

Blue Cross in World War One

Blue Cross was originally called 'Our Dumb Friends' League' when it was formed in 1897 to care for working horses on the streets of London. We opened what is thought to be the world's first animal hospital in 1906 and set up the Blue Cross Fund to raise money to help sick and injured horses during the Balkan War in 1912.

Animals in World War One

In World War One animals made a huge contribution to the war effort; horses, donkeys, mules, dogs and pigeons were used mainly with other animals helping too.

Can you think of the ways in which those animals may have helped us?

The animals needed help when they were sick or injured and by raising money through the Blue Cross Fund we provided valuable support.

We were responsible for helping and treating the dogs for the entire French army;

- 18,000 dogs in total!



Blue Cross Ambulance at Work in France.
ARTHUR J. COLE, BOSTON. BY VICTORIA STREET, LONDON, N.W. 1

Raising money

People raised money from different parts of the world to help; Australia, Canada, India and the USA.

Can you find these countries on a map?

Crossword

Across

- A person who treats animals
- An animal who has wandered away from home is called a _____
- These cause explosions
- To save someone or something

Down

- If we find a pet a new place to live we _____ it
- Someone who is fearless

Answers: 1. Rehome 2. Brave 3. Vet 4. Stray 5. Bombs 6. Rescue

What did we do?

We established animal hospitals and provided materials and supplies to the army, particularly for horses.

By the end of the war in Belgium and France there were:

- 10 horse hospitals
- Three hospitals for dogs
- 80 vets and nurses working at the hospitals with the help of 150 French soldiers



Helping at home

As well as the very important job of helping animals overseas we also continued to help animals here too. At the end of the war lots of soldiers



wanted to bring home dogs they had made friends with. One dog we helped was Monti who had saved the lives of two soldiers - we paid for the quarantine fees for Monti.

What does quarantine mean?

Thanks

The brave people who served in the war were thankful for our help. This is from a soldier grateful we looked after a dog he brought home from France.

"After all this war has been worth winning, knowing that we have people in England who look after Our Dumb Friends whilst we were doing our bit out there, I shall never forget the Blue Cross and its Fund."



Pets change lives
We change theirs

Please visit bluecross.org.uk for information on our free education programme or email education@bluecross.org.uk