

STUBBY OF A.E.F. ENTERS VALHALLA Tramp Dog of No Pedigree Took Part In the Big Parade in France

Stubby is dead. He was only a dog and unpedigreed at that, but he was the most famous mascot in the A.E.F. Stubby took part in four major offensives, was wounded and gassed. He captured a German Spy and won more medals than any other soldier dog. He led the American Legion parades and was known to three Presidents. He was, indisputably, a fighting dog. His Arlington is to be the Smithsonian Institution.

Early in life Stubby longed for a career. Realizing the value of education, the brindle and white "bull terrier" abandoned his nomadic life for that of a student. Selecting Yale University as his alma mater, he was soon recognized there was a prodigy. His progress, however, was interrupted.

America entered the war and the First Connecticut Regiment, later merged into the 102d Infantry, Twenty-sixth Division, was ordered to Yale field for training. Though delighted with his intellectual environment and his frolics in the huge Bowl, Stubby came to the conclusion that he ought to do his bit by his country. It was hard, after five peregrinating years, during which he had often been hungry and cold, to leave the only scene of peace and hospitality he had ever found. But in such a time, when men were parting from mothers and wives to defend the honor of Uncle Sam, was he, a mere wanderer without dependents, to think of self?

Stubby joined up. One morning a bugle sounded the departure from camp. Crammed into a train loaded with equipment, he was started South. He knew not where he was speeding. His recent contacts with scholasticism, however, stood him in good stead. Tennyson had said something memorable--"His not to reason why, his but to do and die".

At Newport News the soldiers were hustled aboard a transport. Here difficulties arose. Stubby was not on the roster. He had no enlistment card. The officers were stern and unknown to him.

Corporal J. Robert Conroy perceived his hand-dog look and was touched.



Humane Society of Huron Valley

Happy Memorial Day, everyone. We're closed today in recognition and memorial to those who have died in service.

This is Stubby, a WWI hero. Dogs weren't allowed in the US military then, but this Pit Bull Terrier wiggled his way into their hearts (and boots). Stubby not only learned to salute officers by putting his right paw on his right eyebrow, he warned of poison gas, captured a German spy, and comforted dying soldiers on bullet-ridden battlefields. Stubby also reportedly had a talent for locating wounded warriors stuck between the trenches of opposing armies -- he'd listen for English, then go to the location and bark until paramedics came. By the end of the war, Stubby had grenade shrapnel in his leg and chest, nerve damage from gas, experience in 17 battles, the rank of Sergeant, and thousands upon thousands of friends. He died in 1926 (See his obituary here: <http://www.ct.gov/mil/cwp/view.asp?a=1351&q=257958>).

Here's to Sergeant Stubby and to all the animals in the world who have served and loved us.

Wrapping him into the greatcoat slung on his arm and admonishing him to be quiet, he smuggled him up the gangway. Stubby lay still, with bated breath, until released into a coal bunker. Without diminishing allegiance to all his comrades, Stubby from that moment adopted Conroy as his master.

On Feb. 5, 1918, he entered the front lines of the Chemin des Dames sector, north of Soissons, where he was under fire night and day for more than a month. The noise and strain that shattered the nerves of many of his comrades did not impair Stubby's spirits. Not because he was unconscious of danger. His angry howl while a battle raged and his mad canter from one part of the lines to another indicated realization. But he seemed to know that the greatest service he could render was comfort and cheerfulness.

When he deserted the front lines it was to keep a wounded soldier company in the corner of a dugout or in the deserted section of a trench. If the suffering doughboy fell asleep, Stubby stayed awake to watch.

In the Chemin des Dames, Stubby captured a German spy and saved a doughboy from a gas attack. Hearing a sound in the stillness of the night, the dog, who guarded sleeplessly, stole out of the trenches and recognized--a German. Attempts by the German to deceive the dog were futile. Seizing his prisoner by the breeches, Stubby held on until help arrived.

Stubby, on other leaves, visited Nice, Monte Carlo and Nancy. At Neufchateau, the home of Jeanne d'Arc, he was presented with the first of the many medals he subsequently won in dog shows and Victory loan drives. Upon his return to the front he found himself in the thick of the Meuse-Argonne fray, which was to end the war.

After armistice Stubby spent his time congratulating and being congratulated. Traversing the streets of Paris, he was recognized by hundreds of French, English, Australian and American soldiers. And then on Christmas Day, at Mandres-en-Basigny, he met President Wilson. Stubby the dog to whom rank insignia made no difference, offered his paw. Little had he expected that he was to be known and greeted by three Presidents.

Back in his native land he was demobilized at Camp Devens, Mass., April 20, 1919. Parading with his famous division in Boston, he was reviewed by Governor Calvin Coolidge. An acquaintance was started which was renewed at the American Legion convention at Kansas City in 1921, attended by Vice President Coolidge, and at the convention in Omaha 1926, attended by President Coolidge.

On parade Stubby always wore the embroidered chamois blanket presented to him by admiring Frenchwomen and decorated with service chevrons, medals, pins, buttons and a galaxy of souvenirs. On the end of his modern bobbed tail a German iron cross was appended, the possession of which Stubby never explained.

Conroy's decision to study law at Georgetown University brought him and Stubby to Washington. There Conroy became secretary to Representative E. Hart Fenn of Connecticut and Stubby met Representative William P. Connery Jr. of Massachusetts and B. Carroll Reece of Tennessee, old friends from the Twenty-sixth Division, in Congress. His buddies were coming into prominence. One day Stubby encountered Major M.D. Arnold and Captain J.W. Boyer, both of the old Y. D.

Besides being painted by Charles Ayer Whipple, artist of the Capitol, Stubby had the distinction of being photographed with General Pershing.