

“Whose Dog are You?” Union Army Pets in the American Civil War, 1861-1865

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This is an analysis of the importance and use of Union Army pets during the American Civil War from 1861-1865. Research shows that pets provided psychological advantages, companionship, and a meaningful, necessary relationship with their fellow soldiers. Research also shows that these pets were held to the same standards as the soldiers and were treated and acted just like any other soldier. The author used letters, diaries, studies, journal articles, reports, photographs, and books.

Nineteenth century America was fraught with increasing conflict and tension between the federal government and the southern states. The tension that was building for the better part of fifty years culminated in a single action by South Carolina: secession. Amid growing tension between the northern and southern United States after the election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860, South Carolina seceded from the Union on December 20, 1860.¹ Shortly thereafter, rest of the ten Confederate states followed suit in order as follows: Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, Virginia, Arkansas, North Carolina, and Tennessee. The action taken by the eleven southern states set the groundwork for the American Civil War. Following the secession of the Confederate states, the Civil War began in 1861 and contrary to popular belief at the time, lasted four grueling years until finally ending in 1865.² Soldiers on both sides had to endure a long and horrific war that became the deadliest in American history.³ How did soldiers, who believed in a short, low-scale war, survive the deadliest war in American history? The answer could be the soldier's companion animals that fought and marched alongside them.

The Civil War had undoubtedly put immense mental and physical stress on the every soldier, officer, and man on the front line. With understanding of psychological practices not gaining momentum until the twentieth century, soldiers of the Civil War were left with the underdeveloped psychological treatments of the mid nineteenth century.

¹ *Declaration of the immediate causes which induce and justify the secession of South Carolina from the federal union: and the ordinance of secession*, (1860): 1

² William Garrigues Bentley, *Burning Rails As We Pleased: The Civil War Letters of William Garrigues Bentley, 104th Ohio Volunteer Infantry*, ed. Barbara Bentley Smith and Nina Bentley Baker (McFarland, 2010), 20.

³ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, *America's Wars*, 2017. https://www.va.gov/opa/publications/factsheets/fs_americas_wars.pdf. It is estimated that between Union and Confederate, losses totaled 498,332 men.

Surgeons observed the effects of the war but did not actually understand the science behind mental health. So, how did the soldiers cope with the atrocities of the Civil War? As historians and primary source authors have shown, most regiments of the Union Army had companion animals such as dogs, cats, birds, and even a rooster on occasion.⁴ Several contemporary texts refer to such animals and pets as mascots of a specific regiment or company. However, the word “mascot” is fairly new in the English language and was first recorded in 1881, six years after the conclusion of the Civil War.⁵ The first-hand accounts of pets in the Civil War referred to the animals simply as a company pet or a regiment pet.⁶ For the purposes of clarity, the animals referred to in this article will be consistent with the primary source vocabulary.

These animals served as companions to the soldiers and as a steadfast ally in battle. Some of the regimental animals gained fame, such as the eagle “Old Abe” from Wisconsin, or were an ordinary animal such as the cat and dog mentioned in the letters of a Union soldier, Zenas Haines. The dog and cat were taken in by Haines’ regiment and treated like soldiers; providing entertainment and support to the soldiers.⁷ Regardless if the company animal became famous or was a stray that was picked up, they all served the same purpose: to give support, companionship, and act as a morale booster.

⁴ See, for instance, Marilyn Seguin. *Dogs of War: And Stories of Other Beasts of Battle in the Civil War* (Boston: Branden Pub Co, 1998).

⁵ “Mascot,” *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/mascot>.

⁶ “From Regiment to President: The Structure and Command of Civil War Armies,” *National Park Service*. August 14, 2017, <https://www.nps.gov/articles/from-regiment-to-president-the-structure-and-command-of-civil-war-armies.htm>, a new regiment contained approximately 1,000 men and ten total companies. The companies typically had around 100 men. These totals coincide with a new regiment and were subject to change throughout the course of the war.

⁷ Zenas T. Haines. *Letters from the Forty-Fourth Regiment M.V.M a Record of the Experience of a Nine Months’ Regiment* (Boston: Herald Job Office, 1863), 26-27.

Both the Confederate and the Union Armies were able to use regiment or company animals to their advantage. However, due to a lack of records or unsubstantiated usage of companion animals by the Confederate army, it appears as though the Union Army had a significantly larger number of pets. The Union Army was in no short supply of pets.

According to Richard Devens, “Nearly every company, certainly every regiment, in the Army of the Potomac, had a pet of some kind or another.”⁸ Possibly, the use of such pets could have been the edge the Union troops needed to last such a brutal war. In such a long conflict that resulted in thousands of deaths and casualties, these animals would have been needed to relieve the mental distress of so many Union soldiers. The role of pets as morale boosters certainly helped keep the fight in the Union Army as soldiers watched their loyal companions go into battle with them.⁹ Due to constant companionship, the pets of a regiment or company quickly became involved in the everyday activities of the soldier’s lives. When one of the pets died, either in battle or by another cause, such as disease or old age, the animal was usually treated to a proper funeral just like a soldier might receive.¹⁰ This aspect of companion animals in the war demonstrates the ability of the soldiers to literally adopt the animals into the fold of their lives, to accept them as a beneficial component of their regiment or company.¹¹

Since the end of the Civil War in 1865, psychological studies for soldiers have increased and improved. It is now commonplace to understand the mental strain of fighting and how soldiers remedy the traumatic experiences of war. The most commonly

⁸ R.M. Devens *The Pictorial Book of Anecdotes and Incidents of the War of the Rebellion, Civil, Military, Naval and Domestic* (Hartford: Hartford Pub., 1866), 504.

⁹ Seguin, *Dogs of War*, 13.

¹⁰ Haines, *Letters from the Forty-Fourth Regiment*, 27.

¹¹ Cindy Stouffer and Shirley Cubbison, *A Colonel, A Flag, and a Dog* (Gettysburg: Thomas Publications, 1998), 4.

recognized modern diagnosis is posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). PTSD has been described in American medical writing since the American Civil War, ultimately gaining worldwide recognition and the common name PTSD in 1980.¹² PTSD has changed names with every war until after the Vietnam War: it started as irritable heart in the Civil War, then was shell shock in World War I, followed by combat stress in World War II, until being named PTSD in the 1980 *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-III).¹³ Research has concluded that the adoption of pets by soldiers during wartime proved beneficial to soldiers.¹⁴ The Civil War was an early example of this due to the high rates of adoption and animals discovered within the Union Army. The use of companion animals by Union soldiers in the Civil War, either for personal or battle use, proved to be an important aspect of the war and to the state of the soldiers within any given regiment or company.

Recent studies have shown the effects animal companionship has had in events like war. Children have often been selected as group to study after traumatic experiences like war. A study during the Croatian Civil War researched the effects animals had on children. The study concluded that animals were important for developing coping mechanisms during a traumatic time.¹⁵ Studies of children and young people are easily relatable to the soldiers of the American Civil War because of the young ages of Union Army soldiers. According to Mark Dunkleman "The average age of the 154th's volunteers was 25.8, exactly

¹² U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, "History of PTSD in Veterans: Civil War to DSM-5," 2017. <https://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/PTSD-overview/basics/history-of-ptsd-vets.asp>

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Julie Ann A. Pooley, Myra F. F. Taylor, and Mary Edwards, "Reaching Down and Finding Humanity: Military Personnel's Experiences of Adopting Dogs While on Deployment," *Society and Animals*, 23, no. 4 (2015), 336.

¹⁵ Lidija Arambašić, et al., "The Role of Pet Ownership as a Possible Buffer Variable in Traumatic Experiences," *Studia Psychologica* 42, no. 1-2 (2000), 144.

the same as the Union army at large.”¹⁶ The average age of soldiers is considerably skewed due to underage boys lying about their ages, so the average age should be younger than 25.8.¹⁷ The young age of Union soldiers puts the need for companionship into perspective. Most of the soldiers were fresh out of their childhood home, young, and possibly emotionally immature. However, the sentiment that is often attached to the idea of human and animal bonds has a place, but not necessarily in the context of war. The bond presented in war was one of action and necessity. Due to the lack of consistent records of the effects of animals in the Civil War, more recent examples must be taken into account. Modern studies have shown animals adopted during overseas deployment established a sense of “Esteem,” particularly self-esteem, between human and animal.¹⁸ Self-esteem allows soldiers to fight to their best abilities and perform their duties well. This is absolutely critical in times of war, no matter the time period. Personal performance of soldiers would have been a beneficial edge in any situation.

Mental health practices such as psychological treatment in the 1860s were rudimentary by modern standards. There was no real understanding of the mental effects on soldiers of a gruesome war during the antebellum years. However, surgeons and doctors did describe issues like “nostalgia”, “melancholia”, and “insanity” in their reports of regiments.¹⁹ These conditions are the most relatable to the understanding that is present today. Nostalgia was similar to what is now called depression. Modern criteria of depression such as persistent sadness, irritability, and decreased energy were the same

¹⁶ Mark H. Dunkelman, *Brothers One and All Esprit De Corps in a Civil War Regiment* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004), 32.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Pooley, “Reaching Down,” 333.

¹⁹ Frueh, and Smith. “Suicide, Alcoholism, and Psychiatric Illness among Union Forces during the U.S. Civil War.” *Journal of Anxiety Disorders* 26, no. 7 (2012), 770.

when diagnosed with nostalgia. Lewis Castleman, a Union soldier, described the effects of nostalgia on a soldier, “The poor fellow died of Nostalgia (home-sickness), raving to the last breath about wife and children. It seems strange that such an affection of the mind should kill strong, healthy men; but deaths from this cause are very frequent in the army...”²⁰

However, most Civil War surgeons believed nostalgia to be more closely related to homesickness than an actual disorder.²¹ Melancholia or melancholy is another term closely related with modern practices. This is similar to depression, just like nostalgia, but is more of a symptom. Melancholia is defined by decreased mood and increased sadness.²² Perhaps the most relevant to PTSD was the condition called irritable or soldier’s heart by Civil War surgeons. According to physician J.M. Da Costa, irritable heart’s symptoms included “palpations,” “cardiac pain,” “rapid pulse,” “shortness of breath,” “nervous disorders,” and “disturbed rest.”²³ These symptoms are synonymous with some of the symptoms presented in PTSD. Da Costa later states that the main causes of irritable heart were “hard field service” such as marching, battle, or heavy-duty activities.²⁴ Pets created a relationship that would lessen the effects of mental disorders. George Nichols, a Union soldier, described the peculiar relationship between soldiers and a dog, “These pets are watched, fed, protected, and carried along with a faithfulness and affection which

²⁰ Alfred Castleman, “Diary of Alfred Lewis Castleman, October, 1861,” in *The Army of the Potomac, Behind the Scenes: a Diary of Unwritten History: from the Organization of the Army...to the Close of the Campaign in Virginia, About the First Day of January, 1863* (Milwaukee: Strickland & Co., 1863), 44.

²¹ Frueh, “Suicide, Alcholism,” 770; “Depression,” *National Institute for Mental Health*, accessed October 22, 2017, https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/depression/index.shtml#part_145397

²² Frueh, “Suicide, Alcholism,” 772.

²³ J.M. Da Costa, “On Irritable Heart: A Clinical Study of a Form of Functional Cardiac Disorder and Its Consequences,” in *The American Journal of Medicine*, 11, no. 5, (1951), 565.

²⁴ Da Costa, “On Irritable Heart,” 581.

constantly suggest the most interesting psychological queries.”²⁵ The rigorous conditions of marches, battles, and camps created the basis for illness such as nostalgia, melancholia, and irritable heart.

Modern psychology did not begin to take form in the United States until 1890 with the publication of William James’ book *The Principles of Psychology*.²⁶ Therefore, surgeons and doctors within regiments had no real understanding of the mental strain of the Civil War. The low understanding of illness by “Combatants and medical care providers in the 1860s [was] psychologically naïve by today’s standards, resulting in an extremely small number of diagnoses that we would associate with psychiatric illnesses today.”²⁷ The surgeons during the Civil War were not equipped with the knowledge to make proper diagnoses, which often resulted in the misdiagnosis of soldiers.

One aspect of large multi-day battles such as: Gettysburg, Vicksburg, and Antietam was the sheer noise that all of the men and weapons emitted. Osborn Oldroyd, a soldier from Ohio, described the sights and sounds that occurred during a siege as,

This morning our whole line of artillery -- seven miles long -- opened on the doomed city and fortifications at six o'clock, and kept up the firing for four hours, during which time the smoke was so thick we could see nothing but the flash of the guns. No fog could have so completely hid from view objects around, both close and familiar. Had the rebs made a dash for liberty then, they could not have been discovered until they were right upon us.²⁸

²⁵ George Ward Nichols, “Diary of George Ward Nichols, November, 1864,” in *The Story of the Great March. From the Diary of a Staff Officer* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1865), 76

²⁶ Ian Miller, “William James and the Psychology of Consciousness: Beginnings of the American School,” *Contemporary Psychoanalysis*, 23, no. 2, (1987), 300; Matthew Sharpe and Joanne Faulkner, *Understanding Psychoanalysis* (Durham: Taylor and Francis, 2014), 4.

²⁷ Frueh, “Suicide, Alcoholism,” 770.

²⁸ Osborn Hamiline Oldroyd, “A Soldier’s Story of the Siege of Vicksburg,” in *Diary of Osborn H. Oldroyd* (H.W. Rokker, 1885), 59.

The sounds of battle were so loud and terrifying that men could not think straight. Another aspect was the infamous Rebel Yell of the Confederate Armies. This yell was used to strike fear into the opposing Union troops so that they might gain an advantage. The Rebel Yell itself was a haunting series of sounds used by the Confederates in battle.²⁹ This animalistic, echoing sound would have been shouted by thousands of men across the battlefield and could most likely be heard over the rifles and canon fire. Albert Marshall, a Union soldier, described the Confederate zeal and yell, “On they came more fierce than before, blowing monstrous horns, pounding kettles, beating drums, screeching the harsh, shrill rebel yell. What possessed them?”³⁰ Regimental animals played an important role in offsetting the effects of the noise level. The dog Sallie is reported as barking along with her own regiments shots and volleys.³¹ This may have given the 11th Pennsylvania something to focus on other than the chaotic noises of battle. The combination of the Rebel Yell, artillery, gunshots, and animal sounds would have been deafening and disorienting to everyone on the battlefield.

To help with morale and rallying troops in battle, regiments often adopted pets such as dogs during the war. While many regiments across the Union Army adopted animals, the 104th Ohio Volunteer Infantry’s dog, Harvey a Bull Terrier, survived the entire war. Harvey is pictured below in Figure I.

²⁹ Craig A. Warren, *The Rebel Yell: A Cultural History* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2014), 56; *Rare Footage of Civil War Veterans Doing the Rebel Yell* (1930; Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 2011.), Video.

https://www.si.edu/sisearch?edan_q=rebel%2Byell

³⁰ Albert Marshall, *Army Life from a Soldier’s Journal: Incidents, Sketches and Record of a Union Soldier’s Army Life, in Camp and Field, 181-1864* (Joliet: A.O. Marshall, 1883), 410.

³¹ Stouffer and Cubbison, *A Colonel, A Flag*, 29.



Figure I: A painting of the dog Harvey from the 104th Ohio Volunteer Infantry circa 1860s. Note this is a painting commissioned by the soldiers of the 104th Ohio after the war. SOURCE: Massillon Museum, <http://www.massillonmuseum.org/201>

This regiment was also known as the “barking dog regiment” because they were famous for always having dogs in their company.³² Harvey’s owner, Daniel M. Stearns, brought the dog to the 104th Ohio in 1862 and they served the remainder of the war until the end in 1865.³³ Harvey accompanied the regiment, specifically Company F, to all battles and traveled with the company throughout the entirety of the war. Harvey would march, not ride, along his fellow soldiers over great distances to the next battle or camp.³⁴ He was an integral part of the entire company and easily the regiment’s most famous companion. Harvey was injured

³² Seguin, *Dogs of War*, 39.

³³ Nelson A. Pinney, *History of the 104th Regiment Ohio Volunteer Infantry from 1862-1865* (Akron: Werner & Lohmann, 1886), 129.

³⁴ Seguin, *Dogs of War*, 39.

twice during the war but still continued to serve alongside the soldiers.³⁵ Harvey was considered a veteran who had “been in service before.”³⁶ He was a seasoned soldier who earned the respect of his company and showcased his abilities in battle and in camp. Harvey’s collar famously stated, “I am Lieutenant D. M. Stearn’s dog; whose dog are you?” and was made completely of brass.³⁷ Harvey was an important part of camp and battlefield life, providing support and morale to the men who fought with him.

Another famous battle-worn dog of the Civil War was the 11th Pennsylvania Infantry’s dog, Sallie.³⁸ Sallie was a brindle coated Pit Bull Terrier, as pictured in Figure II below.



Figure II: Photograph of Sallie from the 11th Pennsylvania Infantry circa 1860s. Note this is the only known photograph of Sallie. Photography was a relatively new media type in the 1860s making this photograph an early example of photography. SOURCE: <http://www.nycivilwar.us/sallie.html>

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Seguin, *Dogs of War*, 39; Pinney, *History of the 104th Regiment*, 129.

³⁷ Pinney, *History of the 104th Regiment*, 129.

³⁸ Stouffer and Cubbison, *A Colonel, A Flag*, 11.

The regiment adopted Sallie in 1862 after she wandered into camp at West Chester, Pennsylvania.³⁹ Sallie quickly adapted to camp life and the demands of marches and drills.⁴⁰ She was famous for recognizing bugle calls and marching along with soldiers. Sallie would often take the lead during drills and escort Colonel Richard Coulter's horse at the front until the soldiers were dismissed.⁴¹ Sallie was a perfect example, along with Harvey from the 104th Ohio, of how dogs were incorporated into the regiment as soldiers themselves, not just as pets. Sallie was treated no differently and reported to roll call and company drills. According to a soldier from the 11th Pennsylvania, Sallie detested deserters and reportedly "planted her teeth firmly in the flesh" of a soldier deserting.⁴² Sallie was no stranger to battle, having served famously in Gettysburg and following the regiment all over the Civil War Theater to battles.⁴³ She served with the 11th Pennsylvania throughout the war, providing a steady ally and companion for soldiers in battle.

The 11th Pennsylvania's first call to battle was in August of 1862 during the battle of Cedar Mountain. Sallie was in the front lines, always attached to the flag bearer as the regiment battled.⁴⁴ This was a dangerous position because Confederate soldiers often targeted the regimental flag in attempt to demoralize Union soldiers. Despite the danger, Sallie faithfully served next to the soldiers throughout the entire battle barking and chasing Confederate soldiers.⁴⁵ Being present during the battle and not hiding in the back lines proved Sallie's worth to the soldiers and truly made her a part of the regiment. By the end

³⁹ Stouffer and Cubbison, *A Colonel, A Flag*, 7.

⁴⁰ Stouffer and Cubbison, *A Colonel, A Flag*, 19.

⁴¹ Micheal Zuccherro, "Dogs of the Regiment," *AKC Gazette*, January 2010, 36.

⁴² "Soldiers' Faithful Dog, Sallie," *The Gettysburg Compiler*, 1910, 2.

⁴³ Seguin, *Dogs of War*, 24.

⁴⁴ Stouffer and Cubbison, *A Colonel, A Flag*, 29.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

of the war, Sallie was largely believed to be one of the most important facets of the 11th Pennsylvania.

Sallie was present at all battles the 11th Pennsylvania Infantry participated in and was notably present at the Battle of Gettysburg. The Battle of Gettysburg occurred in July of 1863 and is largely considered one the bloodiest battles in the Civil War. Gettysburg battlefield is characterized by a large open plain, wooded edges, and areas of high and low elevation. The geography and topography played an important role in the battle as both sides fought for the high ground. Even the location of Gettysburg town was important to the battle.⁴⁶ Sallie was a steady companion to her soldiers, taking her place at the end of the firing line where she would bark at the enemy.⁴⁷ On the first day of battle, Sallie became separated from the regiment during a retreat through the Gettysburg town. She was luckily found after the fighting had ceased, standing vigil over her dead comrades of the 11th Pennsylvania.⁴⁸ Sallie's will to survive and protect her soldiers gave the men the drive to continue on to the next battle. The devotion that the men and Sallie had for one another was unceasing throughout the war as displayed by Sallie at Gettysburg.

By understanding the mechanisms behind dog behavior, we gain a better understanding of how regimental dogs fit in to day-to-day activities and battle scenarios. According to a 2014 study, dogs are one of the only animals with the capability to form lasting attachment and relationships with humans.⁴⁹ This relationship, between humans and dogs, ultimately influences the behavioral and social traits of dogs. Dogs have the

⁴⁶ Peter Doyle, "Military Geology and the Battle of Gettysburg, July 1863," *Geology Today* 22, no. 4, (2006), 145.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Stouffer and Cubbison, *A Colonel, A Flag*, 46.

⁴⁹ Juliane Kaminski and Sarah Marshall-Pescini, *The Social Dog Behavior and Cognition* (Boston: Academic Press, 2014), 166.

ability to take behavioral cues from humans and turn those cues into actions. For example, dogs can discern emotional suggestions from humans and can behave according to that emotion. Dogs, like Sallie, would have been able to comprehend the emotional state of battle from surrounding soldiers and act in a hostile manner towards the enemy.⁵⁰ This is especially true for puppies. Since Harvey and Sallie were both adopted at young ages, their learning stages were within their respective regiments. From a young age, regimental dogs would have learned from verbal and observational cues from their fellow soldiers.⁵¹ The study also found that, dogs have the ability to mimic behavior of superior/dominant beings.⁵² Another study from 2014 found that dogs more likely to focus their attention on the faces of their owners and then behave according to the action, such as pointing.⁵³ So regimental pets would have developed their unique behaviors during battles and in camp from their puppy stages and into adulthood. Regiments had close family ties; multiple family members could be found within one regiment.⁵⁴ This allowed the dogs to be adopted as soldiers into the regiment. Union soldier George Ward describes a dog that was adopted into a company “which soon became so attached to its new home that it never strayed, but became a part of the body, recognizing the face of every man in it.”⁵⁵ The family-oriented structure of a regiment coupled with the human-dog relationship behaviors of dogs would have provided a powerful companionship and loyalty between regimental dogs and the soldiers.

⁵⁰ Kaminski and Marshall-Pescini, *The Social Dog*, 326.

⁵¹ Kaminski and Marshall-Pescini, *The Social Dog*, 296.

⁵² Kaminski and Marshall-Pescini, *The Social Dog*, 292.

⁵³ Alexandra Horowitz, “Visual Attention in Dogs and the Evolution of Non-Verbal Communication” in *Domestic Dog Cognition and Behavior the Scientific Study of Canis Familiaris* (New York: Springer, 2014), 147.

⁵⁴ Dunkelman, *Brothers One*, 35.

⁵⁵ Nichols, “Diary of George,” 76.

While there were advantages to having pets accompany regiments throughout the war, there were also disadvantages. The Civil War Theater was in the outdoors either marching or camping in tents that offered minimal protection from the environment.

Nelson Pinney, a Union Soldier with the 104th Ohio Infantry described a march:

From here we wound along by a mere bridle path up to the summit of Clinch Mountain, which we reached just before dark, The road down the mountain was rocky and dangerous, and led through a deep, narrow gorge where the darkness could be felt, it was so intense... at the end of two more toilsome days' marching in overpowering heat and blinding dust we entered the city of Knoxville...⁵⁶

Men were expected to march exceptionally long distances in one day over varying terrains, overnight, in varying weather, and without rest. This was true across all regiments, often making the men weary, exhausted, and low on morale as Union soldier James Hosmer describes, "I write now in the old camp, under the magnolias (which has become home to us), ragged, dirty, contented, burnt like an Indian, unkempt, unshaven, but about ready now for another start. During the week, we have marched fifty miles, heavily weighted, through mud, dust, heat, and a deluge of rain."⁵⁷ Soldiers were offered reprieve from the natural conditions of the Civil War every couple of days after marching to their next encampment. They were then obligated to fight days-long battles in the same conditions in which they marched in the previous day. The environment affected even the animals, as Thomas Ellis, a Union soldier, explains, "Even the contrabands, horses, and mules were visibly affected by the heat..."⁵⁸ The Civil War had battles primarily in the southern United States. This means

⁵⁶ Pinney, *History of the 104th Regiment*, 19-20.

⁵⁷ James K. Hosmer, *The Color Guard: Being a Corporal's Notes of Military Service in the Nineteenth Army Corps* (Boston: Walker Wise and Co., 1864), 244.

⁵⁸ Thomas T. Ellis, *Leaves from the Diary of an Army Surgeon: or, Incidents of Field, Camp, and Hospital Life* (New York: John Bradburn, 1863), 312.

<http://solomon.cwld.alexanderstreet.com.er.lib.k-state.edu>

the heat in the middle of summer, when many campaigns took place would have been excruciating in full battle fatigues or fur for animals. This is especially true for smaller animals, like dogs, which have a lower heat tolerance than humans. Still, men and animals were expected to march and fight in any given environment.

The animals were at risk of dying just as much as the average soldier. Since there are no actual records of pet deaths for the Civil War, we cannot be entirely sure of how many or how often the pets died. However, it can be inferred that the rate was high because companies held several different animals over the course of the war. The death of the one being that provided relief, morale, and companionship would have been devastating to the men. Union soldier Zenas Haines described the funeral of his company cat,

Her little stiffened body was encoffined in a paper box, and placed in the centre of the barrack. A small American flag was thrown over it, and the boys gathering about the remains sung Pleyel's Hymn with an appearance of solemnity that was altogether irresistible. The remains were then carefully placed upon an extemporized bier, and borne to the rear of the kitchen in the midst of a formidable guard of honor, marching with arms reversed, and chanting doleful symphonies.⁵⁹

The death of the cat truly had an emotional impact on the men as they also fired “imaginary vollies” and prosecuted a man for murder of the cat. They withheld rations for two days from the murderer.⁶⁰ This cat did not even have a name and was only with the company for a few weeks; imagine the repercussions of a longer surviving pet. Another example comes from the 11th Pennsylvania Infantry and their dog Sallie. Sallie had served from the very start of the war all the way until February 6, 1865, when she was killed in the Battle of Hatcher's Run.⁶¹ It is reported that the men of the 11th Pennsylvania stopped fighting when

⁵⁹ Haines, *Letters from the Forty-fourth*, 27.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Seguin, *Dogs of War*, 25.

Sallie was discovered and buried her under heavy enemy fire.⁶² The death of Sallie just three months before the end of the Civil War would have been a devastating blow to the men of the 11th Pennsylvania Infantry. Her unwavering will and dedication to her regiment proved the importance of regimental pets during the Civil War. Sallie's impact on the men she served with is displayed in a monument at Gettysburg National Battlefield and reunion photographs as seen in Figure III and Figure IV below.



Figure III: Photograph of the 11th Pennsylvania's monument at Gettysburg National Battlefield, circa 2000s. Note the statue of Sallie at the bottom of the monument. SOURCE: <http://gettysburg.stonesentinels.com/union-monuments/pennsylvania/pennsylvania-infantry/11th-pennsylvania/>



⁶² Stouffer and O

Figure IV: A photograph of the 11th Pennsylvania reunion at Gettysburg, 1910. Note how three men on the right moved to the side to allow room for the statue of Sallie to show. SOURCE: <https://emergingcivilwar.com/2015/02/06/mans-best-comrade/>

Harvey, from the 104th Ohio, was also memorialized by his comrades in the post-war period. While Harvey was not killed in battle, he went missing shortly after the war, effectively ceasing all contact with his compatriots.⁶³ However, the men of the 104th Ohio remembered Harvey in their reunions by placing a painting of Harvey next to the men in the photograph as seen in Figure V below.



Figure V: Photograph of the 104th Ohio Infantry reunion, circa 1890s. Note the painting of Harvey in the front row on the left. SOURCE: <http://www.historynet.com/war-words-bug.htm>

Undoubtedly the Civil War was a long and brutal conflict that resulted in the deaths of nearly 500,000 Americans. The aspects of war in general, such as days-long battles, noise, camp life, and death put immense stress on soldiers of both armies. Loyalty between soldiers and pets was unmatched and enhanced the ability of soldiers in the field and

⁶³ Seguin, *Dogs of War*, 39.

improved their lives in general. Soldiers suffered immense physical and mental stress throughout the war that often resulted in basic diagnosis of disorders. The psychological field expanded incredibly in the hundred years following the Civil War. This war was merely the starting point for the eventual modern wartime diagnoses. Soldiers were able to persevere through the Civil War with the help of regimental and company pets. Pets continued to serve in wars after this conflict, continually gaining popularity for their enhanced senses. Even as dogs became a more functional aspect of the Army, they would have continued to act as companions and soldiers during war. While some pets may not gain recognition or are lost in the history of battles and wars, they were just as important for the soldiers as the men serving with them. Dogs and other companion animals were critical to the Army of the Potomac and for the Union Army as a whole. Pets, through unwavering loyalty and support likely helped turn the tide of the war to the Union side. Through battle noise, illness, and grief, these dogs proved their worth in supporting and making a difference in the outcome of the Civil War.

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