not on the scale of World War Two caused many animals to become homeless. Many only survived due to being taken as a mascot by a soldier passing by.



Figure 49: An officer and one of his soldiers tending canaries in France, May 1918. *Thomas Aitken*, IWM, catalogue number Q 11138. Soldiers with a cage of canaries they found among the ruins in Amiens, France, May 1918. The photographer *Thomas Aitken*, IWM, catalogue number Q 10949.

A series of pictures taken by official British war photographer Thomas Aitken captured the relationship between men and canaries for audiences across the Allied forces. The photograph above was published in the *Daily Mail* in May 1918, the caption reveals a great deal: 'Battlefield canaries. They have been rescued from the ruins in shelled areas in France.

¹⁹⁴ *Otago Witness*, issue 3234, 8 March 1916. p.37.
<https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/OW19160308.2.124.2.11>

Hundreds were found dead through gas and wounds; the survivors in the photograph are being well cared for'.¹⁹⁵ That soldiers were 'rescuing' caged canaries left behind in French villages as the Germans retreated suggested that in spite of the necessities of combat, soldiers were still gentle, kind and civilised. These birds had not been in combat in the way that mining canaries had, but they were still cherished by the troops. Such depictions stood in contrast to the stories of the cruel and barbarous 'Hun', whose apparent atrocities the press had made vivid in British minds.¹⁹⁶

Another of Aikten's photographs appeared in the *Illustrated London News* in August 1918. Amid the mess of war, soldiers seemed to proudly display canaries as mascots of freedom, the caption reading: '*A cage full of canaries rescued from ruins in Amiens*'.¹⁹⁷

These photographs may have been staged but they were not faked. Aitken wanted to depict genuine sensitivity in troops. For home audiences, these rescue pictures and the stories of stoic mining canaries underlined a rapport that went well beyond the birds' functional role on the Front. Men and canaries shared a partnership in survival that made the bond between them one of love as well as work. It was a comforting message for all those involved in the war.



Figure 50: Near Doullens 27 April 1918 nurses with canaries which they kept on the trains to cheer the wounded or perhaps having a secondary role to give warning of gas attack (IWM).

Apart from the front-line canaries used by the tunnellers they were also enlisted into the medical corps.¹⁹⁸ The song of a canary was often used by nursing staff on mobile train hospitals or on the long return sea voyages home on medical ships to cheer up injured troops.¹⁹⁹ Towards

¹⁹⁵ The Great Advance: Battle Incidents and Scenes of Interest behind the British and French Lines. *Illustrated London News*, 31 August 1918, 230-231.

¹⁹⁶ Robert Lubow: *The war animals* Doubleday, 1st edition 1977. pp.116-119.

¹⁹⁷ Larsson: The AHRC Pets and Family Life Project Blog, 2018. Viewed 5 March 2018. <https://pethistories.wordpress.com/love-in-the-air-canaries-on-the-western-front>.

¹⁹⁸ Jilly Cooper: *Animals in War*, Corgi books, 2000 p.111.

¹⁹⁹ Early in 1915 the Red Cross saw there was a necessity to be able to transport some sick and wounded from ports of landings to military hospitals at very short notice the Railway Department equipped the necessary

the end of the war birds were so popular a bird hostel was set up to receive all the birds troops were bringing home from the trenches. These included injured birds, such as pigeons and canaries that had initially been working animals, along with birds found in-situ or hand raised from eggs found by troops.

Nurses often used animals to cheer up the troops and perhaps themselves, Australian nurses also using symbolic kangaroos or cats. Kangaroos (both real and toy versions) were a particularly popular choice of mascot at military hospitals to help cheer up the wounded soldiers.²⁰⁰



Figure 51: Image Florence Elizabeth McMillan, one of the nurses on the Greek Island of Lemnos during World War I. Lydia King, in Goodman, *Our War Nurses*, p.39.

When a patient's condition improved, a nurse might help him to write letters himself, so that he could re-establish communication and prepare his family for his eventual return home. Nurses also tried to make the ward as comfortable as possible. They might bring in books and music (to be played on a gramophone), and if there was nature nearby, pick flowers and put them in vases on little tables around the beds. There were lots of stray animals on the Western Front, abandoned by families who had either fled or been killed in the fighting. Nurses often adopted these strays and brought them to their wards for the patients to see. Patients could pet the animals, and if they had recovered sufficiently, help the nurses take them out for a walk. We still bring animals into hospitals today because we understand, just as they did then, that stroking a dog can be a therapeutic, calming experience and help patients to deal with what is

carriages. This was also done in New Zealand, work was done by Petone workshops using First Class carriages, interiors were removed adding rows of beds instead.

²⁰⁰ Tag archives: WWI Mascots, <https://diannewolfer.com/tag/wwi-mascots/>

happening to them at the hospital and the potential longer-term consequences of their illness or injury.²⁰¹ According to the human animal bond research institute:

A mutually beneficial and dynamic relationship between people and animals that is influenced by behaviours to the health and well-being of both.²⁰²

For Australians, the image usually associated with 25 April 1915 is that of Australian soldiers charging bravely up the steep and barren slopes of Gallipoli. Less appreciated is the picture of Australian nurses on that same day attending to hundreds of battered and bleeding men on the decks and in the confined wards of a hospital ship.²⁰³ Serving on a hospital ship was the closest the Australian nurses came to the fighting during the Gallipoli campaign. Even in the comparative safety of such ships, they were sometimes in danger.²⁰⁴ New Zealand funded two hospital ships officially known as His Majesty's New Zealand Hospital Ship (HMNZHS) No. 1 and No. 2, the *Maheno* and *Marama*. These state-of-the-art floating hospitals were crewed by a mixture of civilian seafarers and army medical staff, including nurses. By the end of the war they had transported 47,000 patients. Mascots were also present on New Zealand Hospital ships. At least one mascot called *Jock* a bulldog onboard the *Maheno* was reported to have jumped ship when in Southampton in 1915.²⁰⁵ These shipboard animals included mascots trying to be smuggled back home as by now restrictions were being made regarding quarantine. Others kept by nursing staff aided moral and comforted for patients.

In November 1914 Mr and Mrs Charles Billyard-Leake, Australians resident in the UK, offered their home, Harefield Park House and its grounds, to the Minister of Defence in Melbourne for use as a convalescent home for wounded soldiers of the Australian Imperial Forces (AIF). The offer was accepted by the Commonwealth Defence Department and the property became the No. 1 Australian Auxiliary Hospital in December 1914. It was the only purely Australian

²⁰¹ Emily Mayhew: *Wounded: The Long Journey Home*, 2014, vintage publishers London p.82. See also: Article British Library WWI, Life as a soldier, Wounded and Medicine.2018. Dr Mayhew is a military medical historian specialising in the study of severe casualty, its infliction, treatment and long-term outcomes in 20th and 21st century warfare.

²⁰² See also: Jill Lenk Schilp: *Dogs in Health Care: Pioneering Animal-Human Partnerships*, Jefferson Publishers, Carolina. 2019 p.7.

²⁰³ ANZAC Portel, Telling the history of Australians serving in our defence forces through our veterans' experiences. <https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/history/conflicts/gallipoli-and-anzacs/events/nurses-gallipoli/nurses-experience-gallipoli>.

²⁰⁴ Kendall Sheryl: *Military Hospitals and hospital ships NZ military nursing*, 1990 Alpine Print, Chapter 8.

²⁰⁵ Gavin McLean: *The White Ships: New Zealand's First World War Hospital Ships*, NZ Ship & Marine Society, Wellington, 2013.

hospital in England.²⁰⁶ It was manned by Australian staff and had a kangaroo as mascot to make the soldiers feel like home. Behind the lines approximately 80,000 women served in the First World War. During the war 644 New Zealand nurses served overseas. 550 enlisted in the NZANS and 100 served with QAIMNS, the French or British Red Cross. They served in Samoa, North Africa, France, India, Italy, England and in New Zealand.²⁰⁷

An Australian called Frank Fryer went to France during the First World War to drive an ambulance. He and a nurse called Ethel Ubsdell, wanted to help the wounded. One day after an air raid, they discovered a very frightened dog. They managed to coax him into the ambulance and from then on he became their constant companion. Zep as he was called visited patients in the hospital with Sister Ubsdell unknowingly being in the forefront of animals being used for rehabilitation and Post Traumatic Stress assistance.²⁰⁸ It was decided Zep should have a permit to allow him to travel legally in military zones, just as the humans did. The pass listed his special characteristics and stamped it with his paw print.



Figure 52: Francis (Frank) Fryer, an Australian, ambulance driver made a passport for his mascot. Image: <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/PO2686.026>.

²⁰⁶ M. Shepherd: 'Heart of Harefield'. London Quiller Press 1990. Viewed 22 March 2018. <http://ezitis.myzen.co.uk/harefieldpark.html>

²⁰⁷ Anna Rogers: *With them through hell, New Zealand Medical Services of the First World War*, Massey University Press. 2018. Chapter 9-Safe at Sea p.218.

²⁰⁸ M is for Mates-Animals at War. Dept Veteran Affairs, AWM publication. p.22.



Figure 53: Left: An Australian nurse at No 1 Australian Auxiliary Hospital about to feed their pet kangaroo Jimony.²⁰⁹ Right: First World War, England. Jimony poses with the brass band at Harefield, an Australian hospital. M is for Mates Animals in Wartime from Ajax to Zep. Australian War Memorial publication. p.25.

Jimony the Wallaby who was sometimes referred to as Jimony, was not the only Australian mascot at Harefield. There was also a cockatoo which had been brought from the trenches of Gallipoli. It seems that Harefield's wallaby mascot regularly strayed from the hospital, roaming around the village, bringing smiles to the faces of patients, nurses and villagers.²¹⁰ However, this freedom also led to Jimony's untimely passing by being run over.²¹¹ One nurse would always be accompanied by her Irish wolfhound who improved morale greatly according to her diaries.²¹² Years later dogs are used in military hospitals to aid comfort to veterans suffering from PTSD.

The mansion was offered for use as a home for wounded diggers, it had 1000 beds at its height providing specialist aid to amputees. Towards the end of the war many Australian nurses went to Britain to work in the convalescent hospitals. Not only were service men very obviously physically wounded, but they were psychologically wounded as well, and needed compassionate care. In many cases, the nurses acted as surrogate mothers for the wounded soldiers, often they had mascots to assist in patient care.²¹³

²⁰⁹ From soldier's letters reprinted in an article by Evelyn Observer and Bourke East Record (Vic.: 1902 - 1917) Friday 26 January 1917 p. 3.

Abstract: Private C. T. Harris, writing from the and Australian General Hospital at Boulogne, France, under date of 19th August 1917 he noted the presence of possum and kookaburra mascots.

²¹⁰ Before Harefield, he was the mascot of the Australian Third Division.

²¹¹ Article in the *Harefield Park Boomerang*, the hospital's magazine p.57.

²¹² Terry Breverton : *First World War Curiosities* Amberley, Scotland 2014 p.205.

²¹³ Anna Rogers: *With Them Through Hell New Zealand Medical Services in the First World War*, Massey University Press 2018. Also read Harris, Kristy - *Red Reflections on the Sea: Australian Army Nurses serving at Sea in World War 1*. Also read: Peter Rees: *The Other Anzacs, nurses at war 1914-1918*. Allen & Unwin; First edition, 2008.



Figure 54: First World War, 1916. Soldiers and nurses on board the troopship *Demosthenes*, bound for England. Seen in front row is mascot cat. M is for Mates Animals in Wartime from Ajax to Zep. Australian War Memorial book p.26.

Likewise, the wars end did not see the removal of animals from New Zealand Hospitals, who were still treating around 3000 servicemen in 1920. Many of these animals ‘stayed on’ after the war unwittingly assisting rehabilitation.²¹⁴

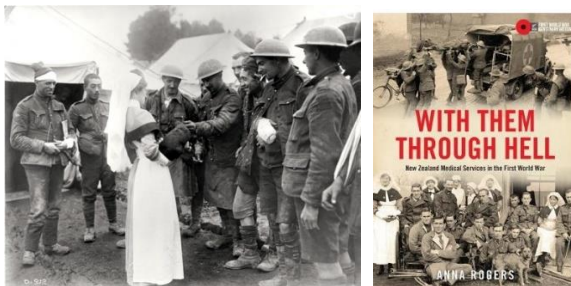


Figure 55: After being treated for wounds, soldiers present a nurse with a dog they found in the trenches, October 1916. The cover of “With Them Through Hell New Zealand Medical Services in the First World War” shows mascot dogs at hospitals. There were lots of stray animals on the Western Front, abandoned by families who had either fled or been killed in the fighting. Nurses often adopted these strays and brought them to their wards for the patients to see. Patients could pet the animals, and if they had recovered sufficiently, help the nurses take them out for a walk. The role of animals in World War I, District Historical Society, 2017.

At New Zealand based establishments in Britain including hospitals and convalescent homes such as in Hornchurch Convalescent Hospital, the effects on patients caring or responsible for their welfare of animals, was observed as being therapeutic.²¹⁵

²¹⁴ Matthew Wright: *Western Front the NZ Division in the First World War 1916-1918*, Reed publication, 2005 p.164.

²¹⁵ Ibid p.41. Also read: *The war effort of New Zealand Hornchurch convalescent hospital*. Victoria University, Wellington p.124.



Figure 56: New Zealand soldier at Hornchurch convalescence Camp 1918. Image scoured: <https://www.brendan-graham.com/nz-convalescent-camp-ww1-23033188>.

One of New Zealand's most famous mascots was Freda, of the New Zealand Rifle Brigade, stationed at Cannock Chase, near Brocton in England.²¹⁶ Freda who surrounded by myth and stories including her breed type, has recently been researched by Richard Pursehouse, who was able to uncover the truth with the help of Freda's studded collar measurements provided by the National Army Museum Waiouru. This revealed the collar was far too big for a Dalmatian, it was more likely a Harlequin Great Dane.²¹⁷ Looking at the image of *Freda* it is easy to see why many still insist she was a Dalmatian. Freda had two handlers, Sergeant Ashby, and Boer War veteran Captain Christopher Magnay. Letters sent back home to New Zealand by soldiers often refer to the mascot always being by Magnay's side.²¹⁸

One of *Freda's* functions apart from morale was to raise funds. She accompanied the New Zealand Rifle Brigade and its band to Banks at Wolverhampton and Walsall, to promote the sale of war bonds.

There are many versions of how Freda came to be adopted by Kiwi troops stationed at Brocton in the heart of Cannock Chase. One theory is that Freda was picked up and adopted as the brigade mascot in France, providing warmth and companionship to New Zealand soldiers amidst the death and destruction of the Western Front battlefields, before accompanying the unit back to Cannock Chase in 1918.²¹⁹

²¹⁶ Location of Cannock Chase Staffordshire, United Kingdom (OS Grid Ref: SJ 979 188).

²¹⁷ Although some have erroneously described Freda as a Dalmatian, enquiries with the Great Dane Club of Great Britain have reinforced The Chronicles of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force comment that she was a Great Dane. <https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/nostalgia/story-cannock-chases-hero-dog-12451367>

²¹⁸ The story of Cannock Chases hero dog of war. <https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/nostalgia/story-cannock-chases-hero-dog-12451367>.

²¹⁹ Philippa Werry: *Article First World War mascots*, 2014, Ministry of Education p.14

During the First World War the Rifle Brigade fought in Egypt, against the Senussi, and then on the Western Front.²²⁰ Apart from the losses at the front, Cannock Chase War Cemetery was also the resting place for about 50 members of the Brigade who 'died of disease' between late October and late November 1918. Freda was a constant companion to the sick at the unit hospitals, again like so many mascots providing a role of welfare dog to boost morale or simply being by the side of a dying soldier. Freda was so highly thought of that when she died members of the brigade erected a headstone in her memory at Cannock cemetery.

For the next 20 years, after the First World War townspeople of nearby Brereton kept Freda's grave tidy, laying crosses and flowers each year. After it was vandalised, the Friends of Cannock Chase laid a new marble headstone in her honour in 1964.²²¹ The headstone was renewed again recently and the grave remains a feature of historical tours.²²² The New Zealand Rifle Brigade was disbanded on 4th February 1919 and *Freda's* collar eventually was returned to New Zealand where it is held at the National Army Museum at Waiouru. In a letter from F.R Smith Service number 0/18695 Australian Imperial Army, who wrote a letter on 23 September 1975 to the Officer Commanding Waiouru Military Museum answering how *Freda's* collar was returned to New Zealand.²²³ So popular is her story a children's book was published in 2015.²²⁴

The chronicles of the NZEF was published every fortnight, within is a notice about Freda regimental mascot, claiming Freda, although the adjutant's dog "She was loved by all... she carried out guard and drill ceremonial duties as a mascot she earned the respect and admiration of all".²²⁵

²²⁰ The New Zealand Rifle Brigade, affectionately known as The Dinks, was formed on 1st May 1915 as the 3rd Brigade of the New Zealand Division, part of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force.

²²¹ <https://office23.jimdo.com/gazetteer/in-memoriam/freda-s-grave/> In 1964, Fred Smith a former North Staffordshire Regiment soldier who emigrated to New Zealand, returned to the Chase for a visit and sought out the headstone. Fred was so shocked by the poor state of the monument that he contacted the county council, but the local authority had no interest in restoring a dog's grave. The Royal British Legion was more amenable and organised a replacement headstone.

²²² Nancy Swarbrick: 'History of pets in New Zealand', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/pets/page-2> (accessed 16 February 2020)

²²³ Newspaper article *NZ Herald* 22 Nov 2001, sourced Kippenberger Research Library.

²²⁴ Peter Millet, *The ANZAC Puppy*, Faber and Faber 2015.

²²⁵ *Chronicles of the NZEF*, Vol 5, number 49, 2 August 1918, Cambridge University Library.



Figure 57: Staffordshire chronical 8 October 1964 archive from Kippenberger Research Library- second memorial. Second image of *Fredas'* grave taken in 2018 by Lt Col New Zealand Military Attaché London. A physical legacy to remember the mascots deeds and sacrifices.

It is perhaps only natural that historical documentation has focused on animals accompanying soldiers in the trenches and indeed the vast majority of mascots in the First World War did belong to soldiers. However, the navy has a long history of ships mascots. The New Zealand Navy did not exist as a separate military force until 1941. The passing of the Naval Defence Act 1913 created the New Zealand Naval Forces, still as a part of the Royal Navy. The Act also provided for the establishment of a New Zealand branch of the Royal Naval Reserve.²²⁶

The Royal Navy had men and ships from New Zealand and Australia serving under their command, some ships fought with New Zealand crews, other ships such as HMS *New Zealand* was paid for by the people of New Zealand. The ships were to be manned as far as possible by New Zealanders.²²⁷

One such animal directly related to New Zealand was the dog Pelorus Jack. He first joined HMS *New Zealand* on 4 February 1913. *Jack* was present during two naval actions, in 1914 and 1915. He died, it is said, when he fell down the forward funnel and was burnt to death. His successor was also named and unlike a ship's cat that functioned as mascot and rodent control, *Jack* was simply Pelorus Jack for Sailor morale.²²⁸

²²⁶ *Genesis of Royal New Zealand Navy NZETC*. nzetc.victoria.ac.nz. University of Wellington, 2016. p.5.

²²⁷ New Zealand arranged for naval reservists to be returned to Britain immediately war broke out. In 1916 it agreed to dispatch New Zealanders to bolster the ranks of the Royal Navy. In all, about 500 New Zealanders served in the Royal Navy during the First World War.

²²⁸ Michael Wynd: *Mascots in the New Zealand Navy*, Navy Museum Torpedo Bay, Auckland 2019. p.1.



Figure 58: Pelorus Jack, a brindled bulldog, mascot of H.M.S. New Zealand for some four years. He served through the battle of Jutland. He knows what is happening so well that when "stations" is sounded he seeks refuge, and when the guns begin to roar, he has a rest down below.²²⁹



²²⁹ *New Zealand Times*, volume xlv, issue 10401, 4 October 1919. Viewed: 20 August 2019. <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/NZTIM19191004.2.23>

Figure 59: Cartoons also were a source of entertainment that often featured the exploits of mascots. Pelorus Jack appearing in numerous articles.²³⁰ Cartoon of mascot 1919.

The New Zealand maritime use of mascots require some special mention as it took mascots globally during conflicts. An extract from the *Otago Daily Times*, 27 February 1919 Stated: Practically every ship and depot in the navy has its own mascot cockatoos, peacocks, storks, curlews, emus, otter hounds, wallabies, monkeys, kangaroos and so on. A special cemetery has been set aside for the internment of departed naval mascots.²³¹ HMS *Philomel* formed the core of New Zealand's naval forces during the First World War.²³² The aged and largely obsolete vessel was commissioned in New Zealand in July 1914 and went on to serve in the Pacific, Mediterranean and Middle East.²³³ Like most Royal Navy warships of the time HMS *Philomel* had its own mascots, in this case the familiar bulldog and goat.²³⁴



Figure 60: Captain Carpenter (on right) and Commander Osboen (holding the mascot cats of the Vindictive.) *Otago Witness*, Issue 3353, 19 June 1918. New Zealand's participated in the great raids on Zeebrugge in 1918 both on board HMS and axillary boats. <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/OW19180619.2.94.3.1>

Maritime history of animals has often been absent or marginalised in historic narratives, despite all kinds of animals being carried in ships, if not as cargo, then as mascots or as a crew food source. 'Military' animals crossed the sea to their battlefields whilst animal mascots, affectionately regarded as shipmates, played a significant role in bringing a ship's human

²³⁰ *The Observer*, 11 October 1919 the New Zealand's legacy, Auckland City Gets a Present of Pelorous Jack. <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/TO19191011.2.26>

²³¹ *Otago Daily Times*, Otago Daily Times, 27 February 1919. <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/ODT19190227.2.72.3>

²³² HMS *Psyche* and *Pyramus* which had about 90 New Zealanders among its crew. <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/war/royal-new-zealand-navy/first-world-war>

²³³ The light cruiser HMS *Philomel* was purchased from the Royal Navy to function as a training ship. *Philomel* escorted New Zealand land forces to occupy the German colony of Samoa in 1914 and saw further action under the command of the Royal Navy in the Mediterranean Sea, the Red Sea, and the Persian Gulf. <http://www.navy.gov.au/history/feature-histories/1914-1918-wwi>

²³⁴ Mascots on HMS *Philomel* at Muscat 1916. Image: AAC0152. RNZN Museum.

community together.²³⁵ When you look closer at sea travel archives around New Zealand they are in fact full of the mention of animals.²³⁶ Historically sailors and cats have a special relationship that dates back thousands of years.²³⁷



Figure 61: HMAS AE2's crew with mascot and dog at Malta 1915. Image: Photographer unknown ANMM Collection 00051787. During the First World War, Australian submarine, HMAS AE2, made a daring and hazardous incursion into the Dardanelles and the Sea of Marmara. This emphatic act by Captain Henry Stoker and his 31 Australian and British officers and crew with their mascot cat.

Perhaps of all the servicemen who had to undertake long periods of isolation from family or country, have been members of the maritime forces. Even by the First World War sea travel across the globe still took months and prior to the twentieth century expeditions sometimes took years to complete. It is hardly surprising that the navy allowed the use of mascots onboard ships since early colonial times. In addition to offering sailors much needed companionship, cats were selected to provide protection by ridding ships of vermin.

²³⁵ A two-day conference hosted by the U.K.'s National Maritime Museum in Greenwich in 2019 will explore maritime history by focusing on animals which are too often marginalised as passing references in traditional maritime narratives.

²³⁶ Many whaling ships recorded the births, deaths and losses of cats in the ships' logbooks. A Southland whaler, Johnny Jones, was recorded as having over 200 cats. Jones owned at least seven whaling stations on the southern coast of the South Island in the mid-1800s. E. J. Tapp. 'Jones, John', Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, first published in 1990. Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1j4/jones-john> (accessed 22 March 2019).

²³⁷ <https://research.kent.ac.uk/kentanimalhumanitiesnetwork/maritime-animals-conference/> Dr. Kaori Nagai School of English University of Kent. When researchers conducted the first global study of ancient cat DNA they found that felines had been domesticated in the Near East and Egypt some 15,000 years ago, and later spread to Europe thanks in part to mariners, from the Phoenicians to the Vikings, who often took them on board to ward off rodents.

Superstition and mascots went hand in hand, sailors also believed cats on ships to be lucky. This might in part be due to the simple logic that a cat-less ship overrun by rats was definitely unlucky!



Figure 62: Assigned to the Pacific Station during 1914–15, perhaps the very first Australian war animals were the Ship's cats that accompanied the first fleet. This Ship's cat is on HMAS Encounter during WW1. Sourced AWM accession number 304910 <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/304910/>

The *Encounter* was a light cruiser used by the Royal Australian Navy throughout the First World War. Her feline mascot became an iconic symbol after being photographed while innocently peeking out of the muzzle of a six-inch gun. This cat showed that, even when around dangerous and powerful weapons, 'warm and fuzzy' feelings of home need never be too far away. Cats have a natural tendency to attach themselves to a place, space or territory and were therefore better suited to shipboard life, or as a mascot to an air force base behind the lines, than to an army regiment likely to be on the move. Even so, many of the Memorial's photographs of cats were taken with infantry and other land-based units.



Figure 63: Image of two Anzac soldiers above with cats, is interesting to speculate if they are mascots or used deliberately by the photographer to invoke an image of normality and home via there use within the image.

Apart from the official Naval mascots usually on ships at sea or patrolling naval dockyards for vermin,²³⁸ hundreds if not thousands of cats, both unofficial mascots and pets, found

²³⁸ Ships have had cats for pest control for hundreds, possibly thousands of years. They were even written into the shipping rules published in Barcelona in 1494 – *Les costums marítimes de Barcelona universalment conegudes per libre del Consolat de mar*. They were insurance. If goods laden on board of a ship are devoured by rats, and the owners consequently suffer considerable damage, the master must repair the injury sustained by

themselves working in all theatres of war where Anzac troops served, the lucky ones occasionally found themselves pampered at rear echelon hospitals and canteen establishments. Apart from their rodent control abilities they often gave much comfort and morale- a reminder of home to troops on Rest & Recovery.²³⁹

Another mascot favoured by the Navy was the goat. Like a Naval ship's cat, sailing goats also served a practical role on the waves. Since ships spent months at sea, the crews needed a source for fresh dairy products, meat, leather and fibre. Goats offered advantages over cows. They required less space and a goat's sure-footedness was better suited for rough seas. A half-ton cow being tossed in a storm could be as dangerous as a loose cannon. Goats also spared ships from having to store the enormous amount of special feed that would have been needed for cows because goats would at least try to eat anything placed in front of them. Crews would feed goats scraps of whatever was available, giving goats another purpose by turning them into the ship's garbage disposal.²⁴⁰

Mascots were particularly important to the morale of the prisoners of war.²⁴¹ Behind enemy lines mascots also gave much needed comfort to Prisoners of War. Second Lieutenant Hamilton 'Flossie' Hervey of the Royal Flying Corps was a prisoner of war in 1917 at Zorndorf camp, in what was then Prussia and is now Poland.²⁴² Officers were granted privileges, including the right to enjoy a countryside walk unaccompanied, as long as they gave their word not to attempt an escape. Out for a stroll, Flossie encountered a small boy dragging a dachshund pup on a leash. A handful of coins and some chocolate were enough to buy the animal, and Flossie named his new pet Kleiner, meaning small. She slept on his bunk and joined him on walks. Once, after she ran off in pursuit of a deer, a German sentry found and returned her. In a lonely isolated position being separated from other people and your environment a mascot will benefit mental health.²⁴³

the owners, for he is considered in fault. But if the master kept cats on board, he is excused from that liability. (A manual of maritime law consisting of a treatise on ships and freight and a treatise on insurance. translated from the Latin of roccus with notes by Joseph Reed Ingersoll-1809). Without the presence of cats, a crew might find their ship overrun with rats and mice that would eat into the provisions, chew through ropes and spread disease. <https://www.navalhistory.org/2018/04/13/cats-in-the-sea-services>.

²³⁹ Visited research section at New Zealand Naval Museum, Auckland. Discussions with staff.

²⁴⁰ *A Brief Illustrated History of the Navy Goat*, US Naval Institute Staff, December ,2014
<https://news.usni.org/2014/12/12/brief-illustrated-history-navy-goat>.

²⁴¹ Prisoners of the First World War, Imperial War Museum, Animals in war Pets, image Q 83963.

²⁴² <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3928372/The-beloved-dogs-trenches-British-Tommies-fighting-France-comfort-adopted-pets-World-War.html>

²⁴³ Animals help with depression, anxiety, and stress. In addition, they provide companionship and ease loneliness. <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/mental-health/mood-boosting-power-of-dogs.htm>



Figure 64: During the course of the war, photographic postcards from prisoners were sent home. Some wanted them to notify their families that they were still alive. Members of a prisoners-of-war camp football club believed to be from 15 Battalion Queensland, pose with their dog and rabbit mascots, with German guard, Munster, Germany, c. 1918. AWM P03236.164

Wherever Mascots served in the midst of battle or behind the lines they were an essential part of the First World War. The most obvious of the rear echelons roles of mascots that emerged is the positive therapeutic benefits that animals have on injured troops. They also reminded troops of home and distracted them from thoughts of returning to the front. They were also comfort and companionship. Not just the injured, but the Nurses are seen in many photographs holding animals.²⁴⁴

Mascots behind the lines has shown both the timeless and diverse culture of mascots in Australia and New Zealand. From all three services to all rank's mascots have been a presence not just in combat but on the home front and what was once regarded as safe areas in war zones.

Soldiers, Sailor and Airmen have sought their companionship, it stems from much more than a novelty of a pet at the front, some troops needed their psychological presence as reminders of normality. Although not perhaps understood as much as today, medical care was enhanced by their presence. It was more than mutual survival, the mascot represented hope to return home see family and get back to normality.

The next section will explore how the impact they had in war, would follow on into peacetime. The very way our attitudes have changed towards animals is partly contributed to their presence on the battlefields by their displays of what can only be called courage, their devotion and love.²⁴⁵

²⁴⁴ Anna Rogers: *With them through hell NZ medical services in WWI* Massey University Press, Chap.11 p. 264.

²⁴⁵ Unti, B., & Rowan, A.N. (2001). A social history of post-war animal protection. In D.J. Salem & A.N. Rowan (Eds.), *The state of the animals 2001* (pp. 21-37). Washington, DC: Humane Society Press.

Chapter 5: Post First World War and their Legacy

For those soldiers who had mascots one of the concerns after the war was how could they bring them home. On this postcard the war is over and as the soldier waits on the dockside for the boat back to England, he asks his dog "Is it to be good bye, old Pal?" Well, maybe not! The RSPCA came to the rescue of Blightly-bound soldiers and offered to assist any who wanted to take their pets and mascots home. The fee for quarantine and other expenses was about £14 for each dog. The soldier was asked to pay £2 towards the cost, the Society paid the remainder. Many soldiers were unable to pay many attempting to smuggle their mascot home rather than leave them behind to the mercy of strangers or be destroyed.²⁴⁶ Smuggling the mascot home would have been a grave risk, all animals from the Western Front going via England. A serious outbreak of rabies had already occurred earlier on during the war, believed to have been brought in by a mascot dog flown in by a Flying Corps member.²⁴⁷



Figure 65: This card was not postally used. On the back of it was a printed appeal from the "BLUE CROSS FUND" at the "Dog Quarantine Kennels, Charlton Kennels Shooters Hill". All "DONATIONS GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED" it said. The artist signed the card. Sourced: Picture postcards from the Great War 1914-1918. <https://www.worldwar1postcards.com>. Interest in mascots after the war is evident in the production of a set of six cards showing unit mascots. The first two animals featured are dogs and the remainder are obviously not. The popular firm of "Raphael Tuck & Sons" produced these "OILETTE" cards and named the set of six - quite reasonably - "REGIMENTAL MASCOTS." The artist was Norah Drummond. Picture postcards from the Great War, <https://www.worldwar1postcards.com/ww1-war-dogs-on-postcards.php>

²⁴⁶ Peter Shaw Baker: *Animal War Heroes*, A&C Black, London, 1933 p.118.

²⁴⁷ Peter Shaw Baker: *Animal War Heroes*, A&C Black, London, 1933 p.129.

Many troops took to the illegal smuggling home of their mascots. One was “*Driver*” a tiny silky terrier puppy when he went to the First World War, smuggled inside a soldier’s coat on board the troopship Suffolk on November 1915. He went everywhere with his master, serving in France and Belgium with the 7th Australian Field Company. Soldiers often took him on ridding expeditions in the trenches, and he became an expert at catching the rodents.²⁴⁸ The same technique got him home aboard the troopship 'Castalia' in 1919. When the Captain and the officer commanding troops became aware of Driver's presence and demanded that he be put down before the ship arrived in Australia, so loved had he become the troops threatened to kill anyone who killed Driver. An example of the devotion and the risks soldiers would take to ensure their mascot comrades made it home too.²⁴⁹

Several mascots were lucky to have the support of high-ranking officers. On the 8 July 1919 Brigadier -General Commanding A Group NZEF requested permission to return the Auckland’s detachment mascot Great Dane dog back to New Zealand.

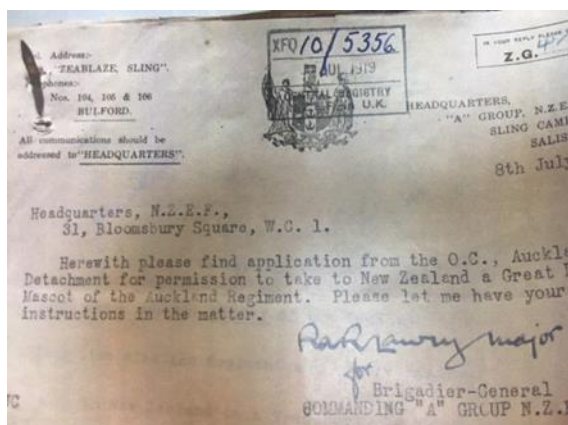


Figure 66: Signal Z.G 48/165 XFO10/5356 July 1919 from Rodgers Kippenberger Research Library

Another dog was Paddy, the regimental mascot Irish Terrier of the 1st Battalion Wellington Regiment. A document requesting the return from England to New Zealand of Paddy shows how the mascot served with the battalion from 1914 through Egypt, Gallipoli, France, Belgium and Germany. Such was the men’s love for this mascot the letter states the men were willing to pay for its return which would include 12 months quarantine.²⁵⁰ Calls for Paddy’s return was in New Zealand newspapers and an appeal from the Wellington Regiment.

²⁴⁸ Australian War Memorial photographic collection, A02639. <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C1004787>

²⁴⁹ Australian War Memorial Heraldry collection, <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/RELAWM09411/>

²⁵⁰ Paddy document from the *Dominion* 16 August 1934, titled memories of Paddy, Wellington regimental mascot.

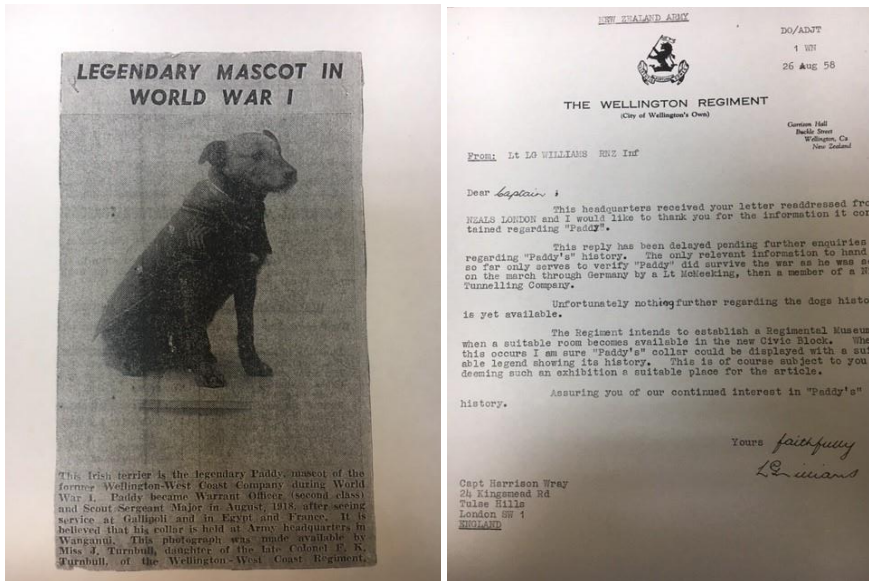


Figure 67: Accession number 1994.2346 National Army Museum archives – Paddy mascot a series of papers donated by Captain Harrison Wray 1 NZEF. The was an appeal from Regimental Headquarters, requesting his return to New Zealand.



Figure 68: Ref: Herman Schmidt, Returned Soldiers group from the 15th North Auckland Regiment with bulldog, Auckland, c. 1910-1919, Sir George Grey Special Collections, 31-WP8123

Mascots were also important enough to be represented by a unit after the war. The image above shows a group portrait of thirty-three Returned Soldiers, arranged in five rows, all in military uniforms, most are from the 15th North Auckland Regiment, mainly privates, except for a Lieutenant and two sergeants, the sergeant in the front row holds their mascot bulldog on a leash.

Not all mascots made it home, in a report from the *New York Times* Australian mascots were destroyed. The article stated:

Melbourne Australia April 30- Thirty dogs twenty-three monkeys, three squirrels, one mongoose and one rabbit accompanying the Australian Imperial Forces home have

been destroyed to prevent the introduction of diseases, including rabies of which five separate visitations occurred in the United Kingdom from 1918 to 1920 as a result of the landing of small animals with returning troops.²⁵¹

The mascots gave unconditional love to our troops. In turn they were reliant on humans to feed, groom and exercise them, thus enabling soldiers to express nurturing and protective behaviours. After the conflict the bonds were so strong soldiers would risk disciplinary action to smuggle their unofficial mascots back home.²⁵²

During and immediately post the First World War social barriers between upper classes (usually Commissioned Officers) and the working classes (usually the bulk of the army's rank and file) still existed both outside and within the army. Animals quite often broke down these barriers, officers would frequently enquire how a soldier's mascot was doing and even ensured it was billeted and rationed.²⁵³ Often mascots were given as gifts as signs of appreciation from, Royalty or commanders of regiments or war ships, to their men.²⁵⁴ This practice still remains today and is an answer to how they are selected.

Memorials

Not only did mascots change lives in adversity, in so doing these animals had to adjust to the demands we place on them in war. This they did willingly, trusting that we provided in return security, love and their essential needs. But is this enough, should mascots be formally recognized for their service?

You won't find their names on any memorials, and they barely rate a mention in official histories of the First World War, but animal mascots a cat, donkey, goat, monkey and assorted dogs, including bulldogs, spaniels, a Great Dane, a fox terrier and probably a few mongrels were there on the battlefields of Gallipoli and western Europe. Sometimes right in the middle of the fighting or helping to boost the morale of New Zealand's soldiers in the trenches and field hospitals.²⁵⁵ There was much conflicting debate immediately post First World War on

²⁵¹ *New York Times (1923-Current file)*; May 1, 1942; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: p.6.

²⁵² C. E. Le: *Silent heroes: The bravery and devotion of animals in war*. London: Souvenir Press 2009.p78

²⁵³ Isabella George: *Animals at War*, Usborne publishers, 2006.p.35.

²⁵⁴ Army Mascots: The National Army Museum, London. :<https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/army-mascots>

²⁵⁵ C.E. Le: *Silent heroes: The bravery and devotion of animals in war*. London: Souvenir 2009.

appropriate ways of memorialising the war dead (humans), yet the contribution of the animals was largely excluded from these discussions or rarely considered.²⁵⁶

Despite a stream of publications acknowledging the war-time role of nonhuman animals, a small group of critics maintained that animal memorialisation is an inappropriate fad that trivialises the ugliness of war while sidelining human suffering through the foregrounding of non-human sacrifice.²⁵⁷

Just as we remember heroes who have served our country in war time, the animals that served in the First World War have been remembered only recently in Australia and New Zealand, with formal monuments to them being built. Their importance to the men is suggested by the memorabilia that has made its way into our museum collections. Auckland War Memorial Museum, Te Papa and the National Army Museum at Waiouru, to name a few, have well-worn collars, leads, nameplates and faded photos – reminders of the close bonds forged between animals and humans in wartime.

The first New Zealand mascot memorial that represents all animal mascots that have served on land or sea with the New Zealand Navy was opened on 25 May 2019 at the Naval Museum, Devonport, Auckland. Previously tombs have represented individual mascots, such as Freda, post the First World War, this tradition continuing into the Second World War with New Zealand mascot Nelson whose grave resides in Burnham Military Camp. The newspaper Bay of Plenty Beacon, volume 8, issue 45, 2 February 1945 noted:

“In memory of Nelson to illustrate the bond that can exist between the soldier and his close and loyal friend”.²⁵⁸

Apart from memorials, other forms of recognition mascots have received, include specially made collars presented by a ship’s crew or grateful troops. In the Australian War Memorial (AWM) mascots have either been subject to taxidermy or their hides have been preserved on display and several New Zealand mascots have had books written on their exploits.

²⁵⁶ R Hediger: *Animals and war: Studies of Europe and North America*, Boston, MA: Brill, 2012, 237–262.

Read also: Karsten Nowrot: *Animals at War: The Status of "Animal Soldiers" under International Humanitarian Law* Historical Social Research Vol. 40, No. 4 (154) (2015), pp. 128-150.

²⁵⁷ *Scientia Militaria*, South African Journal of Military Studies, Vol 43, No. 2, 2015, pp. 133–150.

²⁵⁸ Article: *Bay of Plenty Beacon*, volume 8, issue 45, 2 February 1945, *Animal war heroes recognised*. <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/BPB19450202.2.29>

Why is it important to remember the mascots, what makes them special after all? Since man began military campaigns there has always been the sight and smell of animals. To start with animals on the hoof especially cattle, were used as an important food source for armies. Chickens, pigs, and cattle were slaughtered and served in camps. We rode them into battle, and used them as logistical transportation.²⁵⁹

Whether 100 years ago or today on the front lines of Afghanistan, mascots are still a present part of New Zealand soldiers' lives. They form great mateship, comfort and remind us of home. It has not always been so, but we owe these animals that looked after our spirits during times of danger, the respect to look after them when our troops pull out by bringing them home.²⁶⁰ We also need to recognize their service with memorials or, like our human soldier, a medal.

Dr Rachel Lyons Veterinarian RSPCA, when addressing the inauguration of the Australian operational medal for canines at the Australian War Memorial Canberra in 2018 stated:

In a way having a dog on the battlefield is similar to having one at home. They offer wellbeing and companionship a friend who'll stand by you at all times, regardless of what's exploding around you." But these battlefield dogs have one massive advantage over other tools used by soldiers: the emotional support they offer is crucial in easing the stress of combat. We all know our dogs can distract us very easily, that's what they do with soldiers.²⁶¹

Unlike 100 years ago when New Zealand and Australian forces were utilizing animals at its height numerically, animals today are not thought upon as disposal pieces of equipment but as living creatures that require and deserve humane and fair treatment. This includes proper recognition for their service. As society becomes more urbanised people's primary connection with animals is as pets. Given pets are regarded by many as family this is leading to a 'personification' of animals. Therefore, recognising animals for their service would tap into this sentiment and allows the Anzac defence forces to move with society.

²⁵⁹ J. Gardiner: *The animals' war: Animals in wartime from the First World War to the present day*, London: Portrait 2006.

²⁶⁰ Nancy Swarbrick is the author of *Creature Comforts: New Zealanders and their pets, an illustrated history*, Otago University Press.

²⁶¹ Bayer Animal Health Graduate Dr Rachel Lyons <https://pickle.nine.com.au/2015/04/25/12/26/dogs-of-war>

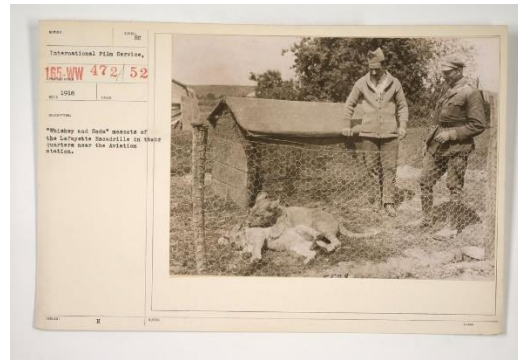


Figure 69: Sample of a mascot file are available at the National Archives at St. Louis (RL-SL). Alas New Zealand and Australia did not keep similar records.

During the First World War many military mascots had official military personnel files which were created to give authenticity to their status as mascots. They still exist with official regimental mascots in Australia, but there are no formal mascots within the New Zealand Defence Force at the time of this thesis.

From the first days of the First World War in 1914 to its end post 1918, millions of heroic animals served silently. Many of their stories have been recorded and some remain untold, but their action was always delivered with courage. *Evelyn Le Chene* wrote:

Animal courage, like that of humans, comes in many forms. It may be simply by being there, uplifting the spirit and morale and turning a situation from darkest despair into one of driving will to survive. Or an animal, without urging, may decide what to do in a moment of peril and save life or turn a situation for the better.²⁶²

In 2017 a memorial dedicated to Australian and New Zealand animals in war was unveiled at Pozieres, France. It exists as a memorial to the huge number of animals that have served and died during the First World War including combative and mascots animals. Other forms of recognition to war animals is the Dickin Medal instituted in 1943 by Maria Dickin to honour the work of animals in war. It is a large bronze medallion, bearing the words ‘For Gallantry’ and ‘We Also Serve’ within a laurel wreath, carried on a ribbon of striped green, dark brown and pale blue. Traditionally, the medal is presented by the Lord Mayor of the City of London. It has become recognised as ‘the animal’s Victoria Cross’.²⁶³

²⁶² Evelyn Le Chene: *Silent Heroes: The Bravery and Devotion of Animals in War*. Souvenir Press, 1994.

²⁶³ Rebecca Frankel: *War Dogs: Tales of Canine Heroism, History, and Love* St. Martin's Press 2014. See also P. Hawthorne, *The Animal Victoria Cross: The Dickin Medal*, Pen & Sward, 2019.

Legacy

In this chapter it will be observed that mascots have left several legacies post the First World War. The most obvious is their continuance in the Second World War which saw large numbers of mascots alongside Anzac troops.²⁶⁴ Today on the modern battlefield the impact on morale from these times has naturally led both New Zealand and Australian forces in Afghanistan to continue the tradition of having mascots.²⁶⁵

Regardless of the historical application of mascots held in many units including within the Anzac forces, they are on the decline. This thesis began with the adaption of the British army's use of mascots, it is fitting to use them as a comparison of why they are on the decline today. Just like Australia and New Zealand it appears that politicians who perhaps have never served in the forces or have little knowledge or care of military tradition are asking the question what purpose do mascots serve, what is their fiscal value in maintaining mascots.²⁶⁶

In Australia official military animal mascots are a long-standing tradition and carry out ceremonial roles and duties, all of which are attached to the army. Other unofficial mascots are maintained through private unit funds.²⁶⁷

It's not easy for an army unit to get an official mascot, a lengthy process must take place, first, the regiment must comply with the welfare guidelines issued in standing orders to ensure that the mascot is properly fed and housed. Second, the regiment's Commanding Officer must give approval and will consider whether the mascot is "appropriate", can take an active part in army life, including ceremonial occasions, and have a symbolic and historic connection with the regiment.²⁶⁸ Regardless of this proud tradition mascots within the Australian army are on the decline. Currently there are no mascots in the New Zealand Defence Force.

²⁶⁴ Anthony Hill: *Animal Heroes*, Second Edition Penguin books Melbourne, 2017.p.69.

²⁶⁵ National Army Museum article on Animals at War Stories <https://www.armymuseum.co.nz/animals-at-war/> <https://www.armymuseum.co.nz/blog/gunner.html> and <https://www.army.gov.au/search/node/mascot>

²⁶⁶ Article on taxpayer bill for military mascots, The independent, Dublin, January 2016. Viewed 22 April 2020. <https://www.independent.ie/world-news/and-finally/taxpayer-bill-for-dogs-of-war-and-other-military-mascots-revealed-34358604.html>.

²⁶⁷ In the *Commonwealth of Australia Ceremonial Manual* which deals with the drills, formations and procedures applicable to normal ceremonial occasions Chapter four states; (4.3) Where practicable, Mascots should be positioned behind the Regimental Sergeant Major during the parade.

²⁶⁸ In the Australian Army great care is taken to select the right mascot, to ensure that the mascot projects the desired and appropriate image for the unit. Some considerations include the animal's legality, disposition, size, feeding requirements, climatic tolerance, aesthetics, housing requirements, and transport needs. The new mascot is registered and requesting correspondence to go through head of corps, and DG Pers requesting approval to have a mascot.



Figure 70: Image of Hugh Lofting during the First World War seen with an array of animal mascots. An unexpected post war legacy was *Lofting*, not wishing to write about the brutality of war, to his children instead wrote imaginative letters with illustrations about his and other mascots. These later became the foundation of the Dr Dolittle novels, published in 1920.²⁶⁹

In the United Kingdom as the legend of the mascot grew alongside the pet population, war time memories recalled the food shortages of the First World War and by the commencement of the Second World War many felt it inappropriate to have the 'luxury' of a pet during wartime. The result was an estimated 750,000 pets were destroyed on the eve of war.²⁷⁰ It was all based on a false assumption that putting down the family pet was a patriotic and humane thing to do. This also led to strays, in particular dogs, who would often attach themselves to soldiers.

The whole demographic relating to animals, what they were used for and how they were viewed, changed after the First World War. One legacy of the mascots` popularity in the First World War was many servicemen exposed to them during that time wanted to acquire a pet after the war perhaps to reflect on comradeship. For a short time, the pet population around the world increased including in New Zealand and Australia.²⁷¹ However, dramatic changes in the economy occurred during the Depression and prior to World War Two many people left the land for the urban life style causing the pet population to change at this time as well.

Another legacy from the war was mascots acted as social facilitators between humans, reducing the risk of social isolation. They were of great interest not just to the handler but all the troops in the trenches. They helped form a team bond by belonging to all the men of the unit who often felt they each had a stake in the mascot`s welfare.²⁷² Beyond this original role as mascot

²⁶⁹ Hugh Lofting British American author (born Jan. 14, 1886, England—died Sept. 26, 1947, California, U.S.) of a series of children`s classics which later became a motion picture, *Doctor Dolittle*, (1967. Viewed 22 April 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Hugh-Lofting>.

²⁷⁰ Alison Feeney-Hart: *The little told story of the massive WWII pet cull*. BBC News Magazine, 2013 p.7.

²⁷¹ <https://teara.govt.nz/en/pets/print>.

²⁷² J. Lenselink: De berichtenhond in het nederlandse Leger: Een bescheiden experiment. *Armamentaria*. p. 31, 36–40. 1996.

there has been increasing research into their use as social or emotional companions post war. These results regarding the therapist role of the animals suggest that the animal-mascot bonds have both an individual and a group dimension. This therapy role was not officially recognized during the First World War like it is today, however individual medical staff witnessed and permitted animals to be present in hospital and rehabilitation wards. Mascots showed great affection to their masters, with many able to stay with them at hospitals.²⁷³

The transition from war to peace is always a difficult path but having an animal has proved to help. The greatest legacy that mascots have given soldiers today is the confirmation and realisation that post conflict animals can be used to aid veterans to settle back into normal society. increasing the research into their use as social or emotional companions. Dog pioneers of health care, and their work, span decades but began in the trenches of the First World War.

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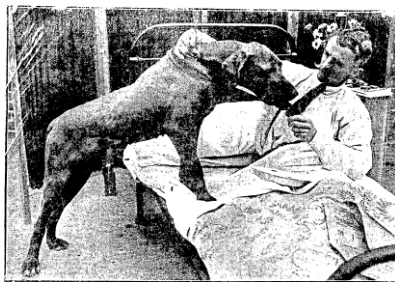


Figure 71: The Great Dane mascot of the Auckland Mounted Rifles: touching story of the animal's affection for its wounded master.²⁷⁵

These horrors of war would have exacerbated the comfort and companionship that animals provided to people's lives. Many modern-day studies have proven that animals provide company, exercise and amusement, that they lower heart rate and blood pressure, and that they improve mental health. In such a case, the animal-mascot as a "possible shared transition object" may represent a way of coping for a suffering soldier to maintain socialization.²⁷⁶

For many soldiers confronted with exposure to stressful situations, an animal-mascot bond is considered effective help for dealing with the stress.²⁷⁷ Human-animal bonds were greater for soldiers than for civilians, with Dr Herzog, Professor of Psychology at Western Carolina

²⁷³ Papers Past, National library of New Zealand, *New Zealand Herald*, August 1916.

²⁷⁴ Jill Lenk: *Dogs in Health Care: Pioneering Animal-Human Partnerships* Jefferson Publishers, Carolina, 2019 p.8.

²⁷⁵ Papers Past, *New Zealand Herald*, Volume LIII, Issue 16312, 19 August 1916.

²⁷⁶ David Frei: *Angel on a leash therapy dogs and the lives they touch*, Bow tie press, 2011.p.14.

²⁷⁷ H. Herzog, *The impact of pets on human health and psychological well-being: fact, fiction, or hypothesis? Current Directions in Psychological Science*. 2011 pp.236–239.

University, stating in a recent study: “One may assume that the animal-mascot bonds will trend to a therapeutic coping process for mitigating distress for soldiers”.²⁷⁸

One of the benefits afforded to soldiers by the presence of animals during war was the relationship between a soldier and an animal mascot to mitigate distress. Studies considering the human-animal bond as an anti-stress agent shows stroking dogs and cats, watching tropical fish in an aquarium and even caressing a pet boa constrictor have been reported to reduce blood pressure and stress levels.²⁷⁹

The legacy of compassion and genuine affection that soldiers shared with their mascots translated in peace time to a general concern for animals. The death of so many millions of animals on the battlefields, exposed to the public by photography, caused a paradigm shift in animal welfare.

Prior to the First World War animals, in particular equines, were seen as implements of work in particular the agricultural and industrial sectors. After the First World War much of the equine population had been devastated and along with the development of modern technological advancements saw the engine increasingly replace horsepower.²⁸⁰ Animals over the following decades began having a resurgence as pets and social attitudes towards them altered.²⁸¹



²⁷⁸ http://file.scirp.org/Html/12-6900738_51093.htm. Scientific Research Publishing Psychology Vol.05 No.15 October 2014.

²⁷⁹ H. Herzog: *The impact of pets on human health and psychological well-being: fact, fiction, or hypothesis?* Current Directions in Psychological Science. 2011;20(4):236–239. doi: 10.1177/0963721411415220

²⁸⁰ Zabecki, David T.: Military Developments of World War I, in: 1914-1918-online. International Encyclopedia of the First World War, ed.p.15.

²⁸¹ James Serpell. *In the company of animals: a study of human–animal relationships*. Oxford, Blackwell, 1986. Also read Clifton, Jane. ‘For the love of dog.’ New Zealand Listener 211, no. 3528 December 2007pp.14–19. New Zealand has one of the highest rates of pet ownership in the world, and many households have a dog or a cat. From working dogs to ‘fur babies’, pets have been part of the country’s history. Nancy Swarbrick, ‘Pets’, Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/pets/print> ,accessed 14 February 2020.

Figure 72: Much of the historiography on the First World War and many of its images like the one above has painted a picture of a four-year long static blood bath after the war the public viewed the death of millions of animals. But new photographs are appearing in collections of another type of animal in the First World War, that being the mascot.

During the First World War just like any animal be they wildlife, agricultural or members of the armed forces including mascots, International Humanitarian Law (IHL) largely ignored the protection of animals and was deeply anthropomorphic. Although animals are among those affected by armed conflicts today, International Humanitarian Law still does not directly deal with the question of their protection. Animals are only indirectly addressed as civilian objects or as part of the natural environment.²⁸² There are moves for the possible incorporation of "animal soldiers" into the scope of application of international humanitarian law. This originates from 2014 when the Taliban revealed the capture of a British military working dog in Afghanistan and posted a video of its captivity on the internet.²⁸³ The contribution aims to evaluate some aspects relating to the issue of a possible incorporation of "animal soldiers" into the scope of application of international humanitarian law. Potential recognition of animals as international legal subjects having the status of combatants under the law of armed conflict would hopefully include mascots.²⁸⁴

In the Imperial War Museum exhibit in 2019 called *The Animals` War*, a sign states:

While the appalling privations of soldiers have been carefully depicted in fiction and non-fiction, the sufferings of animal conscripts have been understandably left in the shade. Yet their bones, too, were part of the battlefield scenery, as is demonstrated by a lieutenant's (unknown) directions on how to find him:

'Bear half-left to dead pig; cross stream below dead horse; follow smell of three dead cows.'²⁸⁵

Large numbers of animals lose their lives in military conflicts, this occurs regardless of whether armies deliberately act in a cruel way towards animals, which does happen on occasion. Animal deaths also occur in rural areas (animals on farms) during a bombardment, animals confined in

²⁸² Jérôme de Hemptinne, Researcher at the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Law. *AJIL Unbound*, Volume 111, 2017, pp. 272-276. The protection of animals during warfare generates many complex questions regarding international humanitarian law its largely ignores animal protection sighting animals as civilian objects or part of the natural environment.

²⁸³ *Animals at War: The Status of "Animal Soldiers" under International Humanitarian Law* Karsten Nowrot *Historical Social Research* Vol. 40, No. 4 (154) (2015), pp. 128-150.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid*

²⁸⁵ Military use of animals *Animal Ethics* <http://www.animal-ethics.org/animal-exploitation-section/animals-workers-introduction/military-use-animals/>. Also read Ritter, E. M. & Bowyer, M. W. (2005) "Simulation for trauma and combat casualty care", *Minimally Invasive Therapy*, 14, pp. 224-234.

zoos can be killed, or abandoned animals as their owners flee a war zone.²⁸⁶ Dr Brendan Nelson at the unveiling of a war animal tribute at the Australian War Memorial read an extract from the diary of poet, Captain Patterson, who was himself in the Veterinary Corps during the First World War wrote:

The Australians and New Zealanders who fought, suffered and died here were volunteers. The animals that served and supported them were not. Men could speak of what they endured. Their animals could not. Nerve shattering, pounding artillery, relentless gunfire, snipers, disease, mud, water and brutal weather, both man and animal endured. In all this they were bound in trust and the comfort one gave to the other.²⁸⁷

In 1912, the Our Dumb Friends League created The Blue Cross Fund for the aid of animals in wartime, particularly horses, and continued to fundraise during the war. The RSPCA provided veterinary hospitals in France, which treated over 700,000 animals.²⁸⁸ The horrid deaths and living conditions appalled military officials from multiple nations, some of whom made strides to protect and improve the care for animals used in warfare, this included mascots. It was recognized, apart from the thousands of official combat animals in an army, there were also thousands of unofficial mascots in the trenches. It was realised that a soldier's emotions and love towards such animals could affect his fighting capability. Soldiers have been reported being killed returning to a trench after an advance to pick up his trench pet.

A continuation of the legacy from this war was the use of mascots in the Second World War in Australia to aid patients moral.²⁸⁹ Bill Wynne, with a mascot silky terrier, used this therapy dog at Brisbane Hospital between 1943-45. This mascot called *Smoky* became the world's first recognised Post Traumatic Stress Disorder dog.²⁹⁰

Mascots or at least their demise have stimulated an awareness that they need to come home after war. New Zealand and Australia failed to bring home their mascots they had in-situ in the

²⁸⁶ B. Unti & A.N.Rowan *A social history of post war animal protection*. 2001. Also, D.J. Salem & A.N. Rowan (Eds.), *The state of the animals* 2001 pp. 21-37. Washington DC, Humane Society Press.

²⁸⁷ Hon Dr Brendan Nelson AO, interview with author, Pozieres, 21 July 2017.

²⁸⁸ Blue Cross is a registered charity in England. <https://www.bluecross.org.uk/our-history>.

²⁸⁹ Media release: 29 April 2008. <https://mch.govt.nz/animal-mascots-wartime-lifting-soldiers-spirits> Ministry of culture and heritage. Viewed 2 Oct 2019.

²⁹⁰ Nancy Rose Pimm, interview with author, 11 November 2019. *Smoky, the Dog That Saved My Life: The Bill Wynne Story*, Ohio University Press, 2019.

recent Afghanistan war. Just like the First World War due to defence policy and agricultural quarantine requirements, they were left behind.²⁹¹

Mascots have influenced a legacy of writers and film makers portraying their deeds and sacrifices such as Smoky the War Dog and even adding humour of their contributions in British television comedies such as *Black Adder Goes Forth*²⁹² and Hollywood movies.²⁹³

The resource and efficiency of the New Zealand Veterinary Corps is well recorded, it even surprised high-ranking officers of the Imperial Army at the time by the low percentage of losses sustained in transportation and on active service. Naturally both the Australian and New Zealand veterinary officers were charged with the administration of medicines and welfare of combative animals.²⁹⁴ When an official mascot was injured or needed medication it received treatment from veterinary staff. However, a soldier's personnel mascot or one a unit had adopted in-situ, did not have any entitlements to treatment.²⁹⁵ Quite understandably many soldiers either approached the veterinary corps staff for help or more common was to obtain first aid assistance from medics or stretcher orderly's. The New Zealand Veterinary Corps was formed in 1907, but, apart from a nucleus of officers—all qualified veterinary surgeons—it was not on "establishment." On the outbreak of war immediate calls were made upon the resources of the Corps, for the purchase of military horses, the provision of veterinary officers for duty on transports, and in the training of essential personnel which had to be enrolled for the carrying out of routine duties. To do this it was necessary to utilise the services of all available qualified veterinary surgeons in New Zealand. The majority of those who enrolled subsequently received commissions in the New Zealand Veterinary Corps. The various veterinary operations were under the administration of Dr. C. J. Reakes (later the Director-General of the Department of Agriculture) who held the appointment of Director of Veterinary

²⁹¹ Some troops brought animals from Australia to Egypt, like kangaroos and koalas, but they could not go home again due to the cost and quarantine laws. At the end of the war, many were donated to the Cairo Zoo, which was said to have a large collection of Australian native animals in the 1950s. ANZAC portal Department of Veterans Affairs <https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/wars-and-missions/ww1/military-organisation/animals-in-military#5>.

²⁹² Ronald Perry: *Horrie the War Dog the Story of Australia's Most Famous War Dog*, Allen & Unwin 2013.

²⁹³ Ann Bausum: *Stubby the War Dog: The True Story of World War I's Bravest*, National Geographic, 2014, p.133.

²⁹⁴ Robin Hutton: *Combative animals included Horses, Mules, Dogs, Donkeys and pigeons. War Animals: The Unsung Heroes of World War II*, 2018, p.74.

²⁹⁵ Michael Tyquin: *Forgotten Men: The Australian Army Veterinary Corps 1909-1946*, Big Sky Publishing, p.242.

Services and Remounts.²⁹⁶ Similar to New Zealand, the Australian Army Veterinary Corps (AAVC) played a vital military role. One of the army's smallest and least recognised corps the significant contribution of the Australian Army Veterinary Corps outweighed its size. During the First World War veterinarians and their assistants have provided professional care animals of the Australian Army which included mascots.²⁹⁷

Animal Welfare

Animals have always suffered in war, theriocide was caused by numerous factors ranging from battle casualties to animals exploited for military experimentation.²⁹⁸

There will always be arguments relating to the use of animals, as large number of animals lose their lives in military conflicts. This occurs regardless of whether armies deliberately act in a cruel way towards animals, which does happen on occasion.²⁹⁹ Therefore, if soldiers or armies use mascots in the future their welfare must not only be protected in the war zone but they must be brought back home when forces withdraw.



Figure 72: Dogs remain today the most popular mascot. A large number of them are left behind when troops return to their respective home countries. Dogs are one of the few common points of reference between the military and the larger public. When we cannot make that human connection over war, when we cannot empathize or imagine the far-off world of a combat zone ... these military working dogs are a bridge over the divide.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁶ Medical units New Zealand History p.5. Veterinary Corps. viewed 8 August 2019.<https://nzhistory.govt.nz/war/medical-units/veterinary-corps>.

²⁹⁷ National Army Museum United Kingdom -Animals-Army mascots, p.2. Sourced: <https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/pawfect-pals-and-pets-soldiers>.

²⁹⁸ U.S. Department of Defence, *Final Report of the Use of Live Animals in Medical Education and Training Joint Analysis Team*, unclassified publication, Washington, D.C., 12 July 2009.

²⁹⁹ B. Unti & A.N. Rowan (2001). A social history of post war animal protection. In D.J. Salem & A.N. Rowan (Eds.), *The state of the animals*. 2001 (pp. 21-37). Washington, DC: Humane Society Press.

³⁰⁰ Thesis: Onur ÇİFFİLİZ, Hacettepe University; School of Social Sciences English Language and Literature British Cultural Studies, *The agency and recognition of animals in the first world war and its aftermath in Michael Morpurgo's war horse and Megan Rix's a soldier's friend*. 2019.

Ron Aiello President of the US War dog Association states:

The Operation Baghdad Pups program provides veterinary care and coordinates complicated logistics and transportation requirements in order to reunite these beloved pets with their service men and women back in the U.S. These important animals not only help our heroes in the war zone, but they also help them readjust to life back home after combat.³⁰¹

For many soldiers confronted with exposure to stressful situations, an animal-mascot bond is considered effective help for dealing with the emotional hardships and stress of life in a combat zone.³⁰² The human-animal bond is a powerful force. It can help us through the most difficult times in our lives. There are many stories of the close relationship between men and their animals, whether bringing a reminder of a more peaceful life at home on the farm or as a source of companionship in the face of the inhumanity of man.³⁰³

Based on the statement that animals may help suffering individuals to cope with their difficulties, a recent study by W. Alton Jones Professor of Philosophy at Vanderbilt University assessed that:

The presence of a mascot in theatre help soldiers to deal with the emotional hardships and stress of life in a combat zone.

Such relationships with an animal- mascot may be considered to offer soldiers with limited responsibility a chance to share and express their pure selves without needing to defend their actions or feelings. Companion animals may give them their greatest opportunities to express emotion, without ever having to worry about being judged or rejected or being seen as disturbed in front of their buddies. Stigmatisation is a real fear in the military environment.³⁰⁴

A mascot may offer them a private harmless and/or an oasis of unqualified acceptance in an otherwise stressful and critical world. It may give them back a devotion, or a love that is unmatched by any other relationship during a deployment. Such a love may provide them with

³⁰¹ According to the website for Operation Baghdad Pups, a subsidiary of the SPCA, "U.S. troops in Iraq and Afghanistan befriend local animals as a way to help cope with the emotional hardships they endure every day while deployed in a war zone. www.spcai.org/baghdad-pups.html.

³⁰² Article Psychology journal Vol.05 No.15, Article ID:51093, p.15 *The Role of an Animal-Mascot in the Psychological Adjustment of Soldiers Exposed to Combat Stress*. 2014.

³⁰³ Michele Pich MA, MS, in *Small Animal Critical Care Medicine* (Second Edition), 2015. Relatively new subcategories of "service" animals have been designated to provide humans with, not only physical assistance (as guide dogs do) but with therapy, emotional, psychiatric and therapeutic support. .

³⁰⁴ John. Burnam: *A Soldier's Best Friend*, Union Square Press edition 1, 2008.p.52.

an oasis of unqualified love and acceptance.³⁰⁵ Their obedience and respect may give them an increased sense of self-worth that adds “new” meaning to their lives in a war zone.³⁰⁶

Findings, post-World War Two, have shown the importance of the human animal relationship under extreme stress. From an extract in the book *Faithful Friends* the same function a mascot in war can be inferred.

When Jewish families were torn from their homes, neighbourhoods and livelihoods, what happened to the animals that loved and depended on them? Here is a collection of never-before-told stories of pets during the Holocaust. Most of these accounts are told by men and women who were children during World War II in Europe. As they lost parents, siblings and friends in the death camps, their beloved pets provided comfort and courage, gave them a connection to happier times, and helped them to never give up hope.³⁰⁷

The legacy of mascots has continued post the First World War with both the Australian and New Zealand Defence Force increasing in the official mascot status in peace time and numerous less official mascots during the Second World War. New Zealanders who served in the Royal Navy during the Second World War experienced mascots at sea. Lieutenant-Commander Charles Bunty recorded that their mascots included goats, hens, a bulldog, cats, and a budgerigar.³⁰⁸ In the 1960s the WRNZNS at HMNZS *Philomel* had a mascot named Leading Cat Mehitabel. She lived with the Wrens in Elizabeth House on King Edward Parade in Devonport.³⁰⁹

The New Zealand Air Force have a long association with mascots, this legacy from the First World War passed on from the Royal Flying Corps, which New Zealanders served in, to recent times. The ‘squadron dog’ has always been a part of military aviation culture, particularly during wartime. They had an important role to play; at a time when the future was far from certain for many young airmen on active operations, their canine companions offered some comfort and distraction from the grim realities of war. Through their unwavering devotion and boundless affection, they kept spirits high and provided a temporary link to normality and

³⁰⁵ S.B.Barker & A.R.Wolen: *The Benefits of Human-Companion Animal Interaction: A Review*. Journal of Veterinary and Medical Education, 35, 2008 p.487-495. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3138/jvme.35.4.487>

³⁰⁶ K.M.Fick: ‘*The Influence of an Animal on Social Interactions of Nursing Home Residents in a Group Setting*’. American Journal of Occupational Therapy 1993.

³⁰⁷ Susan. Bulanda *Faithful Friends: Holocaust Survivors' Stories of the Pets Who Gave Them Comfort, Suffered Alongside Them and Waited for Their Return*, Cladach Publishing, 2011. Abstract: p.iv.

³⁰⁸ CPPR *New Zealand Herald* 18 July 1941.

³⁰⁹ ‘One Shot Jump Ahead of the Jonty’, *Action: The Combined Services Newspaper* 2:1 January 1966, p. 7.

peace. Rudy, the mascot terrier, was the last known mascot in the Royal New Zealand Air Force at Whenuapai Base between 1985 and 1994.³¹⁰



Figure 73: Flying Training School, RNZAF Wigram, in front of a Vickers Vildebeest, c. 1938. Students are standing in the back row, instructors and officers commanding seated in the front row. Note also the bulldog (belonging to R.J. Cohen) seated in centre front row and mascot cat.³¹¹

The benefits mascots had on morale and companionship in the First World War are perhaps best reinforced by the fact that both New Zealand and Australian troops again took them to the Second World War in vast numbers. Both countries armed forces also had official individual units' mascots which received rank and, if killed were honoured by a gravestone.³¹²

In Australia almost, all Regiments and Battalions have official regimental mascots but even subunits have their own. Such is a desire for animal companionship units even only temporarily stationed on overseas missions frequently adopt a local creature for comfort. In 2019 the 1st Combat Engineer Regiment welcomed its smallest recruit with a parade at Robertson Barracks. Sapper Cerikey, a six-month-old sand goanna, “marched in” as the unit’s mascot³¹³.

Recently a mascot called Gunner was adopted in Afghanistan by the New Zealand Provincial Reconstruction Team and is a big white ‘wolf-like’ dog with a shaggy coat that is perfectly suited to the harsh rugged hills of Afghanistan. Gunner was powerful, tough and full of energy and loved the snow, even when temperatures drop to minus 20 degrees. He mostly slept outside and only used the kennel that was built for him when it rained. He was grateful for the occasional bone thrown his way and ate every scrap of leftovers. Gunner was loyal, fiercely protective of the Kiwi base and enthusiastically welcomed home soldiers when they return

³¹⁰ Nigel. B. Allsopp: *New Zealand War Animals*, Sign Circus Publishing, Brisbane, 2019 p.78.

³¹¹ 2010/048.67 Black and white gloss print, Formal group portrait of members of No. 2 Pilot's Course.

³¹² Second World War mascots, URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/war/mascots/second-world-war-mascots>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 29-Aug-2014. Accessed 1 May 2020.

³¹³ Relocation North Journal 2017. p.26 <http://www.territorystories.nt.gov.au>

from the daily patrols. One of the detachments members Major Syd Dewes had such a soft spot for Gunner that when he got home from deployment, one of the first things he did, was to go out shopping for worm and flea tablets so he could send them to the remote Kiwi patrol base in Nayak, where Gunner serves as guard and mascot.³¹⁴

Animals in general continue to this day to be utilized by Anzac troops, be they mascots or practical beasts of burden in Afghanistan or canines detecting roadside explosive devices. The connection between man and animal is mutually beneficial to our physical and emotional wellbeing.



Figure 74: NZ Soldiers in Afghanistan still have close contact with animals be they used for transport, explosive detection or as a mascot. Left image members of one of the NZ Provincial Reconstruction Teams, circa 2005. New Zealand mascot Gunner May 2008, Afghanistan, NZPRT 11 KT1 with Major Syd Dewes. Photos supplied by the National Army Museum Te Mata Toa, Waiouru,

The legacy of mascots has spread to images of them appearing on postage stamps and coins during the centenary celebrations. As Australia continues to commemorate the Centenary of Anzac, it is not just human diggers who are remembered but all Australian combatants of all different species. Director of the Australian War Memorial Dr Brendan Nelson stated: “Creatures great and small who contributed their strength, energy and lives to the Australian Imperial Forces and the Australian Defence Force helped to define the spirit of our great nation”.³¹⁵

³¹⁴ Author interviewed Syd on 13 December 2019, also see: National Army Museum, New Zealand, article on Gunner in Afghanistan. <https://www.armymuseum.co.nz/blog/gunner.html>

³¹⁵ At opening of the War animal day AWM opening 24 February 2015.

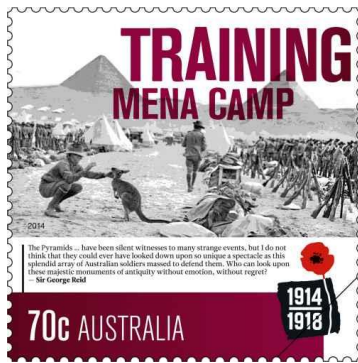


Figure 75: The stamp image shows lines of 9th and 10th Battalions at Mena Camp, one soldier playing with a camp mascot. Soldiers brought several native animals to Egypt, some of which were given to the Cairo zoo when the troops left for Gallipoli.

In recent times several books have also been published of individual deeds of mascot animals some fiction some non-fiction. These books all promote the legacy and virtue of mascots who served in the First World War but also in subsequent conflicts. There are also several short movies on Anzac mascots, including Digger the war dog.³¹⁶

The legacy of mascots of the First World War is simply that troops still seek their affection in conflicts today. They provide physical and emotional support and put a small piece of humanity and normalcy into the lives of soldiers far from home. For the wellbeing of soldiers who had them, the government should enable those troops to return home with them regardless if obtained in-situ. Upon previously interviewing Vietnam veterans the trauma of having to leave animals behind, due to quarantine, still distress's them today nearly 50 years on.

³¹⁶ Patricia Stroud illustrated by Bruce Potter. *Caesar the Anzac dog*. Harper Collins, 2003. Also see Laurie Calkhoven, *Judy, Prisoner of War*, Scholastic Inc, 2018. Mark Wilson, *Digger: The Dog Who Went to War*, Hachet Books, 2015. Glyn Harper. *Bobby, the Littlest War Hero*, Picture Puffin, 2018.

Conclusion

In 2019 one New Zealand mascot received the prestigious Blue Cross Award.³¹⁷ This was Caesar, A Company, 4th Battalion, New Zealand Rifle Brigade. Caesar and his handler, Rifleman Thomas Samuel Tooman (s/n 26/918) took part in the Battalion's parade up Auckland's Queen Street in 1916 before they embarked initially for Egypt on H.M.N.Z.T. 43, the '*Mokoia*' which arrived in Egypt in February 1916. He was trained as a Red Cross dog in order to help rescue wounded troops. He wore a harness which was equipped with medical supplies like bandages, water and writing materials. If a soldier was slightly injured, he could use the bandages to patch himself up and the dog would guide him back to the trenches and if unable to move, but conscious, he could write of anything that might hamper the rescuers, such as enemy nearby or unexploded shells. Caesar was also trained to take a piece of a soldier's kit if he was unconscious, to bring back to show the rescue party, such as a cap or piece of torn clothing as evidence.³¹⁸

After intensive training, Caesar left Egypt and embarked for the Western Front. The Somme was a world away from Egypt, muddy, barbed wire scattered about and full of craters left by shells, it was difficult terrain, especially for a dog with short legs, like a bulldog! Caesar was personally responsible for locating many men who were wounded on the Somme battlefield, many of whom would not have survived without the brave bulldog's help. During one battle Caesar was killed in action and was found in No Man's Land, shot presumably by a sniper alongside a soldier who had died with his hand resting on Caesar's head.³¹⁹ Most likely, Caesar had come across the wounded man and they had died together. His collar, all be it with his name incorrectly spelt, is now held at the Auckland War Memorial Museum. In 2019 Caesar was awarded the Blue Cross Award for his actions in the First World War.³²⁰ As a nation of

³¹⁷ The organisation was founded on 10 May 1897 in London. On the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 the Blue Cross Fund had raised nearly £170,000 – the equivalent of almost £6.5 million today – to care for the animals of conflict.

³¹⁸ Caesar, the ANZAC dog New Zealand history on line <http://nzhistory.net.nz/media/photo/Caesar-the-Anzac-dog> (Ministry for Culture and Heritage) updated 31 July 2014. In 2019 I interviewed Patricia Stroud author of Caesar the true story of an Anzac hero and relative to WWI handler. Also see her book '*Caesar the ANZAC Dog*' illustrated by Bruce Potter, Harper Collins 2003.

³¹⁹ Prasad, Mini. *Caesar the Anzac dog*. Auckland War Memorial Museum - Tāmaki Paenga Hira. First published: 29 November 2016. Updated: 26 April 2018.

URL: www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/features/caesar-the-anzac-dog

³²⁰ 'War animals and the purple poppy', URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/classroom/conversations/war-animals-and-purple-poppy>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 19-Feb-2020.

animal lovers it is probably not that hard to understand how mascots could have provided comfort, companionship, and a positive effect on morale for soldiers at war who were missing home comforts. On the Western Front, a dog would have provided a great psychological comfort to the men enduring the cold, wet and bleak horrors of trench warfare.³²¹

The psychological importance of the comfort animals in the military bring to soldiers should not be overlooked, which is why mascots were so important during wartime. Anecdotally, we all seem to know that somehow, animals can be therapeutic – and, we have the ability to form bonds with them. Historically, even Florence Nightingale, the founder of “modern day” nursing advocated for the health benefits derived from animal companionship, and as early as 1860, she observed that small pet animals could help heal the sick.³²²

Apart from mascots, humans have been bringing animals along into their wars for as long as there have been wars. These animals were likely active participants: war horses, war dogs, and other animals literally used to wage war. However, as the centuries wore on, military animals have developed additional roles such as companions and pets. These animals in turn became mascots embedded in units, raising the spirits of the soldiers as well as comforting them in hardship. These animals came to represent the unit and became an emotional rallying point for its members. “Whatever the animal, it’s the fighting man’s symbol of home and the things he’s fighting for.”³²³

This thesis asked several key questions relating to mascots used by New Zealand and Australian forces during the First World War. These were, what purpose did mascots serve? Were they common in New Zealand and Australian units and if so, how were they selected, by tradition or chance? Finally, what legacy, if any, have they left.

Mascots were selected in several ways during the First World War. There were professional selection processes to recruit a particular animal for historic reasons be they traditional or geographical. Some mascots were adopted by units as a representation of the regimental badge (2nd Cavalry Regiment and the eagle of the Australian Armoured Corps), some because of history (the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps and the donkey - Simpson at Gallipoli) and

³²¹ Jill Lenk Schilp: *Dogs in Health Care: Pioneering Animal-Human Partnerships*, Jefferson Publishers, Carolina, 2019, pt 4. pp. 184-186.

³²² Dr. Geller PhD: *Psychiatric Risk Assessment & Management* .

³²³ *The Saturday Evening Post*, article June 19, 1943.

some simply because the animal in question adopted the unit. There were ‘unit-trained’ mascots, such as dogs and horses which could participate in regimental parades, and there are those which are better off, for all concerned (particularly reviewing officers), housed elsewhere.

Second, they were selected to represent a national symbol such as a native animal. Sometimes this same process included selection based on an animal's mythological or perceived quality which a unit wanted to express, such as a lion's or similar, fierce and powerful characteristics.³²⁴

Third, opportunity be they domestic animals such as dogs and cats or animals native to an area such as a fox or tortoise attaching themselves to individuals or vice-versa. Many of these creatures were available in large numbers in-situ due to destruction of their environments forcing them to seek a provider. Some were brought from their homelands being a militia's mascot already or picked up prior to ship embarkation. Regardless, very few mascots would ever return home.

Mascots had numerous roles during the First World War, they helped suffering individuals to cope with their difficulties, emotional hardships and stress in a combat zone. Given our understanding of the horrors of war, it is often difficult to understand how men coped with life at the front during the First World War. Many, of course, did not. The presence of mascots often gave soldiers a coping strategy to express emotion.³²⁵

Paul Cornish, of the Imperial War Museum posted a sign in the 2017 war animal exhibit, stating:

It was probably something to do with holding on to a bit of normality... offering a bit of innocence in contrast to the horror around them. Because the one thing they couldn't blame for everything bad that was happening around them was an animal.

It is impossible to estimate how many lives were positively affected by the presence of a mascot on the battlefields during the First World War. Certainly, their value was out of

³²⁴ An example is the 5th/7th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment mascot which is a tiger and is kept at Sydney's Taronga Park Zoo.

³²⁵ Regiments and other military groups often used animals as their symbol, emphasising ferocity and bravery, and adopted mascots, both as a means of helping to forge comradeship and to keep up morale. Although not on the battlefronts mascots of a different type were also used for educational and propaganda purposes.

proportion to the numbers involved.³²⁶ Indiana Neidell, in the acclaimed series *Companions in the Trenches*, stated ‘survival for the men of the Great War would quite simply have been impossible without the four-legged or feathered soldiers’.³²⁷

The effects of these mascots on soldiers` morale during the First World War maybe directly attributed to the lessening of post conflict rehabilitation and mental health issues to those who had contact with them in-situ. Given the positive effects seen with PTSD dogs on returned veterans this maybe an area of study that needs to be examined in a future thesis?

Consider that in the First World War, unlike today`s armed forces, women especially on the battlefield were absent to a very large degree. Frequently apart from recreational leave the only feminine contact a soldier would likely have was at the hospital or aid post by interaction with a nurse.³²⁸ Women were idealized as symbols of the home front and during the First World War the absence of someone or something to love, touch or show affection towards took away part of the men`s emotions as humans. This tactile touch and ability to confide in a loved one was often taken over by a mascot.³²⁹

Animals have the power to change people`s lives. They are the companion that will never judge, they comfort soldiers when feeling down or alone, and they motivate troops to care for something other than themselves. Mascots remind us about kindness and compassion no matter what circumstances men faced. Some animals have not only changed their owner`s life, they have also shaped the course of human history. Animal companions have influenced the world we live in today in the most remarkable – and often unlikely – ways. Our attitudes have changed over the years towards the value of animals, from mere tools to be used then disposed of, to today were the New Zealand government`s concern towards animals includes the NZDF support for counter poaching operations against the multibillion-dollar illegal wildlife trade.³³⁰

³²⁶ One mascot maybe stationed at a hospital or rehabilitation hospital or troopship giving comfort to thousands during the course of the war.

³²⁷ This is a documentary piece broadcast on *YouTube*. In their channel Indiana Neidell and a team of researchers produce several informative videos a week providing a weekly account of the events of The First World that took place a hundred years ago. As additional content they provide special episodes about animals, weapons, equipment and biographies of significant human figures.

³²⁸J. Bourke: *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

³²⁹ Viktor Reinhardt: *The Magic of Touch: Healing Effects of Animal Touch & Animal Presence* Animal Welfare Institute Second edition, 2017.

³³⁰ Member of NZDF have deployed to Malawi in 2019 to compliment UK troops training Wildlife Rangers: Issue 501 April 2019, NZ Army News Luz Baguioro Public Affairs Manager NZ Joint Forces.

The military to embraces a canine companion as a fellow warrior that deserves the same attention and respect as any human soldier. This extends to medical care, both on the field and in the hospital. In the book *animal Liberation* the author argues against what he calls speciesism: discrimination on the grounds that a being belongs to a certain species. He holds the interests of all beings capable of suffering to be worthy of equal consideration and that giving lesser consideration to beings based on their species.³³¹

Historically the vast number of Australian and New Zealand units- Army, Naval and Air Squadrons in the First World War had mascots. The purpose they served and the contributions they gave troops outweighed any concerns by leaders regarding distracting troops or possible health risks. To a unit they gave cohesion, a joint sense of belonging and commanders have commented how they installed discipline within the unit. They were a symbolic link to tradition and pride of a unit's history, as well as a reminder of geographically where they came from and perhaps what they were fighting for- the love of home and country. In a larger context they brought a nation together in time of war by a united symbol such as the kangaroo. When a mascot was killed, they were mourned by the whole unit. To individuals who were home sick or missed a loved one they provided not just emotional companionship but tactile touch of a living creature to whom one could share love. Not just in the trenches but post war studies including current ongoing research had proved they provide occupational therapy. In war part of this was they have given individuals responsibilities, via looking after something other than themselves. Post the First World War they brought a legacy of how the view of animals changed from beast of burden to one of also a companion, leading to a boost in pet numbers.³³² They effected their own welfare as people gained respect, love and understanding for animals directly causing changes in welfare care and laws for the protection of animals.

As many historians write about the deeds and sacrifices of soldiers during the centenary celebrations of the First World War, it is important to also remember the contributions of soldiers of a different kind. As people went to battle, they were joined by a large menagerie of animals that fought loyally beside them in the trenches and at sea. There has been a recent surge

³³¹ Peter Singer: *Animal Liberation*, Harper Collins Publishers, London, 1975. pp.211-218.

³³² New Zealand has one of the highest levels of pet ownership per person, well ahead of the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia. A 2007 survey revealed that 52% of New Zealand households had a cat, and nearly 30% had a dog. Nancy Swarbrick, '*Pets - Pets and other animals*', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/pets/page-1>. accessed 16 January 2019.

in academic acknowledgment of animals during warfare and their importance in our history. Animals have always been a vital part of military campaigns yet why they were used has often been overlooked by historiography.

The life of a soldier has always entailed long periods away from loved ones. During the First World War soldiers were kept away from their sweethearts for periods of up to five years. The company of a mascot helped fill a void. Numerous recent studies attest to the powerful emotional connection of the soldier/animal bond and studies continue on how an animal may assist a veteran suffering from mental or physical illness.³³³

Not only did mascots change our lives in adversity, in so doing these animals had to adjust to the demands we place on them in war. This they did willingly, trusting that we provided in return security, love and their essential needs. They have fulfilled the role ranging from confidant to physically saving soldiers' lives by direct action. The intention of this thesis is to move towards amending the undeserved historiographical lack of attention on the role mascots played during war. Often absent or marginalised in historic narratives, it is no exaggeration to say that mascots were important to Australian and New Zealand servicemen and helped win the First World War. Their legacy lives on.

³³³ Clifton, Jane. 'For the love of dog.' *New Zealand Listener* 211, no. 3528 (22–28 December 2007) pp. 14–19. Also see: James Serpell: *In the company of animals: a study of human–animal relationships*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1986.

Appendix-Glossary

A dog handler is a person who cares for, maintains and works alongside a military working dog.

Allied powers Serbia, Russia, France, the United Kingdom, Italy, Belgium and the United States.

Battalion The term battalion dates back to the 16th century. It is derived from the French battalion, which is thought to have been a common term used associated with the word ‘battle’. Traditionally the battalion is a unit of infantry made up of several companies and forms a part of a brigade and/or a regiment.

Central Powers consist of Austria-Hungary, Germany, Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire

Companion animal is any animal that shares a living environment and relationship with humans. The term ‘companion animal’ is an all-encompassing phraseology given to an entire spectrum of animals with whom interaction and/or companionship is enjoyed by humans, and where a responsible guardianship is established and accepted for their welfare by humans. Where it is accepted that this degree of ‘companionship’ will vary by species, the expression ‘companion animal’ acknowledges the important role all such animals play in our society.

Dominion Forces Autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown.

Ethology is the scientific and objective study of animal behaviour, usually with a focus on behaviour under natural conditions, and viewing behaviour as an evolutionarily adaptive trait

Messenger Dog Wireless was still being developed, and signal cables were often damaged during the fighting and heavy artillery fire. Dogs carrying messenger cylinders around their necks could run quickly from the forward trenches back to headquarters. These dogs faced the same dangers as the men on the battlefields, such as bombardment and gas attacks. Some started life as mascots like *Roff* mentioned in this thesis.

Military unit, a group having a prescribed size and a specific combat or support role within a larger military organization.

Pet The boundaries between pets and other animals are sometimes blurred. Working companion animals, such as guide dogs and animals in rest homes for the elderly, provide practical help or therapy for vulnerable people, but usually enjoy the same comforts as pets. Other working animals such as racehorses, farm dogs, police dogs and Customs dogs perform strenuous and sometimes dangerous jobs. However, some may also be treated as pets during or after their working lives. Wild animals, mainly indigenous species of birds, fish and insects, are kept as pets by some people. Some farmed animals such as sheep, cows and pigs may start

off or live their entire lives as pets – for example, many country children have pet lambs or calves.

Red Cross dogs Also known as mercy or ambulance dogs – played an important role in World War I, as they were trained to locate wounded soldiers and bring back help. Injured WWI troops were known to crawl into thickets and concealed areas, which made it difficult for medics to locate them. Owing to their excellent sense of smell and keen hearing, dogs were able to find these wounded soldiers and alert their masters. Many mascots such as Digger were used in this role.

Regiment The term regiment, from the Latin *regimentum* (to rule) a permanent unit of an army typically commanded by a lieutenant colonel and divided into several companies, squadrons, or batteries and often into two battalions.

Runner A term used to describe a man delivered messages by foot.

Sentry Dogs These dogs worked on a short leash and were taught to give warning by growling, alerting or barking. They were especially valuable for working in the dark when attack from cover or the rear was most likely. Sentry dogs are trained to warn their handlers of the approach or presence of strange persons. Again, many mascots were used or learnt to be sentry dogs.

Troop The origin of the term troop has been lost in time, but it is thought to have come originally from the French troupe or trope, based on the Latin troppus, a flock. Today the term troops is also used to describe the ‘other ranks’ (junior NCOs and private soldiers).

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