



Ladd Field Goes
to the Dogs!

Acknowledgments

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On th cover: A pair of sled dogs in Fairbanks with Mr. and Mrs. Walseth who were stationed at Ladd Field in the 1940s



Did you know...

... that the U.S. military trains more than men and women? That's right, animals have helped the military with several important missions. These animals include mules to carry supplies, pigeons to transport messages, and even dolphins to find submarines.

Dogs have played a very important role in the U.S. Army. They are great companions, have a good sense of smell, can stand guard, and are hard workers.

During World War II, the Army started training dogs in Virginia to be part of the War Program or the "K-9 Corps." By 1943, the program was up and running. Soon other Army sites began training dogs to help with the war effort, including places in Alaska.

Keep reading to meet several dogs that helped the soldiers at Ladd Field during World War II.

*Dogs and their handlers
(Photo courtesy of the National Archives)*

Hi everyone,
my name is
Sukat!

Sukat was an Alaskan husky and worked as a sled dog at Ladd Field. Huskies are quick and strong dogs that love to be outside in the cold weather. Sukat's name means "to be fast" in Iñupiat, and she was definitely a quick runner.

Sukat had two layers of fur to keep her warm, even when the weather was -30° outside. Brrr! If she got cold, Sukat curled up in a ball and wrapped her tail around her nose to keep her face warm.

Since Sukat liked cold weather, she made a great sled dog. Sukat's ancestors pulled sleds for almost a thousand years in the cold climates of Alaska and Canada, so she followed in their steps.

Sled dogs work in teams of 2 to 14 dogs and run across snow or ice. The biggest teams carry the heavier loads and can run longer distances. Sleds are great to carry supplies. The sled sits in the back of the team and connects to the dogs with ropes or cords. Older sleds were made of wood, but newer ones are made of metal.

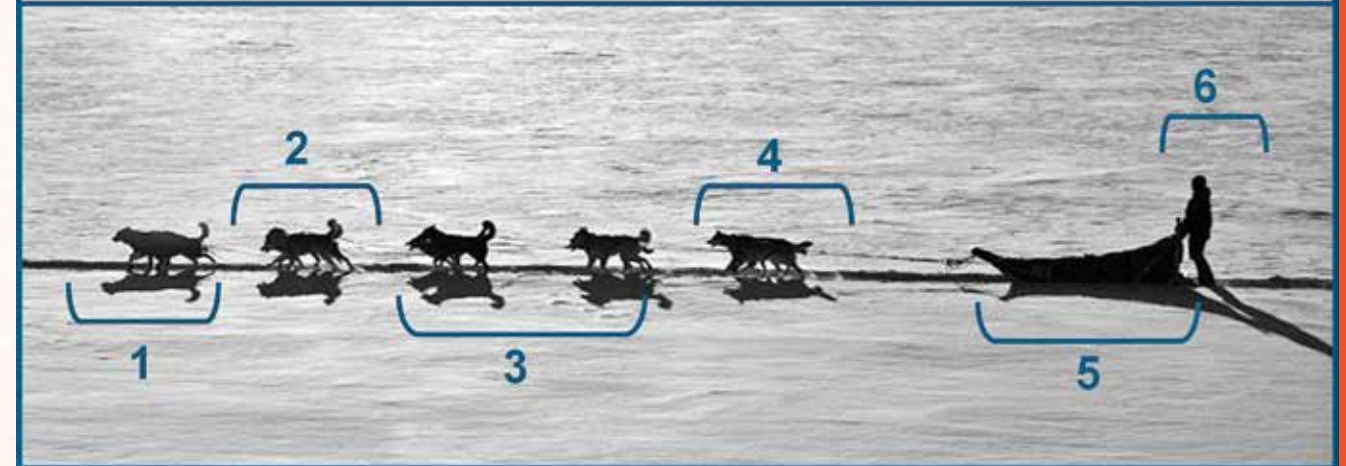
On a dogsled team, everyone is important. Mushers take care of the dogs and give orders to the team. The lead dogs are in the front and they listen to the musher for commands and set the pace. Behind the lead dogs are swing dogs, which keep up the pace and help turn the sled around corners. In the middle are team dogs that give the team extra running power. Wheel dogs are closest to the sled and, since the sled may hit some bumps, they must be strong, brave, and calm.



See if you can
match the
sled dogs with
their roles on
the team. ▷

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Musher
Swing Dogs
Sled
Team Dogs
Lead Dogs
Wheel Dogs



Hi there,
Jill here!



Jill was part of a long line of dogs trained at Camp Rimini in Montana. The camp trained hundreds of sled dogs and pack dogs during World War II. Soldiers like Dave Armstrong trained teams of dogs to travel to areas too dangerous to travel by vehicle or plane.

Mr. Armstrong had a difficult job in picking the best dogs to train. Dogs like Jill were good choices because they were strong and could run for long distances without getting tired. Training included running, learning commands, and building up muscles by pulling weights across the camp.

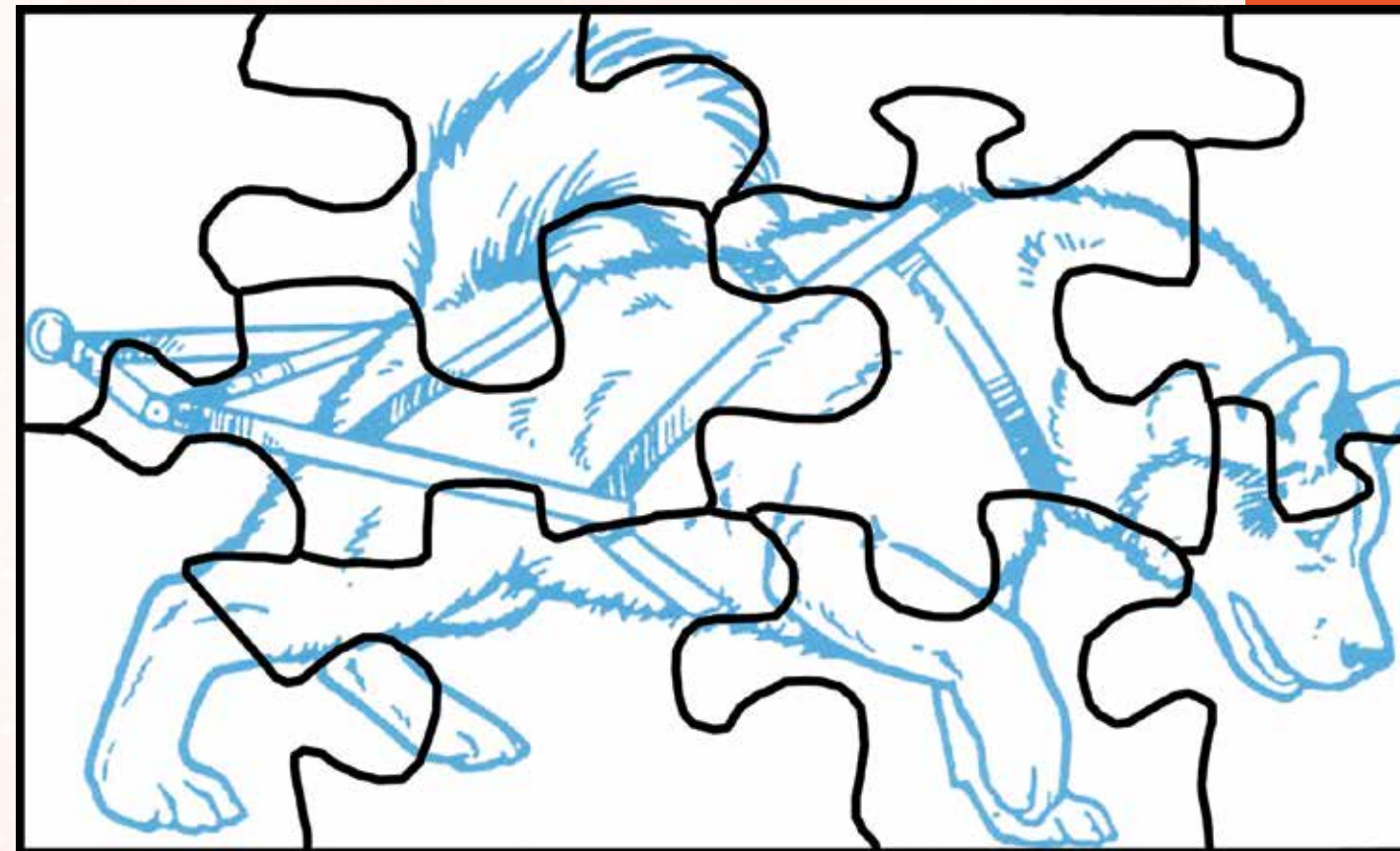
The dogs were trained to rescue and recover pilots, planes, and other equipment in cold and icy places. After training, dogs went to Greenland, Baffin Island, Antarctica, and Alaska for missions. Ladd Field received several dogs trained at Camp Rimini.

Jill was a valuable member of the "cream team," which was named for the color of their fur. Mr. Armstrong was a good trainer and this team was well known in the area for their hard work. Even though Mr. Armstrong kept his dogs in shape and trained them, he was close with them, especially Jill.

Color the picture of Mr. Armstrong's dog in training.
Then carefully cut the pieces and put the puzzle together. ▷



Dave Armstrong with one of his dogs, Jill, 1943



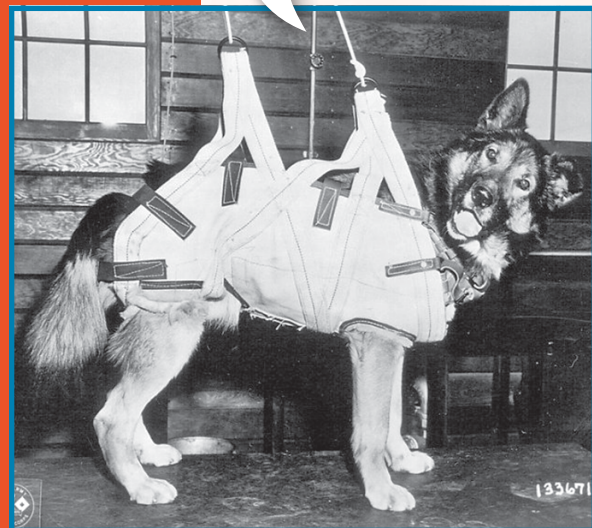


After the war ended in 1945, many dogs stayed in Alaska as sled dogs and search and rescue dogs. When snowmobiles and helicopters became more common, sled teams were no longer the only choice for rescue missions. These dogs still loved to run, and many became part of dog sled racing. The Iditarod is a famous race where dogs race from Anchorage to Nome. Another well-known race is closer to Ladd Field. The Yukon Quest is 1,000 miles long and runs between Fairbanks and Whitehorse, Yukon.



*Yukon Quest musher and dogs passing by Fort Wainwright, 2010
(Photo courtesy of the U.S. Army)*

Jiggs
reporting for
duty!



Jiggs was a flying dog! Some dogs that trained for search and rescue missions also trained to jump out of airplanes. Many pilots flew in and out of Ladd Field, and when accidents happened, dogs like Jiggs went out to help. Since Alaska is so big, flying to the spot is faster and easier than going by land.

Pilots flew 350 feet or lower from the ground and when they reached the right spot, the dogs and their trainers jumped. Dogs wore harnesses that wrapped around their chests, back, and bellies to keep them safe. The harness attached to the parachute, which opened and allowed them to float to the ground. These parachuting dogs were called "paradogs."

Paradogs were usually part of a sled team, so when they landed, they were hitched up to the sled with a musher. Remember Sukat and her job as a sled dog?

Jiggs was not the first dog that parachuted at Ladd Field. During the war, a Scottish Terrier named Tinker made many jumps with his owner, Sergeant Eglehardt. Tinker even wore a custom-made parachute.



Tinker the dog with the Ladd Parachute Group, 1942

Find the
words to
help Jiggs
with his
mission. ►

F	S	W	Q	D	W	D	D	X	C	H	C	I	J	P
L	S	T	X	T	S	D	Z	J	C	Z	M	T	A	R
Y	E	H	A	A	N	B	G	R	A	E	T	R	O	K
E	N	A	L	P	R	I	A	O	X	I	A	N	G	C
U	R	L	P	Z	X	E	Q	M	D	C	K	F	G	H
F	A	Z	R	I	S	R	N	M	H	A	M	P	W	F
B	H	O	Y	K	L	S	I	U	T	Y	R	K	O	Q
R	E	S	C	U	E	O	T	Y	U	S	K	A	B	N
L	Q	N	V	T	L	E	T	D	B	Y	H	P	P	Z

AIRPLANE
PILOT

FLY
HARNESS

SEARCH
PARACHUTE

RESCUE
PARADOG

I'm Hokey!



Dogs continue to perform many of the same jobs they did during World War II, but now they do even more work. They still run as sled dogs and work in search and rescue groups, but others learn how to find bad people, locate explosives, and find drugs.

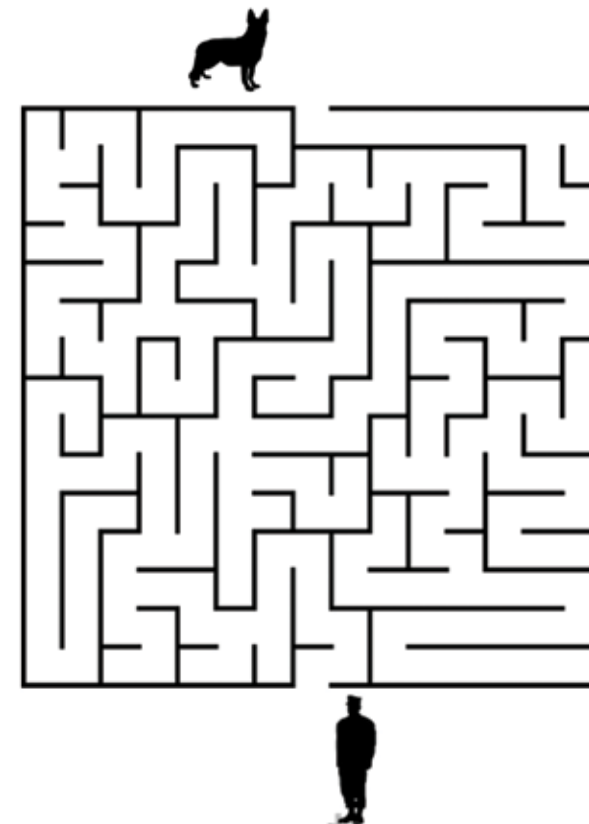
Hokey is a military police dog at nearby Fort Wainwright, and he works with his trainer, Lynnette. Every year Hokey and Lynnette must pass several tests to show that they know how to do their jobs. In one test, a soldier pretends to be a bad person and hides in a building. Hokey chases the soldier and looks for him like a game of hide and seek. When Hokey finds him, he waits until Lynnette arrives and then makes sure the soldier doesn't cause any more problems.

Hokey and Lynnette have a special relationship since they work together every day. Like other dog and handler relationships, they need to understand each other and be ready to jump to their feet and work at a moment's notice.



Hokey and his trainer, Lynnette, walk with a soldier who is pretending to be a bad person.

Help
Hokey find
the hiding
soldier. ▷





Questions to think about:

1. Which position would you want if you were a dog on a sled team?
2. Do you think you could jump out of a plane with a parachute? Would you like to?
3. If you were a dog with the U.S. Army, what job would you want? Why?

Want to learn more about dogs in the military?

Check out these other resources:

The Amazing Adventures of Bing the Parachuting Dog
(Gil Boyd)

D-Day Dogs: Remarkable True Stories of Heroic Dogs
(Isabel George)

A Dog With a Destiny: Smoky (Isabel George)

The Most Decorated Dog in History: Sergeant Stubby
(Isabel George)

Prisoner of War: Judy (Isabel George)

Rags: Hero Dog of WWII (Margot Theis Raven)

Rob the Paradog (Dorothy Nicolle)

Sea Dog Bamse, World War II Canine Hero (Angus Whitson and Andrew Orr)

Tuesday Tucks Me In: The Loyal Bond between a Soldier and His Service Dog (Luis Carlos Montalvan)

War Dogs, Canines in Combat (Michael G. Lemish)

War Dog: The No-Man's Land Puppy Who Took to the Skies
(Damien Lewis)

War Dogs: Tales of Canine Heroism, History, and Love
(Rebecca Frankel)

Want to learn more about Ladd Field's history?

Ladd Field's history is filled with many amazing stories. You and your parents can take a driving self-guided tour around the Ladd Field National Historic Landmark. More information about Fort Wainwright's history can be found online at <https://home.army.mil/wainwright/index.php/about/environmental/cultural-resources/ladd-field-national-historic-landmark-world-war-ii-1939-1945>.

Cultural Resources Management at Fort Wainwright

The Cultural Resources Management Program supports the Army's mission by inventorying and managing cultural resources in a manner that complies with federal law, minimizes impacts on the mission, supports sustainability of resources and infrastructure, and provides sound stewardship of properties eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

The Cultural Resources Management Office is located within the Environmental Division, Building 3023. Copies of publications and additional information on the history of Fort Wainwright are available upon request. Business hours are Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Directorate of Public Works, Environmental Division
ATTN: IMFW-PWE (Cultural Resources Manager)
1046 Marks Road, Fort Wainwright, Alaska 99703-4500
(907) 361-3002



*U.S. Army sled dog team member
and one of his dogs, 1965
(Photo courtesy of the U.S. Army)*

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