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Accepted for publication in *Journal of Social History*.

“Four-legged *poilus*”: French Army Dogs, Emotional Practices and the Creation of Militarized Human-Dog Bonds, 1871-1918

Acknowledgements: For comments on various drafts of this article, I would like to thank Anna Bocking-Welch, Celia Donert, Neil Pemberton and the journal’s reviewers. Address correspondence to: Chris Pearson, Department of History, University of Liverpool, 9 Abercromby Square, Liverpool, L69 7WZ, United Kingdom. Email: chris.pearson@liverpool.ac.uk.

Abstract

This article explores the militarization of dogs in France from the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian war to the Armistice of 1918. Following defeat to Germany in 1871 a handful of French army officers promoted dogs as essential military auxiliaries that would compensate for deficiencies in French masculinity and emotions. Militarizing the nineteenth-century narrative of dogs as emotionally sensitive creatures, trainers argued that interspecies love and attachment would provide the necessary foundation for harnessing dogs towards military ends. After a hesitant start, the army mobilized thousands of rescue, sentry and messenger dogs during the First World War. This official enlistment of dogs existed alongside soldiers’ unofficial pet-keeping. Indifferent to soldiers’ harnessing of dogs to survive emotionally, the

army sought to police and prevent these informal human-dog attachments. This article contributes to the growing scholarly interest in animals and warfare through creating a dialogue with the history of emotions. It argues that training and pet-keeping were ‘emotional practices’ (to use Monique Scheer’s term) that created bonds between dogs and humans. To understand better human-canine relations we need to set them within their particular historical context, and explore how face-to-face encounters between humans and dogs combine with cultural narratives to bind the species together in meaningful, varied and sometimes conflictual ways.

Introduction

Following the disastrous military defeat of the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71) a small but dedicated group of French army officers began to train search and rescue, sentry, transportation and messenger dogs. The outbreak of war in 1914 added fresh impetus to the militarization of dogs, and like its Belgian, British and German counterparts the French army mobilized dogs on the battlefield alongside horses, carrier pigeons and other animals. War dog advocates stressed dogs’ intelligence, sensory skills and capacity for companionship and cooperation that humans could harness through developing an emotional rapport with their dogs.¹ The more systemic use of army dogs from the late nineteenth century onwards formed part of the thickening and expansion of the modern state. As part of the material turn in History, Geography and other disciplines, analyses of modern state formation argue that territory and things, as well as people and ideas, have enabled states to deepen and diversify their power.² Yet the focus of the state materialities literature on engineering, landscapes, technology and things has overshadowed the role of animals in the growth of the state. The late nineteenth century saw numerous Western states begin to deploy dogs for police,

customs and army work in the metropole and colonies, often in intense competition with each other. Dogs became increasingly enmeshed in social and national defence against those deemed enemies of the state, including criminals, vagabonds, colonial insurgents, smugglers and enemy soldiers. The militarization of dogs by various armies during the First World War was a pivotal moment in the history of war dogs. Since that conflict Western states have mobilized dogs during the Second World War, various wars of decolonization, Cold War conflicts and the so-called War on Terror.³

With scholarly interest growing in the histories of animals at war, this article explores the military connections forged between dogs and humans in France between 1871 and 1918. It focuses on their emotional dimensions to integrate the history of animals into the emotional histories of the First World War, expanding Damien Baldin's brief overview of dogs' affective roles as pets and mascots on the Western Front, and interrogating Monika Baar's observation that the First World War was "an *interspecies* moment" that saw a "deepening of the human-animal bond."⁴ The history of French army dogs suggests that the story is more complex as the war led to a refashioning and diversification, as well as a deepening and contestation, of human-dog relations.

The question of what binds and separates animals and humans animates animal studies, with scholars mobilizing agency, amongst other concepts, to explore the connections between different species.⁵ This article addresses this issue by interrogating the bond between humans and dogs to consider how emotions "bind subjects together" across different species, and to explore how humans understand and police these attachments.⁶ The mobilization of French army dogs drew upon the notion that a special relationship existed between humans and dogs. Often treated as a universal and natural entity that has existed since the domestication of dogs approximately 12,000 years ago, the human-canine relationship became a much studied topic following Konrad Lorenz's postwar identification of the bond

between humans and dogs. Veterinarians, psychologists, archaeologists, and ethologists have since examined the deep and multifaceted physiological, neurological, emotional and cognitive entanglements between the two species. Their methodologies include observing dogs performing laboratory-based tasks, qualitative analysis of human-dog relations, and, more recently, neurological testing of dogs' emotional states. As illuminating as these studies sometimes are, they tend to frame the multiple emotional connections between humans and dogs as biological and ahistorical.⁷ Placing far less emphasis on biological factors, animal historians have highlighted the differing historical and geographical representations and manifestations of the human-dog bond. Focussing mainly on pet-keeping, rather than the instrumentalization of human-dog attachments covered in this article, they have demonstrated the shifting classed, racialized and gendered dimensions of human-dog relations.⁸ At the risk of over-simplifying the situation we are confronted with, on the one hand, studies that stress the culturally-malleable and contingent characteristics of human-dog attachments, and, on the other, those that emphasise their innate nature.

The concept of a special bond between humans and dogs that was forged through domestication and cemented by centuries of living and working together has its uses. In particular, it highlights the deep companionship, cooperation and connections between the two species. But the history of French army dogs suggests that the notion of an ahistorical bond obscures more than it illuminates. Without denying the deep and extensive history of human-canine cooperation and cohabitation, it is important to recognize the fragmented, multi-faceted, contested and contingent qualities of human-dog attachments. Rather than treat them as ahistorical, I investigate here how they were constructed, critiqued and understood within the political, social and cultural specificities of a particular historical context, thereby aligning myself with historical approaches to human-dog connections, and emotions more generally.⁹ But that does not mean ignoring the embodied dimensions of human-dog

relations. It instead entails setting them within a particular historical context and exploring how face-to-face encounters between humans and dogs created bonds between the two species that were simultaneously informed by cultural narratives about dogs and their relationship with humans.

War dogs advocates' arguments that dogs could facilitate army work did not simply reflect an innate and universal human-dog bond. Instead, it relied on the militarization of civilian narratives about human-dog collaboration to convince an often sceptical army command that human-canine relations could be effectively militarized. The construction of a militarized human-canine bond also meant reflection on how to harness dogs emotionally during training, alongside considering other factors such as dogs' intelligence, breed and gender. Army trainers treated dogs as creatures capable of experiencing emotions, such as love and fear, and suggested ways that dog handlers should control their own emotions around their canine trainees.¹⁰ Training was intended to reshape dogs. Yet commentators also saw militarized dogs as affecting the emotional experience of soldiers, and making up for their emotional and other deficiencies.

Army trainers' interpretations and representations of canine affective states and other related-attributes were not free-floating representations. Instead, they were partially based on army trainers' own emotional, physical and mental encounters with actual dogs on the training ground. Training became an "emotional practice," which Monique Scheer defines as:

Habits, rituals, and everyday pastimes that aid us in achieving a certain emotional state. This includes the striving for a desired feeling as well as the modifying of one that is not desirable. Emotional practices in this sense are manipulations of the body and mind to evoke feelings where there are none, to focus diffuse arousals and give them an intelligible shape, or to change or remove the emotions already there. In other

words, they are part of what is often referred to as ‘emotional management’ and the ongoing learning and maintaining of an emotional repertoire.¹¹

As Scheer elaborates, these practices – “the bodily act[s] of experience and expression” – are simultaneously embodied and cognitive, particularly as they are often “distributed” and enacted in relationship with other “people, artefacts, aesthetic arrangements, and technologies.”¹² Trainers described training as an emotional, reciprocal and repetitive process that necessitated the trainer monitoring and adapting their own emotions to create a bond with their dog that would enable the latter to perform useful tasks on the battlefield. As elaborated in training texts, training was an emotional practice designed to form a bond between dogs and humans to harness the canine skills and capabilities for military ends.

Dogs’ most significant role in soldiers’ emotional lives, however, was not performing military tasks but offering companionship and solace. Historians of the First World War have convincingly highlighted the conflict’s emotional dimensions, including how soldiers and civilians sought to survive emotionally, the affective ties that bound home and Western fronts, the hatred felt for enemy soldiers and the huge emotional impact of mass slaughter.¹³ This history of French war dogs adds another facet to the war’s emotional history by showing how it encompassed nonhuman, as well as human, animals. Various animals, including horses and birds, helped soldiers of various nationalities emotionally survive the conflict.¹⁴ Although impossible to quantify, dogs perhaps most commonly fulfilled this role. Numerous French soldiers adopted stray dogs as one of their “emotional practices” in the trenches. Historians have shown how soldiers used letters, nature observation, ornaments and gardening to maintain a degree of emotional equilibrium in the trenches.¹⁵ Dogs performed similar functions. However, keeping a dog as a companion was different to making trench art or tending a garden, as unlike a plant or object dogs showed a capacity to return soldiers’ love. The bonds between soldiers and dogs were rooted in cultural understandings of dogs as

loving and loyal creatures. But they were also forged and strengthened through embodied encounters. These emotional practices challenged army commanders' views that only operationally-useful dogs should be tolerated in the trenches. Military authorities failed to understand how soldiers used dogs not so much to wage modern war as to survive its inhumanity. When they banned pet dogs, they strove not so much to establish alternative emotional norms or values than to stamp out an emotional practice that they deemed disorderly and dangerous.¹⁶ Although tensions existed between the official and unofficial emotional practices that created the "four-legged *poilu*," both rested on the assumption that dogs were emotionally responsive creatures dedicated to serving humanity. Both practices bound beings together across the species divide.¹⁷

A brief methodological note is needed. Unlike historians who try to recover animals' emotional experiences of war, I am more methodologically conservative.¹⁸ I do not deny the existence of historical canine emotional states, and perhaps dogs drew soldiers into their own emotional practices. But I treat canine emotional experiences as elusive and beyond my grasp.¹⁹ I instead examine how human actors experienced and made sense of canine emotions, and engaged them in their emotional practices. I begin by outlining how war dog advocates depicted dogs as creatures who could be enlisted to help the French state defend its territory, prepare for future wars and compensate for the emotional deficiencies of French soldiers.

Promoting War Dogs

In 1869 Edouard de la Barre Duparcq, an army engineer and professor at the Saint-Cyr military school, outlined a history of war dogs stretching back to Ancient Greece, which he presented as evidence of superior European civilization and *savoir-faire*. Europeans had successfully domesticated, bred and trained “useful [combat] accessories.” In contrast, the dogs of the “savage peoples” of the Americas and Oceania were either too “ferocious” or too “idle” for military service. For de la Barre Duparcq, European dogs’ trainability, intelligence and sociability (“an important martial quality”) transformed them from military “companion[s]” to “collaborator[s].”²⁰ De la Barre Duparcq’s racialized promotion of war dogs foreshadowed the militarization of dogs in Europe and the United States at the end of the nineteenth century. In asserting that dogs could be collaborators rather than just pets for soldiers (dogs were renowned for loitering around barracks and army camps), de la Barre Duparcq helped pave the way for the more extensive militarization of dogs.

This harnessing of canine strength, mobility and intelligence rested on the broader assumption that dogs were sociable and trainable creatures devoted to serving humans. In nineteenth century France, animal protectionists, dog care experts and others celebrated the emotional qualities of dogs and their close attachments to humans. These attitudes infused tales of French army dogs. They included Moustache, a poodle who had helped French soldiers avoid Austrian ambushes on the Marengo battlefield in June 1800. Eugène Gayot, the author of a magisterial 1867 book on dogs, argued that Moustache proved that poodles were the “faithful friend[s]” and “devoted and inseparable companions” of humans.²¹ Poems, meanwhile, celebrated the diverse services that dogs provided to humanity – as guide, guard and shepherd dogs – and their loyalty.²² Army dog advocates adapted these ideas to promote national defence and French military modernization.

But some opposed the militarization of dogs, including the Société Protectrice des Animaux (SPA or Animal Protection Society, founded in 1845), which campaigned against

violence towards animals. It succeeded in passing the Grammont Law in the 1850, which banned public cruelty towards domestic animals and was intended to protect animals and promote public morality by reducing violence in the public sphere.²³ In this vein, SPA vice-President Dr Henry Blatin condemned the long history of army dogs as one of cruelty and a betrayal of human-canine relations. This perversion, as Blatin saw it, of canine temperament and abilities dated from the anti-Greek campaigns of Persian king Xerxes I and continued into the contemporary era. Most distressingly for Blatin, French forces had imported bloodhounds from Cuba to track down rebels in 1802-3 during the revolution in Saint-Domingue (Haïti). He depicted the training of these dogs as a process of brutalization during which caged juvenile dogs were forced to subsist on a diet of animal blood before being released upon a mannequin stuffed full of “blood and entrails.” Army trainers rewarded the starving dogs with caresses once they had ripped the intestines from the mannequin, which was dressed up as a “Negro.” So depraved had the dogs become that more than once they had slipped their chains and “eaten alive Negro babies.” Alongside the Confederacy’s use of dogs to attack black soldiers during the US Civil War and the continued use of dogs against slaves in Brazil, these were “sad pages in the history of humanity!”²⁴ Trapped in a cycle of violence in which they had become the perpetrators of racialized and state-condoned violence, war dogs had become evidence of the brutalization of modern society and the corruption of the relationship between humans and animals.

When Blatin penned his critique, the contemporary French army’s use of dogs was restricted to colonial and overseas campaigns, such as the conquest of Algeria and combatting guerrillas in Mexico.²⁵ The Franco-Prussian War created the fertile conditions for the emergence of army dogs in metropolitan France. Defeat in 1871 raised serious concerns about the army’s ability to defend France’s borders against a newly-unified Germany, as well as heightening existing concerns about national degeneration and decline. Military

modernization, competition with Germany and new ideas about the place of working dogs in modern society added further impetus. A handful of officers supported by sympathetic journalists and dog breeders promoted army dogs as one of the solutions to France's military predicament. Alongside the installation of military bases and forts along the Franco-German border, the protection of defensive forests and new conscription laws, dogs would allow the army to defend more effectively the nation.²⁶ Lieutenant Jupin of the 32nd Infantry Regiment positioned them as evidence of military innovation and efficacy. In 1890 he argued that the army needed to train "*modern war dogs*" whose senses, strength and speed would help with sentry and communication duties.²⁷ The promotion of war dogs incorporated animals into broader attempts to avoid a future debacle by preparing for national defence in peacetime, echoing the Red Cross's belief that all citizens, and not just soldiers, had a patriotic duty to prepare themselves for future conflicts.²⁸

French dogs would play a role too. To inspire and legitimate the enlistment of dogs Jupin revisited the painful events of 1870-1871. He suggested that the use of messenger dogs would have helped French forces during the battle of Saint-Privet and, to highlight the French army's deficiencies, he reported that Prussia and its allies had mobilized 30,000 dogs.²⁹ Emulating Germany by introducing war dogs would allow France to avoid future military defeats and better safeguard its soldiers. Jupin asserted that canine vigilance and unflappability would offset French male emotional defects. The humiliation of 1870-1871 called into question the character and capabilities of French soldiers, fuelling pre-existing concerns about the physical, emotional, mental and sexual health of French men and individual and collective degeneration. Experts proffered sport, sexual restraint and heroism as possible remedies.³⁰ The bond between dog and human might also compensate for Frenchmen's emotional and other weaknesses. According to Jupin, dogs would have mitigated "certain flaws in the French temperament" during the Franco-Prussian War.

Although “chivalrous” and famous for their “bravery,” French soldiers lacked the “calm and methodical” character of German and British soldiers, making them “nervous and impressionable” and prone to “despondency” after setbacks. Furthermore, their “disdain” for enemy forces made them “inattentive” on guard duties. These deficiencies helped explain the debacle of 1870-1871. Dogs would have provided “incontestable services” by helping to prevent surprise German attacks that had frequently led to “disorder, confusion, failings, indiscipline and, often, defeat.” Particularly at night, when the French sentry man was prone to fearful thoughts, dogs’ importance would be as much “moral” as operational.³¹

Refashioning human-dog attachments for warfare would allow calm and steadfast dogs to combat the perceived emotional weaknesses of the French character. This idea re-emerged during the First World War. When promoting war dogs in 1916 feminist Nelly Roussel argued that their handling of sentry duties allowed “our brave soldiers to take a well-earned rest without worry.” In particular, dogs performed sentry duties better than human soldiers as they lacked the latter’s “vivid imagination and heightened nerves that in hours of extreme fatigue could create chimeras, mirages and false perceptions of noise and movements.”³²

The emphasis on canine collaboration echoed the contemporaneous claims made about customs dogs and the early twentieth century assertions about police dogs.³³ In all these cases, the attachment between state official and dog was seen to enhance the former’s capacity to carry out his duties. Customs dogs would help customs officials survey the border more effectively; police dogs would make up for policemen’s physical and sensory deficiencies in the dangerous urban environment; and war dogs would improve soldiers’ performance on the battlefield. The connections between these types of dogs was recognized in publications, such as Léon Dormoy’s *Les chiens de guerre* (1888),³⁴ which portrayed the modern use of dogs as the pinnacle of domestication, a logical extension of the human-canine relationship, and an effective element of defence, whether against smugglers, criminals or

foreign soldiers. Unlike supposedly worthless pet dogs or harmful strays, army, police and war dogs would perform a valuable public service.³⁵ But unlike customs and police dogs, French army dogs would not be trained for acts of violence against humans except in colonial settings.³⁶ Instead they would indirectly facilitate violence by supporting battlefield operations, as well as mitigating the effects of violence on French soldiers through search and rescue duties.

The mobilization of these dogs seemed poised to enhance the modern state's abilities to protect its citizens from a range of threats. According to their promoters, dogs were well suited to the demands of modern military operations and would prove more effective than technology. They could support communications by carrying messages across rough terrain faster than horses, as demonstrated during manoeuvres in 1888, 1898 and 1909.³⁷ The well-trained messenger dog was quick and unfazed by gunfire, could go anywhere, did not require the infrastructure of telegraph systems, and was unaffected by poor weather. With a coat that blended into the environment, they were "almost invisible," according to Jean-Daniel Lauth, a captain in the 67th infantry regiment.³⁸ Dogs could also carry supplies during battles, but, above all, argued Jupin, the military dog's main role would be supporting sentries in isolated and advanced positions, especially at night or in bad weather when visibility was poor.³⁹

Inspiration came from abroad. As with other aspects of military modernization, the French army treated its eastern counterpart as a threat and model. Competition with Germany provided a powerful source of motivation, with French observers noting the German army's progress in developing war dogs, especially search and rescue ones.⁴⁰ Jupin argued that it would be "dangerous" for France not to deploy war dogs when Germany and other states were making strides in this area: French soldiers would, he claimed, feel demoralized when faced with enemy troops armed with dogs.⁴¹ As if to further allay French fears about the effectiveness of German canine auxiliaries, an article in *Le Petit Journal* noted that their dogs

could be overcome with human ingenuity. Reporting on the German army's training of dogs to combat the French army's new bicycles divisions, *Le Petit Journal* noted wryly that a sausage thrown from the bike would be enough to distract these "four-legged Prussians."⁴²

Within geopolitical constraints, co-operation, as well as competition, was possible. The international Red Cross reported on developments in training search and rescue dogs as a way of saving wounded soldiers of whatever nationality.⁴³ Nonetheless, the primary motivation of Jupin and his collaborators was to save French lives and defend France through well-trained and devoted dogs. Jupin proposed that the French army should mobilize 700-800 dogs in the outbreak of war with a further held 1,800-2,000 in reserve.⁴⁴ Despite concerns that militarization sullied human-dog bonds, Jupin and others militarized the narrative that dogs' character and attachment to humans made them destined to serve humanity including on the battlefield. In particular canine temperaments would mitigate the emotional weaknesses of French soldiers against German military might. Yet the fulfilment of this vision required organization and persuading a sceptical army command of the dogs' utility.

Organizing War Dogs

Like the development of customs and police dogs, the initiative for army dogs came from individual officers, leading to a lack of consensus on the best type of dog to militarize. As in other nineteenth-century European countries, French dog breeders sought to separate dogs into distinct breeds. They created numerous dog breeding societies aided by the establishment of the French kennel club, the Central Society for the Improvement of Dog Breeds in France (*Société centrale pour l'amélioration des races de chiens en France*), in

1882. They promoted pedigree dogs as the pinnacle of domestication and evidence of human expertise and control over nature in opposition to the supposedly diseased, dangerous and degenerate stray.⁴⁵ Jupin advised mobilizing pure breed dogs in harmony with dog breeders' assertion that without careful human guidance dogs would degenerate.⁴⁶ The faith in dog breeds was, however, not universal. Other army officers instead emphasised the qualities of individual dogs. Vicard and Rode argued that apart from racing, lap and ratting dogs the army could use any dog as long as they were "intelligent and trainable."⁴⁷ Captain Léon-Alphonse-Hippolyte Tolet similarly argued that although shepherd dogs were ideally suited for the role, search and rescue dogs could be of any breed as long as they were "robust and rustic, kind, intelligent, obedient," possessed a "very subtle sense of smell" and were "indifferent to game."⁴⁸ Wartime training manuals continued to stress the importance of individual dog's characters. Official army guidance issued in November 1915 advised that when selecting war dogs trainers should look for animals who were "attentive," "vigilant" and lacking in fear.⁴⁹

There was a similar disagreement on the desirable gender of war dogs. Without specifying why, Jupin stated a preference for dogs over bitches and, despite the army's cultivation of masculine strength and vigour, he believed that castrated dogs would be fine as they were "more loyal [and] attentive" than intact dogs.⁵⁰ Others preferred female dogs. Lauth experienced success on manoeuvres with his bitch Galopette, as did Vicard and Rode with their bitch Kiss.⁵¹ Lieutenant Buer of the 19th battalion of light infantrymen similarly pioneered messenger dog training with his bitch Radette.⁵² This preference for bitches may have sprung from personal experiences of working with female dogs, or cultural assumptions that females, of whatever species, were more emotional and less aggressive than males. According to this view, bitches might respond better than dogs to the considerate, yet firm, direction of rational male trainers. Like the husbands, priests, psychiatrists, teachers, doctors and judges who were seen to guide and control French women, army dog trainers would

supervise and improve their bitches, as well as complementing them emotionally.⁵³

Nonetheless the practice of using both male and female dogs continued once war broke out in 1914. Some French trainers preferred bitches as they believed them to be “more adaptable, loyal, and accommodating (*maniabiles*)” than male dogs. Certain army units, however, sided with their British counterparts in refusing to work with bitches due to their periods of heat when they could reportedly not be used for war work and when they “deranged” all male dogs in the vicinity.⁵⁴ According to this gendered perspective, bitches could affect the emotional stability of dogs to the detriment of military objectives.

The establishment of the National Society for Rescue Dogs (NSRD or Société nationale du chien sanitaire) in 1908 under the presidency of André Lepel-Cointet, a stockbroker and army reserve officer, finally provided an organization to promote the use of French army dogs and, more specifically, the training of search and rescue dogs. Aligning itself to the influential and buoyant Red Cross-led French humanitarian movement, the NSRD’s membership included numerous French army officers. With their support it ran rescue dog trials during army manoeuvres near Nancy and Bordeaux in 1907 where Captain Tolet’s bitch Nelly located a soldier pretending to be wounded and led stretcher bearers to him. With the Morocco crisis focussing minds, the NSRD managed to attract the support of the ministers for war, the colonies and agriculture, the army’s chief of staff, military medical units, the French Kennel Club, and the Paris police prefect, as well as the main Red Cross organizations. It became part of the constellation of semi-private, semi-public organizations that supported the state’s efforts to prepare for war. The NSRD’s military purpose was clear: in the outbreak of war all of its dogs would be delivered free of charge to the army.⁵⁵

The NSRD made some progress, with reports suggesting that French-trained rescue dogs had outperformed competitors from Switzerland and Germany.⁵⁶ It also achieved one of its aims when the minister of war authorized the creation of a kennel to train rescue dogs at

Fontainebleau-Avon under the auspices of Captain Tolet.⁵⁷ Lauth also succeeded in obtaining some limited financial support from General Joffre, while Buer established a kennel at his garrison in Verdun.⁵⁸ However, Buer's kennel received no official support from army commanders, and during one inspection generals dismissed his dog training activities as a "useless sport."⁵⁹ When war broke out in 1914 Buer's six dogs were the only ones available for combat, while the NSRD presented the army with 250 rescue dogs. However, many of these dogs were "disoriented" (*dépaysés*) when they arrived on front lines and took a while to adjust to their new handlers, many of whom had no experience of training dogs.⁶⁰ This stood in stark contrast to the 6,000 war dogs at the disposal of the German army, and the Belgian's army small but well-trained contingent of rescue and transport dogs.⁶¹

In the early years of the war, initiative continued to come from societies, such as the Société nationale d'acclimatation de France (SNAF), as well as dog-loving army officers, such as Paul Mégnin, son of army veterinarian Pierre Mégnin and editor of dog breeding journal *L'Éleveur*. It was only after the second and seventh armies and the 36th corps established their own official kennels that minister for war Alexandre Millerand officially approved the use of army dogs. This led to General Louis Ernest Maud'huy creating a more centralized Service des chiens de guerre (War Dogs Service) in December 1915 under the command of Captain Malric and Mégnin. Meanwhile, the NSRD morphed into the Society for Rescue Dogs and War Dogs (SRDWD), and obtained more legitimacy and status in December 1916 when the state recognised it as an association of 'public utility.' It increased its promotion of rescue and other war dogs as useful and patriotic canine auxiliaries, and arranged publicity events. This included one co-organized with the SPA at the Trocadero in May 1916 when 15 rescue dogs marched in front of a crowd of 1,500 Parisians, and noted war dogs, including Fend-l'Air who had located and dug out his half-buried master under shell fire on the Roclincourt battlefield, received "collars of honour."⁶² As part of the self-

mobilization of French society behind the war effort, the SPA had reversed Blatin's earlier aversion to war dogs.⁶³

The militarized dogs joined horses, donkeys, mules and pigeons as creatures harnessed to sustain the trench system of the Western Front.⁶⁴ However, it was only in January 1917 that minister for war General Hubert Lyautey established a more comprehensive and better-resourced War Dogs Service (hereafter WDS), again led by Malric and Mégnin. The WDS created a network of kennels and oversaw the recruitment of dogs, drawing on the support of regional dog breeding societies. Despite military and civilian authorities' aversion to stray dogs, many of the army's canine recruits were drawn from municipal pounds or sourced directly from the army zone. Others were donated by patriotic owners.⁶⁵ The army set guidelines on the types of dog to be enlisted. In 1917 it stated a preference for herding and guard dogs who measured between 45cm and 60cm, and excluded those with white coats and those who were "insufficiently attentive and vigilant."⁶⁶ The following year, it banned "mongrels" (*corniaux*) and hunting dogs. It did not provide a reason for doing so, but its decision may have been part of a crackdown on soldiers' pet dogs, as discussed below, or evidence that breeders' involvement in promoting and training war dogs had finally cemented the primacy of pedigree dogs.⁶⁷ Assessments of canine character were still required. The WDS issued guidelines in 1918 on war dogs' desired temperaments. It stressed that dogs needed to be "bold" and "courageous."⁶⁸ After being processed at the "depot kennel" at the SNAF's Jardin d'Acclimatation in Paris, suitable dogs were sent out to training kennels. Those who showed potential were housed and trained at the Central Military Kennel at Satory Camp near Versailles, before being sent to army kennels near front lines. Overall, 10,000 dogs were pressed into service as search and rescue, messenger, sentry and transportation dogs.⁶⁹

Throughout, the army's mobilization of war dogs was characterized by improvisation and beset with problems. These included poor coordination, unsatisfactory training and inadequate attention paid to the dogs' welfare.⁷⁰ Dogs' military potential was squandered in other ways. By March 1918, most of the dogs supplied by the SRDWD had been killed, run over or gone missing during bombardments or as regiments moved around front lines. In addition, some had never actually been delivered to their intended unit, while others broke their chains and fled.⁷¹ Nonetheless, this often shambolic militarization of human-dog relations was underpinned by the belief that transforming dogs into military collaborators required a strengthening of the emotional ties between trainers and their dogs.

Training as an Emotional Practice

As with human soldiers, the training of war dogs was designed to reshape the recruit physically and mentally. It was intended to adapt them to the wartorn environment and allow them to perform myriad military tasks. Routine, the correct diet and the repetition of increasingly complex exercises would produce the militarized body.⁷² But training was also an emotional practice intended to bind together handler and dog. Before the war army trainers represented the emotional bond between dog and human trainer as the foundation of any successful training relationship, drawing on their own experience of working with dogs. Buer claimed that he never "brutalized" Radette who he treated with the "the deepest kindness" (*la plus grande douceur*).⁷³ In contrast to an influential strand of human military psychology, trainers, at least in theory, did not treat dogs as an undifferentiated mass of creatures who were driven by primordial and bestial desires to kill.⁷⁴ They instead stated the importance of engaging dogs' individual capacity for love and attachment. Lalloué, a policeman from

Epinal (Vosges) who published advice on training police and army dogs, preferred “caresses” to “the whip and violence.” Training should be an emotional and reciprocal process in which dog and trainer became attuned to each other. The trainer had to “love” his dog.⁷⁵ Official army guidance issued in November 1915 stated that trainers should work “gaily” with their dogs and avoid “sharp reprimands and anything that might make [them] fearful.”⁷⁶ Handlers were called upon to manage their emotions to create a loving and devotional bond with their dog to unlock canine military potential. The notion that an army dog’s obedience sprung from connection to their human companions rather than fear militarized the bourgeois celebration of the loving family dog who was always willing to defend the home.⁷⁷

Kindness towards dogs was not motivated by concerns for their welfare and did not translate into a comprehensive veterinary service to tend wounded dogs.⁷⁸ Instead it was intended to shape more effectively the dogs’ emotions and character for military tasks and cement their attachment to their trainer to make them active yet compliant collaborators. Trainers needed to embody “kindness, patience, firmness, and perseverance” to create dogs who possessed a sense of “active obedience,” a state of being in which the dog was willing to serve because of the connection with the trainer rather than out of fear. As with police dogs, the army dog should not be a “slave who seems obedient but a faithful companion ready to work with enthusiasm.”⁷⁹ Training based on an emotional bond between trainer and dog was designed to create a dog that was habituated to performing certain tasks actively through love rather than passively through fear.

During the war trainers depicted training as a practice that was sensitive towards different canine emotional characteristics. The 1918 WDS guidelines recognized that training needed to be adapted to individual dogs’ temperaments. With “soft dogs” (*chien mous*) the trainer needed to persevere, and with “violent” ones they needed to be “calm.” The trainer bore ultimate responsibility for shaping the dog so needed to be aware of his emotional

presence: a “violent and irritable man” would never succeed in training a useful dog.⁸⁰ The training manuals attempted to create an emotional stance for trainers: kind, patient and attentive.

Rewards, in the form of cuddles or treats, helped form the bond. Reporting on the training of war dogs at the army kennel at Joinville-le-Pont near Paris, Xavier Garnier noted how caresses and food awaited dogs who followed their trainer’s commands. Trainers also used food to habituate dogs to the wartime soundscape. At Joinville-le-Pont gunshots preceded the dogs’ meals so that they would associate “detonations” with “good news.” Rather than stoking fear, gunfire would, in theory, place the dogs in a “state of happiness.”⁸¹ In such ways, dogs would become emotionally “hardened” (*aguerris*) to the exacting conditions of the trenches.⁸² At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Donna Haraway identified the possibilities for uneven cross-species relationships that shape and change the partners engaged in the human-nonhuman “dance of relating.”⁸³ During war, and coming from very different philosophical and ethical stance, dog trainers similarly positioned the individual human-dog relationship as a crucial foundation of any successful training regime.

Army trainers believed that communication between dog and trainer was not only possible but essential. They suggested that dogs and humans could understand each other’s emotions through sensitive awareness of the subtleties of sound and bodily gestures. Simon stressed that dogs could communicate with their trainers; when they understood a command their “eyes [lit] up.”⁸⁴ Consciously or not, the training manuals provided a militarized version of comparative psychologists’ efforts to read and understand animal emotions, spurred by Darwin’s *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872).⁸⁵

The overall emphasis on kindness and reciprocity contrasted with the testing conditions of mechanized and industrial warfare in which many dogs were wounded or killed.

A further tension emerged between depictions of war dogs as machines and as emotional beings, even within the same text. Garnier described dogs both as sensitive creatures and as animals who could “function like a machine,” and be trained to instinctively travel between any soldier holding a flag rather than just their beloved trainer. In this vein, comparative psychologist and technical director of the French Association for the Training of War Dogs Pierre Hachet-Souplet downplayed the significance of canine emotions. He devised a training regime based on the use of flags to depersonalize the liaison system, aiming to produce dogs that could perform messenger duties in a variety of settings and for different handlers.⁸⁶ This system was founded on Hachet-Souplet’s understanding that trained animals should be characterized by obedience and automatic responses, as should children and soldiers.⁸⁷

However, army reports undermined Hachet-Souplet’s description of dogs as unfeeling machines. They also highlighted that although the emotional practices of training might forge a bond between dogs and humans, they were not always successful in emotionally preparing dogs for war. In particular they recorded how the all-encompassing soundscape of the trenches distressed dogs. Infantry officers observed how some dogs were fine under machine fire but became “panic-stricken” (*affolés*)’ under shell bombardments. Some messenger dogs were reduced to “crying and barking at shells,” and others showed a “real loathing for running during a bombardment.” Such “sensitivity” undermined their ability to deliver messages.⁸⁸ Canine emotional vulnerabilities might hinder not help military operations, just as shellshock and other conditions were seen to sap the effectiveness of human soldiers.⁸⁹ Alongside the disruption springing from the dogs’ embodied relationship with the wartorn environment, deficiencies in the dogs’ training process became all too apparent, as they did with human soldiers.⁹⁰ Some officers reported that dogs who had been through the training process lacked the necessary skills and were unaccustomed to battlefield environments. Some infantry divisions even returned insufficiently trained dogs to army kennels.⁹¹ It seems that

some army dog handlers were unaware of, or unwilling to follow, the official training guidelines.

Nonetheless the emotional enlistment of dogs enabled them to perform some useful tasks on the Western Front. The SWDRD claimed that its search and rescue dogs succeeded in saving French lives. Amongst them was Truc who reportedly rescued 150 wounded soldiers in the Vosges. For wounded soldiers close to death the rescue dog was a “messenger of hope.”⁹² Yet other types of dogs gradually replaced rescue dogs whose poor handling and training undermined their overall effectiveness.⁹³ Army units increasingly mobilized dogs for sentry duties. Dogs’ refined senses of smell and hearing were particularly useful in the wooded Vosges region at night.⁹⁴ Messenger dogs became the most coveted type of war dog with demand outstripping the WDS’s ability to supply them by 1918. Dogs could travel faster and more discreetly than humans, as well as traverse war-ravaged terrain that horses and donkeys found impassable. At Vaudesson (Aisne) dogs proved themselves far quicker and surer than humans at carrying messages, saving the 219th infantry regiment time and manpower. Significantly, they could perform their duties day and night and even under bomb and gas attacks. According to Colonel Destenay of the 165th infantry division, they “constantly assured” communications even as bombs fell.⁹⁵ Dogs also carried supplies to army units, including those fighting at Chemin des Dames (Aisne) and Bois de Plémont (Oise) where teams of dogs transported grenades, food and machine gun ammunition to front lines. The journeys across uneven and barbed wire-ridden terrain under mustard gas took their toll on the dogs, causing inflammation in the paws and weight loss. Moreover, a messenger dog perished at Bois de Plémont, as did dogs elsewhere on the Western Front, brought down by bullets, shells, gas or illness.⁹⁶ 25% of messenger and rescue dogs died on the battlefield or from injuries, according to one postwar estimate.⁹⁷

Despite these losses, the emotionally-mobilized dogs performed worthwhile labour for the army. Army dog advocates had succeeded, after numerous delays and setbacks, in convincing their commanders that the human-dog bond could be harnessed for modern military work. As an emotional practice, training was meant to create an emotional style in trainers that would forge a bond with their dog, reshaping the dogs emotionally to unlock their military potential and prepare them for the wartorn environment. But for many soldiers, dogs' most significant contribution came from providing companionship and emotional succour through the emotional practices of pet-keeping.

Pet-keeping as an Emotional Practice

Pet-keeping in the trenches demonstrates that the state did not monopolize wartime affective relationships with dogs. Founded on physical proximity and informal contacts between soldiers and dogs, pet-keeping represented an important emotional outlet for soldiers in a cultural and material environment that seemed to crush the self and in which overt sentimentality and intimacy were treated as unmanly and unpatriotic. In contrast to human companions, emotional vulnerability could be freely expressed towards, and witnessed by, pet dogs. Pet-keeping became an “emotional refuge” from the horrors of war and its emotional norms.⁹⁸ Historians have advanced numerous reasons as to why French soldiers endured the misery of the trenches, including their identity as citizen-soldiers fighting for the Republic, patriotism, a desire to reclaim Alsace and Lorraine or passively obeying orders. Emotional reasons have also been suggested, including a visceral hatred of Germany, feelings of solidarity towards their fellow soldiers, ties of affection to their families, and the emotional succour provided by *marraines* (“godmothers”).⁹⁹ For some soldiers, pet-keeping as an inter-species emotional practice offered an essential way of emotionally enduring the trenches.

A canine companion helped maintain a soldier's sense of self amidst the death, mud, and misery of the trenches. Army commanders, however, sought to police the informal and everyday relations that developed between soldiers and dogs. Motivated by hygienic concerns, these disciplinary measures dated back to the late nineteenth century. In 1888 Minister for war Charles de Freycinet banned dogs from barracks and other military institutions. This interdiction followed potentially-rabid dogs biting 110 soldiers, and reflected increased clampdowns on stray dogs in the civilian sphere.¹⁰⁰ In line with dominant police, public hygiene and veterinary narratives that condemned stray dogs as rabid and unruly vagabonds, Jupin had welcomed this exclusion of "irregular dogs" who lacked breeding and training. They were nothing more than the rabies-infected 'pariahs of the canine species.'¹⁰¹ Others were less concerned about the threat of rabies. Dr Ferrière of the Red Cross argued that the dogs who frequented army barracks and hospitals in search of food and company should be tolerated as they offered companionship and solace for bored and lonely soldiers who might otherwise pick up "more infectious germs" in their "moments of leisure." It was better that soldiers sought solace in dogs than prostitutes. Ferrière's fears of venereal disease outweighed any anxiety over rabies.¹⁰²

When seeking to eliminate pet dogs from the trenches of the First World War, army commanders and doctors overlooked their emotional role and the way in which soldiers adapted the emotional practices of civilian pet-keeping.¹⁰³ The well-established narrative of devoted and loving dogs seeped into wartime practices and culture. Medieval and Romantic writers had venerated the faithful dog who loved their master more than themselves, a view that certain Enlightenment philosophers strengthened when they asserted that animals possessed feelings and souls. This portrayal of animals as sentient beings may have been a minority one but it nonetheless challenged the Cartesian view of animals as unthinking and unfeeling automata.¹⁰⁴ In the mid-nineteenth century dog lovers rejoiced in dogs' seemingly

endless capacity for fidelity and devotion at a time when the modern world seemed harsh and empty, and fellow humans faithless and shallow. Accounts of dogs attending their dead owners' grave each day, and stories of dogs so overcome with grief following the death of their owner that they committed suicide, circulated in newspapers and conversations. The story of the *chien de Louvre* was representative of the genre: Médor, the dog of a worker shot during the revolution of 1830, initially refused to leave his master's corpse and then maintained a daily vigil at his grave until eventually succumbing to his grief.¹⁰⁵ Darwinian theories that stressed the emotional similarities between humans and the so-called higher animals reinforced this narrative. According to Darwin, canine instincts had an emotional dimension forged through domestication, and the "love of man has become instinctive in the dog." Such thinking gave credence to animal protectionists and anti-vivisectionists' promotion of animals as sentient creatures, while Darwinian comparative psychologists and physiologists debated the extent to which animals could feel and express emotions.¹⁰⁶ The growing popularity of pet-keeping responded to, and reinforced, the assumption that dogs were loving creatures devoted to humanity. This view seeped into wartime culture. Author and poet Miguel Zamacoïs repurposed the story of the bereaved dog who diligently attended their master's grave in his October 1914 poem "Le chien" in which the grave became that of an unknown soldier who had died for France.¹⁰⁷ The SPA similarly refreshed the myth of the devoted dog who would go to enormous lengths to track down their master, this time searching for him on battlefields and in army hospitals.¹⁰⁸

The narrative of devoted dogs reached a wide wartime readership that stretched beyond animal protectionists, appearing in newspapers and children's books amongst other texts.¹⁰⁹ Socialist infantryman and stretcher bearer Henri Barbusse in *Le Feu* (1916), his bestselling and Goncourt Prize-winning fictionalized account of his wartime experiences, introduced readers to Labri, a sick and maltreated army dog, who acts as a kind of canine

Proustian madeleine. When Fouillade, a poilu from southern France, encounters Labri in a dark and dingy barn, he sits down next to him and is suddenly transported from the mud and cold of the Western Front to the pleasant sights and smells of his former civilian life that he enjoyed with his girlfriend Clemence. After a depressing evening spent drinking and reminiscing about the south, Fouillade ends his day stroking Labri as he tries to get to sleep. For readers accustomed to tales of altruistic and kind dogs, Labri conforms to expectations when he rouses himself from his slumbers to acknowledge Fouillade's affection.¹¹⁰ Bedraggled, suffering, but clinging doggedly to life, Labri and Fouillade provide each other with moments of intimacy and, for Fouillade, a taste of home, however fleeting and bittersweet.

Some observers welcomed and recognized the emotional role of dogs in the trenches. Writer and poet Alphonse Labitte argued that animals were "useful for our soldiers" as they provide "distractions" that make "life in the trenches" less monotonous.¹¹¹ Journalists portrayed the soldier-dog bond as further evidence that "dogs have always been the friend of soldiers." Some became the "intimate *camarade*" of their master, guarding their money and possessions when they were away from the trenches and keeping their human companion warm at night. Others become the "child" of the whole regiment and "pampered" by all.¹¹² Such attitudes were not restricted to France. Second Lieutenant Hector MacQuarrie of the Royal Field Artillery, who was hugely attached to his Brussels Griffin cross, advised American soldiers to keep a pet because they "humanize the front" and "keep you from being too lonely at night."¹¹³

This advice was matched on the ground by soldiers' embodied and affective relationships with dogs, which the army sought to eliminate. From 1917 it required all soldiers who kept a dog for operational reasons to register their animal with the WDS. A canine version of the human soldier's registration booklet was to accompany each dog,

recording details of training and notes on their “character and aptitudes.” The registered dog was only to be used in accordance with their training and should not be allowed to “stray” or play with anyone.¹¹⁴ Hygiene considerations once again motivated army commanders, especially the threat of rabies, a disease that they believed was triggered by the numerous stray dogs who wandered through the army zone.¹¹⁵ As if to reassure troops worried about rabies, army physician Dr Henri Chatinière outlined how to disarm and strangle a rabid dog. He also argued that dogs constituted health risks through the fleas that lived in their coats and the parasites who inhabited their tongues.¹¹⁶ According to this medicalized viewpoint, the risks associated with physical contact between soldiers and dogs outweighed any emotional benefits.

However, the military authorities’ belief that only trained canine auxiliaries should be admitted in the trenches proved very hard to enforce. In particular ratters blurred the line between working and pet dogs. Alongside traps and poisons, dogs were one of the scientifically-endorsed ways of killing rats.¹¹⁷ Rattling was an official canine wartime role and the SRDWD supplied ratters to soldiers to combat the rodents who swarmed through the trenches bothering soldiers and alarming health officials. Ratters had some impact. A brigadier regretted that a shell killed his ratter Rubis who had “served [him] extremely well” in killing at least 197 rats.¹¹⁸ But ratters also became companions for poilus who cared for them and gave them individual names. Artillery officer (and later businessman and Saharan explorer) Gaston Gradis named his fox terrier Tipti.¹¹⁹ The army realized that the dividing line between ratter and pet dog was ambiguous and tried to tighten up regulations. It specified that dogs could only be considered ratters if they were “actually used as such.”¹²⁰ An eighth army instruction specified that soldiers should treat ratters as “material.” The dogs should remain in the same trench rather than staying with one unit to make it harder for bonds to

develop between dogs and soldiers.¹²¹ Designating ratters as things overlooked how soldiers kept these dogs to make the physical and emotional conditions of trench life more bearable.

The army also strove to discipline soldiers who kept trained rescue dogs as pets.¹²² As with ratters, the boundaries between search and rescue, messenger, sentry and transport dogs and pets were often porous as affectionate ties developed between handlers and their dogs. Paul Pireaud wrote to his wife Marie that his dog Cornillet – his “companion in misery” – “follows me everywhere and when he is really attached to me we will have to train him so that he can take my place as a messenger during bombardments.”¹²³ Other ties of affection developed between individual soldiers and militarized dogs, which some soldiers communicated to the SRDWD. Artilleryman Georges W wrote that along with his fellow soldiers he was “very distressed” when their “poor” dog Dick who had “given us so many important services” died on the Soissons battlefield.¹²⁴ Soldiers also expressed love for the dogs who had saved their lives. One wounded stretcher bearer trapped under a collapsed parapet related how a rescue dog, Domino, discovered him and fetched help: “How could I not love him...?” (*Comment voudriez-vous que je ne l’aime pas...*).¹²⁵ These views are not representative of all the soldiers who worked with dogs on the Western Front. Those who felt indifferently towards their dogs were hardly likely to go to the effort to record their views, and nor was the SRDWD inclined to publish hostile opinions. Nonetheless, soldiers’ tender feelings of appreciation towards militarized dogs further blurred the line between pet and working dogs, as the emotional practices of living and working together forged interspecies bonds.

The distinction between stray and pet dogs became blurred. Dogs were one of many domestic or wild animals that soldiers met and kept as they passed through the army zone. These included cats, goats and sheep, as well as birds and other wild creatures whose habitats the conflict had swallowed up. Some soldiers may have felt indifferent or hostile to stray

dogs. A SPA correspondent reported that reservists in Evreux (Eure) amused themselves by pouring hot water on strays.¹²⁶ But many befriended strays as they wandered through the militarized environment seeking company and food.¹²⁷ They included Pervyse who soldiers rescued from a ruined Belgian village and made a “spoilt pet.”¹²⁸ Welcomed by *poilus*, dogs made themselves at home in the devastated trench environment and seemingly became accustomed to its noises, sounds and smells. The war did not disrupt canine reproduction, with puppies born in the trenches replacing those dogs who perished.¹²⁹ The army attempted to banish pet dogs from the trenches. In December 1917 it banned all dogs who had “no military purpose.” But to perhaps prevent a storm of protest from troops in the aftermath of the 1917 mutinies, it allowed soldiers to keep hold of their pets until their next period of leave when they could be taken home.¹³⁰

Pet dogs offered *poilus* emotional comfort and solace in an alienating and lethal environment. As novelist and soldier Pierre Dumarchey recalled, even the “hardest [soldiers] softened in front” of their animals.¹³¹ Poet and soldier Paul Verlet divulged why he loved his scruffy and devoted dog Péroche (Coward) in his poem “Mon Chien”: “It’s because my distress is less alone/When you sleep against my gun.” Verlet celebrated the physical contact between Péroche and himself: “At midnight, it won’t be warm/Place your tender face/On my beating chest/And gently lick my figures/I’ll feel less cold in the cold night.”¹³² Such haptic interspecies connections allowed for a socially-acceptable expression of deep tenderness and affection. Santanu Das has argued that “physical contact was the transmission of the wonderful assurance of being alive” and constituted a “fresh category of nongenital tactile tenderness” in the trenches. Despite the ‘new level of intensity and intimacy in male-male relationships’ during the war, Verlet was able to express an intimacy with his dog that would be overtly sexual or transgressive were it enacted between men.¹³³ Dogs physically reminded *poilus* that they were still alive without the risk of social condemnation that human same-sex

intimacy might entail. Pet-keeping was a socially acceptable emotional practice that also allowed for comforting sensations. The softness of a dog's fur and the warmth of their tongue offered a pleasant and smoothing experience that stood in stark contrast to the disturbing and uncomfortable physical sensations occasioned by mud, rats, lice, and extreme weather.

Keeping a dog became an emotional practice to endure trench life and alleviate its dispiriting mixture of physical hardship, fear, and boredom. Alongside gardening and displaying photos and other homely objects, pet dogs domesticated the hostile trench environment. As suggested by photos showing soldiers relaxing with their dogs and, as Labitte argued, dogs and other animals were affectionate and hope-inspiring "reminders of home" and symbols of "life" amidst the "ruins and devastation."¹³⁴ In recreating aspects of home life and in carving out a space, however fragile, for intimacy within the crushing trench environment, petkeeping sustained morale and aided emotional survival.¹³⁵

The sense of shared experiences and companionship turned to grief and worry at times of separation. Chaplain "René B" felt moved by the death of his dog César: "I must confess that I cried when [he] died."¹³⁶ Another soldier wondered what had happened to his "old [canine] comrade who had followed him constantly throughout the war" after he left him with troops at Soissons: "I hope that he has not strayed into Germany in search of his master with whom he lived for more than two years."¹³⁷ Their attachment towards their dogs led some soldiers to resist official army regulations. After the 1917 crackdown on pet dogs some went to great lengths to take their dogs with them as they moved through the trenches.¹³⁸ When confronted with such indiscipline the army separated many pet dogs from their owners and returned them to the SPA refuge in Paris. Yet the SPA was unable to cope with the sheer number of dogs it received from front lines and slaughtered many of them.¹³⁹

Commemorating war dogs

Between 1914 and 1918 the French army had emotionally enlisted dogs as military collaborators while poilus forged embodied and everyday interspecies emotional connections. These different conceptions of human-dog bonds continued after the Armistice. Pet-keeping appeared only in soldiers' memoirs whilst authorized war dogs received some official recognition. In 1917 French President Raymond Poincaré had conferred a medal on sentry dog Pyrame.¹⁴⁰ Amidst the outpouring of grief and commemoration that followed the Armistice, further state recognition of dogs' wartime efforts followed when Minister of War Georges Clemenceau and Marshall of France Philippe Pétain wrote a congratulatory letter to the SRDWD in 1919.¹⁴¹

The emphasis on dogs' emotional strength and their attachment to humans survived the war intact. De Maud'huy argued how canine feelings of "bravery" and "loyalty" had made dogs feel "dedicated" to French soldiers.¹⁴² Mégnin similarly asserted that the desire of "brave [canine] poilus" to "please [their] master[s]" to whom they were "devoted" had enabled them to play an important role in the "victory of humanity over barbarism."¹⁴³ The celebration of canine bravery was striking not only for its anthropomorphism but because it legitimated the army's mobilization of dogs by casting them as courageous creatures who were destined and willing to sacrifice themselves for France. If anything, the war strengthened the narrative that dogs were humanity's "faithful friend[s]," in the words of SPA president Dr H. Boucher, and its kind and "loyal servants," as eulogized by Berthe Zablet in her poem "Pour le chien sanitaire."¹⁴⁴ Such acknowledgment, however, was not enough to secure the immediate future of French war dogs. The reasons for the army's decision to

disband its dog service after the war are unclear, but perhaps spring from continuing doubts over the dogs' training, preparation and abilities on the battlefield. After the Armistice the army ordered that all of its dogs be returned to its depot kennel in Paris and in December 1919 it shut the central kennel at Camp Satory. Despite the army releasing a new official training manual in 1924, the training of war dogs was almost moribund by the mid-1920s.¹⁴⁵

To resuscitate the use of war dogs, their advocates once again lauded dogs' emotional qualities in the late 1920s. Veterinarian Paul Savette argued that dogs were "ardent in their passions" and could communicate and express these through their voice. Echoing previous advice, he stressed the importance of selecting the right kind of dog for army work, avoiding those with an "irascible or pugnacious character."¹⁴⁶ Similarly, and after criticising the army's poor understanding of "canine psychology," army veterinarian Velu urged that future trainers pay close attention to canine emotions, including the "attachment, loyalty, [and] devotion" that dogs feel for their master.¹⁴⁷ Writing in 1936, military veterinarian Maurice Barat also emphasised how the numerous tales of dogs' "fidelity, courage and intelligence" proved their suitability for army work. Moreover, dogs shared similar "intellectual, sensitive and affective" qualities to humans, reinforcing their potential for militarization. Dogs served humans "with all their animal soul" and never "betrayed the trust placed in them."¹⁴⁸ With geopolitical tensions increasing at the end of the 1930s, the army authorized the use of bouviers by Mobile Republican Guard Units in the Vosges.¹⁴⁹ Yet army commanders did not order the more generalized use of dogs until war broke out in 1939. General Gamelin then hastily established a war dog service that was once again characterized by improvisation and setbacks, leading to its dissolution after less than six months. It was not until the wars of decolonization in Indochina and Algeria that the French army established a permanent war dog service.¹⁵⁰

Conclusion

Emotional attachments between militarized humans and dogs worked on multiple and interlinked levels between 1871 and 1918, and were particularly intense on the Western Front. Drawing on cultural assumptions that dogs were destined to serve humans, war dog advocates sought to militarize human-dog bonds to alleviate fears of German military dominance and French soldiers' emotional deficiencies. They portrayed emotion as the basis of training and the means by which dogs would be transformed into military collaborators. Training was an emotional practice as trainers were called upon to manage their emotions in order to transform their dogs through repetitive activities on the training ground. In theory, training bound together dogs and trainers, forming part of the "remarkable deepening of human and non-human connectedness" that enabled the modern state to expand.¹⁵¹ However, setbacks, improvisation and a lack of central support undermined training. Most worryingly for war dog advocates, some army reports suggested that dogs lacked the emotional fortitude to act effectively in the militarized trench environment. Canine emotional sensitivity seemed to hamper, rather than assist, the war effort. Nonetheless, war dogs provided enough of a contribution, particularly as messenger dogs, for demand to outstrip supply by 1918. Yet this militarization of human-dog relations was contingent, and maintaining a war dog service was not a priority for the army after the Armistice, echoing the decline of customs and police dogs in the interwar period.¹⁵²

The army sought to militarize dogs on its own terms. Like their human counterparts, "four-legged poilus" were to be selected, registered and deployed in accordance with their training and military objectives. But pet dogs had the greatest emotional impact in the trenches as French soldiers subverted the official militarization of dogs by making pets of

officially-militarized dogs and the numerous strays they encountered. By providing an outlet for emotional expression and connection, and by serving as a physical reminder of home, pet dogs helped humanize a dehumanizing conflict. Pet-keeping was an emotional practice that created bonds between individual dogs and humans. Echoing the official emotional enlistment of dogs, this unofficial mobilization of dogs for personal survival and comfort was simultaneously cultural and embodied. The *poilu*-pet partnership combined narratives of loving and devoted dogs with the lived physical intimacies of human-canine companionship. Historians and others have explored the emotional connections between pets and owners in civilian settings.¹⁵³ The inter-species emotional practices of two- and four-legged *poilus* suggests that the everyday and embodied militarization of human-dog relationships could be explored further.¹⁵⁴

The concept of a human-dog bond remains a useful lens through which to analyse the emotional and other enmeshments of humans and dogs, as long as it is situated within its historical context and attention is paid to its diversity and simultaneously imaginative and embodied qualities. It is created through emotional practices and, like William Reddy's elaboration of "emotives" it is life-altering and history-shaping.¹⁵⁵ As Sara Ahmed argues, "emotions *do things*."¹⁵⁶ In the case of the First World War emotional attachments between dogs and humans resulted in operational functions on the battlefield and shaped life in the trenches. The history of four-legged *poilus* also shows how competing visions of the human-dog bond co-exist and compete, serving as a reminder of the bond's complex and contradictory character. Moreover, their history suggests that including animals within the history of emotions offers a fresh way to explore further the inter-connected imaginative and material dimensions of emotions, and to investigate how emotions bind humans and nonhumans together.

¹ As Nicole Shukin argues, trainers and handlers seek to engage their dogs' "feeling power, and more specifically their capacity for loving attachment." Nicole Shukin, "Security Bonds: On Feeling Power and the Fiction of an Animal Governmentality," *ESC: English Studies in Canada* 39 (2013): 178. Emphasis in original.

² Frank Trentmann, "Materiality in the Future of History: Things, Practices, and Politics," *The Journal of British Studies* 48 (2009): 283-307; Patrick Carroll, *Science, Culture and Modern State Formation* (Berkeley, 2006); Patrick Joyce, *The State of Freedom: A Social History of the British State since 1800* (Cambridge, 2013); Chandra Mukerji, *Territorial Ambitions and the Gardens of Versailles* (Cambridge, 1997); Chandra Mukerji, *Impossible Engineering: Technology and Territoriality on the Canal du Midi* (Princeton, 2009).

³ Fiona Allon and Lindsay Barrett, "That Dog was Marine! Human-Dog Assemblages in the Pacific War," *Animal Studies Journal* 4 (2015): 126-147; Ryan Hediger, "Dogs of War: The Biopolitics of Loving and Leaving the US Canine Forces in Vietnam," *Animal Studies Journal* 2 (2013): 55-783. Philip Howell, "The Dog Fancy at War: Breeds, Breeding, and Britishness, 1914-1918," *Society and Animals* 20 (2012): 546-567; Robert G. W. Kirk, "In Dogs we Trust? Intersubjectivity, Response-able Relations, and the Making of Mine Detector Dogs," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 50 (2014): 1-36; Aaron Skabelund, "Breeding Racism: The Imperial Battlefields of the 'German' Shepherd Dog," *Society and Animals* 16 (2008): 354-71; Robert Tindol, "The Best Friend of Murderers: Guard Dogs and the Nazi Holocaust," in Ryan Hediger, ed., *Animals and War: Studies of Europe and North America* (Leiden, 2013), 105-22.

⁴ Damien Baldin, "Le chien, animal exemplaire d'une anthropologie historique des relations hommes-animaux en temps de guerre (1914-1918)," *Enthnozootechnie* 78 (2006): 159-62; Monika Baár, "Prosthesis for the Body and for the Soul: The Origins of Guide Dog Provision for Blind Veterans in Interwar Germany," *First World War Studies* 6 (2015): 82, 85. On animals and war, see; Martin S. Alexander, "War and its Bestiality: Animals and their Fate during the Fighting in France, 1940," *Rural History* 25 (2014): 101-124; Hediger, *Animals and War*; Anthony J. Nocella II, Colin Salter and Judy K.C. Bentley, eds, *Animals and War: Confronting the Military-Animal Industrial Complex*

(Lanham MD, 2014); Edmund P. Russell, *War and Nature: Fighting Humans and Insects with Chemicals from World War I to Silent Spring* (New York, 2001). On animals and the history of emotions, see Otniel E. Dror, "The Affect of Experiment: The Turn to Emotions in Anglo-American Physiology, 1900-1940," *Isis* 90 (1999): 205-37; Liz Gray, "Body, Mind and Madness: Pain in Animals in Nineteenth-Century Comparative Psychology," in Rob Boddice (ed), *Pain and Emotion in Modern History* (Basingstoke, 2014), 148-63; Jed Mayer, "The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Laboratory Animals," *Victorian Studies* 50 (2008): 399-417; Edmund Ramsden and Duncan Wilson, "The Suicidal Animal: Science and the Nature of Self-Destruction," *Past and Present* 224 (2014): 205-17; Paul S. White, "The Experimental Animal in Victorian Britain," in *Thinking with Animals: New Perspectives on Anthropomorphism*, eds, Lorraine Daston and Gregg Mitman (New York, 2015), 60-81.

⁵ Erica Fudge, *Brutal Reasoning: Animals, Rationality, and Humanity in Early Modern England* (Ithaca, 2006); Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis, 2008); Chris Pearson, 'Dogs, History and Agency,' *History and Theory* 52 (2013): 128-145.

⁶ Sara Ahmed, "Affective Economies," *Social Text* 22 (2004): 119

⁷ L Gygax et al., "Dog Behavior but not Frontal Brain Reaction Changes in Repeated Positive Interactions with a Human: A Non-Invasive Pilot Study using Functional Near-infrared Spectroscopy (fNIRS)," *Behavioural Brain Research* 281 (2015): 172-76; Linda M. Hines, "Historical Perspectives on the Human-Animal Bond," *American Behavioral Scientist* 47 (2003): 7-15; Ádam Miklósi, *Dog Behaviour, Evolution and Cognition* (Oxford, 2007); Darcey F. Morey, *Dogs: Domestication and the Development of a Social Bond* (New York, 2010); and numerous articles in such journals as *Journal of Veterinary Behavior: Clinical Applications and Research* and *Anthrozoos*.

⁸ Damien Baldin, *Histoire des animaux domestiques, XIX^e-XX^e siècle* (Paris, 2014); Kathleen Kete, *The Beast in the Boudoir: Petkeeping in Nineteenth Century Paris* (Berkeley, 1994); Harriet Ritvo, *The Animal Estate: The English and Other Creatures in the Victorian Age* (London, 1987); Jonathan Saha, "Among the Beasts of Burma: Animals and the Politics of Colonial Sensibilities, c. 1840-1940,"

Journal of Social History 48 (2015): 910-32; Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800* (London, 1983).

⁹ As Barbara H. Rosenwein argues, “the history of emotions should take into account the latest scientific advances in our knowledge about emotions without adopting a presentist or universalist approach. Above all, it should be sensitive to the otherness, seriousness, and complexity of the past.” Quoted in Jan Plamper, “The History of Emotions: An Interview with William Reddy, Barbara Rosenwein, and Peter Sterns,” *History and Theory* 49 (2010): 261. See also Thomas Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions: The Creation of a Secular Psychological Category* (Cambridge, 2003); William M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (New York, 2001); Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca, 2006); Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Generations of Feeling: A History of Emotions, 600-1700* (Cambridge, 2016).

¹⁰ In portraying dogs as sensitive and sentient creatures, trainers did not use the term “emotion,” instead referring to the dogs’ “character,” “soul,” or “psychology.” These words encompassed more than emotions, but emotions were key parts of them. I will be sensitive to this diverse terminology alongside using “emotion” as a convenient, if problematic, term, and take a broad view of what was understood as emotional. On the use of “emotion,” see Thomas Dixon, “‘Emotion’: The History of a Keyword in Crisis,” *Emotion Review* 4 (2012): 338-44. On adopting an inclusive view of emotions, see Rosenwein, *Generations of Feeling*, 6-8.

¹¹ Monique Scheer, “Are Emotions a Kind of Practice (And is That What Makes Them Have a History)? A Bourdieuan Approach to Understanding Emotion,” *History and Theory* 51 (2012): 209.

¹² Scheer, ‘Are Emotions a Kind of Practice’: 209.

¹³ Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker, *1914-1918: Understanding the Great War*, trans. Catherine Temerson (London, 2002); Joanna Bourke, *An Intimate History of Killing: Face-to-Face Killing in Twentieth-Century Warfare* (London, 1999); Bruno Cabanes, “Negotiating Intimacy in the Shadow of War (France, 1914-1920s): New Perspectives in the Cultural History of World War I,” *French Politics, Culture and Society* 31 (2013): 1-23; Santanu Das, *Touch and Intimacy in First World War Literature* (Cambridge, 2005); Martha Hanna, *Your Death Would be Mine: Paul and*

Marie Pireaud in the Great War (Cambridge MA, 2006); Michael Roper, *The Secret Battle:*

Emotional Survival in the Great War (Manchester, 2009); Gregory Thomas, *Treating the Trauma of the Great War: Soldiers, Civilians and Psychiatry in France, 1914-1940* (Baton Rouge, 2009).

¹⁴ Andrew McEwen, “‘He Took Care of Me’: The Human-Animal Bond in Canada’s Great War,” in Susan Nance, ed., *The Historical Animal* (Syracuse, 2015), 272-288; Chris Pearson, *Mobilizing Nature: The Environmental History of War and Militarization in Modern France* (Manchester, 2012), 99.

¹⁵ Hanna, *Your Death Would be Mine*; Kenneth I. Helphand, *Defiant Gardens: Making Gardens in Wartime* (San Antonio, TX, 2006), 21-59; Roper, *Secret Battle*; Nicholas J. Saunders, *Trench Art: Materialities and Memories of War* (Oxford, 2003).

¹⁶ Peter N. Stearns and Carol Z. Stearns, “Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions and Emotional Standards,” *American Historical Review* 90 (1985): 813-836.

¹⁷ Paul Mégnin was one of many war dog advocates who used the term “poilus à quatre pattes.” *Les chiens de France: soldats de la Grande Guerre* (Paris, [s.d.]), 2. “Poilus” was the affectionate nickname given to French soldiers. Nationalist Maurice Barrès lamented the nickname, as it has “something animal about it,” whilst other commentators equated it with manliness and virility. Libby Murphy, *The Art of Survival: France and the Great War Picaresque* (New Haven, 2016), 124.

¹⁸ Eric Baratay, *Bêtes des tranchées: des vécus oubliés* (Paris, 2013); Gervase Philips, “Writing Horses into American Civil War History,” *War in History* 20 (2013): 160-181. See also Eric Baratay, *Le point de vue animal: une autre version de l’histoire* (Paris, 2012). Wartime writers imagined the world from animal perspectives to highlight its brutal and dehumanizing environment. Murphy, *Art of Survival*, 120-1, 125.

¹⁹ Historians of emotions have identified the difficulty of accessing human emotional experiences. Christophe Traïni, “Opposing Scientific Cruelty: The Emotions and Sensitivities of Protesters against Experiments on Animals,” *Contemporary European History* 23 (2014): 523-543, 526. See also William M. Reddy, “Against Constructionism: The Historical Ethnography of Emotions,” *Current*

Anthropology 38 (1997): 327-51; Rob Boddice, "Introduction: Hurt Feelings?" in Boddice, *Pain and Emotion*, 1-15.

²⁰ Edouard de la Barre Duparcq, *Les chiens de guerre: étude historique* (Paris, 1869), 8-9, 172-6.

²¹ Eugène Gayot, *Le Chien* (Paris, 1867), 304.

²² *Eloge des chiens: esquisse rapide des divers services que les chiens rendant aux hommes* (Paris, 1880).

²³ Damien Baldin, "De l'horreur du sang à l'insoutenable souffrance animale: élaboration sociale des régimes de sensibilité à la mise à mort des animaux (19^e-20^e siècles)," *Vingtième Siècle* 123 (2014): 52-68; Maurice Agulhon, "Le sang des bêtes: le problème de la protection des animaux en France au XIX^e siècle," *Romantisme* 31 (1981): 81-110; Eric Pierre, "La souffrance des animaux dans les discours des protecteurs français au XIX^e siècle," *Etudes rurales* 147-48 (1998): 81-97.

²⁴ Henry Blatin, *Nos cruautés envers les animaux au détriment de l'hygiène, de la fortune publique et de la morale* (Paris, 1867), 92-4. See also Philippe R. Girard, "L'utilisation de chiens pendant la guerre d'indépendance haïtienne," *Napoleonica: La Revue* 15 (2012): 54-79.

²⁵ Olivier Bree, *Historique de la Cynotechnie militaire et du 132^e bataillon cynophile de l'armée de terre* (Reims, 2006 [1998]), 131-2.

²⁶ Pearson, *Mobilizing Nature*, 65-90.

²⁷ L. Jupin, *Tactique et chiens de guerre* (Paris and Nancy, 1890), x. See also 'Les chiens militaires,' *La Nature*, 15 (1887): 245-6.

²⁸ Rachel Chrastil, "The French Red Cross, War Readiness and Civil Society, 1866-1914," *French Historical Studies* 31 (2008): 444-76, 447-8; Rachel Chrastil, *Organizing for War: France 1870-1914* (Baton Rouge, 2010).

²⁹ Jupin, *Tactique et chiens de guerre*, 84, 132.

³⁰ Christopher E. Forth and Elinor Accampo, eds., *Confronting Modernity in Fin-de-Siècle France: Bodies, Minds, Gender* (Basingstoke, 2009); Benoît Lecoq, "Les sociétés de gymnastique et de tir dans la France républicaine (1870-1914)," *Revue historique*, 559 (1986): 157-66; Robert A. Nye,

“Degeneration, Neurasthenia and the Culture of Sport in Belle Epoque France,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 17 (1982): 51-68.

³¹ L. Jupin, *Chiens militaires dans l’armée française* (Paris and Nancy, 1887), 20-3.

³² Quoted in ‘Les chiens sur le front,’ *Bulletin de la Société protectrice des animaux*, first semester 1916, 61-2.

³³ Lalloué, *Méthode de dressage du chien de guerre, de police, de garde et de défense*, 4th edition (Epinal, 1918 [1907]).

³⁴ Léon Dormoy, *Les chiens de guerre: la conquête du chien. Aperçu historique sur l’emploi des chiens à la guerre, les chiens de contrebandiers, les chiens de guerre modernes* (Paris, 1888).

³⁵ René Simon, *Le chien de police, de défense, de secours* (Paris, 1909).

³⁶ Captain Pein deployed dogs in Southern Algeria in 1892, as did Malric in Madagascar in 1898. Mégnin, *Chiens de France*, 54.

³⁷ Jupin, *Tactique et chiens de guerre*, 57-8, 113; Henry de Varigny, *Histoire et moeurs des animaux*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1904), 735; Jean-Daniel Lauth, *Etude sur la liaison par chien de guerre* (Paris, 1910), 7.

³⁸ Lauth, *Etude sur la liaison*, 11-13; Jupin, *Chiens militaires*, 107.

⁴⁰ de Varigny, *Histoire et moeurs des animaux*, 736; Jupin, *Chiens militaires*, v; “Les chiens de guerre en Allemagne,” *L’univers illustré*, November 16, 1895; Allan Mitchell, *Victors and Vanquished: The German Influence on Army and Church in France after 1870* (Chapel Hill, 1984).

⁴¹ Jupin, *Chiens militaires*, vii, 19.

⁴² “En Allemagne,” *Le Petit Journal supplément illustré*, August 8, 1897. French war dog advocates also drew inspiration from other nations’ experiences, such as the Austrian army’s rescue dogs. L.V., “Préface,” in Lieutenant Pierre-Albert Vicard and Sergent Rode, *Le Chein estafette* (Paris, 1911), 8-9.

⁴³ “Dressage des chiens pour la recherche des blessés,” *Bulletin international des sociétés de la Croix-Rouge* 22 (1891): 125; “Associations allemandes des chiens sanitaires,” *Bulletin international des sociétés de la Croix-Rouge* 36 (1905): 157.

⁴⁴ Jupin, *Tactique et chiens de guerre*, 132.

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- ⁴⁵ Chris Pearson, "Stray Dogs and the Making of Modern Paris," *Past and Present* 234 (2017): 137-172; Damien Baldin, *Histoire des animaux domestiques, XIX^e-XX^e siècle* (Paris, 2014). See also Michael Worboys and Neil Pemberton, "The Invention of the Basset Hound: Breed, Blood and the Late Victorian Dog Fancy, 1865-1900," *European Review of History/Revue européenne d'histoire* 22 (2015): 726-40. Harriet Ritvo, *The Animal Estate: The English and Other Creatures in the Victorian Age* (London, 1990 [1987]), 82-121.
- ⁴⁶ Military secrecy prevented Jupin from naming his preferred breed. *Tactique et chiens de guerre*, 124-7; A.-C.-E. Bellier de Villiers, *Le Chien au Chenil: De l'amélioration des race canines du logement, du pansage, de la nourriture, de l'exercice et de la condition de l'élève, soins thérapeutiques* (Paris, 1901).
- ⁴⁷ Vicard and Rode, *Chein estafette*, 46.
- ⁴⁸ Léon-Alphonse-Hippolyte Tolet, *Dressage du chien sanitaire* (Paris, 1912), 1.
- ⁴⁹ "Notice concernant les conditions à remplir par les chiens de guerre envoyés aux armées, en exécution de l'instruction 7355 C/1 du 8 novembre," November 28, 1915, reproduced in Mégnin, *Chiens de France*, 139.
- ⁵⁰ Jupin, *Tactique et chiens de guerre*, 126.
- ⁵¹ Lauth, *Etude sur la liaison*, 7; Vicard and Rode, *Chein estafette*, 27-8.
- ⁵² Mégnin, *Chiens de France*, 64.
- ⁵³ Lisa Downing, "Murder in the Feminine: Marie Lafarge and the Sexualization of the Nineteenth-Century Criminal Women," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 18 (2009): 121-37; Ruth Harris, "Melodrama, Hysteria and Feminine Crimes of Passion in the Fin-de-Siècle," *History Workshop Journal* 25 (1988): 31-63; Judith Surkis, *Sexing the Citizen: Morality and Masculinity in France, 1870-1920* (Ithaca, 2006).
- ⁵⁴ Mégnin, *Chiens de France*, 219; Edwin H. Richardson, *British War Dogs: Their Training and Psychology* (London, 1920), 133, 259.
- ⁵⁵ *Société nationale du Chien sanitaire* (Paris, 1909); Chrastil, "French Red Cross," 456-7; Chrastil, *Organizing for War*.

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- ⁵⁶ Dr Ferrière, “Chiens sanitaires et chiens de transport,” *Bulletin international des sociétés de la Croix-Rouge* 39 (1908): 111-13.
- ⁵⁷ Martin Monestier, *Les animaux-soldats: Histoire militaire des animaux des origines à nos jours* (Paris, 1996), 33.
- ⁵⁸ Mégnin, *Chiens de France*, 60.
- ⁵⁹ Quoted in Mégnin, *Chiens de France*, 64.
- ⁶⁰ “Revue des journaux,” *Revue générale de médecine vétérinaire* 24 (July 1914-December 1915), 446-7. Transportation dogs were also deployed in the wooded hills of Alsace and the Vosges, and, on the order of General Hubert Lyautey, in Morocco. Archives de l’Ecole nationale vétérinaire d’Alfort, Archives départementales du Val-de-Marne (hereafter ADVM) 7 M 166 Maurice Barat, ‘Le chien au service de l’armée,’ February 19, 1936, 64.
- ⁶¹ Mégnin, *Chiens de France*, 65; Clément Bressou, “Chiens de guerre,” *Recueil de médecine vétérinaire* 104 (1928): 547-8.
- ⁶² Adolphe Lasnier, with drawings by P. Mahler, *Nos Chiens sur le Front* (Paris, 1915); “Compte rendu,” *Bulletin de la Société protectrice des animaux*, April-June 1916, 73.
- ⁶³ Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker, *1914-1918*, 110.
- ⁶⁴ Damien Baldin, ed., *La guerre des animaux, 1914-1918* (Peronne, 2007); John Singleton, “Britain’s Military Use of Horses, 1914-1918,” *Past and Present* 139 (1993): 178-203.
- ⁶⁵ Some came from further afield: the army imported 436 sled dogs from Alaska to move supplies in the Vosges. Service historique de la Défense, Département de l’armée de terre (hereafter SHD-DAT) 16 N 261 “Extrait du rapport du Lieutenant Mégnin,” [n.d.].
- ⁶⁶ Direction de l’Infanterie: Cabinet du Directeur, “Instruction sur le service du ravitaillement en chiens de guerre dans les armées,” January 5, 1917, in *Bulletin officiel des ministères de la guerre, des travaux publics et des transports du ravitaillement général de l’armement et des fabrications de guerre*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1917), 141.
- ⁶⁷ SHD-DAT 16 N 121 President du conseil, Ministre de la guerre to Général Commandant en chef les armées du Nord et du Nord-Est, January 13, 1918.

⁶⁸ Ministère de la Guerre, Service des Chiens de guerre, *Dressage et emploi des chiens de ronde et d'enclos* (Paris, 1918), 9.

⁶⁹ Bressou, "Chiens de guerre," 549-54; SHD-DAT 19 N 32 Préfecture de la Somme, "Rage," July 13, 1918.

⁷⁰ On at least one occasion, stray dogs recruited in the army zone were sent to the depot kennel at the Jardin d'Acclimatation with insufficient food and water. Over the course of the four day journey many dogs died and were then "half-devoured" by their starving fellow canine travellers. SHD-DAT 16 N 261 Général commandant en chef, Grand quartier général des armées du Nord et du Nord-Est, March 10, 1918.

⁷¹ SHD-DAT 16 N 261 "Etat indiquant la situation des chiens sanitaires livrés à des corps de troupe par la Société Nationale du Chien Sanitaire," March, 19 1918; SHD-DAT 16 N 261 'Exécution des prescriptions de la Note du G.Q.G du 22 février au sujet de chiens sanitaires,' March 12, 1918.

⁷² Emma Newlands, "Preparing and Resisting the War Body: Training in the British Army," in *War and the Body: Militarisation, Practice and Experience*, ed., Kevin McSorley (Abington, 2013), 35-50.

⁷³ Quoted in Mégnin, *Chiens de France*, 64

⁷⁴ Bourke, *Intimate History of Killing*, 85.

⁷⁵ Lalloué, *Méthode de dressage*, 24, 34.

⁷⁶ "Notice concernant les conditions à remplir par les chiens de guerre."

⁷⁷ Kete, *Beast in the Boudoir*.

⁷⁸ The French army's efforts to alleviate canine suffering were limited as many army veterinarians lacked the necessary training, resources and medicines to treat wounded dogs. It eventually established canine hospitals at its Jardin d' Acclimatation and Camp Satory kennels. It also reached an agreement with the British Blue Cross organization in January 1918 to look after sick and wounded dogs at the "canine hospital" at Provins (Seine-et-Marne), partly to avoid "dangerous" epidemics sweeping through its kennels. Baratay, *Bêtes des tranchées*, 181-91; Barat, "Chien au service de l'Armée," 104; SHD-DAT 16 N 261 Président du Conseil, Ministre de la Guerre, "Service des chiens de guerre," January 8, 1918.

⁷⁹ Service des Chiens de guerre, *Dressage et emploi*, 1, 2, 6, 7. On the instrumentalisation of care towards particular ends, see Eva Giraud and Gregory Hollin, “Care, Laboratory Beagles and Affective Utopia,” *Theory, Culture & Society* 33 (2016): 27-49.

⁸⁰ SHD-DAT 19 N 32 Ministère de la Guerre, Service des Chiens de guerre, *Principes de dressage des chiens de guerre* (Paris, 1918), 3-4, 7-8.

⁸¹ Xavier Garnier, “Les chiens de guerre,” *Je sais tout*, 137, April 15, 1917, 435. To help familiarize dogs with the intense auditory environment of the Western Front, the army supplied guns and ammunition to kennels run by civilian dog breed clubs. SHD-DAT 16 N 261 Direction de l’Infanterie: Cabinet du Directeur, “Instruction sur le service du ravitaillement en chiens de guerre dans les armées,” January 5, 1917, 144.

⁸² SHD-DAT 16 N 261 Général commandant la 56^e D.I., “Rapport sur les services rendus par les chiens de liaison pendant la période du 26 mars au 1 avril 1918 (Bataille de Picardie),” May 13, 1918.

⁸³ Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 25.

⁸⁴ Simon, *Chien de police*, 30. Simon and other trainers foreshadowed early twenty-first century scientific claims about dogs’ abilities to understand their human companions. Natalia Albuquerque et al., “Dogs Recognize Dog and Human Emotions,” *Biology Letters* 12 (2016): 1-5; Brian Hare and Michael Tomasello, “Human-like Social Skills in Dogs?” *Trends in Cognitive Science* 9 (2005): 439-44; Pamela J. Reid, “Adapting to the Human World: Dogs’ Responsiveness to our Social Cues,” *Behavioural Processes* 80 (2009): 325-33.

⁸⁵ Charles Darwin, *The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals*, The Works of Charles Darwin, vol 23, ed., Paul H. Barrett and R. B. Freeman (New York, 1989 [1872]); Mayer, “Expression of the Emotions”; Joanna Bourke, *What it Means to Be Human: Reflections from 1791 to the Present* (Berkeley, 2011), 236-46.

⁸⁶ Garnier, “Chiens de guerre,” 438-9.

⁸⁷ Marion Thomas, “Are Animals just Noisy Machines?: Louis Boutan and the Co-invention of Animal and Child Psychology in the French Third Republic,” *Journal of the History of Biology* 38 (2005): 425-460; Marion Thomas, “Histoire de la question de l’intelligence animale en France et aux

Etats-Unis au début du XX^e siècle,” *L’homme et la société*, 167-69 (2009): 223-50. On the wider stakes of the debate over humans, animals and machines, see Ernest J. Yanarella and Herbert G. Reid, “From ‘Trained Gorilla’ to ‘Humanware’: Repoliticizing the Body-Machine Complex Between Fordism and Post-Fordism,” in Theodore R. Schatzki and Wolfgang Natter, eds, *The Social and Political Body* (New York, 1997), 181-99.

⁸⁸ SHD-DAT 16 N 261 Colonel Garçon, “Rapport sur les services rendus par les chiens de guerre,” May 10, 1918; SHD-DAT 16 N 261 Chef de Bataillon Ducornez, “Compte-rendu au sujet du service des chiens de guerre,” May 9, 1918; SHD-DAT 16 N 261 Général Commandant le 15^e division, “Compte-rendu au sujet de l’utilisation des chiens de liaison,” May 10, 1918; SHD-DAT 16 N 261 Colonel Bussy, “Au sujet des chiens de liaison,” May 7, 1918; SHD-DAT 16 N 261 Lieutenant-Colonel Rouchon, “Compte-rendu au sujet des chiens de liaison,” May 6, 1918. On the trench soundscape, see Das, *Touch and Intimacy*, 81-2.

⁸⁹ On the belief that animals could experience shellshock, see Bourke, *What it Means to Be Human*, 73-5.

⁹⁰ Bourke, *Intimate History of Killing*, 60-2.

⁹¹ SHD-DAT 19 N 1435 “Note de service (suite à comptes rendus mensuels des chenils régimentaires de la 165^e D. I.),” October 7, 1918. Such episodes sprung from the army’s inability to recruit enough suitable trainers. Some volunteer trainers may have been primarily motivated by shirking more dangerous duties than a burning desire to train dogs. Paul Savette, “De l’utilisation des chiens dans les armées en campagne” (Doctorat vétérinaire, Diplôme d’Etat, Ecole nationale vétérinaire de Toulouse, 1929), 28. See also SHD-DAT 19 N 1435 “L’emploi des chiens au course de la guerre par la 5^e D.I.” May 16, 1919.

⁹² M. d’Haussonville, “Préface,” in Société du chien sanitaire et des chiens de guerre, *Le chien sanitaire, les chiens de guerre* (Paris, 1919), 9-10.

⁹³ Baratay, *Bêtes des tranchées*, 82.

⁹⁴ *ibid.* 47, 71; ADV M 7 M 166 Vétérinaire commandant H. Velu, “Le chien de guerre: son passé, son présent, son avenir,” January 28, 1938, 12; Barat, “Chien au service de l’Armée.”

⁹⁵ SHD-DAT 19 N 1435 Colonel Destenay, “Compte-rendu,” October 16, 1918.

⁹⁶ Baratay, *Bêtes des tranchées*, 84-6, 175; Velu, “Chien de guerre,” 14-16; SHD-DAT 19 N 32 “Rapport sur l’emploi des chiens porteurs dans les Armées,” [n.d.].

⁹⁷ Savette, “Utilisation,” 62.

⁹⁸ Baár, “Prosthesis,” 88; André Loez, “Tears in the Trenches: A History of Emotions and the Experience of War,” in *Uncovered Fields: Perspectives in First World War Studies*, eds, Jenny Macleod and Pierre Purseigle (Leiden, 2004), 211-26; Das, *Touch and Intimacy*, 48-53. On emotional refuges, see Reddy, *Navigation of Feeling*, 129.

⁹⁹ Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, *Men at War 1914-1918: National Sentiment and Trench Journalism in France during the First World War* (Oxford, 1992); David Englander, “The French Soldier, 1914-1918,” *French History* 1 (1987): 49-67; Susan R. Grayzel, “Mothers, *marraines* and Prostitutes: Morale and Morality in First World War France,” *The International History Review* 19 (1997): 66-82; Hanna, *Your Death Would be Mine*; Ruth Harris, “‘The Child of the Barbarian’: Rape, Race and Nationalism in France during the First World War,” *Past and Present* 141 (1993): 170-206; Leonard V. Smith, *Between Mutiny and Obedience: The Case of the French Fifth Infantry Division during World War I* (Princeton, 1994).

¹⁰⁰ C. de Freycinet, “Interdiction de tolérer ou de laisser pénétrer des chiens dans l’intérieur des casernes et autres établissements militaires,” *Journal militaire*, 99, 1888, 550. On military hygiene, see Jean-François Chanet, *Vers l’armée nouvelle: République conservatrice et réforme militaire, 1871-1879* (Rennes, 2006), 225-244; Alphonse Laveran, *Traité d’hygiène militaire* (Paris, 1896).

¹⁰¹ Jupin, *Tactique et chiens de Guerre*, 124-7; Nicolas Fétu, *Requête à mes concitoyens pour l’extinction de la race canine à Dijon* (Dijon, 1866).

¹⁰² Dr Ferrière, “Chiens sanitaires et chiens de transport,” *Bulletin international des sociétés de la Croix-Rouge* 39 (1908): 114-15; Chanet, *Vers l’armée nouvelle*, 240-43; Surkis, *Sexing the Citizen*.

¹⁰³ On pet-keeping as a form of emotional support in nineteenth-century Paris, see Kete, *Beast in the Boudoir*.

¹⁰⁴ Eric Baratay, “La promotion de l’animal sensible: une révolution dans la révolution,” *Revue historique* 661 (2012): 133-44; René Descartes, *Discourse on Method and The Meditations*, trans. F. E. Sutcliffe (London, 1968 [1637]), 73; George Boas, *The Happy Beast in French Thought of the Seventeenth Century* (New York, 1966 [1933]); L. Cohen Rosenfield, *From Beast-Machine to Man-Machine: Animal Soul in French Letters from Descartes to La Mettrie* (New York, 1941), 205.

¹⁰⁵ Kete, *Beast in the Boudoir*, 22-28.

¹⁰⁶ Charles Darwin, *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*, ed. Joseph Carroll (Ontario, 2003 [1859]), 229-30; Gray, “Body, Mind and Madness”; White, “Experimental Animal.”

¹⁰⁷ Miguel Zamacoïs, “Le chien,” *Lectures pour tous: revue universelle et populaire illustrée*, October 24, 1914, 135-6.

¹⁰⁸ Dr E.-G. Sée, “Reconnaissance et fidélité d’un chien de guerre,” *Bulletin de la Société protectrice des animaux*, first semester, 1915, 63; “Les chiens mobilisés,” *Bulletin de la Société protectrice des animaux*, first semester, 1915, 63-4. See also Charles Guyon, *Nos braves toutous à la guerre* (Paris, 1915), 42.

¹⁰⁹ Murphy, *Art of Survival*, 126.

¹¹⁰ Henri Barbusse, *Le Feu: journal d’une Escouade* (Paris, 1965 [1916]), 116-22.

¹¹¹ Alphonse Labitte, “La guerre rapproche les animaux des hommes,” *Almanach illustré du Petit Parisien*, 1917, 153.

¹¹² “Les mascottes de nos poilus,” *Lectures pour tous: revue universelle et populaire illustrée*, September 15, 1916, 1822.

¹¹³ Hector Macquarrie, *How to Live at the Front: Tips for American Soldiers* (Philadelphia and London, 1917), 215-21.

¹¹⁴ Archives nationales de France, 181 AQ/121 Fonds Gaston Gradis, “Livret matricule de chien,” [n.d.].

¹¹⁵ Stray dogs considered to have “incurable maladies” were to be killed in army kennels. SHD-DAT 19 N 32 Général commandant en chef des armées du nord et du nord-est, November 6, 1917; SHD-DAT 19 N 32 Général commandant en chef des armées du nord et du nord-est, December 14, 1917.

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- ¹¹⁶ Henri Chatinière, *Pour la santé: ce qu'un poilu doit savoir* (Paris, 1916), 72-3, 95-6. On efforts to preserve soldiers' health in the trenches, see Leo van Bergen, *Before my Helpless Sight: Suffering, Dying, and Military Medicine on the Western Front, 1914-1918* (Aldershot, 2009).
- ¹¹⁷ Laboratoire de Zoologie, Station Entomologique, Faculté des Sciences de Rennes, *Renseignements gratuits sur les animaux nuisibles: Animaux nuisibles aux soldats en Campagne* (Rennes, 1915), 7-8.
- ¹¹⁸ Monsieur G..., November 19, 1916, *Chien sanitaire, les chiens de guerre*, 107
- ¹¹⁹ "Livret matricule de chien."
- ¹²⁰ SHD-DAT 19 N 32 Général commandant en chef, Grand quartier général des armées du Nord et du Nord-Est, December 25, 1917.
- ¹²¹ SHD-DAT 19 N 1435 Eighth Army, "Note de Service," August 14, 1918.
- ¹²² SHD-DAT 16 N 261 Président du Conseil Ministre de la Guerre to Général Commandant en Chef les Armées du Nord et du Nord-Est, November 18, 1918.
- ¹²³ Quoted in Hanna, *Your Death would be Mine*, 210-11.
- ¹²⁴ George W..., April 28, 1917, *Chien sanitaire, les chiens de guerre*, 105.
- ¹²⁵ Raymond L..., March 6, 1918, *Chien sanitaire, les chiens de guerre*, 99.
- ¹²⁶ "Regrettable passe-temps," *Bulletin de la Société protectrice des animaux*, first semester, 1915, 72. See also Baratay, *Bêtes des tranchées*, 148.
- ¹²⁷ Baratay, *Bêtes des tranchées*, 140, 147-9.
- ¹²⁸ "Mascottes de nos poilus," 1822.
- ¹²⁹ Baratay, *Bêtes des tranchées*, 150-51. On the wartorn environment, see Pearson, *Mobilizing Nature*, 91-115.
- ¹³⁰ SHD-DAT 19 N 32 Général commandant en chef, Grand quartier général des armées du Nord et du Nord-Est, "Note no. 9.051," December 9, 1917.
- ¹³¹ Pierre Dumarchey [Pierre Mac Orlan, pseud.], *Verdun* (Paris, 1935), 142.
- ¹³² Paul Verlet, "Mon chien," in *De la Boue sous le Ciel: esquisses d'un blessé* (Paris, 1919), 83-92.
- ¹³³ Das, *Touch and Intimacy*, 73-136, 115, 119. Emphasis in original. Pets performed similar functions for sailors in the male environment of sailing ships. Sari Maenpaa, "Sailors and their Pets: Men and

their Companion Animals aboard early Twentieth-Century Finnish Sailing Ships,” *The International Journal of Maritime History* 28 (2016): 480-495.

¹³⁴ Alphonse Labitte, “Guerre rapproche,” 156; Musée de l’Armée, Paris, anonymous photo, *32463-1-70, “Bibi à la batterie de Foucaucourt, le 21 octobre”; Helphand, *Defiant Gardens*, 21-59.

¹³⁵ Cabanes, “Negotiating Intimacy,” 3-4; Roper, *Secret Battle*.

¹³⁶ René B..., May 10, 1917, *Chien sanitaire, les chiens de guerre*, 100.

¹³⁷ M. J.-L. L..., 1February 15, 1919, *Chien sanitaire, les chiens de guerre*, 102

¹³⁸ Baratay, *Bêtes des tranchées*, 151.

¹³⁹ “Séance mensuelle du 20 juin 1918,” *Bulletin de la Société protectrice des animaux*, April-September 1918, 155. On military indiscipline, see Hanna, *Your Death would be Mine*, 178-226; Smith, *Between Mutiny and Obedience*.

¹⁴⁰ Labitte, “Guerre rapproche,” 154

¹⁴¹ Louis Ernest de Maud’huy, “Préface,” in Mégnin, *Chiens de France*, ii; Clemenceau and Pétain letter reproduced in *Chien sanitaire, les chien de guerre*, 113.

¹⁴² De Maud’huy, “Préface,” i.

¹⁴³ Mégnin, “Chiens de France,” 641, 642.

¹⁴⁴ *Chien sanitaire, les chiens de guerre*, 171-2.

¹⁴⁵ SHD-DAT 16 N 261 Président du Conseil Ministre de la Guerre to Général Commandant en chef les Armées du Nord et du Nord-Est, “Au sujet de la démobilisation des chiens de guerre,” November 21, 1918; Savette, “Utilisation,” 51-2; Ministère de la guerre, *Manuel de dressage et d’utilisation des chiens de transmission* (Paris, 1924).

¹⁴⁶ Savette, “Utilisation,” 30-31, 36.

¹⁴⁷ Velu, “Chien de guerre,” 2, 33-4.

¹⁴⁸ Barat, “Chien au service de l’armée.”

¹⁴⁹ SHD-DAT 33 N 96/1 Colonel Vohl, “Chiens de garde dans les postes de G.R.M.,” October 26, 1937.

¹⁵⁰ Bree, *Historique*.

¹⁵¹ Joyce, *State of Freedom*, 20.

¹⁵² Chris Pearson, “Between Instinct and Intelligence: Harnessing Police Dog Agency in Early Twentieth Century Paris,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 58 (2016): 463–490; Chris Pearson, “Canines and Contraband: Dogs, Nonhuman Agency and the making of the Franco-Belgian Border during the French Third Republic,” *Journal of Historical Geography* 54 (2016): 50-62.

¹⁵³ Nickie Charles, “‘Animals Just Love You as You Are’: Experiencing Kinship across the Species Barrier,” *Sociology* 48 (2014): 715-30; Katherine C. Grier, *Pets in America: A History* (Chapel Hill, 2006); Kete, *Beast in the Boudoir*.

¹⁵⁴ See, for instance, the celebration and contestation of the close ties that developed between soldiers and their dogs during the Vietnam War. Hediger, “Dogs of War.”

¹⁵⁵ Reddy, *Navigation of Feeling*, 104. See also Matteo Millan, “The Shadows of Social Fear: Emotions, Mentalities and Practices of the Propertied Classes in Italy, Spain and France (1900-1914),” *Journal of Social History* 50 (2016): 336-61.

¹⁵⁶ Ahmed, “Affective economies,” 119.