With Animals at War: Human-Animal Relations and the British War Effort, 1939-1945

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of Liverpool for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy by Thomas Ian Webb.

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Abstract

Focusing on case studies concerning food production and fighting, this thesis offers the first in-depth account of how the British state enrolled and utilised a diverse range of animals for the war effort. Pigs converted kitchen waste into meat; dairy cattle produced milk for the health of the nation; pigeons carried messages for the British military that helped save the lives of military personnel and provided intelligence from occupied Europe; meanwhile mules carried food, ammunition and human bodies, and provided a source of comfort and intimacy for military personnel within various theatres of war. These animals were represented at the time, to greater or lesser extents, as symbols of the war effort. Moreover, civilians and military personnel used them to forge and reaffirm their wartime identities. The enrolment of these animals also had divergent legacies, shaping human-animal relationships into the post-war years.

To reveal the cultural and material impact of war on these particular human-animal relationships, this thesis draws on a diverse source base, including governmental and archival sources, military records, newspapers and journals, photographs, and personal testimonies. It introduces the notion of 'effort' and uses this concept to explore how animals were enrolled for war. This includes the state-led effort to work out what animals were capable of and what they could contribute towards the war. It also shows how this was a physical and imaginative effort, as it required animals to be studied, experimented on, interacted with, and harnessed. Furthermore, it demonstrates how this was a collective effort, built on the simultaneous enrolment of humans to work with animals and the interactions between various historical actors. Through such an approach, it recognises the significant role animals played within the British war effort *and* offers new stories about humans at war. In particular, it extends wider historiographical debates concerning the war's impact on gender, citizenship and emotion. It also contributes to debates regarding the 'People's War.' It explores human-animal relationships to reveal social cohesion and dissension in wartime Britain along state-individual, military-civilian, urban-rural, class and gendered lines. More widely, it contributes to the social, cultural and environmental histories of Britain during the Second World War. Overall, it argues that the Second World War in Britain needs to be reconsidered as a human-animal effort.

List of Abbreviations

ARP	Air Raid Precautions
ATO	Animal Transport Officer
IWM	Imperial War Museum
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
MMB	Milk Marketing Board
MO	Mass Observation
MOF	Ministry of Food
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOI	Ministry of Information
NPS	National Pigeon Service
PDSA	People's Dispensary for Sick Animals
RAF	Royal Air Force
RASC	Royal Army Service Corps
RASE	Royal Agricultural Society of England
RAVC	Royal Army Veterinary Corps
RIASC	Royal Indian Army Service Corps
RIAVC	Royal Indian Army Veterinary Corps
SPKC	Small Pig Keeper's Council
UNRAA	United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration
WAAC	War Artists Advisory Committee
WAEC	War Agricultural Executive Committee
WLA	Women's Land Army
WVS	Women's Voluntary Services

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Introduction

In February 1940, *Picture Post* published 'Pigs for Victory', an article about a group of dustmen from Tottenham who had voluntarily responded to the government's 'Grow More Food' campaign by rearing over 40 pigs in the yard of their refuse destructor plant.[1] The article outlined how the dustmen fed their pigs on kitchen refuse collected from housewives and sold their produce to the government to enhance the nation's food-stocks. It also lauded how the dustmen's activities were pioneering an interconnected system of food production and waste management across North London. This was at a time when the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) promoted the pig as a 'war winner' due to its capabilities of efficiently converting kitchen waste into food.[2] Various ministries of the British government were keen to endorse the pig club scheme as it was a prime example of wartime duty, participation and citizenship in action. Officials from the Ministries of Agriculture and Fisheries, Food, Supply, and Information, attended the public arrival of the pigs at their new urban home in Tottenham to help raise its profile and encourage similar efforts across Britain.[3] The celebration of the pig club's human *and* nonhuman members indicates that the popular motif of everybody 'doing their bit' for the war effort stretched across military-civilian, class, gender, *and* species boundaries.

The governmental and press attention paid to the Tottenham dustmen pig club during the war indicates that the utilisation of animals for the war effort was represented as a significant endeavour. It is surprising, therefore, that animals have only recently sparked the interests of academic historians in regards to the history of wartime Britain. This thesis seeks to build upon this interest, and fill a gap in academic historiography, by offering the first in-depth account of how the British state enrolled and utilised animals for the war effort within the arenas of food production and fighting. It traces the ways in which various animals – pig, cows, pigeons, and mules – were reimagined, scrutinised, experimented upon, and harnessed to meet the demands of the conflict. It highlights how the utilisation of animals for wartime purposes involved the simultaneous enrolment of humans. It also demonstrates how

[1] *Picture Post*, 3 February 1940. For more press coverage on the Tottenham Dustmen pig club see, *Manchester Guardian*, 31 January 1940.
[2] *Daily Express*, 23 November 1939.
[3] *Picture Post*, 3 February 1940.

the material *and* cultural enrolment of these animals offers a lens for exploring human wartime identities and for offering new understandings of the 'People's War', especially along the lines of national unity, gender and emotion. Through such enquiries, the thesis argues that the British war effort needs to be reconsidered as a human-animal effort.

The term 'effort' offers a productive way of looking at the history of human-animal relations in a wartime context. In the first instance, there was a state-led effort to work out what animals were capable of and what they could contribute towards the war. This was both a physical *and* imaginative effort, as it required animals to be studied, experimented on, interacted with, and harnessed. This human effort to enrol animals was also contingent on how humans attempted to utilise the physical effort of the animal. The physical force, or energy, of the animal was required to produce food, transport messages or carry loads of supplies.[4] Moreover, the collective demands of a 'war effort' highlight how it was built on the interactions between historical actors.[5] It is then necessary to view the war effort as a human-animal effort, which was premised on human-animal interactions. In a similar way to scholars who have explored animal agency in light of post-humanist theories, a focus on how humans utilised the physical effort of animals allows the historian to examine their historical influence beyond the human-centric notions of subjectivity, intention or reason.[6] But it also overcomes the problematic aspects of using the term agency in regards to animals, which can be critiqued for being used in an ahistorical manner, and which is often developed within the frameworks of social history and histories of capitalism to uncover the 'resistance' or 'labour' of the animal.[7] Instead, 'effort' captures the wartime influence of animals, and the significance of human-animal interactions, outside of these anthropocentric concerns.

Through the lens of human-animal effort, this thesis also offers a reinvigorated cultural history of animals that brings the corporeal animal to the fore. As Erica

[4] For a discussion of the historical influence of animals and their energy see, A. Mikhail, 'Unleashing the Beast: Animals, Energy, and the Economy of Labor in Ottoman Egypt', *American Historical Review*, 118.2 (2013), pp. 317-348.
[5] The term 'war effort' was commonly evoked during the war. In the first month of the war *The Times* deployed the term in headlines. See, *The Times*, 16 September 1939, p. 9; *The Times*, 21 September 1939, p. 7.
[6] For a range of articles that propose various approaches, in a posthumanist vein, in regards to the question of animal agency see, *History & Theory, Theme Issue*, 52 (2013).
[7] Such works include, J. Hribal, 'Animals, Agency, and Class: Writing the History of Animals from Below', *Human Ecology Forum*, 14.1 (2007), pp. 101-112; J. Hribal, *Fear of the Animal Planet: The Hidden History of Animal Resistance* (Oakland: A.K. Press, 2011); S. Swart, *Riding High: Horses, Humans, and History in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2010).

Fudge indicates, historians use human-constructed sources to uncover the history of animals. This ultimately means that historians are examining representations of animals in the past that are revealing of humanity.[8] In the context of Britain and the Second World War, representations of animals provide an untapped means to explore the construction and negotiation of wartime discourses and human identities. However, such a cultural approach, as Fudge highlights, can also render the corporeal animal invisible.[9] The recent material turn in animal history, especially in regards to questions of animal agency, has challenged this purely cultural approach and has sought to bring the corporeal animal into view. A focus on human-animal effort, therefore, offers a way of marrying these two approaches. Its focus on the imaginative *and* physical effort involved in enrolling animals for the war grounds representations of animals within material human-animal interactions. As such, wartime discourses and human identities were not just constructed and negotiated in human writings, photographs, or spoken testimonies about animals, but were embedded in the physical interactions and lived experiences between the two. This is still a history built on the analysis of human-constructed representations of animals. However, it is one that seeks to embed such representations within their material underpinnings.

This focus on the cultural and material significance of animals during the war intersects, and extends, the burgeoning literature of the environmental history of war. Bringing environmental and military history together, scholars have demonstrated how nature shaped warfare and warfare, simultaneously, shaped nature. Edmund Russell and Richard Tucker, in their edited volume *Natural Enemy, Natural Ally*, highlight how various facets of nature, including fauna and flora, have been designated as enemies and/or allies, and mobilised or targeted as such by belligerent nations.[10] Building on this work, environmental historians have also considered the agency of nature, and have accounted for the ways in which nature enabled or thwarted the ability of humans to wage war.[11] This focus on the material influence of

[8] E. Fudge, 'A Left-Handed Blow: Writing the History of Animals', in N. Rothfels (ed.), *Representing Animals* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), pp. 3-18.
[9] *Ibid*., pp. 6-7.
[10] R. Tucker and E. Russell (eds), *Natural Enemy, Natural Ally: Towards an Environmental History of War* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2004).
[11] L. Nash, 'The Agency of Nature or the Nature of Agency?', *Environmental History*, 10.1 (2005), pp. 67-69; L. M. Brady, 'The Wilderness of War: Nature and Strategy in the American Civil War', *Environmental History*, 10.3 (2005), pp. 421-447; C. Pearson, *Mobilizing Nature: The Environmental History of War and Militarization*

nature has been accompanied by attention to the cultural significance of nature, and how it has been imbued with wartime discourses. For example, the French Alps during the Second World War were mobilised as sites for reconstructing French masculinity.[12] This body of work informs this study as it points towards how animals were positioned as allies or enemies of the British war effort. It also indicates the need to recognise the cultural and material importance of nature, of which animals are a central component, for studies of war. But while animals are present within such scholarship, they are often considered as another facet of nature and treated under the rubric of the war-environment relationship. Following the recent growth within the field of animal history, there is a growing awareness of the influential historical role of animals in their own right. This research, therefore, seeks to bring the animal to the fore at the intersection of animal history and environmental histories of war.

This thesis also contributes towards the growing historiographical interest specifically in the role of animals in Britain during the Second World War. In recent years there has been a proliferation of popular history books that focus on the wartime Dickin Medal winners - which were medals awarded by the charity People's Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA) to animals for 'bravery' during wartime service - and the thousands of other animals that were mobilised by the British during the Second World War. Most likely because of their status as 'man's best friend', military and civil defence service dogs have warranted the most attention.[13]

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in Modern France (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012); M. Dudley, *An Environmental History of the UK Defence Estate: 1945 to the Present* (London: Continuum, 2012).

[12] C. Pearson, *Scarred Landscapes: War and Nature in Vichy France* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), pp. 95-8.

[13] J. Cooper, *Animals in War* (London: Corgi, 1983). C. Campbell, *Bonzo's War: Animals under Fire 1939-1945* (London: Constable and Robinson, 2013); C. Campbell, *Dogs of Courage: When Britain's Pets Went to War 1939-45* (London: Corsair, 2015); D. Lewis, *War Dog: The No-Man's-Land Puppy Who Took to the Skies* (London: Sphere, 2014); D. Lewis, *Judy: A Dog in a Million: From Runaway Puppy to the World's Most Heroic Dog* (London: Quercus, 2015); D. Lewis, *The Dog Who Could Fly: The Incredible True Story of a WWII Airman and a Four-legged Hero who flew at his side* (London: Sphere, 2015); I. George, *The Dog that Saved My Life. Sacrifice. Loyalty. Love beyond all bounds*. (London: Harper Element, 2010); G. McCafferty, *They Had No Choice: Racing Pigeons at War* (London: Tempus, 2002); D. Long, *The Animals' VC: For Gallantry or Devotion: The PDSA Dickin Medal – Inspiring stories of bravery and courage* (London: Preface, 2012); P. Hawthorne, *The Animal Victoria Cross: The Dickin Medal* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2012); E. Le Chene, *Silent Heroes – the Bravery and Devotion of Animals in War* (London: Souvenir, 1994); M. Manning and B. Granstrom, *Winkie's War* (Glasgow: Collins Educational, 2012); S.R. Redmond and D. Ettlinger, *Pigeon Hero!* (New York: Simon Spotlight, 2012); P. Street, *Animals in the Second World War* (Stroud: The History Press, 2017); I. George and R.L. Jones, *Animals at War: In Association with the Imperial War Museum (Young Reading Series)* (London: EDC, 2006); J. Gardiner, *The Animals' War: Animals in Wartime From the First World War to the Present Day* (London: Portrait, 2006); R. Weintraub, *No Better Friend: One Man, One Dog, and Their Incredible Story of Courage and Survival in World War II* (London: John Murray, 2016); V. Croke, *Elephant Company: The Inspiring Story of an Unlikely Hero and the Animals Who Helped Him Save Lives in World War II*

Lagging behind the interest on this topic within popular history, academic historians have only very recently begun to explicitly explore the wartime relationship in Britain between humans and animals. Hilda Kean has explored the Dog and Cat Massacre of September 1939, where roughly 400,000 British canine and feline pets were euthanised. She then traces the evolving human-animal relationship throughout the war across themes such as bombing, rationing, sheltering, and mutual support, with an aim to destabilise the notion that the war was a 'People's War'.[14] Prompted by the unveiling of the 'Animals in War' memorial in London in 2004, Kean - alongside others - has also explored how animals have been remembered, forgotten and commemorated in regards to the conflict.[15] These studies have sought to question why the cultural memory of animals resonates during the twenty-first century, and adopt a critical focus on how recent memorialising practices reinforce ideas of human power over animals.

Nonetheless, there is still much scope for exploring the impact of the Second World War on human-animal relations within Britain. Kean's focus on domestic pets as an indicator of, or a window into, wartime human-animal relations as a whole are limited as it privileges domestic pets over other animal species. Instead, through focusing on how the British utilised animals for particular wartime purposes, it becomes apparent that a more diverse range of species were harnessed during the conflict, especially within the arenas of food production and fighting. This thesis recognises that animals were not only wartime victims and human companions, but also historical actors whose physical effort shaped the way the war was fought and sustained. Moreover, focusing on a more diverse range of animal species also challenges problematic anthropocentric notions of 'bravery' and 'heroism', which are often attached to the animals written about within popular histories. The extended focus on agricultural animals, furthermore, disrupts the association of

(New York: Random House publishing, 2015); A. Whitson and A. Orr, *Sea Dog Bamse: World War II Canine Hero* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2009); M. Rix, *The Victory Dogs* (London: Puffin, 2013).

[14] H. Kean, *The Great Cat and Dog Massacre: The Real Story of World War Two's Unknown Tragedy* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2017); H. Kean, 'The Dog and Cat Massacre of September 1939 and the People's War', *European Review of History*, 22.5 (2015), pp. 741-756.

[15] H. Kean, 'Britain at War: Remembering and Forgetting the Animal Dead of the Second World War', in M. DeMello (ed.), *Mourning Animals: Rituals and Practices Surrounding Animal Death* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2016), pp. 115-122; H. Kean, 'Animals and War Memorials: Different Approaches to Commemorating the Human-Animal Relationship', in R. Hediger (ed.), *Animals and War: Studies of Europe and North America* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 237-262; H. Kean, 'Traces and Representations: Animal Pasts in London's Present', *The London Journal*, 36.1 (2011), pp. 54-71; J. T. Baumel-Schwartz, 'Beloved Beasts: Reflections on the History and Impact of the British 'Animals in War' Memorial', *History & Memory*, 29.1 (2017), pp. 104-133.

animals and war with military or civil defence service alone. Nevertheless, the focus of this thesis means that it is not possible to capture the war's impact on every human-animal relationship. The case studies chosen – pigs, cattle, pigeons and mules – represent animals that were designated and enrolled as allies, and that were both physically and imaginatively repositioned in regards to the British war effort.[16] But they also represent a range of animal species whose wartime lives and post-war legacies differed significantly, highlighting the value of studying human-animal relationships along species lines. Other animals, such as rats and rabbits, were labelled as enemies and were systematically targeted during the war.[17] They, like many other species of animal, require further examination beyond the scope of this study.

The thesis also contributes to the cultural and social history of Britain at war by placing animal history at the heart of the analysis. The simultaneous enrolment of animals *and* humans for the war effort ensured that animals played a significant part in shaping the construction and negotiation of wartime discourses and human identities. This was especially the case when humans were enrolled to work with animals they had not encountered or had much contact with before, such as members of the Women's Land Army (WLA) with cattle and soldiers with mules. However, it also applied to humans whose pre-war relationships with animals were refashioned for the purposes of the war effort. For instance, thousands of pigeon fanciers went from breeding and rearing their birds for racing purposes, to co-operating with the military from their own pigeon lofts or volunteering their birds to local military bases. Exploring how humans constructed their own identities in relation to the animals they interacted with, intersects with, and extends, key historiographical debates on themes such as gender, nation and emotion. This also reveals lines of co-operation and tension along state-individual, military-civilian, urban-rural, class, and

[16] I have also not chosen to include militarised canines or zoo animals as case studies, as both of these have been/are in the process of being explored. For a short study of the relationship between the Second World War and London Zoo see, J. M. Kinder, 'Zoo Animals and Modern War: Captive Casualties, Patriotic Citizens and Good Soldiers', in R. Hediger (ed.), *Animals and War: Studies of Europe and North America* (Boston: Brill, 2013), pp. 45-76. For militarised canines, PhD Candidate Kimberley Brice O'Donnell (King's College London) is exploring the employment of dogs by the British Armed Forces in the Second World War.

[17] Studies have started to focus on the wartime impact on rats and rabbits, but there is still room for further exploration. J. Sheail, 'Wartime Rodent-Control in England and Wales', in B. Short, C. Watkins and J. Martin (eds), *The Front Line of Freedom: British Farming in the Second World War* (British Agricultural History, 2006), pp. 55-66; J. Martin, 'The Wild Rabbit: Plague, Policies and Pestilence in England Wales, 1931-1955', *Agricultural History Review*, 58.2 (2008), pp. 255-276.

gendered lines, intersecting wider debates about our understandings of the 'People's War' and its associations of national unity and equality of sacrifice.[18]

Finally, the thesis considers the war's legacy on human-animal relationships. The repositioning of human-animal relations during the war did not end in 1945. With continued rationing, global food shortages, the emergence of the Cold War, and British involvement in small-scale conflicts, the wartime enrolment of human-animal relationships continued to greater or lesser extents until the mid 1950s. This signals that a focus on human-animal relationships disrupts the temporal boundaries imposed on studies of the Second World War, which often end their analysis in 1945. Moreover, the role of certain animals – especially pigeons – in war has subsequently been remembered to a limited extent in British cultural memory, while the roles of others – mainly agricultural animals – have not been recognised in public forms of commemoration and remembrance. The legacy of the war on human-animal relations, therefore, has significance for how we remember the war in the present day. It also continues to inform differentiations between which animals are considered worthy of remembrance and which ones that are not, and contributes towards the problematic normalisation of enrolling animals in recent and present conflicts.

Enrolling Animals

Historians have examined how humans (across military and civilian boundaries), resources and environments have been mobilised within the 'totalizing logic' of the Second World War.[19] Within the historiography of wartime Britain, this has encompassed themes and topics such as militarisation, the harnessing of civilians and industry, the nationalisation of farming, and the utilisation of resources and

[18] For two key works regarding the 'People's War' see, A. Calder, *The People's War: Britain 1939-1945*, (London: Jonathan Cape Ltd, 1969); S. Rose, *Which People's War? National Identity and Citizenship in Wartime Britain 1939-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

[19] I borrow the term 'totalizing logic' from John Horne's study of 'total war' during the First World War. This term is more productive than 'total war' as it recognises that total war has never been reached but that modern wars, at least the First and Second World Wars, had totalizing tendencies that encompassed last swathes of peoples, resources and environments. See, J. Horne, 'Introduction: Mobilizing for 'Total War', 1914-1918', in J. Horne (ed.), *State, Society and Mobilization in Europe during the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 1-18. For the application of the idea of 'totalizing logic' in relation to the mobilisation of the environment during the Second World War see, C. Pearson, 'Environments, States and Societies at War', in M. Geyer and A. Tooze (eds), *The Cambridge History of the Second World War Volume III: Total War – Economy, Society and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 220-243.

technologies on a global scale.[20] The rhetoric of the 'People's War', and the emphasis on active citizenship, also led to various forms of mobilisation that were premised on voluntary participation, such as the expansive role of the Women's Voluntary Services (WVS) and the involvement in domestic food production campaigns.[21] Although the totalising forms of mobilisation have been extensively examined, there has been little focus on how animals were enrolled into the British war effort. In fact, the Second World War was a profound moment in the repositioning of animals within Britain. The roles, spaces and bodies of animals were re-imagined and re-purposed in accordance with the demands of war, and new human-animal relationships were formed and existing ones were reconfigured. This repositioning shaped the lives of both animals and humans stretching into the post-war decades.

The enrolment of animals for the war involved the formation of new 'animal spaces'. The concept of 'animal spaces', proposed by the geographers Chris Philo and Chris Wilbert, offers a fruitful way to explore how the totalising tendencies of the Second World War re-spatialised animals in both physical and imaginative terms.[22] A focus on 'animal spaces' involves explorations of the discursive construction of animals, including how they were categorised, the spaces that were allocated to them, and

[20] For militarisation see: M. Francis, *The Flyer: British Culture and the Royal Air Force, 1939-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); E. Newlands, *Civilians into Soldiers: War, the body and British Army Recruits* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014); J. Bourke, 'Psychiatry, Hate Training, and the Second World War', *Journal of Social History* (2017), https://doi.org/10.1093/jsh/shx034; D. French, *Raising Churchill's Army: the British Army and the War against Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); A. Allport, *Browned Off and Bloody-Minded: the British Soldier Goes to War 1939-1945* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2015); L. Noakes, *Women in the British Army: War and the Gentle Sex, 1907-1948* (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 103-132. For the harnessing of civilians and industry see: P. Summerfield, *Women Workers in the Second World War: Production and Patriarchy in Conflict* (London: Routledge, 1984); J. Pattinson, A. McIvor and L. Robb, *Men in Reserve: British Civilian Masculinities in the Second World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017). For the nationalisation of farming see, B. Short, C. Watkins, J. Martin (eds), *The Front Line of Freedom: British Farming in the Second World War* (Exeter: British Agricultural History, 2006); S. Ward, *War in the Countryside, 1939-1945* (London: Cameron Books, 2008); B. Short, *The Battle of the Fields: Rural Community and Authority in Britain during the Second World War* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2014); B. Short and C. Watkins, 'The National Farm Survey of England and Wales', *Area*, 23 (1994), pp. 288-293; J. Martin, 'The State Directed Food Production Campaign and the Farming Community, 1939-45', *Family & Community History*, 17.1 (2014), pp. 47-63; D. Harvey and M. Riley, 'Fighting from the Fields: Developing the British 'National Farm' in the Second World War', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 35 (2009), pp. 495-516; J. Murdoch and N. Ward, 'Governmentality and Territoriality – The statistical Manufacture of Britain's 'National Farm'', *Political Geography*, 16 (1997), pp. 307-324. For the utilisation of resources and technology see, D. Edgerton, *Britain's War Machine: Weapons, Resources and Experts in the Second World War* (London: Allen Lane, 2011).

[21] For the role of the Women's Voluntary Services see, J. Hinton, *Women, Social Leadership, and the Second World War: Continuities of Class* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). For histories of wartime domestic food production and gardening see: F. Ginn, 'Dig for Victory! New Histories of Wartime Gardening in Britain', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 38.3 (2012), pp. 294-305; P. Brassley and A. Potter, 'A View from the Top: Social Elites and Food Consumption in Britain, 1930s-1940s', in F. Trentmann and F. Just (eds), *Food and Conflict in the Age of the Two World Wars* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006), pp. 223-242.

[22] C. Philo and C. Wilbert, 'Animal Spaces, Beastly Places', in C. Philo and C. Wilbert (eds), *Animal Spaces, Beastly Places: New Geographies of Human-Animal Relations* (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 1-34.

where they were seen as in or out of place. Recognising that 'animals have been socially defined', it requires scholars to analyse the various ways in which animals were 'placed' by human societies in their local material spaces (such as domestic homes, fields or factories) and in a range of imaginary or cultural spaces.[23] Paying attention to the construction of 'animal spaces' is productive in this context as various species of animals were physically moved into spaces that prior to the war would have been 'out of place'. This ranged in scale from the return of pigs into urban yards and parks to the placement of militarised pigeons in aircraft. Likewise, it also involved the imaginative placement of animals as either allies or enemies of the war effort, which had material effects on the ways in which animals were either harnessed or targeted.[24] In light of this, focusing on 'animal spaces' reveals the impact and legacy of the war on the physical and imaginative place of animals within Britain.

The enrolment of animals also took place at the level of the body. The demands of war shaped state-led interventions over animal bodies in order to secure the British state's ability to wage war within the arenas of food production and fighting. This builds on scholarship that has examined how the lives of animals have been protected (through various bodily interventions) or taken according to how they were perceived to benefit or threaten the human population.[25] For those animals that were enrolled as allies within the British war effort, it was deemed necessary to foster their lives and control and optimise their physiologies for a range of purposes.[26] This extended beyond the breeding of animals for producing particular physical traits to include a diverse range of experiments that focused on increasing the productivity of food animals and the ability of militarised animals to operate effectively within conflict zones. For instance, wartime conditions led to the instigation of diverse feeding experiments for optimising the output of both pigs and cattle, while mules

[23] *Ibid*., p. 5.
[24] For further discussion of how nature has been defined as an enemy or ally see, Tucker and Russell (eds), *Natural Enemy, Natural Ally*.
[25] Scholars have considered how the lives of animals have been protected and destroyed through the lens of biopower. For a recent discussion of the relationship between biopolitics and human-animal relations see, K. Asdal, T. Druglitro, and S. Hinchliffe (eds), *Humans, Animals and Biopolitics: The More-Than-Human Condition* (London: Routledge, 2017). For an overview of the literature concerning Foucault and Animal Studies see, C. Taylor, 'Foucault and Critical Animal Studies: Genealogies of Agricultural Power', *Philosophy Compass*, 8.6 (2013), pp. 539-551.
[26] Sarah Wilmot draws attention to the need to think about not just how agricultural animal bodies were counted, their breeds noted, and their output recorded, but also how their physiology was controlled and optimised. S. Wilmot, 'From 'Public Service' to Artificial Insemination: Animal Breeding Science and Reproductive Research in Early Twentieth-Century Britain', *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Biology and the Biomedical Sciences*, 38 (2007), pp. 411-441.

were devocalised in order to silence their 'voices' within the jungles of Burma. Concurrently, the bodily capacities and capabilities of animals were placed under scrutiny, and efforts were made to harness these capacities for various purposes. The training of militarised animals in particular, like that of their human counterparts, was designed to reshape the recruit both physically and mentally, and habituate them to perform a variety of tasks in wartime environments.[27] The enrolment of animals for the war was then a process that involved shifting perceptions of, and interactions with, animal bodies.

The process of enrolling animals was also tied to the simultaneous enrolment of humans and the subsequent formation of new human-animal relationships. The physical movement of animals into new spaces, and the subsequent harnessing of their bodily capacities, both required and instigated new human-animal interactions. In certain cases, humans were enrolled and trained by the state to work with animals, such as members of the WLA who worked with cattle and British soldiers who were trained as muleteers. In other instances, new bodies of professionals were enrolled, and bureaucratic systems were created, to enable the effective utilisation of animals. These included the formation of the Small Pig Keeper's Council (SPKC) and the National Pigeon Service (NPS), which provided guidance and regulated civilian volunteers who reared pigs (many for the first time) and bred and trained pigeons. Likewise, the roles of existing experts were, at times, refashioned. The war provided conditions in which the expertise of the veterinary profession became prevalent within dairy farming, and the place of the veterinary practitioner on the farm was actively created.[28] This simultaneous enrolment of animals and humans indicates that animals had an influential role in shaping the ways in which humans were mobilised for, and experienced, the war. Exploring the history of human-animal interactions during the war also requires the historian to grapple with the question of animal agency.

[27] This idea is adapted from Emma Newlands' study on the body and the creation of British soldiers during the Second World War. E. Newlands, *Civilians into Soldiers: War, the Body and British Army Recruits* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014), p. 53.
[28] A. Woods, 'The Farm as Clinic: Veterinary Expertise and the Transformation of Dairy Farming, 1930-1950', *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Biology and the Biomedical Sciences*, 38 (2007), pp. 462-487.

Beyond Animal Agency

Animal agency is arguably the main theme of animal history. In recent years there has been an emerging focus within histories that have examined, and theorised, agency as a concept that exists beyond the realms of humanity.[29] As David Gary Shaw notes in a special issue of *History & Theory* on animal agency: 'Although scholars have been including animals as objects in history in some respects for a very long time, we are now discussing the revolutionary question: to what extent are animals historical actors?'.[30] This is a relevant question to consider in the context of warfare where animals have been enrolled by humans as active combatants for millennia. This section briefly examines two of the central facets of concern within historical conceptions of animal agency – subjectivity and intentionality. It argues that for animal agency to remain a productive area of historical concern for historians, especially in regards to the utilisation of animals for war, the concept must be more explicitly historicised with an approach that rests on contextualising contemporary understandings, and utilisations, of animal capabilities.

In an attempt to account for the active participation of animals at war, some scholars have sought to write history from the perspective of the animal. This offers one approach to the question of agency within animal history, which equates animal agency with the recovery of animal subjectivities. Through the case study of the Anglo-South African War (1899-1902), Sandra Swart offers a template for how social history can be enriched through focusing history from an animal, or in this case, specifically equine, perspective. She proposes that tools from social and sensory history, an incorporation of knowledge concerning the physiology of the horse, and a recognition of how historical actors understood and conceptualised their charges, can grant the horse historical agency. For Swart, this approach offers a way of treating horses as active participants in war.[31] Building on Swart, Gervase Phillips has also sought to write horses into the history of the American Civil War. Philips considers the 'experiences' of horses by utilising both contemporary records and

[29] In recent years monographs and edited collections have placed animal agency at the centre of their work. These include: S. E. McFarland and R. Hediger (eds), *Animals and Agency: An Interdisciplinary Exploration* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009). S. Nance (eds.), *The Historical Animal* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2015); S. Nance, *Entertaining Elephants: Animal Agency and the Business of the American Circus* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013).

[30] D.G. Shaw, 'A Way with Animals', *History and Theory, Theme Issue*, 52 (2013), p. 7.

[31] S. Swart, '"The World the Horses Made": A South African Case Study of Writing Animals into Social History', *International Review of Social History*, 55.2 (2010), pp. 241-263; S. Swart, 'Horses in the South African War, c. 1899-1902', *Society & Animals*, 18.4 (2010), pp. 348-366; Swart, *Riding High*.

modern equine science to account for the ways in which horses may have reacted to particular battle situations and other everyday aspects of warfare.[32]

Although these histories offer important examples of how the material significance of the animal can be brought to the forefront of histories of war, they can also be critiqued. First, they can be critiqued for projecting human motivations onto animals by allowing their actions to be read as resistance. This overlooks the specificities of human resistance and other forms of nonhuman agency and activity.[33] Secondly, they raise issues concerning how historians may write histories from the animal's point of view, as this kind of approach requires a different way of knowing the past that exists beyond, as Ewa Domanska describes, 'one offered by historical epistemology with its specific understanding of time, space, change, rationality, and causality.'[34] Furthermore, by applying modern scientific knowledge to the study of historical animals, the historian makes the assumption that the instincts or behaviours of animals do not change over time. Such an approach problematically treats the animal as an ahistorical subject.[35]

Animal subjectivity is only one way, however, in which scholars have attempted to invest animals with historical agency. Building on insights from post-humanist studies, and theories such as Actor Network Theory, various historians have attributed the animal with a conceptualisation of agency that is not premised on the human-centric requirements of intentionality and reasoning. As David Shaw notes, in regards to the contributions to the special issue in *History and Theory* on historical animal agency, while all the contributors include divergent notions of agency, across the articles 'the common implications are that agency is an *interdependent structure or dynamic* in which neither self nor intention is required.'[36] The aim of such an approach has been to highlight how nonhuman actors shape history by making things

[32] G. Philips, 'Writing Horses into American Civil War History', *War in History*, 20.2 (2013), pp. 160-181.
[33] For a critique of Swart's and Phillip's work, as well as equating nonhuman agency with resistance more widely, see, C. Pearson, 'Beyond 'Resistance': Rethinking Nonhuman Agency for a 'More-than-Human' World', *European Review of History*, 22.5 (2015), pp. 713, 709-725.
[34] Ewa Domanksa does not dismiss approaching histories beyond conventional modes of interpretation, but does highlight how it requires the historian to adopt alternative epistemological positions - see, E. Domanska, 'Animal History', *History and Theory*, 56.2 (2017), pp. 268-271.
[35] Erica Fudge points out in her examination 'milking other men's beasts' in early seventeenth century England that while we acknowledge that humans have changed across history, it would be problematic to assume modern cows are the same as those four hundred years ago. Dairy cows have faced changes in environments, diets, breeding and farming practices, which mean that their milk output, size etc. was significantly different. This highlights how animals, like humans, are not ahistorical subjects. E. Fudge, 'Milking Other Men's Beasts', *History and Theory, Theme Issue*, 52 (2013), pp. 23-5.
[36] Shaw, 'A Way with Animals', p. 8. [Italics from original.]

happen, without the need for intention, within relational dynamics between the human and the nonhuman. In the contexts of war and mobilisation, this approach has been deployed in regards to militarised dogs in the First World War, warhorses in Napoleonic Europe, and in environmental histories that consider how wars are fought with, within, and against, various facets of nature such as animals, landscapes, climate and topographies.[37] These studies do not, however, displace human agency with a form of non-deterministic nonhuman agency. Rather, they seek to uncover where human and nonhuman agencies interact, and emphasise that the power relations between humans and nonhumans often were, and remain, unequal.[38]

Although a reconceptualisation of animal agency away from anthropocentric notions of intentionality has been productive in recognising the animal as a historical actor, animal agency, as a wider concept, is still open to critique. Joshua Specht argues that scholars working on animal history should move beyond agency. He stresses that while it has been important for scholars to stress animal agency in order to claim a space for animals within history, there is now a 'triumph of animal history' where mainstream historians accept animals as important historical actors. For Specht, agency is now a counterproductive avenue of enquiry, as the emphasis on individual autonomy 'risks obscuring the structural forces that constrain their actions and explain different actor's historical marginality in the first place', and so a focus on proving animal agency runs the risk of 'minimizing the profound ways that humans have circumscribed and dominated animal life.'[39] Moreover, agency can be problematically employed in historical contexts, as Susan Pearson and Mary Weismantel describe, as a 'transcendent feature of being' that can be found anywhere if the historian looks hard enough for it.[40] It also has the potential to become a monolithic, blunt, and potentially ahistorical concept if considered outside

[37] C. Pearson, 'Dogs, History, and Agency', *History and Theory, Theme Issue*, 52 (2013), pp. 128-145; D.G. Shaw, 'The Torturer's Horse: Agency and Animals in History', *History and Theory, Theme Issue*, 52 (2013), pp. 146-167; Pearson, *Scarred Landscapes*; Pearson, *Mobilizing Nature*; Dudley, *An Environmental History of the UK Defence Estate*.

[38] For a similar point about uneven power relations between humans and canines within the context of imperialism and the making of modern Japan see, A. Skabelund, *Empire of Dogs: Canines, Japan, and the Making of the Modern Imperial World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), p. 12.

[39] J. Specht, 'Animal History after Its Triumph: Unexpected Animals, Evolutionary Approaches, and the Animal Lens', *History Compass*, 14.7 (2016), pp. 331-2.

[40] S. J. Pearson and M. Weismantel, 'Does 'The Animal' Exist? Toward a Theory of Social Life with Animals', in D. Brantz (ed.), *Beastly Natures: Animals, Humans, and the Study of History* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010), p. 27.

of historical context and the ways in which historical actors understood animal capabilities.[41]

In dialogue with these critiques, this thesis maps the varied contexts in which animals are embedded, and moves beyond an approach that seeks to prove or explicitly account for a form of animal agency. Rather, it seeks to capture the combined human-animal effort involved in waging war by historicising how human actors conceptualised, harnessed, and worked with animal capabilities, and by considering the consequences of this for both the humans and animals involved.[42] This approach recognises the material/physical role of animals in the past, as it accounts for the ways in which historical actors perceived, treated, and reacted to animals as active and sentient beings, but embeds this within the wider political, social, cultural and economic structures of war that circumscribed and dominated animal life.

This thesis also dispenses with the term agency. Those historical actors who interacted with animals as part of the war effort, thought and spoke about the qualities and capacities of different species in specific, and quite complex, ways. Agency does not do justice to this variety of conceptualisations along species lines. For instance, agriculturalists predominantly discussed their livestock in terms of their productivity, their capacities to physically adapt to wartime conditions, and their 'natural' tendencies.[43] In a slightly different vein, military and civilian pigeon fanciers often discussed their pigeons in relation to their intelligence, instinct, and trainability, while the British Army talked about their mules in regards to their emotions, temperaments, and physical strength. It was along these varied lines, which differentiated across species boundaries, that humans conceptualised animals and utilised them for wartime purposes. This process of enrolment, however, not

[41] C. Pearson, 'Between Instinct and Intelligence: Harnessing Police Dog Agency in Early Twentieth-Century Paris', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 58.2 (2016), p. 466.

[42] Pearson identifies that a fruitful line of enquiry might be to 'explore how humans have conceptualized and sought to harness nonhuman agency, and the consequences of this for humans and nonhumans. This would not be history from the animal's point of view, but history written with animals in mind as creatures that mattered and who have played a greater role in the past than merely being objects of human representation or technologies unproblematically manipulated by human agents.' Pearson, 'Dogs, History, and Agency', p. 145. Robert Kirk has also considered how British army personnel and scientists have related to, or understood, the capabilities of the dog in regards to the creation of mine-detecting dogs, and argues how historical actors relate to the animal shapes the possibility of the outcomes for harnessing animal agency. See, R. Kirk, 'In Dogs We Trust? Intersubjectivity, Response-able Relations, and the Making of Mine Detector Dogs', *Journal of the History of the Behavioural Sciences*, 50.1 (2014), pp. 1-36.

[43] For further discussion of how British pig producers in early-mid twentieth century worked with the natural tendencies of the pig see, A. Woods, 'Rethinking the History of Modern Agriculture: British Pig Production, c. 1910-65', *Twentieth Century British History*, 23.2 (2012), pp. 165-191.

only tells a story about how animals were utilised for the war effort, it also tells a story about humans at war.

Animals, Wartime Human Identities and the People's War

As Kathleen Kete states in her study of middle-class pet keeping culture in nineteenth century Paris: 'when bourgeois people spoke of their pets, as they loquaciously did, they pointedly also spoke of their times, and above all else of themselves.' [44] In a seminal study on human-animal relationships in Victorian Britain, Harriet Ritvo highlights how it was not only the material animal, but also the rhetorical animal, which was open to human manipulation. For Ritvo, the rhetorical animal does not necessarily refer to figurative or imaginary animal, but instead to human constructed representations of ubiquitous corporeal animals, which unlike their human counterparts, could not 'talk back' and contest discourses. In the case of Victorian Britain – which Ritvo identifies had a uniquely exploitative culture – the material manipulation of animal bodies was intertwined with a rhetorical manipulation of animals. This encompassed broad discourses concerning humanitarianism, social discipline, imperialism, and human domination over nature, revealing insights into Victorian understandings of class, gender and race.[45] Human-constructed representations of animals then allow the historian to rethink historical cultures and identities. As another exploitative moment, the Second World War was also a distinctive period when animals were not just materially enrolled for the war effort, but were rhetorically utilised as a means of expressing human concerns, aspirations and identities.

Scholars have recently demonstrated how both the First and Second World Wars were significant moments in which animals were subject to rhetorical manipulation, where they were enrolled and refashioned as symbols and participants of war, and as symbols of military establishments and nation states. In particular, they have focused on the ways in which representations of dogs and zoo animals offer insights into discourses of identity, race and imperialism. For instance, in his analysis of the British Dog Fancy during the First World War, Philip Howell reveals how discourses of British national identity and patriotism were constructed and reconceptualised

[44] K. Kete, *The Beast in the Boudoir: Pet-keeping in Nineteenth-Century Paris* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994), p. 2.
[45] H. Ritvo, *The Animal Estate: English and Other Creatures in the Victorian Age* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1987), pp. 6-7.

through the relations between dog owners, dog fancying institutions and the press.[46] Other studies depict how dog characteristics and breed lineage enforced national, racial and imperial discourses in Nazi Germany.[47] Notably, Aaron Skabelund shows how the brave, loyal, disciplined and nationalistic representations of the 'German' shepherd dog instigated the adoption of the breed by the Japanese military establishment. The breed was mobilised by the Japanese army, and through the dissemination of stories and publications, it became a national symbol of bravery and sacrifice – ideals promoted by the Japanese military establishment.[48] The Japanese government and private voices then figuratively manipulated dogs to rally human populations in the pursuit of victory.[49] In reference to zoo animals, John Kinder identifies how animals in London Zoo during the Second World War were portrayed as 'patriotic citizens' and 'good soldiers'.[50] Similarly, studies of Japanese zoos during the Second World War uncover how they exhibited changing cultural currents and governmental agendas. The initial militarisation, and subsequent slaughter, of zoo animals was representative of a changing 'culture of total war' to 'culture of sacrifice'.[51] These various instances, which stretched across national borders, demonstrate that the conditions of war heightened animals' susceptibility to rhetorical refashioning and manipulation.

Wartime representations of animals offer a fruitful window for analysing historical human concerns and aspirations, especially as they became an arena through which wartime discourses and human identities were constructed and negotiated. It is surprising that, with only one exception, the relationship between animals and human identity has been overlooked within the historiography of wartime Britain.[52] In recent years, cultural histories of Britain and the Second World War have argued

[46] P. Howell, 'The Dog Fancy at War: Breeds, Breeding, and Britishness, 1914-1918', *Society & Animals*, 21.6 (2013), pp. 546-567.
[47] B. Sax, *Animals in the Third Reich: Pets, Scapegoats, and the Holocaust* (New York: Continuum, 2000); R. Tindol, 'The Best Friend of the Murderers: Guard Dogs and the Nazi Holocaust', in R. Hediger (ed.), *Animals and War: Studies of Europe and North America* (Boston: Brill, 2013), pp. 105-122.
[48] A. Skabelund, 'Breeding Racism: The Imperial Battlefields of the 'German' Shepherd Dog', *Society & Animals*, 16.4 (2008), pp. 354-371.
[49] For a fuller examination of how the Japanese figuratively and materially mobilised dogs in the pursuit of war see, Skabelund, *Empire of Dogs*, pp. 130-170.
[50] Kinder, 'Zoo Animals and Modern War: Captive Casualties, Patriotic Citizens and Good Soldiers', pp. 45-76.
[51] M. Itoh, *Japanese Wartime Zoo Policy: The Silent Victims of World War II* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010); I. J. Miller, *The Nature of the Beasts: Empire and Exhibition at the Tokyo Imperial Zoo* (Berkeley: California University Press, 2013).
[52] For an exception to this see, Kinder, 'Zoo Animals and Modern War: Captive Casualties, Patriotic Citizens and Good Soldiers', pp. 45-76. For an example concerning representations of the avocet and national identity in the initial postwar years see, S. Davis, 'Militarised Natural History: Tales of the Avocet's Return to Postwar Britain', *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biology and Biomedical Sciences*, 42.2 (2011), pp. 226-232.

that 'identity politics' was central to the wartime experience. Sonya Rose offers the most extensive account of how citizenship and 'Britishness' were constructed, debated and contested during the war years. Her account identifies how the various conditions of war placed national, class, gendered, racial, and urban/rural identities and boundaries under the spotlight. She demonstrates how the 'pull to unity' and 'equality of sacrifice' espoused within popular wartime rhetoric created the conditions, or at least the potential, for people to articulate several different kinds of politics of difference within Britain.[53] Scholars have also identified how various non-human entities became arenas for constructing and negotiating wartime discourses. These have included material objects, such as the military uniform, which became a site for creating and challenging gender boundaries and hierarchies, especially concerning anxieties over the femininity of female service personnel and for hierarchising masculinity across military-civilian lines.[54] They have also included environments and landscapes; especially that of rural South-East England, which was imbued with patriotic discourses of nostalgia and timelessness – constructions that were contested by those from within and without the region.[55] This thesis extends such work by demonstrating how animals were utilised, in a metaphorical sense, as a means of constructing and negotiating wartime discourses.

The thesis also builds on the wider literature of how animals have been rhetorically manipulated for the purposes of war. It recognises how a range of animals, beyond a focus on dogs and zoo animals, were open to rhetorical manipulation, and considers how various institutions – such as the British Army and the Ministry of Information (MOI) – sought to culturally harness particular species of animals in order to rally the human populace in the pursuit of victory. It also extends the ways in which we can approach cultural enrolment by examining how the attributes of these animals were represented. As Chris Pearson demonstrates in the context of the relationship between canine agency and constructions of the Franco-Belgian border in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, depictions of canine attributes were mobilised in order to paint the dog as a living symbol of state authority. These representations of canines mattered culturally and politically, and shaped

[53] Rose, *Which People's War?*.
[54] C. Peniston-Bird, 'Classifying the Body in the Second World War: British Men In and Out of Uniform', *Body & Society*, 9 (2003), pp. 31-47; Noakes, *Women in the British Army*, pp. 103-132.
[55] Rose, *Which People's War?*, pp. 197-218.

understandings of the border as an adventurous, yet secure and surveyed space.[56] In light of this, it is important to not only examine the narratives attached to enrolled animals, such as constructions of national identity, but also how their attributes were represented and harnessed to shape wartime discourses. This is clear in the next chapter when I examine how the waste-converting attributes of the pig were represented as characteristics that, when successfully utilised, were equated with wartime participation, active citizenship, and the ethos of salvaging.

However, it was not only through representations of animals that wartime discourses and human identities were articulated. Identity was also enacted and negotiated through the physical interactions between humans and animals. As Judith Butler argues in her work on the performance of gendered identities, identities are not stable nor do they precede action. Rather, identity is constituted in time through a stylised repetition of bodily gestures, movements and enactments.[57] In relation to animal history, Jonathan Saha also demonstrates, through a case study of colonial Burma, how physical encounters between humans and animals were mediated in colonial discourse. His work challenges histories that have often focused on scientific and bureaucratic imperial representations of animals.[58] The emphases on performance within identity, and on physical interaction for contextualising discourses imbued within representations of animals, are productive for thinking about how animals shaped human wartime identities in Britain. This is because the acts of working with, breeding, rearing, training, donating, and fighting alongside animals relied on both physical interactions *and* were representationally imbued with wartime discourses of duty and participation. Interacting with enrolled animals, such as breeding and training pigeons for military service, provided a means by which British citizens could visibly perform their 'good' and 'active' citizenship.[59] It also offered citizens,

[56] C. 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), pp. 50-62.
[57] J. Butler, 'Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory', *Theatre Journal*, 40.4 (1988), pp. 519-20.
[58] J. Saha, 'Among the Beasts of Burma: Animals and the Politics of Colonial Sensibilities, c. 1840-1940', *Journal of Social History*, 48.4 (2015), pp. 910-932.
[59] As Sonya Rose identifies, a significant feature of wartime Britain was the propensity of discussions and debates surrounding the ethical and moral dimensions of being a 'good citizen'. Rose argues that the notion of being a 'good citizen', which was rooted in philosophies of classical republicanism, and which required the individual citizen to actively express commitment to the nation by voluntarily fulfilling obligations and contributing to the welfare of the community, came into full force during the war. This idea of being a good citizen was linked to a sense of social responsibility and active participation in civil society or public affairs. Combined with the extremities of the wartime situation, displays of active citizenship were then predominantly understood as ethical or moral practices that were deemed crucial for national survival. The success of the war

such as male civilian pigeon fanciers, the opportunity to co-operate with the military, and subsequently perform and reaffirm their masculinities amid wartime hierarchies of masculinity that were premised on the idealisation of the 'soldier hero' and the military-civilian divide.[60] Working with animals was perceived by the state as essential to the war effort: this thesis explores the ways in which British citizens performed their wartime service and duty, and visibly reaffirmed their own role and place within the war effort, in conjunction with their animal counterparts.

More widely, by exploring the ways in which human-animal interactions played a role in the construction of human wartime identities, this thesis sheds new light on our understandings of the 'People's War'. The notion of the 'People's War' is a central tenet within the British cultural memory of war, which is premised on a popular image of British citizens coming together as a national, harmonious community in order to defeat the Nazis.[61] Ever since Angus Calder challenged the image of Britain as a unified community of patriotic and self-sacrificing citizens, historians have probed various facets of the British home front to provide a more nuanced view of Britain's wartime history.[62] Of particular significance, Sonya Rose highlights that the British were relatively unified and rallied to the national struggle. But she stresses that the British failed to agree on a singular vision of the nation. As such, the dominant wartime narratives of national unity and equality of sacrifice – which were central to discourses of the 'People's War' – were so fraught with contradictions across the lines of region, race, gender and class, that they did not secure social stability but instead provoked contestation.[63]

Recent studies have utilised animals to intersect, and challenge, this notion. In particular, Hilda Kean examines the Dog and Cat Massacre of September 1939 in an attempt to undermine the notion of both a positive and exclusively human 'People's

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then relied on the shoulders of public, and active, civilian wartime participants. See, Rose, *Which People's War?*, pp. 14-20.

[60] For recent extensive studies of wartime masculinities in Britain see, L. Robb, *Men at Work: The Working Man in British Culture, 1939-1945* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015); Pattinson, McIvor and Robb, *Men in Reserve*.

[61] G. Eley, 'Finding the People's War: Film, British Collective Memory, and World War II', *American Historical Review*, 106.3 (2001), pp. 818-838.

[62] Calder, *The People's War*.

[63] Rose, *Which People's War?*. Similarly, Penny Summerfield and Corinna Peniston-Bird demonstrate how the Home Guard, which was often represented as a symbol of national unity, was also a site of cohesion and/or dissension regarding competing claims that were made for it. See, P. Summerfield and C. Peniston-Bird, *Contesting Home Defence: Men, Women and the Home Guard in the Second World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007).

War'.[64] Taking a different approach, this thesis uses the lens of wartime debates surrounding human-animal relationships to reveal instances of both social cohesion and dissension between human actors at war. These played out across state-individual, military-civilian, urban-rural, class and gendered lines. Like Kean's work, this undermines the human exclusivity associated with the term the 'People's War'. But it extends such work by exposing how wartime efforts for consolidating national unity and encouraging co-operation were also enabled, and thwarted, by the ways in which people represented, interacted with, and constructed their identities in relation to animals.

Sources and Methodology

In order to examine the ways in which animals were physically and imaginatively repositioned in regards to the British war effort, it is necessary to draw on a wide and diverse source base, and to adopt a holistic approach to analysis. This is because this thesis partially considers how the state sought to reposition animals, and examines the ways in which this process of repositioning was translated through various mediums and played out in material human-animal interactions. Repositioning was not always a smooth process, however, as animals both allowed *and* blocked the ways in which humans attempted to utilise or harness them.[65] Likewise, the ways in which the state envisaged this process were also contingent on human collaboration, which was, at times, met with tension and contestation. The use of a wide source base, which includes both state constructed sources and personal testimonies, allows a fuller explanation of how the state, the individual, and the animal, interacted and shaped one another as part of the human-animal war effort.

A diverse source base also allows an exploration of animals within sources that both primarily addressed them and give no more than an indication of their presence. The majority of the sources utilised are directly concerned with the animal in question. In a similar vein to Harriet Ritvo's approach to sources in *The Animal Estate*, I utilise sources that were constructed by historical actors who had material relationships

[64] Kean, *The Great Cat and Dog Massacre*; H. Kean, 'The Dog and Cat Massacre of September 1939 and the People's War', pp. 741-756.
[65] For a discussion of how nonhuman actors can 'allow' or 'block', rather than 'resist', see, Pearson, 'Beyond 'Resistance': Rethinking Nonhuman Agency for a 'More-than-Human' World', pp. 713. Similarly Linda Nash comments on how nature can 'enable' and 'thwart'. See, Nash, 'The Agency of Nature or the Nature of Agency?', 67-69.

with the animals they conceptualised and harnessed.[66] I also draw on sources produced by state officials that quantify animals, such as reports by the MAF, and/or provide instruction or guidance on how to treat and interact with animals, such as military manuals on animal management. But I also read against the grain within sources such as personal testimonies or photographs, where the animal is one aspect of a wider narrative being portrayed. The use of these sources helps gain further access to historical human-animal interactions, especially in cases where the on-the-ground outcomes of these interactions cannot be deduced from official state constructed sources. The use of sources that are explicitly about animals, or require the recovery of the animal through reading against the grain, in tandem, helps connect the story of how animals were repositioned from above and how this played out from below.

Locating animals within sources that either explicitly or implicitly address them raises the wider question of how the historian can recover the historical animal. Some animal historians have recently begun to activate unconventional source bases for locating animals in the past. For instance, Lisa Cox demonstrates how a focus on veterinary tools extends our knowledge of historical animals beyond what we can recover from textual sources. As she states: 'textual sources may indicate an ideal or professionally accepted way that animals interacted with people in terms of their health, but artefacts… illustrate what was *actually* practiced.'[67] Taking a step further, Zeb Tortorici has attempted to consider the presence of animals in the archive through an ethnographic consideration of how they helped construct it, which is evidenced by the leather and animal glue that hold manuscripts together. He argues that archives 'thrive with nonhuman *life*', and recognising the presence of animals in the archive can offer a way of understanding modes of animality in the historical record.[68] These approaches offer potentially productive avenues for animal historians, as they disrupt how we can approach historical sources and materials with the animal in mind.

However, such approaches go beyond the scope of this thesis. With the exception of photographs and oral testimony, I primarily use human-constructed textual sources

[66] Ritvo, *The Animal Estate*, p. 4.
[67] L. Cox, 'Finding Animals in History: Veterinary Artifacts and the Use of Material History', in S. Nance (ed.), *The Historical Animal* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2015), pp. 99-117. Quote on p. 117.
[68] Z. Tortorici, 'Animal Archive Stories: Species Anxieties in the Mexican National Archive', in S. Nance (ed.), *The Historical Animal* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2015), pp. 75-98. Quote on p. 83.

to recover the animal in the historical record due to source access and availability. Nevertheless, as Hilda Kean highlights, the historian can make a conscious decision when approaching their sources on whether the past lives of animals can become 'historical'. For historians who seek to do this, this can go beyond showing how events were shaped by animals to an approach that privileges animals within the historical narrative.[69] Kean, however, attempts to grant the animal agency – or a sense of relative autonomy – beyond their human representation, as demonstrated in her analysis of Matthew Finders' naval diary from 1799 and his account of Trim the cat.[70] In my own effort to privilege the animal – or at least bring them to the forefront of analysis – I embed representations of animals within their physical interactions with humans. This ensures that the animal does not become invisible during source analysis, but does not seek to accord the animal agency or autonomy beyond the ways in which they have been represented.

The first main source base used to locate the historical animal are those materials created by the state (including the military) that explicitly demonstrate the role of the state in conceptualising and harnessing animals. The state played a significant role in re-spatialising animals, both physically and imaginatively, and state officials intervened with animal bodies in an attempt to make them productive for the war effort. This involved the passing of legislation that affected the ways in which animals were treated and utilised; the creation of reports and the conducting of experiments that conceptualised the purpose and utility of the animal; and the introduction of bureaucratic networks, and the simultaneous enrolment of humans, that enabled animals to be enrolled for particular wartime purposes. The state sources I have explored include those created by various wartime ministries, in particular that of the MAF for agricultural animals, and various other military and intelligence services files, manuals, guidebooks for militarised animals, and propaganda images and photographs of animals. Exploring them offers a picture of how animals were repositioned in 'official' terms in regards to the war, and indicate how the state invested significant time and energy into mobilising animals for the conflict. But these types of sources only go so far as they do not offer a picture of how such repositioning was translated and received by the British wartime populace,

[69] H. Kean, 'Challenges for Historians Writing Animal-Human History: What is Really Enough?', *Anthrozoos*, 25, Supplement (2012), pp. S59-S60.
[70] *Ibid.*, pp. S60-S62.

who were directly involved in breeding, rearing, training and volunteering animals for the state. An exploration of additional sources is needed to uncover how the demands of war, and the subsequent implications regarding human-animal interactions, were publically circulated and played out on-the-ground.

Newspapers, magazines and journals supplement state sources by providing further information about how animals were enrolled, and demonstrate how such knowledge was circulated and represented. Moreover, they highlight how representations concerning the enrolment of animals were imbued with various wartime discourses. As Adrian Bingham states about the value of newspapers, especially following their digitisation, for a 'new generation of historians':

> Newspapers are increasingly seen as an invaluable window into popular culture; not a repository of 'facts', as suggested by the 'paper of record' formulation, but a way of exploring the representations and narratives that circulated throughout society. Newspapers played a significant role in setting the agenda for public and private discussion, and in providing interpretative frameworks through which readers made sense of the world. The 'spectacular heterogeneity' of their contents, moreover, ensures that newspapers are a potentially rich source of information on a wide range of subjects: material can be found on everything from politics to personal relationships, from sports to shopping.[71]

Newspapers also offer a significant amount of material on wartime human-animal interactions, especially on items of curiosity, such as the awarding of the PDSA Dickin Medal, and on legislative matters, such as information about animal slaughter licences for domestic pig keepers. But to find a more detailed and sustained focus on animals it is necessary to consider magazines and journals, such as the *Farmer & Stockbreeder* and the *Racing Pigeon*, which were written by and for those who worked directly with animals.[72] The public circulation of such magazines and journals was much lower than national newspapers (by the mid twentieth-century, roughly 85% of the British populace read a national newspaper every day), but there was a still often extensive overlap in terms of their editorial content, advertising and

[71] A. Bingham, 'Reading Newspapers: Cultural Histories of the Popular Press in Modern Britain', *History Compass*, 10.2 (2012), p. 142. For a further discussion of the significance of the press in British culture, see A. Bingham, *Family Newspapers? Sex, Private Life, and the British Popular Press, 1918-1978* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 15-28.

[72] Although not consulted with in this thesis, the journals/magazines *The Field* and *Country Life* both contain articles related to this topic, particularly regarding wartime pig-keeping.

readership.[73] They offer a window into how knowledge about, and representations of, animals were circulated amongst the humans who interacted with them on a daily basis.

Nevertheless, the window offered by newspapers, magazines and journals must be understood in relation to wartime press censorship. For the interests of national security, the press were expected to censor their own content. They followed state guidance about topics that were subject to censorship, and submitted any stories that could possibly breach such rules to the MOI and/or the Press and Censorship Bureau for checking. Any information of potential military significance was subsequently removed, including details on the location of soldiers and weather reports.[74] This had an impact on the ways in which militarised animals were reported in the press. In particular, descriptions of the exploits of militarised pigeons during the war years were often vague in detail, even in leading pigeon racing publications of the time such as the *Racing Pigeon* and the *British Homing World*, as a significant number of pigeons were used for secretive military communications. The publication of details about their whereabouts and exploits would have placed the lives of military personnel in jeopardy. This level of censorship differed for reports and commentaries on agricultural animals, which contained little information of military significance. The particular ways in which animals were enrolled into the war effort, therefore, shaped how extensively they were covered in the wartime press, highlighting how the examination of different species warrants varying source bases.

Although state sources and press reports give a clear indication of how animals were enrolled for the war effort, they only provide glimpses of how this process was enacted within material human-animal interactions. The enrolment of animals was tied to the enrolment of humans, and the formation of specific and individual human-animal relationships. Personal testimonies offer a way of exploring how such specific and individual human-animal relationships played out on the ground, offering insights into the extent to which both humans and animals allowed or blocked their wartime enrolment. They offer a lens for exploring how humans experienced their wartime interactions with animals, and the physical and emotional impact this had on their wartime lives. They also offer a window into how humans

[73] Bingham, 'Reading Newspapers: Cultural Histories of the Popular Press in Modern Britain', pp. 141-3.
[74] I. McLaine, *Ministry of Morale: Home Front Morale and the Ministry of Information in World War II* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1979).

constructed their own wartime identities in relation to these interactions with their animals, which were articulated and refined during the acts of writing or speaking about their animal counterparts.

In order to access a wide range of human wartime experiences with animals, therefore, I draw on testimonial sources that were created during the war. Social and cultural historians of Britain and the Second World War have extensively used Mass Observation (MO) diaries as a way of chronicling the everyday life of war and for tracking the war's impact on selfhood.[75] But in spite of their usefulness, MO diaries offer few instances – with the clear exception of pets, and specifically dogs – of everyday human-animal interactions.[76] Only one farmer regularly sent MO diary entries regarding his cattle and this was only until 1942.[77] Wartime domestic pig keeping, pigeon fancying, and muleteers, either did not contribute to the MO project or did not discuss their animals within their diary entries. At first glance this may suggest that animals were not deemed as important during the war or that humans had infrequent contact with them. However, as Penny Summerfield suggests, MO does not necessarily represent the everyday experiences of a full range of 'ordinary' people at war: its wartime contributors were primarily young members of the lower-middle class who were frequently socio-politically motivated.[78] As recent studies of working class civilian men at war have demonstrated, the wartime voices of these men – who frequently made up the ranks of urban domestic pig keepers and pigeon fanciers – have been much harder to locate.[79] Likewise the agricultural workforce – with the exception of members of the WLA – were less inclined to keep a written record of their everyday wartime experiences.[80] For British muleteers posted in Burma, sending any diary entries to MO would have been prohibited under Army regulations.

[75] J. Hinton, *Nine Wartime Lives: Mass-Observation and the Making of the Modern Self* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); B. Beaven and J. Griffiths, 'The Blitz, Civilian Morale and the City: Mass Observation and Working-Class Culture in Britain, 1940-41', *Urban History*, 26.1 (1999), pp. 71-88; A. Howkins, 'A Country at War: Mass-Observation and Rural England, 1939-45', *Rural History*, 9.1 (1998), pp. 75-97; L. Noakes, 'A Broken Silence? Mass Observation, Armistice Day and 'Everyday Life' in Britain 1937-1941', *Journal of European Studies*, 45.4 (2015), pp. 331-346.
[76] For a MO directive concerning wartime dog keeping see, Mass Observation Directive, FR 838 'Provincial Dogs', August 1941, pp. 1-26
[77] Mass Observation Diary, D 5056, August 1941, pp. 8, 29. Mass Observation Diary, D 5056, September 1941, pp. 3-4.
[78] P. Summerfield, 'Mass Observation: Social Research or Social Movement?', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 20.3 (1985), pp. 441-5.
[79] Pattinson, McIvor and Robb, *Men in Reserve*, p. 33.
[80] David Harvey and Mark Riley have used oral history as a way to recover the everyday wartime experiences of farmers. See, Harvey and Riley, 'Fighting from the Fields', pp. 495-516.

I have drawn on other less frequently used testimonial sources within the cultural and social historiography of wartime Britain: a small number of published and unpublished diaries and personal accounts, which were written during the war years. They include soldiers' testimonies, and offer both explicit and implicit insights into the enrolment and repositioning of animals, as well as the physical and emotional aspects of these human-animal relationships. I also draw on a significant number of letters-to-the-editor in newspapers, magazines, and journals – especially those that were animal focused such as the *Farmer & Stockbreeder* and the *Racing Pigeon*. While it is important to read these sources as testimonies that were constructed for a particular audience, and chosen and mediated by an editor, they provide insights into the voices of people from specific wartime human-animal communities, such as livestock farmers and pigeon fanciers. They offer a way of recovering the wartime lives of working-class men, for example, whose experiences could only otherwise be retrieved through subsequent autobiographical accounts and oral histories.

To supplement personal testimonies that were constructed during the war, I utilise testimonial sources created after 1945. These include autobiographical accounts (including military memoirs), oral testimonies (primarily those of former military personnel held by the Imperial War Museum (IWM) sound archive, which were mainly created between the late 1980s and the early 2000s), and online written testimonies from the BBC People's War website archive (which was a project in the mid-2000s whereby thousands of people uploaded their wartime experiences on to the online database). These sources, especially the oral testimonies and the online testimonies on the BBC People's War website archive, are particularly useful for accessing wartime experiences that may otherwise have been forgotten or marginalised. The website offers a medium for memories that do not necessarily comply with the dominant narratives of cultural/popular memory.[81] These source bases create space for alternative memories of the war, including memories of the enrolment of animals and human-animal interactions. But the use of such sources

[81] As Lucy Noakes suggests, 'websites are potentially more open and participatory than other, more traditional, sites of memory'. L. Noakes, ' 'War on the Web': The BBC's 'People's War' Website and Memories of Fear in Wartime in 21st Century Britain', in L. Noakes and J. Pattinson (eds), *British Cultural Memory and the Second World War* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), p. 50. For further detailed examinations of oral testimonies and military memoirs, in relation to Britain and the Second World War, see P. Summerfield, *Reconstructing Women's Wartime Lives: Discourse and subjectivity in oral histories of the Second World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998); F. Houghton, 'The 'Missing Chapter': Bomber Command aircrew memoirs in the 1990s and 2000s', in in L. Noakes and J. Pattinson (eds), *British Cultural Memory and the Second World War* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), pp. 155-174.

also raises questions about the reliability of memory and the related aspects of composing narratives in oral and written testimony after the event in question. This thesis does not seek to explicitly interrogate the relationship between composing memories and its relationship to factors such as public discourse, which, as Penny Summerfield demonstrates, influenced how women retold their wartime lives.[82] But it is aware of how memories of human-animal interactions were embedded within the political and cultural climate of their creation.

Alongside written and oral sources, I also draw on wartime photography. In particular, I draw on digitised photographs that have been published by the IWM on their online archive database. This photograph archive contains thousands of photographs taken by various state institutions, including the MOI and the British military. Hundreds of these photographs either include animals or centre them as the primary subject matter. Like personal testimonies, they offer 'visual' insights into wartime material human-animal interactions, although they often portray sanitised or idealised human-animal collaborations rather than instances where the enrolment of animals was strained or jeopardised. This is most likely because, as Claire Gorrara suggests in relation to British Army wartime photography, 'such photographs and their captions are traversed by and constructed through British scripts of war that go beyond the photograph's role as visually marking actual historical events'.[83] Instead, these photographs were framed for particular purposes that helped shape and construct certain wartime narratives, especially when they were subsequently published in items such as the popular illustrated magazine *Picture Post*. Subsequently, they offer a way of uncovering how representations of animals were utilised to construct particular wartime discourses, such as notions of citizenship and wartime gender roles. They also reveal how positive portrayals of the British war effort were, in many instances, contingent on positive portrayals of human-animal encounters.

Case Studies

The thesis is made up of four case study chapters and a fifth comparative chapter that considers the post-war legacies of the human-animal relationships that have been

[82] P. Summerfield, 'Culture and Composure: Creating Narratives of the Gendered Self in Oral History Interviews', *Cultural and Social History*, 1.1 (2004), pp. 65-93.
[83] C. Gorrara, 'What the Liberator Saw: British War Photography, Picture Post and the Normandy Campaign', *Journal of War & Culture Studies*, 9.4 (2016), p. 304.

explored. In recognition that animals were enrolled for the war effort for both the purposes of food production and fighting, two of the chapters consider agricultural animals, while the other two analyse militarised animals. The case studies also represent differing spatial locales in acknowledgment that the British war effort encompassed both the home and front lines, within British, occupied and colonial territories. Pigs were enrolled in urban spaces as part of the wartime pig club movement; cows offer a window into rural Britain at war; pigeons occupied both the home front and the front line, and the skies in-between; while mules were primarily mobilised in British colonies, highlighting the role of Empire within the British war effort. Moreover, these species of animal were chosen because of either the numerical scale of their enrolment or the extent to which they were physically and imaginatively repositioned in regards to the conflict. Pigs were physically re-introduced in their thousands into urban spaces; dairy cattle received the greatest level of state-intervention and attention in comparison to other agricultural animals; while approximately 200,000 pigeons and 120,000 mules were militarised by the British-Imperial armed forces – numbers that dwarf the 40,000 horses, 16,000 camels, 6,000 bullocks and 5,000 dogs that were also militarised.[84] The 'effort' involved in enrolling these animals for the war also varied significantly, offering opportunities to engage with, and extend, key debates within the broad historiography of wartime Britain.

The first chapter explores how pigs were represented as economic converters of waste and were utilised as a means of producing meat from kitchen scraps. This relied on the engagement of civilians prepared to keep pigs in yards and other urban spaces, as well as to collect kitchen scraps and produce pigswill. The successful enrolment of pigs was contingent on a redefinition of urban environments as inclusionary, rather than exclusionary, spaces for pigs to occupy. But this enrolment was also hampered by various nonhuman factors, such as outbreaks of swine-related diseases within the confines of congested urban environments. Furthermore, these 'new' practices of wartime pig keeping, on occasion, became sites of tension between individuals and local authorities on public health grounds, and between

[84] These approximate figures are drawn from Hansard and a sitting in the House of Commons on 22 October 1946. The parliamentary discussion refers to an official report circulated by the Secretary of State for War on the topic of animals and war use, but I have been unable to locate this within the archives. For details of the parliamentary discussion see, *Hansard Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 'Pigeons and Animals (War Use), 22 October 1946, vol. 427, col. 1452-3. W.H. Osman, *Pigeons in World War II* (London: The Racing Pigeon Publishing Co., 1950), p. 1.

individuals and the state in regards to illicit pig rearing. The effort to simultaneously enrol pigs and civilians for wartime food production was a process that enabled citizens to display active citizenship, but one that was beset by both human and nonhuman challenges. Focusing on the enrolment of pigs offers a nexus for bridging the wartime histories of rationing, domestic food production, salvaging, and public health.

Chapter Two examines how the state attempted to redefine notions of cattle productivity and actively intervened over the ways in which dairy cattle were bred and reared. In comparison to the physical repositioning of pigs into towns and cities for the British war effort, the enrolment of cattle remained in the countryside centred on state-led efforts to maintain, improve and redefine understandings of their productivity. This required the movement of new historical actors onto wartime farms to work with cattle, as well as the repurposing of existing human-cattle relationships to help meet the demands of war. The state enrolled agricultural scientists, veterinarians and pedigree farmers to improve cattle productivity, while a new agricultural workforce – in the form of the WLA – were deployed to help maintain the milk output of cattle. This shows how state-led efforts to maintain and improve the productivity of dairy cattle were tied to the simultaneous enrolment of humans to work with cattle, which led to the formation of new, and the reconfiguration of existing, human-cattle relationships. In particular, the deployment of the WLA to work with cattle generated much debate about their suitability for such work and their place on the wartime dairy farm. Focusing on these concerns, and how the WLA was recruited, trained for, and experienced such work, this chapter then extends historiographical debates concerning the roles of women at war through the lens of human-cattle relationships.

Moving from food production to fighting, Chapter Three examines the mobilisation of homing pigeons as message carriers for the armed forces. It initially explores how homing pigeons were physically refashioned into militarised animals by focusing on how the British military conceptualised, trained and harnessed them, suggesting that national defence was a simultaneous human-animal effort. For their exploits, militarised pigeons were publically represented in patriotic and heroic terms, and were constructed as symbols of the British war effort. This extensive cultural and material mobilisation of homing pigeons was accompanied by military efforts to co-

operate with civilian pigeon fanciers to rear, train and volunteer their birds. But the perceived threat posed by non-militarised pigeons, as a potential means of subversive communications within wider Fifth Column anxieties, also meant that these birds and their owners were regulated by the state. As such, the state both co-operated, and came into conflict, with civilian pigeon fanciers and homing pigeons. Through a focus on the homing pigeon, and the relationship between the state and the pigeon fancier, this chapter extends historical debates regarding the role of civilian working-class men at war, wartime masculinities, Fifth Column anxieties, and the wartime relationship between the military and civilian spheres.

Chapter Four explores the mobilisation of mules by British Imperial Forces and primarily focuses on their deployment in Burma. Through an analysis of army training manuals, archival documents and soldiers' personal testimonies, it charts the different ways in which mules and British military personnel were simultaneously deployed for the war effort. This was a process that required mules to be militarised and soldiers to be trained as muleteers. In particular, the chapter argues that the British military's training of soldier-muleteers was premised on the construction of human-animal 'bonds'. Turning towards an examination of soldier-mule relationships on the battlefield, the chapter also demonstrates how soldier-muleteers informally enrolled mules as companions for intimacy and comfort. Moreover, it illustrates how both human and nonhuman factors hampered the successful mobilisation of these partnerships. Through such analysis, it reveals tensions between the repositioning of the mule as a militarised *and* companion animal. Overall, it demonstrates how military animals shaped the emotional lives of soldiers, extending the historiography of emotion at war through the lens of soldier-mule relationships.

The final chapter examines the demobilisation of the human-animal relationships explored in the previous four chapters. These reconfigured human-animal relationships did not return to their pre-war 'normality' at the end of the war in 1945. Instead, each underwent various processes of demobilisation, continued enrolment/mobilisation, and commemoration, which differed across species lines. In particular, the post-war commemorative legacies of 'food' and 'fighting' animals sharply contrasted. This chapter takes the thesis through to the mid-1950s, and considers the impact of the war on human-animal relationships in light of wider

debates about the war and change and continuity. It signals that the human-animal war effort continued, albeit in a refashioned manner, into the initial post-war years.

Employing the concept of 'effort', the thesis charts how pigs, cattle, pigeons and mules were physically *and* imaginatively enrolled for the British war effort. It contextualises how various human actors conceptualised, experimented on, interacted with, and harnessed these animals. It also examines how humans were simultaneously enrolled to work with them. This reveals insights into the formation of human wartime identities and sheds new light on historical understandings of the 'People's War'. Overall, it argues that the British war effort needs to be reconsidered as a human-animal effort.

Chapter One: Pigs for Victory – The Return of Pigs to British Towns and Cities

In April 1943, *Picture Post* reported on the voluntary efforts of members of the National Fire Service, who formed a pig club within the ruins of bombed London. Titled 'Pigs in the Ruins', the report described that:

> The pigs – who rooted the soil of London when London soil was sweet – are back again on the old farmlands just outside of the city walls. The buildings – which rose out of the pastures – are lying smashed and deserted. The ground – usurped by lawyers, surgeons, estate agents, and what not – has reverted (temporarily, at any rate) to the original tenants of the land.
>
> On a casual walk round the Lincoln's Inn Fields you wouldn't notice any difference at all. A row of fire appliances half conceals the entrance to the piggery. The ruins of the College of Estate Management – and the Museum wing of its next-door neighbour, the Royal College of Surgeons – show no outward sign that new occupants have moved in.
>
> But if you peer through the gaping brickwork – into the cavernous spaces where, once, the surgeons used to pickle bits of you and me as exhibits and the estate agents contrived to baffle us with the intricacies of property law – your eyes will be gratified by the pink backs of ranging porkers. They are the charges of the men of the National Fire Service whose appliances stand on the kerb.[1]

As this extract indicates, pigs were reintroduced into areas of wartime London that had long been free of livestock animals, including bombed ruins of former city buildings. They were utilised within these bombed ruins, which were close to homes and restaurants that provided kitchen waste for pigswill, to produce meat for the war effort (Figure 1.1). But they were also hidden within this landscape. The journalist noted how it was possible to not notice them at all unless you peered through the brickwork. The ways in which pigs reoccupied spaces within the city was a process that was shaped by historical anxieties about pigs within urban spaces, and was, at times, a source of tension and negotiation between pig keepers and local government officials. In spite of these tensions, however, the article went on to celebrate the voluntary efforts of the firemen who ran the pig club and promoted domestic pig keeping as an act of wartime participation. In this chapter, I argue that pigs were symbolically and materially employed to represent wartime duty and participation on the British home front. They were enrolled, alongside voluntary amateur pig keepers,

[1] *Picture Post*, 3 April 1943.

such as members of the National Fire Service, as part of the human-animal war effort.

Figure 1.1

Picture Post, April 3, 1943

Here Stood the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons
After the building was blitzed, the men of the local N.F.S. station got permission to start a Pig Club in the ruins. The members each took a ten-shilling share. They've already made a profit of fifteen shillings.

PIGS IN THE RUINS

In the bomb debris of Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, men of the National Fire Service are rearing pigs on waste food products.

STILL legible on the bomb-splintered façade of the building is the inscription, "College of Estate Management." But all that remains of the College is a monument to human failure. Snuffling among the debris, scratching themselves on the twisted girders, snoring in the shadow of broken bits of wall, the beasts of the field have come into their own again.

Keats would have written a sonnet about it. The thought of it seems to come straight out of a Wellsian novel.

The pigs—who rooted the soil of London when London soil was sweet—are back again on the old farmlands just outside the city walls. The buildings—which rose out of the pastures—are lying smashed and deserted. The ground—usurped by lawyers, surgeons, estate agents, and what not—has reverted (temporarily, at any rate) to the original tenants of the land.

On a casual walk round Lincoln's Inn Fields you wouldn't notice any difference at all. A row of fire appliances half conceals the entrance to the piggery. The ruins of the College of Estate Management—and the Museum wing of its next-door neighbour, the Royal College of Surgeons—show no outward sign that new occupants have moved in.

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The Men Who Bring Home the Bacon
Mr. Arthur Axford (right), knew nothing about pigs when he started the club. Now he's the manager and an expert.

The firemen had the idea of putting the ruins to good use by running pigs in them about a year ago. They got permission from the Fire Service and the late occupants of the site. And then set to work building sties out of the debris. That wasn't difficult. All the raw materials were lying about on the spot. And all the pig club members had to buy was some cement to stick the sties together.

A pig club was formed in which every member took a ten-shilling share. And, one fine morning, a representative of the club set off for the country to bring eight young squealers to Lincoln's Inn Fields. Arrangements were made to collect swill, fresh every day, from neighbouring canteens and restaurants. The idea was to buy the pigs at ten weeks and sell them again at six months, fattened up for slaughter.

Although only one member of the club had had previous experience of pig-farming, the venture prospered. Prospered to such an extent that, by Christmas, every one of the investors had made a

Some Nice Little Pigs Go to Market
The pig club bought them at 10 weeks old for £1 10s. each. Now, at six months, they'll fetch about £8 each.

Picture Post, 3 April 1943.

The firemen's pig club in the bombed ruins of London was underpinned by government support and the formation of the SPKC in 1940, which was created to oversee the development of pig clubs on a national scale. With campaigns such as a 'Pig on Every Street', pigs were kept on waste grounds, gardens, allotments, and smallholdings.[2] In rural areas, smallholders, who kept pigs on their premises, formed pig owners' clubs and pooled resources. In urban and suburban areas, dustmen, policemen, firemen, transport workers, civil defence station workers, and canteen staff, amongst others, established new co-operative clubs under the guidance of the SPKC. These clubs kept pigs on a shared site, and members contributed through maintaining the pigsties and feeding the pigs. They were primarily fed on salvaged kitchen scraps, which had been boiled down and turned into pigswill. By March 1945, the movement had expanded significantly, with 6,900 SPKC affiliated clubs owning approximately 140,000 pigs, spread across the length and breadth of the British Isles, incorporating individuals from varying regions and backgrounds.[3]

This movement has been sparsely covered by historians, in spite of the integral role pigs, and other livestock, played within British wartime food production and systems of waste management.[4] Both topics have generated historical debate within political, social, cultural, and environmental histories, which show how 'food' and 'waste' were mobilised materially and symbolically for the purposes of the war effort on the British home front.[5] However, work on neither topic has yet placed the human-

[2] *Daily Mirror*, 3 June 1940. Keep a Pig SPKC Promotional Leaflet, Constitution of Pig Clubs (Jan 1940 – Mar 1945), National Archives, London, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Papers (hereafter NA, MAF) 84/55. SPKC Annual Report 1942, Small Pig Keeper's Council – Annual Reports (1941-1950), National Archives, London, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Papers (hereafter NA, MAF) 126/2.

[3] SPKC Annual Report 1945, Small Pig Keeper's Council – Annual Reports (1941-1950), NA, MAF 126/2.

[4] For exceptions in historical literature regarding the SPKC, see: R. J. Hammond, *Food, Volume III: Studies in Administration and Control* (H.M.S.O., and Longmans, Green and Co.: London, 1962), pp. 727-36; Calder, *The People's War*; R.W. Malcolmson and S. Mastoris, *The English Pig: A History* (London: Hambledon Press, 1998), p. 125. For exceptions regarding pig-keeping in wartime, see: Woods, 'Rethinking the History of Modern Agriculture', pp. 177-8; M. Riley, 'From Salvage to Recycling – New Agendas or Same Old Rubbish?', *Area*, 40.1 (2008), pp. 85-6; M. Roodhouse, 'Popular Morality and the Black Market in Britain, 1939-1955', in in F. Trentmann and J. Flemming (eds), *Food and Conflict in Europe in the Age of the Two World Wars* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006), p. 248; M. Roodhouse, *Black Market Britain, 1939-1955* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 67-8.

[5] For histories of 'food' and war, see: I. Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain: Rationing, Controls, and Consumption, 1939-1955* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); L. Collingham, *The Taste of War: World War II and the Battle for Food* (New York: Penguin, 2011); R. Farmer, *The Food Companions: Cinema and Consumption in Wartime Britain, 1939-45* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011); C. Gowdy-Wygant, *Cultivating Victory: The Women's Land Army and the Victory Garden Movement* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013); F. Ginn, 'Dig for Victory!', pp. 294-305. For histories of 'waste' and war, see: Riley, 'From Salvage to Recycling', pp. 79-89; T. Cooper, 'Challenging the 'Refuse Revolution': War, Waste and the Rediscovery of Recycling, 1900-1950', *Historical Research*, 81.214 (2008), pp. 710-31; P. Thorsheim, 'Salvage and Destruction: The Recycling of Books and Manuscripts in Great Britain during the Second World War', *Contemporary European History*, 22.3 (2013), pp. 431-52. P. Thorsheim, *Waste into Weapons: Recycling in*

animal relationship at the centre of analysis or recognised the role of the animal in these processes. This chapter examines the significant expansion of small-scale domestic pig keeping – particularly those in urban environments – to demonstrate how both pigs and humans were simultaneously enrolled for the purposes of war. This will not only extend historiographical debates regarding food production on the British home front, but will seek a new starting point for these histories where the focus on the human-animal relationship is central. Through such an approach, it highlights how the histories of wartime recycling and domestic food production need to be reconsidered as human-animal efforts, which extended out of the countryside and into towns and cities.

The first section of this chapter examines how the pig was reconceptualised for the British war effort. The demands of war had a drastic impact on food imports, which were vital for sustaining the pre-war pig production industry. In response, the government promoted a turn towards small-scale pig production and the formation of pig clubs, which resembled more traditional methods of rearing pigs. Nonetheless, shaped by notions of industrial warfare and recycling, proponents of wartime small-pig keeping frequently reconceptualised the pig in industrial terms, often referring to the digestive capacities of the pig as a 'machine' for converting kitchen scraps into meat.[6] This metaphorical repositioning of the pig as a machine, subsequently, had an impact on how they were reared and experimented on.

This refashioning of the pig was contingent on British citizens voluntarily forming pig clubs and rearing them in their yards and allotments, as well as collecting kitchen waste for pigswill. The second section of this chapter focuses on how British citizens were enrolled as domestic pig-keepers as part of the human-animal war effort. It examines how the state (through propaganda and guidance materials) and the wartime press represented domestic pig keeping, pig clubs, and voluntary kitchen food waste collection. These activities were often promoted in economic terms, as a viable way of supplementing the meat ration and for making a profit by selling meat to the Ministry of Food (MOF). Likewise, they were sometimes portrayed as therapeutic activities that were good for physical and mental health, and enabled

Britain during the Second World War (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); H. Irving, 'Paper Salvage in Britain during the Second World War', *Historical Research*, 89.244 (2016), pp. 373-393.

[6] For a discussion on industrialised cattle see, B. Orland, 'Turbo-Cows: Producing a Competitive Animal in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries', in S. R. Schrepfer and P. Scranton (eds), *Industrializing Organisms: Introducing Evolutionary History* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 167-90.

urban citizens to reconnect with nature. Primarily, however, representations of these activities were rooted in notions of good citizenship. As Sonya Rose argues, 'good citizenship' was predicated on citizens becoming active and willing volunteers who contributed to the welfare of their local communities and the survival of the nation.[7] Through joining a pig club, British citizens were given the opportunity to perform their citizenship and reaffirm their role in the war effort. Focusing on these representations extends the historiography of wartime citizenship by demonstrating how good citizenship was constructed through portrayals of human-pig interactions. It also engages with the historiography on the relationship between war and gender, as these representations explicitly gendered particular roles, such as 'masculine' pig keeping and 'feminine' waste collection.

The successful operation of pig clubs was reliant on being close to sources of kitchen waste. This meant that pig clubs were frequently formed in urban and suburban spaces that were near canteen, restaurant and domestic home kitchens. Subsequently, the third section of this chapter examines how pigs were physically repositioned in urban spaces. The focus on the rearing of livestock in urban settings is of significance, especially if we consider that the historiography of wartime farming is predominantly focused on the countryside.[8] Pigs, chickens and rabbits were reared on a much greater scale than before within city allotments, yards, gardens, and waste spaces, as part of the 'Grow More Food' campaign.[9] This expansion was significant because it countered the sanitisation of the cityscape as a livestock-free space that occurred over the course of the second half of the nineteenth century. Technical, sanitised and visual changes wrought by the introduction of the abattoir, normalised the private act of slaughter and contributed towards the exclusion of livestock from most areas of the city.[10] The expansion and reintroduction of livestock into the urban

[7] Rose, *Which People's War?*, pp. 18-9.
[8] Short, Watkins and Martin (eds), *The Front Line of Freedom*.
[9] J. W. Strang, 'Poultry Keeping in War Time', *Agriculture: The Journal of the Ministry of Agriculture*, 46.7 (1939), pp. 660-3. The use of the pig does not intend to deny the impact, or overlook the histories of, the chicken or the rabbit, and further research on the mobilisation of these animals would extend this study. However, to include all in this chapter would deny the space to determine the processes by which the human-pig relationship was reconceptualised and utilised for the purposes of war.
[10] C. Otter, 'The Vital City: Public Analysis, Dairies and the Slaughterhouses in Nineteenth-century Britain', *Cultural Geographies*, 13 (2006), pp. 517-537; C. Otter, 'Civilizing Slaughter: The Development of the British Public Abattoir, 1850 1910', in P. Young Lee (ed.), *Meat, Modernity and the Rise of the Slaughterhouse* (Durham, New Hampshire: University of New Hampshire Press, 2008), pp. 89-106. Moreover, the association of urban livestock with the demonised slum dweller, and the 'dangerous' spaces they cohabited, ensured the removal of livestock formed an integral part of the 'civilising' mission for nineteenth century city reformers. See,

sphere required the symbolic and material boundaries - which defined humans and animals as distinct categories, and which separated the sanitary city from rural nature - to be redrawn.[11] The occurrence of this process in British cities during the Second World War demonstrates the power of war for shaping the uses of the urban environment, and for redefining the boundaries of inclusionary and exclusionary practices, in relation to animals and their place within the city.[12] Furthermore, the transitory nature of this process of reintroduction within the war-years indicates not only the significance, but also the distinctiveness of this short period, amidst the wider history of urban human-animal relations.[13]

Nevertheless, the physical repositioning of pigs into urban spaces was not always a smooth process. The enrolment of animals was contingent how they both allowed and blocked these processes. In the case of pigs, the cramped conditions of some urban spaces led to outbreaks of swine-related diseases, which hampered how they were bred and reared. The fourth section of this chapter examines outbreaks of various pig-related diseases in urban environments. Exploring the implications of these outbreaks, this section demonstrates how pigs and other nonhuman factors, beyond notions of intentionality and reason, challenged the British war effort.

The final section of the chapter looks at the end of the pig's enrolment into the war effort through an analysis of their slaughter, conversion into consumable meat, and the acquisition of this meat in towns and cities. This intersects longer-term historical debates surrounding slaughter, cultural sensibilities, and the removal of tangible signs of death within urban spaces, by uncovering how slaughtering practices were extended into visible locations for the needs of war. Furthermore, through an analysis of illicit slaughter it also reveals how the conditions of war enabled a below-the-radar geography of meat to circulate within towns and cities, which supplied the

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P. Atkins, 'Animal Wastes and Nuisances in Nineteenth Century London', in P. Atkins (ed.) *Animal Cities: Beastly Urban Histories* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), pp. 19-52.

[11] Philo, 'Animals, Geography, and the City: Notes on Inclusions and Exclusions', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 13 (1995), pp. 655-681.

[12] This topic has received little academic attention, although notable exceptions are: R. Lahtinen and T. Vuorisalo, ' 'It's war and everyone can do as they please!' An Environmental History of a Finnish City in Wartime', *Environmental History*, 9.4 (2004), pp. 679-700; J. M. Diefendorf, 'Wartime Destruction and the Postwar Cityscape', in C. Closmann (ed.), *War and the Environment: Military Destruction in the Modern Age* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009), pp.171-192.

[13] Urban-based histories of Human-Animal Relations have predominantly focused on Western cities in the nineteenth century. For example, see P. Atkins (ed.), *Animal Cities: Beastly Urban Histories* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012). Kete, *The Beast in the Boudoir*. For an example which focuses on pigs in particular, see C. McNeur, 'The 'Swinish Multitude': Controversies over Hogs in Antebellum New York City', *Journal of Urban History*, 37.639 (2011), pp. 639-660.

black market and offered opportunities for people to bypass the rationing system. This highlights that through the enrolment of pigs for the war effort, British citizens could also thwart the intentions of the government and challenge dominant representations of domestic pig keeping as an act of wartime duty and participation. This signals that the human-animal war effort was also hampered by human actions, offering a lens for exploring dissension between historical actors amid the 'People's War'.

Refashioning Pigs for War

The demands of the Second World War had a significant impact on British pig production. Prior to 1939, the growth of specialist-indoor forms of production – rather than outdoor pigsties – relied on a significant amount of concentrated foodstuffs, which were primarily imported. The demands of shipping space following the outbreak of war drastically altered the type of foodstuffs available to pigs. To compensate, and in an attempt to protect the pig production industry, the wartime government allocated a small amount of concentrates to pigs, while producers were expected to supplement their pig-feed with alternative foodstuffs and kitchen scraps. Nevertheless, the total number of pigs dropped by 65% during the course of the war and many specialist breeders went out of business.[14] To compensate for these wartime conditions, the government encouraged small-scale production, including the formation of pig clubs. They also suspended the pre-war marketing scheme and made it a requirement that all pigs were to be sold to the MOF or that a number of meat ration tokens were forfeited following the slaughter of a pig.[15] As a result, efficient wartime pig production centred around rearing heavier pigs than before, as younger pigs required a diet primarily of concentrates, while older and larger pigs could survive on bulkier and more diverse foodstuffs. This focus on increasing carcass quantity was often at the expense of nutritional value and customer preference.[16]

The wartime changes in pig production towards small-scale rearing and the utilisation of farm and household scraps mirrored nineteenth century methods of pig production, and some commentators looked towards the past for inspiration on how

[14]Woods, 'Rethinking the History of Modern Agriculture', pp. 177-8.
[15] *Ibid.*
[16] *Ibid.*

to utilise pigs effectively during the war.[17] Yet, in spite of practicing a more traditional form of pig production, proponents of small-scale pig production frequently adopted a language of industrial and technological warfare for describing their activities. For instance, on a BBC Home Service radio broadcast in December 1940, Alec Hobson, secretary of the SPKC, stated:

> Nineteen-forty has seen the Pig Club come into its own again… I am convinced that pig keeping in this country is under a radical change. It's going to become an integral part of the country's industrial machine. You see, however much we may pride ourselves on our agricultural background, we have got to remember we are an industrial nation.[18]

For Hobson, small-scale pig clubs were framed in conjunction with a view of Britain as an industrial nation, which was distinct from its agricultural past. Through such representations, they were situated within an industrialised and militarised, rather than an agricultural, image of war. This industrialised conception sits within the context of David Edgerton's argument that during the Second World War Britain was a 'warfare state', where a modern, technocratic government was heavily influenced by science, industry and the military.[19] It also supports Peter Thorsheim's argument that waste was reconceptualised in state propaganda as a strategic industrial and military resource, which would turn scrap into war-winning materials. Pigs fed on kitchen scraps would become war-winning bacon.[20]

This industrialised conception of small-scale production shaped the ways in which government officials and waste management officials conceptualised the pig as a 'machine' to be utilised for efficient food production. For instance, with in the SPKC 'Keep a Pig' leaflet (Figure 1.2) - which was distributed throughout the war to promote the activity - the pig was described as 'the most efficient *machine* we have for converting waste into wholesome food.'[21] Similarly, A. L. T. - the official pig correspondent for *Public Cleansing and Salvage* - offered advice on how to utilise the pig appropriately.[22] In particular, he stated that:

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[17] J. A. Scott Watson, 'Nineteenth-Century Pig Keeping', *Agriculture – The Journal of the Ministry of Agriculture*, 47.1 (1940), pp. 15-21.
[18] *BBC Listener*, 9 January 1941.
[19] Edgerton, *Britain's War Machine*, pp. 7-8.
[20] Thorsheim, *Waste into Weapons*, pp. 91-2.
[21] Keep a Pig SPKC Promotional Leaflet, NA, MAF 84/55. [Italics added.]
[22] *Public Cleansing and Salvage* was the journal of the Public Cleansing Department and represented the views of municipal authorities and waste management professionals.

> While there are points to be kept in mind in cases of pigs for special purposes, there are desirable qualities common to all breeds and types. First is a robust constitution, the maintenance of which necessitates the weeding out of the puny and the weak. Then comes strength of limb to enable the carcase to be carried. The temperament should also be quiet and docile, because nervous and savage animals are not good breeders. Prolificness – mainly an hereditary quality – is also of great importance commercially… The nature of the digestive organs also invite notice. It is well to bear in mind that they are altogether different from those of the herbivorous animals. In proportion to the size of animal the capacity of the alimentary canal is about half that of the ox, the sheep or the horse. Nevertheless the pig eats more food than do the other farm animals and the process of digestion is rapid. So it is that the pig is an exceedingly efficient meat-producing machine.[23]

This description offers a comprehensive insight into a wartime understanding of the machine-like digestive capacities of the pig for food production. But it also reveals how this notion of the pig as a machine did not equate with a Cartesian model of the 'animal-machine', which would conceive that the pig was not a sentient being and could only act through the disposition of their organs.[24] Instead, A.L.T. also recognises the importance of the temperament of the pig. As Abigail Woods argues, some early and mid-century pig producers worked with the 'natural' tendencies of the pig and regarded them as sentient beings. Woods demonstrates that a romantic, moral view of pig production was also integral to the formation of modern agricultural practices, and she complicates historiography that suggests modern agriculture was solely built upon the premise of dominating and manipulating nature.[25] Complicating Woods' argument, the wartime positioning of the pig as a machine highlights the multiple ways in which the pig was framed and understood at this time. Adopting a language of industrial and technological warfare for the purposes of converting kitchen waste into meat, state officials and waste management professionals talked of the pig as a machine, while simultaneously recognising the sentience of the animal.

Nevertheless, although A. L. T. recognised the temperament of the pig, an analysis of the experiments conducted by the MAF reflects that a machine conceptualisation

[23] A.L.T, 'Public Cleansing Becomes Pig-Conscious', *Public Cleansing and Salvage*, 31.365 (1941), pp. 146-8.
[24] R. Descartes, *Discourse on the Method* (1637), in J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff and D. Murdoch (eds), *The Philosophical Writings of Rene Descartes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 139-40. For further discussions of the concept of 'automata' see: K. Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800* (London: Allen Lane, 1983), pp. 33-5; E. Fudge, *Brutal Reasoning: Animals, Rationality, and Humanity in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), pp. 147-8.
[25] Woods, 'Rethinking the History of Modern Agriculture', pp. 185-191.

prevailed in experimental terms in order to attain efficiency. Animal experimentation practices directed towards the needs of war accelerated in number during the period.[26] Experiments on pigs were conducted to ascertain the most efficient ways to fatten and breed them and they were trial fed on waste materials, such as grass salvaged from lawns, tennis courts, bowling greens and golf courses.[27] Similar foodstuff experiments also occurred concerning excess oats, acorns, whey and potatoes, which could be procured without impact on human food shortages.[28] In these instances the foodstuff – rather than the pig - was made the variable of the experiments. The digestive constitution of the pig acted as the machine for which to convert these waste materials into food.

These experiments indicate that the urgency of war *temporarily* shaped how pigs were conceptualised and treated. As philosopher Vinciane Despret notes: 'learning how to address the creatures being studied is not the result of scientific theoretical understanding, it is the condition of this understanding.'[29] This applies to how commentators conceptualised pigs in response to the import restrictions of war and the need to efficiently produce food. For example, V. C. Fishwick, from the Pig Husbandry Research Station, Wye, Kent, reflected that 'since the outbreak of war the resources of this station have been devoted to the investigation of war-time problems' and in response to limited food supplies, pig-feed was 'largely restricted to waste products and such home-grown foods as are not required for human consumption or by other stock.'[30] Such experiments were in response to announcements by the Food Policy Committee in the summer of 1941 that animal feed imports were to be drastically decreased, with priority given to dairy cattle.[31] These cuts not only affected livestock animals but also animals used for sports, such

[26] H. Kean, *Animal Rights: Political and Social Change in Britain Since 1800* (London: Reaktion Books, 1998), p. 180; R. Kirk, ''Wanted – Standard Guinea Pigs': Standardisation and the Experimental Animal Market in Britain ca. 1919-1947', *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences*, 39 (2008), pp. 285-6; E. Willis, 'Landscape with Dead Sheep: What they did to Gruinard Island', *Medicine, Conflict and Survival*, 18.2 (2002), pp. 199-211.
[27] C. Crowther, 'Feeding Pigs on Lawn Grass', *Agriculture: The Journal of the Ministry of Agriculture*, 47.4 (1941), pp. 260-4; C. Crowther, 'Lawn Grass for Pigs and Poultry', *Agriculture: The Journal of the Ministry of Agriculture*, 49.1 (1942), pp. 49-51.
[28] W. B. Mercer, 'Whey for Pig Feeding', *Agriculture: The Journal of the Ministry of Agriculture*, 49.1 (1942), pp. 51-3; R. W. Hale, 'The Feeding of Oats to Pigs', *Agriculture: The Journal of the Ministry of Agriculture*, 49.4 (1943), pp. 241-3; R. Braude, 'The Feeding of Acorns to Pigs', *Agriculture: The Journal of the Ministry of Agriculture*, 50.5 (1943), pp. 227-9; D. Black, 'Pigs and Potatoes', *Agriculture: The Journal of the Ministry of Agriculture*, 50.2 (1943), p. 71.
[29] V. Despret, 'The Body We Care For: Figures of Anthropo-zoo-genesis', *Body and Society*, 10 (2004), p. 131.
[30] V.C. Fishwick, 'Pig Feeding in War Time', *Agriculture: The Journal of the Ministry of Agriculture*, 48.3 (1941), p. 155.
[31] Collingham, *The Taste of War*, p. 91.

as horses, dogs and pigeons.[32] The government demand for increased levels of self-sufficiency, and the prioritisation of importing and growing human foodstuffs, acted as a catalyst for agricultural scientists to conduct more diverse feeding experiments on pigs.

This 'condition of understanding' was also shaped within a wider reconceptualisation of waste and salvaging practices. Timothy Cooper argues that a language of anti-waste, thrift and salvage, fed into public consciousness and ensured that recycling was associated with national duty and home front participation.[33] Subsequently, waste was symbolically and materially reconceptualised as something to be reused, and a failure to reuse was seen as a failure of social order.[34] Kitchen refuse became a component of waste that needed to be reused and the efficient way to do this was through its conversion into pigswill.[35] This is especially significant if we reconsider V. C. Fishwick's description of pig-feed as 'largely restricted to waste products and such home-grown foods as are not required for human consumption or by other stock' - it was the leftovers that were given to the pig.[36] Their machine-like robust digestive constitution was required to take advantage of the variety of, otherwise wasted, materials that would form pigswill. Moving the pig closer to kitchen refuse in towns and cities was necessary to ensure that these resources were effectively utilised for food production.

Join a Pig Club

The success of urban pig keeping relied upon human co-operation, and the effective utilisation of pigs within towns and cities was predicated on a state-led effort to enrol voluntary pig-keepers and to encourage the formation of pig clubs. To start these quickly, co-operative clubs were formed early in the war and club numbers expanded significantly. As Alec Hobson, wartime secretary of the SPKC, reflected in 1945: 'Co-operative clubs reached their peak of activity in 1942-43. They were created to meet an emergency and did so very effectively.'[37] Co-operative pig clubs functioned through the collective purchasing of pigs, supplies, and foodstuffs, and relied on

[32] M. Huggins, 'Sports Gambling during the Second World War: A British Entertainment for Critical Times or a National Evil?', *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 32.5 (2015), p. 676.
[33] Cooper, 'Challenging the Refuse Revolution', pp. 717-8.
[34] Riley, 'From Salvage to Recycling', p. 81.
[35] Thorsheim, *Waste into Weapons*, p. 262.
[36] Fishwick, 'Pig Feeding in War Time', p. 155.
[37] SPKC Annual Report 1945, NA, MAF 126/2.

shared responsibility for rearing the pigs and maintaining the sty. This differed to pig owners' clubs, where each individual owned a pig but reared them alongside others. Members of pig owners' club supported one another through mutual insurance. Both types of club were popular during the war, but the co-operative pig clubs, which were often operated by those who had little if no experience of pig rearing, were more frequently represented in the popular press. These clubs aligned with the narrative of the 'People's War', as an example of shared co-operation and sacrifice by people on the home front.

Popular representations of pig clubs stressed their contribution to the war effort and were imbued with notions of wartime citizenship. For instance, *Picture Post* celebrated the pioneer efforts of the Tottenham dustmen pig club in early 1940 for taking voluntary and pragmatic action - the dustmen were described as 'teaching the Government a thing or two.'[38] Similarly, the SPKC *Keep a Pig* promotional pamphlet stressed that by keeping a pig and joining a pig club: 'You will taking up a most profitable form of food production, both for yourself and for your country' (Figure 1.2).[39] Starting up or joining a pig club exhibited what Sonya Rose terms 'good citizenship', in the sense that members were active and willing volunteers who contributed to the welfare of the community and the survival of the nation.[40] Furthermore, voluntary participation in pig clubs straddled both the 'Dig for Victory' and salvaging campaigns. The growing of vegetables was seen as a way for families to display 'the highest form of citizenship' during the war.[41] Likewise, salvaging was linked with national duty and wartime participation.[42] Pig clubs offered citizens the opportunity to partake in both of these campaigns and fulfil their national duty.

[38] *Picture Post*, 3 February 1940.
[39] Keep a Pig SPKC Promotional Leaflet, NA, MAF 84/55, f. 3.
[40] Rose, *Which People's War?*, pp. 18-9.
[41] Ginn, 'Dig for Victory!', p. 296.
[42] Riley, 'From Salvage to Recycling', p. 81.

Figure 1.2

Keep a Pig SPKC Promotional Leaflet, NA, MAF 84/55.

Nevertheless, in an effort to enrol greater numbers of domestic pig-keepers, the SPKC also associated wartime pig keeping with other benefits that went beyond wartime duty and participation alone. In particular, the SPKC stressed the economic advantages of forming a pig club. In their 'Keep a Pig' leaflet, the SPKC promoted how pig club members would be insured against the loss of a pig, the co-operative nature of the system would reduce the costs of necessary purchases, and that the SPKC would offer free advice and assistance.[43] Strict regulation over slaughter licences, and the ability to sell half of a pig to a local retail butcher - or the whole pig to the MOF if the meat produced exceeded requirements - ensured meat distribution was constant over the course of the year. In practice, clubs also offered extra economic benefits. The club, formed by policemen at Nine Elms Station, London, in July 1941, invested any profits from meat sold to the government in saving certificates for the financial benefit of members.[44] Through these extra economic benefits, it is possible to observe - as Franklin Ginn argues in relation to wartime gardening - that people were not only motivated to produce food for the cause of national solidarity, but as an act of self, family and/or community interest, outside of the normal restrictions of rationing.[45] Consequently, a language of wartime duty, combined with an activity that offered an opportunity for personal autonomy, worked to encourage urban food production - although this personal autonomy was restricted within the regulations of the state and the guidance of the SPKC.

Going beyond wartime duty and economic incentives, the national press also encouraged British citizens the form pig clubs by framing the pursuit as a therapeutic activity, whereby interactions with pigs countered the toils and stresses of war. For example, the *Daily Mirror* reported on the activities of a pig club was established at a North East England army hospital, where the rearing of pigs was used as a form of rehabilitation for wounded and shell-shocked soldiers.[46] The activity was considered as therapeutic and useful for gaining skills that would aid soldiers once they had recovered and entered civil life.[47] Similarly, *The Times* and the BBC Home Service stressed the utility of forming a wartime pig club for both its service to the nation

[43] Keep a Pig SPKC Promotional Leaflet, NA, MAF 84/55.
[44] Rules of Nine Elms Police Station Pig Club, Police pig and poultry clubs – rules and regulations (1941; 1952), National Archives, London, Records of the Metropolitan Police Office (hereafter NA, MEPO) 2/6516.
[45] Ginn, 'Dig for Victory!', p. 303.
[46] *Daily Mirror*, 14 July 1941.
[47] See, J. Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain: 'Soul of Nation'* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), for further discussion on rehabilitation in Britain during the Second World War, which involved the use of medical, social and economic techniques in a holistic fashion.

and as a good way to socialise, and noted how attending to the pigs provided an antidote to worry.[48] This therapeutic narrative is consistent with broader historical arguments, which identify how early in the war the government mobilised leisure to aid morale and create national unity amidst a stressed and war-weary population.[49] Moreover, the employment of pigs to counter worry alludes to Amy Bell's argument that within the ruins of London – and what we can assume of other war-damaged urban districts – lurked a landscape of fear, which was hidden beneath Britain's strict emotional regime of fear as bad for morale and a social embarrassment.[50] Through pig keeping it was then perceptively possible to therapeutically combat the stresses of modern warfare *and* play the part of an active citizen.

This therapeutic narrative was also grounded in a wider rhetoric of reconnecting with nature. In particular, the SPKC utilised contemporary debates surrounding rural nostalgia. As Alec Hobson stated in the SPKC's 1944 annual report:

> The contribution of the pig club movement is not confined to the conversion of waste into meat; it has helped to increase the fertility of gardens and allotments; provided members with a profitable interest and relaxation; and by reviving interest in husbandry has shown the way to greater appreciation of one of the fundamentals on which life depends.[51]

The press reiterated SPKC sentiments in regard to this process, which encouraged citizens to engage with nature and to make the connection between land, labour, and food production.[52] As Frank Trentmann argues, rural nostalgia resonated in Britain across the first half of the twentieth century through a revival of folk culture, where people – such as urban ramblers – turned to nature as a process of spiritual regeneration.[53] Moreover, proponents of 'back-to-the-land' became more articulate in wartime. [54] Although supporters of pig keeping did not adopt their messages wholesale, these ideas both shaped the SPKC and were promoted by them to target those sympathetic to their ideals. Furthermore, through the reintroduction of pigs,

[48] *The Times*, 10 December 1940. *BBC Listener*, 14 September 1944.
[49] R. Mackay, *Half the Battle: Civilian Morale in Britain during the Second World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), pp. 209-15. G. Field, *Blood, Sweat, and Toil: Remaking the British Working Class* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 217-50.
[50] A. Bell, 'Landscapes of Fear: Wartime London, 1939-1945', *Journal of British Studies*, 48 (2009), pp. 153-175.
[51] SPKC Annual Report 1944, NA, MAF 126/2.
[52] *The Times*, 10 December 1940. *The Manchester Guardian*, 4 April 1941.
[53] F. Trentmann, 'Civilization and Its Discontents: English Neo-Romanticism and the Transformation of Anti-Modernism in Twentieth Century Western Culture', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 29.4 (1994), pp. 583-625.
[54] D. Matless, *Landscape and Englishness* (London: Reaktion Books, 1998), p. 103.

nostalgic ideals of the countryside were physically manifested within towns and cities.

Propaganda efforts to promote and encourage domestic pig-keeping also reveals wider insights into wartime gender boundaries, especially concerning representations of appropriate wartime pig-related roles undertaken by men and women. Through an analysis of governmental literature and propaganda, Ginn argues that the Dig for Victory campaign legitimised masculine control over the domestic garden, and women and children were addressed as learning how to assist men.[55] This campaign functioned on the reproduction of patriarchal norms, and a similar argument can be made in relation to pig keeping. Those who oversaw the wartime activity explicitly targeted the 'small man' – in regards to the small-scale male farmer – in their campaigns, such as Reginald Dorman-Smith, Minister of Agriculture, in his address at the formation of the SPKC.[56] Visual sources also aided this reproduction of patriarchal norms through a sustained depiction of the pig keeper as male. The SPKC's 'Keep a Pig' leaflet depicted the image of the husbandman, whilst the popular press published more diverse images of male dustmen, firemen and soldiers handling pigs – women did not feature in these visual displays (Figure 1.2).[57] On the other hand, government propaganda, the popular press, and *Public Cleansing and Salvage*, continuously called upon the assistance of housewives to salvage kitchen refuse and supply the pig clubs with the resources they required.[58] This distinction of gendered roles was exemplified in MOI propaganda photographs and films. For instance, women were depicted as the main actors who filled 'pig bins' (Figure 1.3). Similarly, a short cartoon propaganda film depicted a male farmer angrily shouting at housewives to recycle their kitchen waste so that he could feed his pig.[59] These representations highlight that it was not only from the supporting role of the kitchen

[55] Ginn, 'Dig for Victory!', pp. 300-2.
[56] *Daily Express*, 23 November 1939; Letter from R. Dorman-Smith to Minister of Health, 9 February 1940, Poultry and Pig Keeping on Local Authorities' Housing Estates, National Archives, London, Records of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government (hereafter NA, HLG) 101/309; SPKC Annual Report 1944, NA, MAF 126/2.
[57] Keep a Pig SPKC Promotional Leaflet, NA, MAF 84/55. *Picture Post*, 3 February 1940. *Daily Mirror*, 14 January 1941. *Daily Mirror*, 9 April 1943.
[58] *Picture Post*, 3 February 1940; Anon., 'Edinburgh Waste Feeds 3,000 Pigs', *Public Cleansing and Salvage*, 31.370 (1941), p. 320; Anon., 'Feed the Pigs and Save Your Bacon', *Public Cleansing and Salvage*, 21.367 (1941), p. 222; Anon., 'How Aberdeen deals with Swill', *Public Cleansing and Salvage*, 31.365 (1941), p. 162; Anon., 'Kitchen Waste for Pig Feeding', *Public Cleansing and Salvage*, 31.367 (1941), p. 199.
[59] Ministry of Information, 'Government Official: Save Your Bacon', Ministry of Information Propaganda Film, 8 October 1942, British Pathe Film Archive <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/save-your-bacon/query/pigs+war>[accessed 15 September 2017].

that a women's contributions to domestic pig keeping could be made, they were also to blame if male pig keepers could not feed their pigs.

Figure 1.3

Eric Joysmith (Ministry of Information Photo Division), 'Pig Food: Women's Voluntary Service Collects Salvaged Kitchen Waste, East Barnet, Hertfordshire, England, 1943', Ministry of Information Second World War Collection, D 14248, Imperial War Museum, <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205200085> [accessed 19 November 2017].

This distinction between appropriate male and female roles within domestic pig keeping and recycling aligns with wider wartime efforts to preserve pre-war gendered roles and identities. Lucy Noakes identifies how representations relating to wartime air raid precautions framed the civil defence volunteer as a heroic male. This was in response to concerns that civil defence was perceived as a feminine wartime role due to its place on the home front rather than the masculine front line, and for being a passive rather than active role.[60] Other historians have also identified how this distinction between the home and front lines, and passive and active roles, shaped the ways in which notions of masculinity and femininity were represented in wartime state policies and wider culture.[61] This gendered distinction was often premised on the notion of the masculine protection of the nation (including the home), and the feminine maintenance of the home.[62] The deployment of members of the WVS to collect kitchen waste for pigs, which was portrayed in MOI propaganda campaigns and the press, challenged and reinforced such a distinction, as they simultaneously took on a public role outside the home whilst also collecting kitchen waste (an extension of a traditional feminine role).[63] Nonetheless, popular portrayals of domestic pig keeping reinforced the distinction between the active male and the supporting female. Joining a pig club and working with pigs – where pigs were frequently represented alongside munitions and other 'war-winning' materials, which connected the home and front lines – was then represented as a masculine endeavour.[64] For civilian men on the home front – whose masculinities were often represented as subordinated in popular culture to their military counterparts – membership of a pig club provided an opportunity to become an active wartime participant.

Alongside the narratives constructed around domestic pig keeping that symbolically framed it as an act of national duty and a masculine endeavour, the normalisation and success of these wartime schemes was also tied to wider material recycling efforts. In practice, urban pig keepers relied upon the reuse of kitchen refuse as it

[60] L. Noakes, '"Serve to Save": Gender, Citizenship and Civil Defence in Britain 1937-41', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 47.4 (2012), pp. 734-753.
[61] This distinction was also made explicit in the formation and cultural representations of the Home Guard. See, Summerfield and Peniston-Bird, *Contesting Home Defence*.
[62] S. Rose, 'Women's Rights, Women's Obligations: Contradictions of Citizenship in World War II Britain', *European Review of History*, 7.2 (2000), pp. 277-289.
[63] Thorsheim highlights how the enrolment of women for salvaging purposes challenged wartime gender divisions. See, Thorsheim, *Waste into Weapons*, pp. 7-8, 66.
[64] Recent studies have examined how representations of male wartime industrial work was explicitly associated with the front line. See, Robb, *Men at Work*; Pattinson, McIvor and Robb, *Men in Reserve*.

formed pigswill, which could be prepared in the domestic sphere or converted at specially built plants that were erected in wartime. This extended the use of kitchen refuse for pigswill from small, isolated systems employed by some pre-war restaurants and hotels, to the systematic use of pig bins on residential streets and of pigswill plants.[65] By 1944 in Birmingham, this had grown to 5,588 pig bins in use, which offered enough refuse to produce 2,100 tons of sterilised swill annually at the newly built Montague Street Works.[66] This not only provided a solution to wartime import restrictions, but it also reduced the costs of transporting animal feed outside of the municipality and allowed meat production to be kept within the boundaries of towns and cities. The success of these schemes also relied upon the physical repositioning of pigs closer to these sources of pigswill.

Inclusions and Exclusions within the City

In Second World War Britain pig production became, once again, an urban agricultural practice. We need to consider how the physical placement of pigs in these locations functioned, and how the urban environment was both materially and symbolically shaped to accommodate pig production. As Rauno Lahtinen and Timo Vuorisalo show in relation to the Finnish city of Turku during the Second World War, the needs of war fundamentally changed how people experienced and used the urban environment.[67] In an effort to harness the digestive capacities of the pig for converting kitchen waste into food, the state enabled the reintroduction of pigs into towns and cities. Pig clubs and domestic pig keepers appropriated urban and suburban wastelands, gardens, parks, yards and allotments to rear their pigs in wartime Britain. This process of reintroduction raises important questions regarding the constitutive process by which animals are included and excluded from certain spaces, and how these boundaries are shaped and contested within particular cultural contexts. It signals that the human-animal war effort was underpinned by state-led efforts to redefine the city as a pig-friendly space.

Chris Philo argues that we need to recover how human communities think, feel and talk about the animal in question.[68] How the animal is understood and conceptualised

[65] A.L.T., 'The Question of Pig-Feeding: Some Random Notes, *Public Cleansing and Salvage*, 30.359 (1940), pp. 358-9.
[66] Anon, 'Birmingham Salvage', *Public Cleansing and Salvage*, 34.407 (1944), pp. 462-4.
[67] Lahtinen and Vuorisalo, 'It's war and everyone can do as they please!', pp. 679-700.
[68] Philo, 'Animals, Geography, and the City', pp. 655-681.

will shape the 'sociospatial practices towards these beings on an everyday basis' and this has important consequences for whether the particular species of animal is included or excluded from common sites of human activity.[69] In the context of the wartime urban environment in Britain, the pig was redefined as an efficient food producer and waste converter in official rhetoric. Combined with the exigencies of war, and the availability of kitchen refuse within towns and cities, the pig was allowed to re-enter the urban sphere on a greater scale than prior to the war. This helped change the urban environment from an exclusionary to an inclusionary space for the pig.

Nevertheless, historical anxieties about the pig within urban spaces shaped this process. As Robert Malcolmson and Stephanos Mastoris note, prior to the commencement of war pigs had become a 'common-place metaphor for human waste and disgust, and… a metaphorical association with untidiness, disorder and filth', and served to 'define in consciousness a boundary between civilised and the uncivilised, the refined and the unrefined.'[70] The urban populace could not challenge this image through engagement with the 'real' pig as inter-war production was primarily centred on indoor factory-style sites or on rural farms and smallholdings – the pig only entered the city via the abattoir and butchers' shops.[71]

To make the urban environment a legally inclusionary space for pigs, the wartime government suspended legislation that had prohibited pig-keeping in many urban areas. Pre-war urban pig keeping had been hindered by tenancy restrictions and local byelaws, which were extended under the Public Health Act 1936. The locality of these restrictions meant they could vary in scale and specificity within different locales, although the Ministry of Health (MOH) did offer guidelines that pigs needed to kept at least 100 feet from residential dwellings in cleanly maintained sties that were located in areas which would not threaten water pollution.[72] These restrictive measures were partially overturned in an Order of Council passed on 19th June 1940. A response to a query from a potential pig keeper in Preston by a MOH spokesman summarised this order succinctly: 'It is lawful for any person to keep pigs, hens or

[69] *Ibid*., p. 656.
[70] Malcolmson and Mastoris, *The English Pig*, pp. 1-2. For further discussions on the 'negative' construction of the metaphorical pig, see: P. Stallybrass and A. White, *The Politics & Poetics of Transgression* (London: Metheun, 1986), pp. 48-50; A. Stibbe, 'As Charming as a Pig: The Discursive Construction of the Relationship between Pigs and Humans', *Society and Animals*, 11.4 (2003), pp. 376-8.
[71] Woods, 'Rethinking the History of Modern Agriculture', pp. 172-7.
[72] *Manchester Guardian*, 25 October 1939.

rabbits in any place notwithstanding any lease or tenancy or other contract, or any restriction imposed by or under any enactment; so long as the keeping of such pigs, hens or rabbits is not in fact prejudicial to health or a nuisance.'[73] This demonstrates that whilst the urban environment was opened up legally to the pig, historical anxieties associating urban agriculture with public health and nuisance still prevailed over the official redefinition of the pig as useful for the war effort. Even towards the end of the war, proponents of pig keeping were still tackling the 'persistent problem' of urban authorities that regarded the pig as 'not a clean animal and makes his presence felt some distance round his actual quarters.'[74]

Pig clubs negotiated this conflicting definition of the pig as both useful and a threat – in terms of health and nuisance – by hiding pigs within the urban landscape. In this way the pig was both included and excluded from sites of common human activity within towns and cities. For instance, the pigs at Nine Elms Police Station were made unnoticeable, as buildings and a railway track surrounded the pigsty. Prior to the club's formation, a Medical Officer of Health inspected the site and granted permission on the condition that it would not disturb, or be visible to, local residents, in spite of its close proximity to residential dwellings only thirty feet away.[75] Firemen, factory workers, Air Raid Precaution (ARP) depot workers, and dustmen, who set up pig clubs in the borough of Tottenham, took similar precautions and made certain that their pigsties were located on sites away from main buildings and other premises.[76] Scholars argue that these kinds of boundaries are ordered to maintain the distinction between urban civilisation and animal nature. They stop the threat of the animal transgressing into the sanitary city, which helps maintain the distinction between human and animal, order and disorder.[77] Evidently, it was not possible to maintain the pre-war position of the boundary, but the fiction that it was still in place had to be sustained so the urban pig had to be hidden.

Nevertheless, some pig clubs openly exposed this boundary, and they were subsequently monitored and regulated through sanitisation. For instance, the policemen members of a club located on the Frame Ground in Hyde Park were

[73] Letter from A.N.C Shelley to M. Miller, 13 September 1940, NA, HLG 101/309.
[74] Ministry of Agriculture – Memorandum for Meeting at Kingston-upon-Thames, 16 December 1944, NA, MAF 84/55.
[75] Nine Elms Station Letter/Report, 16 June 1941, NA, MEPO 2/6516.
[76] J. S. Blair, 'The Problems of Pig Clubs in War Time', *Veterinary Record*, 46.55 (1943), pp. 445-6.
[77] H. Griffiths, I. Poulter and D. Sibley, 'Feral Cats in the City', in C. Philo and C. Wilbert (eds), *Animal Spaces, Beastly Places: New Geographies of Human-Animal Relations* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 63.

expected to maintain the area's cleanliness, prevent any pollutant smells, keep noise to a minimum, and erect fences to ensure pigs did not escape.[78] Moreover, it was only the perceived propaganda benefits of such a high profile voluntary club that ensured its approval, and government officials stated that such an endeavour would not have been entertained in peacetime. This highlights that club members were expected to maintain and display a sanitised space, and that the visible pig was considered as a pollutant that threatened the urban environment. As Mary Douglas argues, pollutants (dirt) are considered as 'matter out of place' and are culturally specific in relation to time and space.[79] The labelling of dirt and cleanliness can function to establish social order, and cleansing practices can be employed to enforce regulatory and exclusionary practices within communities.[80] The process of sanitisation then served as an apparatus for monitoring and regulating the perceived threat of the pig transgressing into exclusionary spaces, and reinforced the material and symbolic boundaries between the sanitised city and the perceived threat of animal nature.

Outbreaks of Disease

Sanitising urban-pig-spaces also served the purpose of tackling livestock and swine-related diseases. During the early years of the war, cases of Foot-and-Mouth, swine erysipelas, swine fever and necrotic enteritis broke out amongst pig populations across both urban and rural areas of the country.[81] While it cannot be determined that these problems were caused by the reintroduction of pigs into towns and cities alone, discussions by government officials, the Public Cleansing Institute, and veterinarians, suggest the conditions in which pigs were kept in these spaces were perceived to be highly contributory.[82] Furthermore, the widespread use of kitchen-refuse-formed-pigswill was perceived as integral to these disease related issues. This, combined with the cramped locations of urban pigsties, meant that the physiological

[78] Memoranda about Pigs in Frame Ground in Hyde Park, 11 July 1941, Police Station Pig Club in the Frame Ground (1940-1955), National Archives, London, Records of the Office of Works (hereafter NA, WORK) 16/1562.
[79] M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, Sixth Edition (London: Routledge, 2002), p.2. Also see V. Smith, *Clean: A History of Personal Hygiene and Purity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 24.
[80] T. Cooper, 'Recycling Modernity: Waste and Environmental History', *History Compass*, 8.9 (2010), p. 1115.
[81] Anon., 'In Parliament - Foot-and-Mouth Disease', *Veterinary Record*, 2.52 (1940), p. 30; Anon., 'Diagnosis of Diseases of Swine', *Veterinary Record*, 12.52 (1940), p. 224.
[82] A. L. T., 'Our Concern with the Diseases of Animals Act', *Public Cleansing and Salvage*, 31.372 (1941), pp. 380-1.

health of the pig was inhibited.[83] Therefore, diseases and the physical impairment of pigs (nonhuman factors) constrained human activity in the form of food production. In other words, nonhuman factors blocked, or at least hampered, wartime efforts to rear pigs in urban spaces. Simultaneously, the human responses to these problems also indicates that nonhuman factors shaped human intentions, in terms of how pig keepers viewed and treated the pig, and how they interacted with the urban environment to amend these problems.

As the war progressed commentators began to discuss the detrimental effects of wartime pigswill on the health of the pig, as pigswill acted as a vector for spreading disease. Veterinarians observed how a change from a diet largely consisting of concentrates to one that was based from swill produced primarily from kitchen refuse led to worms and digestive conditions.[84] Pigswill was also connected with the spread of Foot-and-Mouth disease. During 1942, 41 initial outbreaks led to a further 629 over the course of the year, and the disease's potential to impact agricultural animals devastatingly through cross-species transmission ensured it received critical wartime attention.[85] Members of Parliament discussed the processes by which pigswill became contaminated and how it was spread.[86] Parliamentarians laid blame on perceived contaminated meat from South America, where the bones from this meat were added to pigswill. This infected pigswill could then contaminate other swill stored nearby. Butchers who came into contact with contaminated meat also spread the disease, via infected blood on their smocks when they visited local pigsties. Moreover, parliamentarians and veterinarians identified how dogs helped spread the disease on several occasions by carrying contaminated bones into spaces occupied by pigs.[87]

The cramped conditions of many urban pigsties were also detrimental to the health of the pig. Veterinarians predicted in early 1940 that the pre-war indoor intensively farmed pig, which had a high rate of weight gain, had acquired this capacity at the expense of disease resistance. The shift to urban allotments or wastelands would expose pigs to disease and, subsequently, they would require a number of years to

[83] Blair, 'The Problems of Pig Clubs in War Time', pp. 445-6.
[84] Woods, 'Rethinking the History of Modern Agriculture', pp. 177-8. Blair, 'The Problems of Pig Clubs in War Time', pp. 445-6.
[85] G. Moore, 'Scraps from the Kitchen Front', *Public Cleansing and Salvage*, 35.416 (1945), p. 308.
[86] Anon., 'In Parliament - Foot-and-Mouth Disease', *Veterinary Record*, 2.52 (1940), p. 30.
[87] Anon., 'In Parliament – Foot-and-Mouth Disease', *Veterinary Record*, 48.56 (1944), p. 463.

build a resistance to these environments.[88] This prediction appears to have proved correct, especially in veterinarian J. S. Blair's case-study of 'The Problems of Pig Clubs in War-time', which focused upon the district of Tottenham.[89] Blair outlined various problems that urban pig keepers faced within his North London district. These included the problems of rearing piglets between the age of weaning and three-and-a-half months on premises where the pig enclosure had no extra grass or earth available for movement, which caused these piglets to be inflicted with a 'thick unhealthy skin, a tucked-up, unthrifty, anaemic appearance, and rickets.'[90] Problems also arose concerning the heating and ventilation of urban pig enclosures, and the use of salvaged sawdust as bedding, which got into troughs and was consumed, causing digestion problems.[91] These congestive enclosures led to outbreaks of swine erysipelas amongst older pigs, necrotic enteritis amongst piglets, and one outbreak of swine fever in the district: although Blair accredits the limited impact of swine fever to the lack of trade outside of the district and the - more often than not - clean maintenance of pig enclosures.

Throughout the war, efforts were made to combat these threats to the pigs' health whenever possible. For instance, the Foot-and-Mouth Disease Act was amended in 1941 with a 'Boiling of Animal Foodstuffs' Order, which stated that all swill must be boiled for over an hour before it was served as food.[92] This would, in theory, alleviate problems of disease and digestion. Public cleansing officials also urged dustmen to familiarise themselves with Foot-and-Mouth disease orders and become 'sanitary conscious' in response to the threat of contaminated materials.[93] In relation to the problems of pig keeping in Tottenham, Blair demonstrated that by 1943 many of the issues faced were substantially rectified.[94] Pig producers alleviated the problems caused by sawdust through the use of non-harmful straw for bedding. The issue associated with ventilation within urban pig enclosures was substantially improved by the trial-and-error of various designs, which sought greater access to fresh air and soil for improvement. In particular, 'the outdoor sty with outdoor run on earth' was seen as the most beneficial type of sty for farrowing and for alleviating

[88] Anon., 'Diagnosis of Diseases of Swine', p. 224.
[89] Blair, 'The Problems of Pig Clubs in War Time', pp. 445-8.
[90] *Ibid*., p. 445.
[91] Ibid.
[92] A. N. Worden, 'The Swill-Feeding of Pigs in Urban Areas', *Veterinary Record*, 46.55 (1943), pp. 448-9.
[93] A. L. T., 'Our Concern with the Diseases of Animals Act', pp. 380-1.
[94] Blair, 'The Problems of Pig Clubs in War Time', pp. 445-6.

the detrimental impact of the urban environment on piglets.[95] This sty allowed these piglets to root and perform natural outdoor tendencies, which aided health through exercise. Furthermore, if the location did not permit the rearing of piglets, clubs bought pigs once they had grown to a size where the lack of soil (or nature) would not be as detrimental.[96]

Such responses to urban pig keeping align with Woods' argument that during the war some pig producers sought 'nature' as essential for successful pig production and viewed the pig as a sentient being rather than as a machine.[97] These commentators voiced concerns with pre-war 'artificial' methods of agriculture and moralised about the danger of breaking nature's laws and, therefore, tried to make the pig's environment as close to rural nature as possible. The human responses to the nonhuman problems of urban pig keeping show how the pig's environment - through improved ventilation, an extension of enclosures and by other means - was naturalised, and the biological needs of the pig were recognised in this process. This extends Woods' analysis, as her argument does not take into account the circumstances of the urban environment. Moreover, the examples of the urban environment nuance her argument as they show how the naturalisation of these pig enclosures was coupled with a process of 'artificial' sanitisation. In other words, urban pig enclosures became hybrid spaces whereby the city met the countryside. They were also spaces in which humans responded to, and worked with, nonhuman factors that potentially hampered efficient pig production. Through working with the needs of the pig, the pig club movement became more effective and the nation's food stocks were enhanced.

Slaughter, Sensibilities and Supply

Once successfully reared, the final stage of the pigs' role in the war effort was their slaughter and subsequent conversion into bacon and pork. Like the tentative reintroduction of pigs into towns and cities, the laws relating to animal slaughter were redefined to suit the needs of war to ensure, in theory, that pig owners contributed to the nation's food supply and were kept within the allowances of rationing. Critical to this process was acquiring a slaughter licence from either a

[95] *Ibid.*, p. 445
[96] *Ibid.*, pp. 445-6.
[97] Woods, 'Rethinking the History of Modern Agriculture', pp. 183-4.

Food Executive Officer or an Area Meat and Livestock Officer.[98] For individual self-suppliers, licences for slaughter were granted to applicants for no more than two pigs per household per year. The applicant must have also reared the pig for at least three months and was required to surrender 52 bacon coupons for each pig or sell one whole side of the pig to the MOF. For pig clubs, slaughter licences were granted on the basis that the number of pigs slaughtered did not exceed the equivalent of two per member per year. The meat was only allowed to be distributed amongst members, and for every pig slaughtered another had to be sold to the government via a Collecting Centre or Pig Allocation Officer. To aid these processes, licences also permitted slaughter to take place on an owner's premises, or any other premises approved by a Food Executive Officer, so long as it was permitted by local regulations and byelaws.

This redefinition of where slaughter could take place offers a glimpse into how the war disrupted longer-term changes regarding human engagement with animal slaughter and food production within towns and cities. Over the second half of the nineteenth century, sanitary discourses combined with expanding animal geographies, globalised networks of trade, and the industrialisation of slaughter, to ensure that agricultural animals were 'visibly' removed from the urban sphere.[99] This timeframe is a fault line in the long history of meat production, where industrialisation has caused an unprecedented break with nature, which distanced people from what they consume, the act of killing, and the natural environment in which animals were raised.[100] Chris Otter argues that 'the beginning of the twentieth century saw the completion of the psychological mechanism that removed death from society, eliminated its character of public ceremony, and made it a private act' in regards to animal slaughter in Britain.[101] This process, in turn, set conditions by which true disgust could be felt when faced with the act of animal slaughter itself or at least certain sensorial engagements, such as the sight of blood.[102]

[98] Ministry of Food Regulations for Issue of Licences to Slaughter to Self-Suppliers of Pigs (1945), Wartime Pig Control – An Outline by Dr A Calder (1945), National Archives, London, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Papers (hereafter NA, MAF) 223/53.
[99] Otter, 'The Vital City', pp. 517-537; Atkins, 'Animal Wastes and Nuisances in Nineteenth Century London', pp. 19-52. Philo, 'Animals, Geography, and the City', pp. 655-681.
[100] A. Fitzgerald, 'A Social History of the Slaughterhouse: From Inception to Contemporary Implications', *Human Ecology Review*, 17.1 (2010), pp. 58-69; W. Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (London: WW Norton and Company, 1991).
[101] Otter, 'Civilizing Slaughter: The Development of the British Public Abattoir, 1850-1910', p. 103.
[102] *Ibid*., pp. 103-6.

The slaughter of animals on premises within wartime towns and cities demonstrates that the once contained industrialised private act of slaughter was breached. The psychological mechanism that removed death from society was challenged by the needs of war. This was no more apparent than in the suburbs, which had been crafted as wholesome, visually edifying and pleasurable spaces that offered a sense of nature where the tangible signs of death had been removed.[103] In early twentieth century suburban Britain, meat had been commoditised and sanitised through its point of access (the butcher's shop), through inspection, and through the way it was displayed.[104] Nonetheless, reactions to slaughter in urban and suburban areas – where they can be found – suggest that a sense of disgust or repulsion was not uniform.[105] For instance, John Gardiner recalls how in wartime Walsall 'the [pigs] screams would be dreadful' when a pig was illicitly taken at night and slaughtered.[106] However, Eva Sewell recalls without repulsion that it was 'quite a task when it came to the killing and butchering of the pig' - which they kept in a sty in their garden in Scunthorpe - and fondly remembers the sausages that were made.[107]

Furthermore, the contradictory responses to slaughter are not found in the process of meat preparation. Instead, urban pig owners appear to have had no problems with preparing the carcasses for consumption and curing bacon. For example, in wartime Dudley, June Pugh remembers, 'when our pig had been killed, we would go into the cellar to salt it on the big slabs. We had great big blocks of salt that we'd break with a sad iron. We salted the sides first, then hung them from big gail-hooks to dry out. That took quite a while.'[108] Similar preparations took place in homes in various towns and cities, where pig carcasses were scrubbed in tin baths, salted in cellars, and hung in pillowcases above staircases.[109] These examples indicate that the

[103] *Ibid*., p. 105.
[104] *Ibid.*
[105] Sources are used from the BBC WW2 People's War online archive, see, Noakes, 'War on the Web', pp. 47-66. Lucy Noakes provides a comprehensive overview of the possibilities and limitations of the use of the BBC's 'People's War' website in historical analysis. Of particular note, she argues that 'websites are potentially more open and participatory than other, more traditional, sites of memory' (p. 50). The website offers a medium for memories to be accounted for which do not necessarily comply with the dominant narratives within popular cultural memory.
[106] J. Gardiner, 'Family Life in 1942', 14 November 2003, BBC People's War, A2040841 < http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/41/a2040841.shtml> [accessed 10 May 2015].
[107] E. Sewell, 'WRVS/Air Raid Shelters/Provision of Food', BBC People's War, A4281842 < http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/42/a4281842.shtml> [accessed 10 May 2015].
[108] J. Pugh, 'Staying Together: Family Life in Wartime Dudley', BBC People's War, A3308195 < http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/95/a3308195.shtml> [accessed 10 May 2015]. A 'sad iron' is a large and heavy flat iron.
[109] R. Whitfield, 'Eggs and Bacon', BBC People's War, A4021462 < http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/62/a4021462.shtml> [accessed 10 May 2015]. P.

corporeal and psychological distance between the live animal and its consumption was broken down during war. Moreover, the knowledge of how to home-cure a pig in these non-rural homes suggests that the previous historians exaggerate the pre-war separation between urban people and meat production.

Slaughter and meat preparation did not always occur on owners' premises, however, and the systems that corporeally and psychologically removed death from society were still maintained in parallel with home-based practices. Regulations ensured that pigs were also sold or donated to the MOF. In these instances, pork pigs were sent to one of the 611 government slaughterhouses in operation and bacon pigs were sent to one of the 140 bacon factories operated by private enterprise but regulated by ministry officials. From the hidden or removed locations of these institutions pigs were slaughtered, converted into bacon or pork, and passed through wholesalers, to retailers and finally to rationed consumers.[110] This system was in place for the majority of the war, although bacon was not rationed until January 1940 and all other meat followed in March of the same year.[111] It is within this system that a large quantity of wartime bacon and pork was circulated, ready to be consumed within towns and cities.

The regulations surrounding pig slaughter, meat preparation and meat acquisition were challenged for being too bureaucratic. Pig producers voiced concern in newspaper letters-to-the-editor columns about complicated systems that simultaneously granted slaughter licences yet denied the right to cure the meat, while delayed payments for their pigs from the MOF exacerbated the situation.[112] For instance, in a letter to the *Daily Express*, Janet Montagu, a pig farmer from Sussex noted numerous problems with the wartime system, including the loss of weight of the pig during transportation to the MOF supply that meant a financial loss and delays in payment.[113] These issues denied people consumable meat and made the whole process of domestic pig production appear complicated and

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Broomhall, 'WW2 Childhood', BBC People's War, A5766339 < http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/39/a5766339.shtml> [accessed 10 May 2015]. J. Burrows, 'Pigs in the Wood', BBC People's War, A5328416 < http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/16/a5328416.shtml> [accessed 10 May 2015].

[110] Ministry of Food Regulations for Issue of Licences to Slaughter to Self-Suppliers of Pigs (1945), NA, MAF 223/53, ff. 3-4. For a detailed administrative account of the wartime pig industry, see, Hammond, *Food*, pp. 317-434.

[111] Hammond, *Food*, pp. 19-20.

[112] *The Times*, 13 December 1940.

[113] *Daily Express*, 15 March 1940.

incomprehensible.[114] Furthermore, the strict adherence to regulations by government officials heightened these critiques of over-bureaucracy. This was no more apparent than during the famous Lowestoft pig case, where Frederick Webb, a wartime pig keeper, was found guilty on three charges relating to the distribution of meat from his slaughtered pig to family and friends over the Christmas period of 1943-4.[115] This case received national attention when it was reported that the Mayor of Lowestoft had condemned the Deputy Meat Agent's 'gestapo-like' methods when he called at the pig-keeper's home. This prompted a letter from Prime Minister Winston Churchill to the Minister of Food Lord Woolton in which he stated that it 'showed bureaucracy in its most pettifogging and tyrannical aspect.'[116] He then went on to write, 'whether that person chooses to eat his bacon slowly over a long period or to share it with his friends is surely for him to decide.'[117]

To avoid these perceived strict regulations, some people turned to illegal pig keeping, illicit slaughter and the trade of meat on the 'grey market'. As Mark Roodhouse argues, the 'grey market' covered wartime illegal exchanges that were perceived to be morally acceptable.[118] Those who participated in these exchanges were, in their own opinion, not selfish or unpatriotic, but ethical consumers, dealers and producers who were entitled to obtain 'a little bit extra' as compensation for the many personal sacrifices they made at the government's behest.[119] This is evidenced, for example, in John Gardiner's full account of wartime pig keeping in Walsall:

> Sunday was the unofficial slaughter day because the Ministry of Food Inspectors never worked on a Sunday. If you had managed to conceal a pig on your premises (we all had something) and it was ready (fat enough), Sunday would be when the poor animal met its fate! The Ministry men would preside over an official slaughter to examine the conditions and procedures (hygiene etc.) then on behalf of the State, take half of the animal away 'because of the rationing' (I really would love to know what actually became of that meat.) The unofficial way would mean the total spoils for the breeder. The perpetrators would grab the pig under cover of darkness but the poor

[114] For further discussion of the complications surrounding slaughter licences in 1940, see, Hammond, *Food*, pp. 728-9.
[115] For other mentions of the Lowestoft pig case, see, Hammond, *Food*, p. 733; Roodhouse, 'Popular Morality and the Black Market in Britain', p. 243; Roodhouse, *Black Market Britain*, pp. 67-8.
[116] Letter from Prime Minister Winston Churchill to Minister of Food Lord Woolton, 26 February 1944, Lowestoft Pig Case (Dec 1943 – April 1944), National Archives, London, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Papers (hereafter NA, MAF 100/43.
[117] *Ibid*.
[118] Roodhouse, *Black Market Britain*, pp. 50-76.
[119] Roodhouse, 'Popular Morality and the Black Market in Britain', pp. 243-4.

> animal would always give them away as he would let the whole world know they were about to kill him. The screams would be dreadful, and Mom would simply comment, 'there'll be some pork about tomorrow', and sure enough, after a few days, we had pork for dinner![120]

The perceived normality of illegal pig keeping ('we all had something'), the skepticism of government intervention ('I really would love to know what actually became of that meat'), and the informal exchange of meat within the community ('we had pork for dinner'), offers a clear window into the below-the-radar practices of slaughter and exchange. Some policemen would also participate in this network. Roy Whitfield recalls that his father, who reared pigs in wartime Bristol, 'would distribute cuts of the pig to various locals and the policemen, who would turn a blind eye on occasions, and allowed his father to get a packet or two of rare woodbines.'[121] These are only two examples of a number of accounts, which indicate that the illicit slaughter of pigs and the illegal trade of meat were not just common in rural areas – as Roodhouse suggests – but occurred across various British towns and cities.[122]

The live pig, rather than bacon and pork, also became an illegally exchanged commodity. One respondent recalled how his father, a taxi-driver in Rotherham, used to do deliveries for local businessmen, and 'on one delivery from a farm, he got pulled over by a policemen in a blackout. Under the blanket in his boot he had a pig, which he claimed was a drunk friend who got violent when awoken, and so got away with the delivery.'[123] Another respondent recalled how her and her mother had purchased a 'black market piglet', which they transferred home on a bus in Wolverhampton wrapped in a shawl, hidden from a policemen sat nearby.[124] Although humorous, these examples reveal the risks people were willing to take to acquire, and trade, pigs outside of the restrictive framework set by the state.

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[120] J. Gardiner, 'Family Life in 1942', BBC, 'WW2 People's War'.
[121] R. Whitfield, 'Eggs and Bacon', BBC, 'WW2 People's War'. A similar scenario also occurred in the village of Tollshunt Knights in Essex. See, R. Houlding, 'The White Cart Horse', BBC People's War, A7924773 < http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/73/a7924773.shtml> [accessed 10 May 2015].
[122] Roodhouse, *Black Market Britain*, pp. 67-8. For other similar cases see, *Manchester Guardian*, 3 February 1941. *Manchester Guardian*, 5 March 1942. *Manchester Guardian*, 8 May 1943. M. Ost, 'Buxton in the War', BBC People's War, A3747954 < http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/54/a3747954.shtml> [accessed 17 May 2015]; J. Bloomfield, 'A Wartime Bakery', BBC People's War, A3192617 < http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/17/a3192617.shtml> [accessed 17 May 2015]; J. Burrows, 'Pigs in the Wood', BBC People's War, A5328416 < http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/16/a5328416.shtml> [accessed 10 May 2015].
[123] Anon., 'Pigs and Cars', BBC People's War, A2064368 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/68/a2064368.shtml > [accessed 17 May 2015].
[124] C. Gardiner, 'Black Market Piglet', BBC People's War, A2982972 < http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/72/a2982972.shtml> [accessed 17 May 2015].

Furthermore, they also demonstrate that the perceived status of the pig had changed: they had become a valuable asset within the wartime urban food economy.

The death of pigs, and the subsequent trade of meat, signaled the end of their utilisation for the war effort. Through both legal and illegal channels, the slaughter of animals on premises other than slaughterhouses, abattoirs, and butcher's shops, created conditions by which the long-term disconnection between animals and food was exposed. The illicit slaughter of pigs also enabled citizens to circulate meat through towns and cities, via a below-the-radar geography of community networks and 'grey market' dealers. These practices intersect long term trends in histories of animal slaughter, food production and cultural sensibilities, and demonstrate that the responses of disgust or repulsion, which were a systemic part of the industrialisation of slaughter, were not as prevalent as previous historians suggest. Furthermore, these community trade networks and 'grey market' deals indicate that whilst pigs had been reintroduced into towns and cities to encourage civilians to participate on the home front and to add food to the nation's larder, they also demonstrate how this process of reintroduction created conditions by which rationing restrictions could be exploited. This signals how the illicit slaughter, consumption and trade of pigs challenged the ethos of national unity and equality of sacrifice that were inherent within the discourse of the People's War.

Conclusion

The redefinition of the pig as a valuable commodity on the wartime grey market highlights just one of number of ways in which the pig was repositioned in accordance with the demands of war. As this chapter demonstrates, state officials and waste management professionals imaginatively redefined the digestive capacities of the pig as machine-like through the adoption of an industrial language of war and in light of wider discourses on wartime recycling. At the same time, agricultural scientists attempted to harness the pigs' digestive capacities through feeding experiments with various waste products. This redefinition of the pig as a waste converting machine was reliant on the voluntary enrolment of humans into domestic pig producers and pig club members. State propaganda and guidance literature, and the wartime press, constructed various narratives of domestic pig keeping in order to encourage citizens to volunteer. These narratives primarily centred on notions of

good citizenship, whereby citizens on the home front could perform and fulfil their wartime duty through rearing pigs and collecting kitchen waste. The success of these clubs was also contingent on the physical repositioning of the pig into urban and suburban spaces that were closer to domestic homes and restaurants, which could supply kitchen waste for pigswill. This required a redefinition of urban environments as inclusionary, rather than exclusionary, spaces for pigs. It also required a redefinition of where pig slaughter could and could not take place.

Nevertheless, human and nonhuman factors both allowed and blocked the success of wartime urban pig keeping. The reintroduction of pigs into urban environments was hampered by outbreaks of disease. Similarly, the illicit slaughter of pigs and the subsequent illegal circulation of meat demonstrate how British citizens thwarted the demands of rationing and challenged domestic pig keeping as an act of wartime duty and participation. The enrolment of pigs in the war effort was, therefore, not a smooth or uncontested process. But it still reconfigured human-animal relations by bringing new groups of humans and animals together as part of the war effort. Similar new human-animal relationships were also forged in the countryside during the war. But instead of livestock animals moving into the city, this saw volunteers and conscripted citizens moving out to work with livestock animals on rural farms.

Chapter Two: Improving the Nation's Dairy Herds - Productivity and 'New' Human-Cattle Interactions at War

Reporting on a cattle sale in West Sussex in December 1940, Douglas MacDonald Hastings – a journalist for the *Picture Post* – reflected on the importance of cattle for waging war. After noting that two cows were bought for 100 guineas each, he concluded his article:

> As Spitfires go, one hundred guineas isn't much. But, of the two, the cow is the more perfect man-developed machine. Even if you know nothing about cattle, you can look at these pictures and admire. In times like these, it's good to remember that, besides having the best Air Force, Britain also has the cattle which are the envy of the world. Like the Spitfires they too are helping us to win the war.[1]

Through utilising the poignant imagery of the Spitfire and the Royal Air Force in December 1940, Hastings made significant claims as to the importance of cattle – described as the 'envy of the world' – for the British war effort. Nevertheless, his adoration of British pedigree cattle skewed the realities of British cattle breeding and productivity in the early years of the war. Many dairy farmers and cattle suffered in the early years of the war and overall milk output decreased.[2] This was vividly depicted in the MO diary of a small-scale dairy farmer from Pwllheli who recorded his exasperation at the lack of food for his cattle. His cattle would go out onto the pasture as 'tho' half starved' after milking, where the shortage of grass made them troublesome. In order to protect two heifer calves from starvation he broke wartime regulations and fed them on milk, an act of desperation that, he wrote, could 'blow Lord Woolton and the public'. Despite his efforts, both of these heifer calves passed away in the following weeks.[3]

In response to the wartime demand to secure milk production, the state focused a significant amount of attention on improving the productivity of dairy cattle. Milk was a politically sensitive topic during the war, with expectant and nursing mothers and children at the centre of wartime concerns over milk. Introduced in 1940, the National Milk Scheme provided pregnant women and mothers of babies with seven

[1] *Picture Post*, 14 December 1940.
[2] J. Martin, 'The Structural Transformation of British Agriculture: The Resurgence of Progressive, High-Input Arable Farming', B. Short, C. Watkins and J. Martin (eds), *The Front Line of Freedom: British Farming in the Second World War* (Exeter: British Agricultural History Society, 2006), p. 35.
[3] D 5056, diary for August 1941, pp. 8, 29. D 5056, diary for September 1941, pp. 3-4.

extra pints of subsidised or free milk a week on top of their rationed allowance.[4] This scheme was accompanied by a significant expansion in the number of school children who consumed milk daily by the end of the war.[5] The inter-war stigma associated with free school milk was challenged by the circumstances of war, and new norms and rights to milk were forged.[6] In order to produce enough milk for the war effort and secure the health of mothers and children, it became essential for the state to ensure that dairy cattle maintained, if not improved, their milk output.

This chapter examines the physical and imaginative effort involved in improving dairy cattle milk output. It analyses how the state attempted to redefine notions of cattle productivity and actively intervened over the ways in which dairy cattle were bred and reared. In comparison to the physical repositioning of pigs into towns and cities for the British war effort, the enrolment of cattle remained in the countryside centred on state-led efforts to maintain, improve and redefine understandings of their productivity. This required the movement of new actors onto wartime farms to work with cattle, as well as the repurposing of existing human-cattle relationships to help meet the demands of war. In particular, the state enrolled agricultural scientists, veterinarians and pedigree farmers to improve cattle productivity, while a new agricultural workforce – in the form of the WLA – was enrolled to help maintain the milk output of cattle. As such, state-led efforts to maintain and improve the productivity of dairy cattle was tied to the simultaneous enrolment of humans to work with cattle, which led to the formation of new, and the reconfiguration of existing, human-cattle relationships.

The chapter begins with an examination of the efforts made by state officials, agricultural scientists and veterinarians attempted to improve the productivity of cattle, demonstrating how this was orchestrated through attempts to redefine notions of productivity and through intervening on cattle bodies. It then considers how the state attempted to engage pedigree farmers, who were seen as leaders of the dairy farming industry, to instil these redefined notions of productivity at the farm level. The remainder of the chapter then focuses on how the state attempted to maintain

[4] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*, pp. 134-5.
[5] P. Atkins, 'Fattening Children or Fattening Farmers? School Milk in Britain, 1921-1941', *Economic History Review*, 58.1 (2005), pp. 57-78; P. Atkins, 'The Milk in Schools Scheme, 1934-45: 'Nationalization' and Resistance', *History of Education*, 34.1 (2005), pp. 1-21; J. Welshman, 'School Meals and Milk in England and Wales, 1906-45', *Medical History*, 41.1 (1997), pp. 6-29.
[6] Collingham, *The Taste of War*, pp. 395-7.

milk output, and improve cattle productivity, by analysing the introduction of the WLA onto wartime dairy farms. The deployment of the WLA to work with cattle generated much wartime debate about their suitability for such work. Focusing on these concerns, and how the WLA was recruited and trained for such work, this chapter intersects, and extends, wider historiographical debates surrounding the roles of women at war, through the lens of human-cattle relationships. It interrogates the ways in which state efforts to maintain and improve cattle productivity were shaped by wartime-gendered discourses. It concludes with an examination on how these new human-cattle encounters were negotiated by members of the WLA, uncovering how Land Girls experienced such work.[7] Through such enquiries it highlights that both human and nonhuman factors shaped how these new human-cattle relationships played out on-the-ground. Overall, it argues that the enrolment of cattle for the British war effort was contingent on the formation of new, and the repositioning of existing, human-cattle relationships.

Improving the Nation's Dairy Herds

State-led efforts to improve wartime dairy cattle productivity were preceded by increasing levels of state and scientific intervention over dairy farming during the inter-war period. In comparison to other sections of a depressed agricultural sector, dairy farming offered an opportunity for profit in 1930s Britain through protective government interventions and the availability of cheap imported grain. The 1920s had been a period of disruption and hardship for milk producers. In an attempt to strengthen the dairy sector, the government established the Milk Marketing Board (MMB) in October 1933. The MMB was set up to stabilise milk prices, register milk producers, provide a guaranteed market for home-produced liquid milk, and encourage research and education. These objectives were also secured by advances in the nutritional sciences and their designation of milk as a protected food.[8] Simultaneously a new relationship was being forged between agricultural scientists and policy makers.[9] In particular, the newly created Agricultural Research Council, and various other agricultural research institutes, attempted to educate farmers and

[7] Members of the WLA were commonly referred to as 'Land Girls' during the war and after.
[8] Wilmot, 'From 'Public Service' to Artificial Insemination', pp. 413-4.
[9] K. Vernon, 'Science for the Farmer? Agricultural Research in England 1909-36', *Twentieth Century British History*, 8.3 (1997), pp. 310-333.

close the gap in knowledge between working farmers and the agricultural scientific community.[10]

Nonetheless, during the inter-war period farmers were more likely to trust tried and tested means, and adopted new insights only if they were seen to increase profits and to be suited to their local environment. They were also more inclined to diagnose and destroy their own sick cattle than use veterinary assistance. The legacy of a lengthy depression in farming meant cost-cutting decisions were a priority. Cheap imported foodstuffs were preferred over home grown fodder crops and cattle sheds descended into states of disrepair as the Hosier Bail outdoor milking system was popularised. Many cows were bred indiscriminately and only a minority of farmers sought to improve productivity through milk recording, careful breeding and controlling outbreaks of disease, which were considerations that were only achievable from a sound financial position.[11]

The onset of war provided the state with an impetus to intervene within the dairy farming sector to a much greater extent than before. Following wartime blockades that stemmed the flow of cheap imported foodstuffs into Britain, the potential lack of food available necessitated a sharp rationalisation of livestock production and a shift towards arable production on the home front.[12] In anticipation of food shortages over the winter of 1941-2, and in an effort to improve the productivity of dairy cattle throughout Britain, the MAF issued a directive to War Agricultural Executive Committee (WAEC) officials in the preceding June for the culling of 'unthrifty' cattle. Titled 'Weeding Out The Wasters', the directive opened with: 'In our war machine there is no room for passengers. This applies to animals as well as human beings.'[13] Inspired by similar efforts for arable production made in the formation of the National Farm Survey, it directed district committees to visit farms, assess herds and recommend culling procedures, in an effort 'to secure that inferior and unthrifty animals are discarded and that only the efficient yielders of milk and meat are

[10] *Ibid*.
[11] Short, *The Battle of the Fields*, pp. 23-5; Woods, 'The Farm as Clinic', pp. 462-3; R. Nimmo, 'Auditing Nature, Enacting Culture: Rationalisation as Disciplinary Purification in Early Twentieth-Century British Dairy Farming', *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 21.2/3 (2008), p. 276.
[12] J. Martin, *The Development of Modern Agriculture: British Farming since 1931* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 2000), p. 40.
[13] Weeding Out The Wasters Directive June 1941, 1941 Order: reduction in dairy herds (1941-1943), National Archives, London, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Papers (hereafter NA, MAF) 52/68.

retained.'[14] This was determined by assessing the performance of the dairy cow in relation to the quantity of their milk output.[15] Farmers had a five-month window to sell their 'wasters' as the MOF offered special prices for lower grade cattle. In support of the scheme an editorial in the *Farmer and Stockbreeder* framed the measure as a choice of 'sanity' and condemned those who would not follow this advice as having been warned.[16]

In spite of such rhetoric, the longer-term scepticism held by many farmers towards state officials and agricultural scientists meant that many farmers did not heed this advice.[17] But this moment of increased state intervention highlights a turning point in wartime efforts to make the dairy industry more productive. Through this directive, the MAF set a standard of productivity for both cattle and farmers. 'Unthrifty' cattle, whose physiologies were not deemed worthy of being optimised, were to be culled to spare resources and to ensure that only productive cattle were bred for improving the future generations of cattle. This state-led biopolitical intervention over cattle bodies highlights how certain bulls and cows were sacrificed for the success of the war effort.[18]

For those bulls and cows that were perceived to be productive, efforts were made to ensure that they were bred with one another by stopping practices of indiscriminate breeding. In 1943, unselective breeding became a matter of heightened concern when James Hudson, the Minister of Agriculture, declared his shock at the poor quality of dairy cattle across Britain and the need for a new livestock campaign.[19] Following this declaration, the BBC Home Service broadcast six shows concerning the problems facing dairy farming, and breed society members, farmers and agricultural scientists were called upon to offer advice for increasing milk yields and improving the quality of British cattle herds.[20] WAECs also conducted livestock demonstrations through the employment of agricultural scientists, veterinarians and

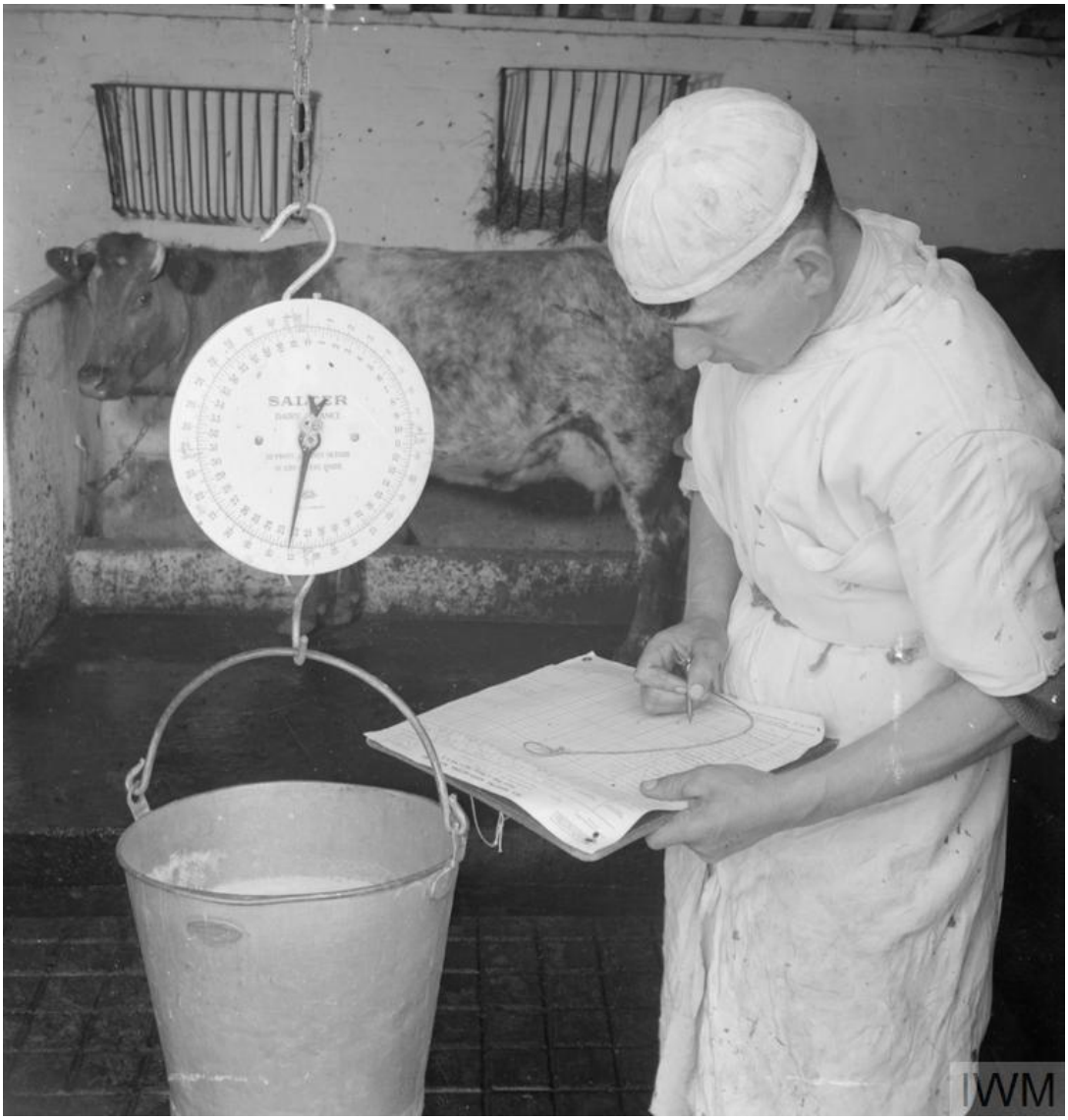
[14] *Ibid.*
[15] *Ibid.*
[16] *Farmer and Stockbreeder*, 10 June 1941.
[17] K. A. H. Murray, *Agriculture: History of the Second World War* (H.M.S.O.: Longmans, Green and Co Ltd, 1955), pp. 266-7.
[18] For the relationship between biopolitics and cattle, see, L. Holloway *et al*., 'Biopower, Genetics and Livestock Breeding: (Re)constituting Animal Populations and Heterogeneous Biosocial Collectivities', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 34.3 (2009), pp. 394-407.
[19] *Farmer and Stockbreeder*, 1 June 1943.
[20] Anon., 'Cattle at the Cross Roads', *Agriculture: The Journal of the Ministry of Agriculture*, 50.9 (1943), pp. 385-8.

'productive' farmers.[21] Commercial and small dairy farmers were expected to avoid scrub bulls and use pedigree bulls to grade-up their herds. Under the leadership of the scientist John Hammond, the Artificial Insemination Centre was established at Cambridge in 1942, which paved the way for artificial breeding.[22] At the heart of these practices was the need for meticulous record keeping – whether milk, ancestry or progeny – and an eye for detail.

The encouragement of milk recording was another wartime priority for dairy industry improvers. They hoped this would improve milk yields and prevent the spread of Tuberculin between herds and from cow to human. In Murray's official history he locates the introduction of the National Milk Recording scheme on 1 January 1943 as a crucial moment in the improvement of milk yields.[23] While milk recording had taken place amongst some productive farmers and milk recording societies for many years prior to the outbreak of war, this scheme brought together bacteriologists, the government, milk recording societies, breed societies and the National Farmers' Union to co-operate under the administration of the MMB. With price incentives for tuberculin tested herds, scheme membership increased rapidly and production per cow – whilst contested by revisionist historiography – increased by about 25 per cent on the national average.[24] Whether or not milk output increased, growing support for the scheme indicates that milk recording and tuberculin testing were becoming norms within the dairy industry. Testament to this was the stipulation that only tuberculin tested cattle could enter the Royal Show when it resumed in 1947.[25]

[21] W. A. Stewart, 'Livestock Improvement Demonstrations', *Agriculture: The Journal of the Ministry of Agriculture*, 51.7 (1944), pp. 295-301.
[22] C. Polge, 'The Work of the Animal Research Station, Cambridge', *Studies in the History of Biology and Biomedical Sciences*, 38 (2007), p. 512; Wilmot, 'From 'Public Service' to Artificial Insemination', pp. 411-441.
[23] Murray, *Agriculture*, pp. 267-9.
[24] Martin, *The Development of Modern Agriculture*, p. 50-2.
[25] *The Times*, 30 June 1947.

Figure 2.1



Ministry of Information Photo Division, 'Milk Production: Dairy Farming in Wartime, Norfolk, England, UK, 1944', Ministry of Information Second World War Collection, D 20191, Imperial War Museum, <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205200872.> [accessed 10 November 2017].

Tuberculin was not the only disease that was targeted to increase productivity. Mastitis, contagious abortion, sterility and Johne's disease were also targeted through a state-supported voluntary scheme instigated in May 1942, under which farmers could call upon the assistance of veterinary officers for a small annual charge per cow.[26] Abigail Woods argues that this scheme was the outcome of the opportunism of veterinarians who found a wartime role for their profession following increasing demands for milk. The scheme redirected the veterinary gaze from the individual animal to herd management, created new norms surrounding sterility and fertility, and allowed new technical interventions into cattle breeding.[27] Through the state-endorsed scheme, the non-militarised members of the veterinary profession were explicitly enrolled into the British war effort. Significantly, it also provided small-scale farmers, with limited financial resources, greater access to veterinary expertise on their farms.

These interventions by state officials, agricultural scientists and veterinarians on dairy cattle and on dairy farming practices shaped the ways in which cattle were envisioned. In particular, these efforts to define, and improve, cattle productivity enabled those who worked with cattle to conceive of their animals on a national scale. In other words, cattle were imaginatively repositioned, or thought about, at a national level. This corresponds with what Murdoch and Ward designate as the creation of the 'National Farm' through the National Farm Survey in 1939-1941. They locate this survey as a moment when the state could spatially consider the agricultural sector in national terms, and the 'National Farm' then came into being accompanied by norms of standard practices and expectations.[28] In a similar vein, the dairy farming industry, nationally, was made knowable by inspections and the accruement of statistical data. Through MAF propaganda literature and the work of agricultural and veterinary experts, expectations of 'good' dairy farming practices were disseminated throughout wartime Britain, and these 'good' ways of interacting with cattle were equated with patriotic duty.[29] While factors such as locality and class shaped the interpretations of these new norms, new systems of wartime regulation facilitated what David Harvey and Mark Riley term a national collegiality,

[26] Murray, *Agriculture*, p. 267.
[27] Woods, 'The Farm as Clinic', pp. 462-487.
[28] J. Murdoch and N. Ward, 'Governmentality and Territoriality: The Statistical Manufacture of Britain's 'National Farm'', *Political Geography*, 16.4 (1997), pp. 307-324.
[29] Woods, 'The Farm as Clinic', pp. 480-1.

which was uncovered through their oral history interviews with Devonshire dairy farmers.[30] Towards the end of the war a correspondent in the *Farmer and Stockbreeder* also posed a question about the formation of two to three 'national breeds'.[31] Although contested in the letter pages over the need to link breed with environment, this example demonstrates how the efforts made to manage and improve the dairy industry enabled farmers to think about cattle in national terms.[32]

State interventions constructed dairy cattle and the dairy farming industry as entities that could be managed and made more productive on a national scale. These measures, however, required the co-operation of farmers. The following section explores the ways in which the state attempted to engage pedigree farmers – and reposition an existing human-cattle relationship – to help circulate and instil their notions of cattle productivity at the farm level. The aim was to transform how pedigree farmers' defined productivity, bred and reared their cattle, and interacted with the wider dairy farming community.

An Opportunity for 'Pedigree Men'

British pedigree breed societies remained an exclusive club at the outbreak of war. This exclusivity stretched back from the late eighteenth century where the show ring fancy and caste bloodlines of pedigree cattle represented the status and aspirations of their producers.[33] Unlike in the United States where pedigree breeders helped improve the productive qualities of general herds, the deferential landed-tenant system of nineteenth century British agriculture numbed the critiques of those who were sceptical of the supposed improvements made by pedigree breed societies.[34] By the inter-war period the pedigree breed societies were more concerned with securing their export markets and largely ignored the scientific advancements of the time.[35] They generally sold bulls to other pedigree breeders or pure-bred multipliers, who were commercial breeders that multiplied stock for ordinary farmers. Small farmers,

[30] Harvey and Riley, 'Fighting from the Fields', p. 513.
[31] *Farmer and Stockbreeder*, 20 March 1945, p. 464.
[32] *Farmer and Stockbreeder*, 10 April 1945, p. 579.
[33] Ritvo, *The Animal Estate*, pp. 45-81; J. E. Grundy, 'The Hereford Bull: His Contribution to New World and Domestic Beef Supplies', *Agricultural History Review*, 50.1 (2002), p. 86.
[34] J. R. Walton, 'Pedigree and Productivity in the British and North American Cattle Kingdoms before 1930', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 25.4 (1999), pp. 448-9.
[35] *Ibid*., pp. 457-8.

who owned around 46% of the total number of cows, were priced out of this market and were often forced into practices of indiscriminate breeding.[36]

In spite of such exclusivity, the MAF attempted to engage pedigree breed societies in 1943 in their attempt to improve the productivity of the nation's cattle. Breeders were asked to sell bull calves that were not considered good enough for rearing, and which would otherwise have been slaughtered, to small and commercial farmers to improve the quality of their herds. WAECs (representatives of the Ministry at the county level) assisted in this process by identifying suitable farms that would benefit from the scheme.[37] Compared to the invasive and, at times, draconian relationship between WAECs and common farmers, where land, farms and animals could be dispossessed if wartime targets were not met, the relationship between the state and the pedigree breed societies was cordial. [38] The reason for this may be understood further if we consider that the Minister of Agriculture owned pedigree Friesian cows, and that members of WAECs were not typical farmers but landowners with considerable wealth and influence in their localities.[39] Pedigree breeders and MAF officials also shared similar social status and, most likely, similar social circles.

'Pedigree men' were asked to pass on their expertise and skill to the wider dairy industry.[40] The return of Lord De La Warr – a former politician who worked in the Ministry of Supply for the majority of the war – in February 1944 from a tour of Canada sparked debate around the wartime role of breed societies. In a speech to the Guild of Agricultural Journalists and the Minister of Agriculture he highlighted the poor quality of British livestock in comparison to that of Canada, and criticised the inclusivity and focus upon 'fancy show points' of breed societies.[41] In a further interview, De La Warr's message was to change breed societies from being a 'closed corporation of animal aristocrats' to a 'body of leaders', which would work with the state and industry.[42] A front-cover editorial of the *Farmer and Stockbreeder* stressed similar sentiments, and praised those 'who have kept our breeds pure and have made

[36]Wilmot, 'From 'Public Service' to Artificial Insemination', p. 415.
[37] Minutes for meeting on the Improved Breeding of Cattle, 16 September 1943, Co-operation of Breed Societies (1943-1946), National Archives, London, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Papers (hereafter NA, MAF) 52/100.
[38] Short, *The Battle of the Fields*, pp. 154-196.
[39] J. Martin, 'George Odlum, The Ministry of Agriculture and 'Farmer Hudson', *Agricultural History Review*, 55.2 (2007), p. 235; J. Martin, 'The State Directed Food Production Campaign', p. 49.
[40] *Farmer and Stockbreeder*, 7 March 1944, p. 367.
[41] *Farmer and Stockbreeder*, 29 February 1944.
[42] *Farmer and Stockbreeder*, 14 March 1944.

them the nucleus of the world's best herds' and who now had the opportunity to 'show the less exclusive breeder how to raise the standard of quality and production in the national interest as well as his own.'[43]

Calls for breed society leadership were fuelled by a mistrust of the abilities of common farmers to rear pedigree bull calves. This reflects wider wartime tensions between labour and capital as to whether it was workers or manufacturers – or ordinary or pedigree farmers – who were responsible for issues regarding productivity.[44] Suggestions were made by society members to rear their own second-rate bull calves and then sell these on to farmers when the bull had reached maturity.[45] Similar sentiments were expressed in the *Shorthorn Journal* following previous attempts to sell pedigree herds to commercial herd owners who had not taken the perceived necessary care required to ensure proper development. Consequently, these animals had failed to obtain licences when examined by Ministry Officers at 10 months of age.[46] In response to these anxieties the government issued the Growmore Leaflet (no. 87) on rearing young dairy bulls.[47] Fears over the necessary care for pedigree bulls indicate that divisions between pedigree breeders and common farmers were also forged through perceptions of how to handle and care for animals appropriately. WAECs exerted similar claims to authority and leadership when cows were perceptibly mistreated. In the case of one tenant farmer, George Podbury, stunted and out-wintered cows were used as evidence in Devonshire WAEC efforts to remove him from his farm.[48]

This concern for the necessary care of pedigree animals did not necessarily translate into practices that embodied values of productivity. As the previous section detailed, from Whitehall downwards, values of productivity were forged through new norms of practice and expectation concerning the breeding and rearing of cattle. These perceived productive values were absent at a stock judging competition hosted by Cheshire WAEC in May 1944, which was attended by over two thousand farmers.[49] Instead, the values of 'breed character' and the aesthetic attributes of cattle dictated

[43] *Ibid.*
[44] Rose, *Which People's War?*, pp. 38-44.
[45] Minutes for meeting on the Improved Breeding of Cattle, 16 September 1943, NA, MAF 52/100.
[46] Anon., 'An Appeal to Breed Society Members by the Minister of Agriculture', *Shorthorn Journal*, 12.7 (1943), p. 195.
[47] 'Growmore' Leaflet No. 87 – Rearing Young Dairy Bulls, NA, MAF 52/100.
[48] Short, *The Battle of the Fields*, pp. 176-7.
[49] *Farmer and Stockbreeder*, 6 June 1944.

proceedings. The journalist who attended the competition 'learned nothing at all about the use of milk records in breeding, nor of progeny records nor proven sires and all the practical problems connected with applying such ideas.'[50] They were dismayed to 'see cows so overstocked that milk is pouring from them and they walk with discomfort.'[51] Traditional show ring values, which reaffirmed the dominance and position of pedigree breeders, continued in spite of the wartime drive for productivity. Criticism was framed through the lack of care shown by pedigree breeders for their animals and the absence of scientific scrutiny, echoing those outside voices who critiqued the elite fancy a century before, and who stressed skill and enterprise, rather than social position, as the foundations of successful livestock breeding.[52]

Some quarters of the pedigree community defended their expertise and the importance of judging cattle on appearance. Writing in the *Farmer & Stockbreeder*, one pedigree breeder, with 36 years of experience, celebrated Britain's pedigree dominance on the global stage and asserted that 'any man who has an eye for cattle, and has seen the cattle parade at the Royal Show, will need no further evidence of the truth of my statement.' [53] Another Friesian breeder equated the aesthetic improvement of the breed over the previous 30 years with an improvement in performance, and at the heart of this improvement was the show ring where it was possible to see if the animal would 'wear well'.[54] Others defended their societies against claims of being unproductive. Instead, they incorporated aspects of the modern and the traditional into their claims for authority.[55] High milk yields were allied with 'good body formation' and the genetic inheritance of a good producer was identified through visible cues such as the place of the udder.[56]

It was not just the values and culture of the pedigree farming community that came under the spotlight during the war. The implementation of artificial insemination (AI) threatened the distinction between 'pedigree' and 'common'. Throughout the 1930s, agricultural scientists, such as John Hammond and Arthur Walton, tried to

[50] *Ibid.*
[51] *Ibid.*
[52] Ritvo, *The Animal Estate*, pp. 79-81.
[53] *Farmer and Stockbreeder*, 1 August 1944.
[54] *Farmer and Stockbreeder*, 14 March 1944.
[55] These claims are similar to those made by rural enthusiasts, preservationists, and town and country planners, who emphasized a form a modern technological progress with a focus on tradition when defending the wartime contribution of the countryside and its place in post-war reconstruction. Matless, *Landscape and Englishness*.
[56] *Farmer and Stockbreeder*, 21 March 1944; *Farmer and Stockbreeder*, 11 April 1944.

persuade the MAF to support the practical development of artificial insemination in cattle breeding. These pleas went unfounded as pedigree breeders and religious organisations raised objections on business and moral grounds.[57] Sarah Wilmot states these types of objection stemmed from a cherished culture of breeding, which favoured individualism, breed variety and pedigree over standardisation and mass production. The needs of small farmers were therefore overlooked, especially when core assumptions were made that pedigree breeders were at the centre of the whole livestock industry and that interference with their monopoly, through adopting practices such as artificial insemination, would undermine the structure of British stock breeding with disastrous consequences.[58] Only with wartime food shortages were such objections set aside and artificial breeding practices were supported by the state.[59]

Fears and anxieties over artificial insemination lingered within the pedigree breeder community in spite of the demands of war. Some of these fears were based on business grounds and the threat posed by artificial insemination to the livelihoods and markets of pedigree breeders. Cosmo Douglas from Newbury expressed concerns over the demise of the pedigree stock market as he foresaw that artificial insemination centres would produce their own bulls. He wished to retain the exclusivity of pedigree to their respective societies to maintain the health of their stock and to leave artificial insemination to commercial herds.[60] Another correspondent feared that artificial insemination would force the retreat of many breeders, leaving only a few lines of 'super bulls'.[61] Others were concerned about tampering with 'nature', echoing wider wartime concerns voiced by agriculturalists about having due regard for 'mother nature' and the evils of artificiality.[62] At stake were the 'evils' of an increase of inbreeding that would lead to the 'near-extermination' of some breeds.[63] C. E. Harvey, a pedigree cattle farmer from Thorpe in Kettering, feared that the repercussions of artificial insemination would be

[57] Polge, 'The Work of the Animal Research Station, Cambridge', p. 512.
[58] Wilmot, 'From 'Public Service' to Artificial Insemination', pp. 418-9.
[59] Polge, 'The Work of the Animal Research Station, Cambridge', pp. 512-3.
[60] *Farmer and Stockbreeder*, 27 June 1944.
[61] *Farmer and Stockbreeder*, 26 December 1944.
[62] Woods, 'Rethinking the History of Modern Agriculture', pp. 183-4.
[63] *Farmer and Stockbreeder*, 14 September 1943.

disastrous. He stated: 'nature works slowly but the manner in which she adjusts the evils which man commits are utterly ruthless.'[64]

As the comments and actions of these farmers suggest, the state's attempt to actively engage pedigree farmers as leaders of 'productive' dairy farming was not necessarily persuasive during the war's latter years. Rather, state efforts to improve the productivity of cattle were hampered by the longer history of pedigree farmer exclusivity, which centred on interpretations of cattle productivity surrounding aesthetic appearance and outward bodily formation, and by pedigree farmer anxieties over the widespread introduction of artificial insemination, which was premised on moral evolutionary and economic grounds. Nevertheless, even if state efforts to improve cattle productivity were hampered by resistant pedigree farmers, the state made significant effort to improve the nation's cattle by enrolling new 'expert' actors and by redefining notions of productivity, reshaping farming practices and standardising (or grading-up) dairy herds. These efforts to improve cattle productivity, however, were also contingent on maintaining the existing milk output and ensuring that dairy farms operated effectively. In order to do this, a new agricultural workforce was introduced onto wartime dairy farms. Wartime efforts to harness cattle were reliant on the simultaneous enrolment of humans and the formation of new human-animal relationships. The remainder of this chapter examines how the state mobilised thousands of members of the WLA to work with cattle. This was a process that raised interconnected questions about the welfare and productivity of cattle, and the appropriate roles women could play at war.

Enrolling the 'Cream of the Land Army'[65]

Recruitment

Recruiting women to work with dairy cattle became a wartime national priority, especially in light of the fact that, as WLA records indicate, in some regions at least 50 farmers were waiting on personnel for milking roles.[66] Gill Clarke notes that the romanticised and bright WLA recruitment posters were 'effective in attracting potential recruits to what looked like appealing and not overly demanding land work

[64] *Farmer and Stockbreeder*, 13 June 1944.
[65] An editorial in the journal the *Land Girl* described those members who worked in dairy farming as the 'The Cream of the Land Army'. See, *Land Girl*, December 1943.
[66] G. Clarke, *The Women's Land Army: A Portrait* (Bristol: Sansom and Company, 2008), p. 108.

with admiring, kindly old farmers in tranquil surroundings with docile animals – an idealized view sharply at odds with the harsh reality and drudgery of much of the work.'[67] However, it is possible to challenge Clarke's argument and read alternative propaganda and recruitment messages in depictions of dairy work. In particular, some efforts were made to downplay the idealised image of farm life. Instead, the difficulties of working with cattle were acknowledged, and overcoming such working conditions were celebrated. This was stressed by Vita Sackville-West in her official wartime account of the WLA, in which she stated that working with cattle was 'not much of the novelist's sunbonneted dairymaid here', especially 'when you come down to the real thing!'[68] Instead, Sackville-West celebrated the WLA enduring the long hours involved in milking cows up to the three times a day, the monotony of washing milk bottles, the potential scorn of the farmer, and the threat of being kicked by a cow, as vital wartime tasks.[69] Overcoming the barriers presented by dairy work signalled wartime participation and sacrifice.

Alternatively, propaganda campaigns and recruitment efforts also framed working with cattle as modern, skilled, and technical, aligning with the wartime state's efforts to define cattle productivity in terms of scientific innovation. Photographs from the MOI series 'The Battle of the Land Army: The Work of the Women's Land Army on the British Home Front, 1942', which are similar to the 1944 image of the man in the dairy (Figure 2.1), include Land Girls undertaking milk recording and using milk coolers and machines (Figure 2.2 and Figure 2.3). These practices were at the forefront of state efforts to modernise dairy farming at the outbreak of war, with only a very small percentage of farmers undertaking milk recording and only around 10 per cent of farms using milking machines.[70] Similarly, following the introduction of the WLA relief milkers scheme, the government produced photographs and recruitment videos calling for another 30,000 WLA recruits following the end of the war in 1946. These recruits were needed to help tackle the problem of supplying the dairy farmer with help on the farmhand's day off, as necessitated by the need to milk cows seven days a week. Relief milkers were described as 'well-trained' and 'highly

[67] *Ibid*., p. 70.
[68] V. Sackville-West, *The Women's Land Army* (London: Michael Joseph Ltd, 1944), p. 29.
[69] *Ibid*., pp. 27-31.
[70] Nimmo, 'Auditing Nature, Enacting Culture', p. 276; Short, *The Battle of the Fields*, p. 25.

skilled' workers, who benefited from the opportunities afforded by their youth and mobility.[71]

[71] *Picture Post*, 16 March 1946.

Figure 2.2

'Land Girls College – Ministry of Agriculture Official Photograph Series', Dairying – Includes 16 photographs depicting: Women's Land Army – Second World War, National Archives, London, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Papers (hereafter NA, MAF) 59/141.

Figure 2.3

Ministry of Information Photo Division, 'Battle of the Land: The Work of the Women's Land Army on the British Home Front, 1942', Ministry of Information Second World War Collection, D 8803, Imperial War Museum,<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205199377.> [accessed 10 November 2017].

The diversity of these recruitment messages echoes Land Girls' narratives as to why they decided to join the WLA. Some of these were rooted in a preconceived romanticised image of dairy work, which is consistent with the idealised imagery of recruitment posters. For instance, in an article in the wartime journal, the *Land Girl*, an ex-town dweller, Ms R. De Bunsen, described how prior to joining the WLA she had picturesque visions of farming life, where 'dear little calves…would run to lick my hand.'[72] Similarly, in her memoir, *Land Girls Gang Up*, Pat Peters enrolled with 'romantic visions' of milking cows.[73] For others, especially those who had previous experience of farm life, their choice was also rooted in pragmatism, and was not necessarily based in the 'romance' of their town dweller counterparts. Having learned to milk as a child, Shirley Joseph volunteered for the WLA 'chiefly for the sake of experience', but when writing in 1946, reflected that 'I would have had no hesitation in joining another service if I had been old enough.'[74] In a slightly different vein, Margaret Rumbold joined because of her love of animals and the outdoors, but her visits to a friend's farm as a child shaped her outlook heading into the WLA. As she recalls:

> You knew that if you were going to work with animals that you were going to do a seven day week with the animals with very little off duty time, and when the animals were in difficulties and it was 5 o'clock, there is no 5 o'clock, you stay if you've got to. For instance, if a cow is going to calve and it starts to calve at 10 to 5 then you stay there until you've got the calf or whatever you know. I sort of already knew this. Perhaps I was more fortunate in that respect than a lot of others. Although I was a town person, I wasn't absolutely ignorant of what country life and farm work was, so was no real shock for me put it that way.[75]

However, for those unaccustomed to farm life, like the 'town-bred girl' in Shirley Joseph's unofficial account of the WLA, the preconceived notion of idyllic farm life was shattered by many 'rude awakenings' on the wartime dairy farm, especially when farmers mistreated Land Girls or doubted their abilities.[76] The next section will consider why farmers were sceptical of these new recruits.

Farmers' Concerns and Contradictory Stereotypes

[72] *The Land Girl*, February 1941.
[73] P. Peters, *Land Girls Gang Up* (Ipswich: Old Pond Publishing, 2009), p. 14.
[74] S. Joseph, *If Their Mothers Only Knew: An Unofficial Account of Life in the Women's Land Army* (London: Faber and Faber, 1946), pp. 156-7.
[75] Margaret Mary Rumbold, Interview, 31 May 1985, IWM 8856.
[76] Joseph, *If Their Mothers Only Knew*, p. 137.

Although recruitment campaigns encouraged young women to join the WLA, farmers needed to be persuaded of the utility of the WLA and their suitability on the farm. Historians provide numerous overlapping reasons why the WLA generated these processes of negotiation and contestation. Gill Clarke notes that the farming community was concerned with the physical suitability of urban Land Girls.[77] Others suggest that the urban background of Land Girls was represented as sexually threatening, especially when contrasted with the wholesome rural feminine image of the farmers' wife. This led to some farmers, and farmers' wives alike, opposing the mobilisation of the WLA.[78] The presence of Land Girls occupying 'male' roles, such as tractor driving, also put questions of 'natural' and 'acceptable' female farm work under the spotlight.[79] However, historians have not yet considered how farmers' conceptualisations of their cattle's productivity shaped the ways in which they viewed the introduction of the WLA onto their farms. This conceptualisation of cattle productivity was partially rooted in a belief that cattle responded – in terms of producing milk effectively – to humans that they recognised. This section will initially consider how cattle productivity was understood in this way, before reflecting on the perceived threats posed by Land Girls in terms of their unfamiliarity, their physicality, and the circulation of contradictory wartime stereotypes that they roughly mishandled cows *and* were also fearful of them.

Recent work by Erica Fudge on recognising the importance of cow wellbeing in early modern England raises issues concerning how farmers have understood their cattle as animals that responded to particular humans. Fudge argues that for people whose livelihoods depended on the productivity of cattle, human economics and animal wellbeing were, and still are, inseparable. This meant that many ordinary farmers believed that their cattle responded most effectively to them alone and so tried to ensure that other people did not attempt to milk their cows. This was not only important for maintaining productivity, but was also vital for ensuring that the farmer's household economy remained stable.[80] While it would be naive to assume that wartime farmers held similar understandings of cattle to those in early modern England, these insights provoke questions as to how wartime farmers understood

[77] G. Clarke, 'The Women's Land Army and its Recruits', in B. Short, C. Watkins and J. Martin (eds), *The Front Line of Freedom: British Farming in the Second World War* (Exeter: British Agricultural History Society, 2006), p. 102.
[78] Rose, *Which People's War?*, pp. 213-4; Gowdy-Wygant, *Cultivating Victory*, pp. 113-4.
[79] Matless, *Landscape and Englishness*, pp. 176-7.
[80] Fudge, 'Milking Other Men's Beasts', pp. 25-8.

cattle wellbeing, especially surrounding factors such as maintaining familiarity, handling cattle appropriately and recognising them as sentient beings that responded differently to particular humans.

Such views, to an extent at least, can be gleaned from looking at letters submitted to agricultural journals and magazines by farmers. A particularly useful example can be found in letters submitted to the *Dairy Farmer* in August 1944 in regards to the 'Care and Management of the Bull.' In these letters, farmers stressed that bulls not only recognised humans and had good memories, but that they could – in an anthropomorphic vein – actively seek revenge.[81] For instance, one contributor wrote,

> Give him plenty of handling; he gets to know you and it's worth it. Ring your bull at about six months, but do not handle him by his ring too soon, or he will get too hard in the nose. Don't condemn your bull to solitary confinement in some old corner shed, with no fresh air and exercise. And don't go barging in to him brandishing a stick or some likely tool. Your bull always remembers.[82]

Cows were similarly viewed as active participants, who, when mishandled or touched by a stranger, would withhold milk. As one farmer noted in another contribution to the *Dairy Farmer* 'I like a small herd, where I can know every cow individually. A cow will only do its best for someone it's friendly with.'[83] These type of attitudes were not necessarily limited to cattle, but were, as Abigail Woods has identified in regards to pig production in early-mid twentieth century Britain, in-built to the development of modern farming. Indeed, farm animals were perceived as active, sentient individuals, who needed to be worked *with* rather than *on*, even if this was for ultimately commercial ends.[84]

The introduction of inexperienced and unfamiliar Land Girls on to wartime dairy farms then caused concerns for the wellbeing and productivity of cattle. This was particularly evident when Land Girls were used in the relief-milking scheme, where they rotated between farms within a given area to allow the regular cowmen to have

[81] By recognising the ways in which historical actors perceived the 'resistance' of the bull, this research differs to scholarship that seeks to accredit animals with the intention to, or understanding of, resistance beyond the human. For an alternative approach that seeks to explicity accredit the animal with the ability to resist in an anthropomorphic manner, see, Hribal, *Fear of the Animal Planet*.
[82] *Dairy Farmer*, August 1944.
[83] *Dairy Farmer*, October 1944.
[84] Woods, 'Rethinking the History of Modern Agriculture', pp. 165-191.

a day off once a week. As the journalist Fyfe Robertson noted in a *Picture Post* article promoting the scheme:

> The concern of a good cowman for his herd is as great as his employer's, and cowmen and farmers were both cautious at first about the scheme, for every farm has its own routine, and there is a firm belief that a cow will not give her milk properly to a stranger. Evidently what a cow dislikes is not unfamiliarity, but inexperience, for milk yields have not fallen. Relief-girls are not only expert milkers, but fully trained farm-workers.[85]

While Robertson attempted to promote the skills of the Land Girl, this snippet highlights that scepticism over Land Girls was tied to notions over unfamiliarity and the effect of a stranger on the cow's productivity. Similar worries were also raised by farmers over the use of 'unfamiliar herds' in WLA milking competitions, with fears that the 'cows or the milk yield should suffer.'[86] These instances highlight that farmers' concerns for cattle wellbeing were inherently tied with human economics. They also highlight a tension over the utilisation of the WLA and their productive value: on one hand they were desperately needed to fill labour shortages, but on the other they potentially threatened cattle wellbeing and productivity through their unfamiliarity and inexperience.

The need to handle cattle appropriately also raised concerns surrounding the physicality of both human and animal, with a particular focus on whether 'urban' Land Girls could control and master the physicality of the animal. While cows were, with some exceptions, represented as docile, bulls were seen to be more dangerous.[87] As the *Book of Farmcraft* detailed:

> Bulls are notoriously liable to a change of temper, and are therefore treated with great caution. By law a bull must have a ring in his nose when he is a year old, and in this simple way the strongest bull can be controlled. When a bull is led out from his stall for a drink or exercise, a leading pole is used: this has a spring catch which can be opened or closed by pulling a cord, and which is hooked to the ring in the bull's nose (illus). The pole is held firmly in both hands and the bull can be led about safely, at arm's length. Don't get too familiar with a bull, but be on your guard in your dealings with him.[88]

[85] *Picture Post*, 16 March 1946.
[86] *Land Girl*, December 1943.
[87] Sackville-West, *The Women's Land Army*, p. 28. Sackville-West notes how cows could be 'frightening' for a new Land Girl, especially in regards to its size and its ability to cause pain through a kick or swish of its matted tail.
[88] M. Greenhill and E. Dunbar, *A Book of Farmcraft* (London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1942), p. 25.

As this description indicates, a successful relationship with a bull was built on knowing his temperament and mastering his physicality through the use of a bull pole. This required a certain level of physical and mental strength from the human involved, and also a level of detachment.

These physical requirements meant that working with bulls was considered 'men's work' before 1939. As Nicola Verdon demonstrates in regards to the inter-war period, farming women (including farmer's wives and daughters, and independent female farmers), with few exceptions, were expected to undertake subsidiary roles in the 'lighter branches of agriculture', which included dairy work, poultry keeping, small animal rearing, and horticulture.[89] These subsidiaries of farming work existed in the domestic space of the farming imaginary, which ranged from the kitchen to the cowshed. Beyond the farm gate, hard physical labour, fieldwork and working with large livestock was the province of male farmers and labourers.[90] By occupying positions previously vacated by male farm labourers, Land Girls straddled the boundary between feminine farm work *and* wartime exceptionalism in their roles with cattle: they milked cows, *and* led bulls and escorted herds beyond the farm gate (figures 2.6 and 2.7).

The breach of the gendered division between farm roles placed a spotlight on the physical capabilities of Land Girls, especially those from urban backgrounds. These new recruits perceptively needed to be physically toughened before they could undertake work with cattle. In an article in the *Land Girl*, Dr. W.A. Stewart - Principal of the Northamptonshire Institute of Agriculture and member of the Northamptonshire WAEC - reflected on how Land Girl trainees from Birmingham and Coventry were not initially strong enough to take on the demands of livestock husbandry and other physical farm work. A training schedule was devised to increase the strength and weight of these urban trainees who had previously been typists and hairdressers. Following four weeks of training these Land Girls gained an

[89] N. Verdon, 'Agricultural Labour and the Contested Nature of Women's Work in Interwar England and Wales', *The Historical Journal*, 52.1 (2009), pp. 109-130; N. Verdon, 'Farm Women, Domesticity and Social Change in Interwar Britain', *History Workshop Journal*, 70 (2010), pp. 86-107; N. Verdon, 'Business and Pleasure: Middle-Class Women's Work and the Professionalization of Farming in England, 1890-1939', *Journal of British Studies*, 51 (2012), pp. 393-415.

[90] These gender spaces of the farm-scape were reinforced in the postwar period, see S. Edwards, ''Nothing gets her goat!' The Farmer's Wife and the Duality of Rural Femininity in the Young Farmers' Club Movement in 1950s Britain', *Women's History Review*, 26.1 (2017), pp. 26-45.

average of four pounds each: one Land Girl gained a stone.[91] This attention to ensuring that Land Girls gained weight was reflected in the MoI wartime propaganda photograph series 'Battle of the Land', where the new Land Girl recruit Iris Joyce – a former 'typist' – was photographed on a set of scales two weeks into her training (Figure 2.4).

[91] *Land Girl*, April 1940.

Figure 2.4

Ministry of Information Photo Division, 'Battle of the Land: The Work of the Women's Land Army on the British Home Front, 1942', Ministry of Information Second World War Collection, D 8791, Imperial War Museum <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205199371.> [accessed 10 November 2017].

But it was not only the Land Girls' physical size and strength that required improvement, as the act of 'touching' cattle was presumed to produce an emotional response (or psychic effect) of fear. Recent scholarly investigation into sensory history, and, in particular, the history of touch, enables such felt encounters to be critically analysed. Mark Smith stresses the importance of historicising the senses, recognising them as socially and culturally constructed, and possessing an ability to help texture the past and illuminate aspects which make little or less sense if understood only in visual terms.[92] Such insights have been applied in relation to the tactile and felt encounters between humans and animals. These reveal how the meanings associated with these encounters are historically contingent, analytically useful, and are tied to the particular times, spaces and actors involved.[93] Representations of how Land Girls 'touched' cattle placed their mental strength and suitability for such work under scrutiny. *Picture Post* reported that there was a common conception that women were fearful of tending to cattle and that this was partly the reason why farmers were initially sceptical of employing members of the WLA on their farms.[94] Likewise, Sackville-West notes that it was normal for some Land Girls to protest in fear when faced with cattle in the close proximity of a cowshed. She wrote, 'Some of them haven't stuck it. One girl went on strike saying that she was allergic to cows, and would rather go through another blitz than ever sit on a milking-stool again.'[95]

At the same time, Land Girls were also represented as being too 'rough' in their handling of cattle. This is shown by the production of the *Book of Farmcraft*, which, as a wartime farming guide by Michael Greenhill and Evelyn Dunbar, was created in response to concerns about 'Land Girls always doing things the wrong way, often endangering themselves and others.'[96] Among 'others', we can include farm animals. The contents of this book will be examined in the following section, but its preoccupation with the ways in which Land Girls should handle cattle reflects anxieties that their rough treatment of these animals hampered productivity and

[92] M. Smith, 'Producing Sense, Consuming Sense, Making Sense: Perils and Prospects for Sensory History', *Journal of Social History*, 40.4 (2007), pp. 841-58.
[93] N. Rothfel, 'Touching Animals: The Search for a Deeper Understanding of Animals', in D. Brantz (ed.), *Beastly Natures: Animals, Humans, and the Study of History* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2010), pp. 38-58; C. Classen, *The Deepest Sense: A Cultural History of Touch* (Urbana; Chicago; Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2012), pp. 93-102; Saha, 'Among the Beasts of Burma', pp. 910-32.
[94] *Picture Post*, 13 January 1940.
[95] Sackville-West, *The Women's Land Army*, p. 28.
[96] Clarke, *The Women's Land Army*, p. 81. Michael Greenhill was an Instructor in Agriculture at Sparsholt Farm Institute. Evelyn Dunbar was an artist commissioned by the War Artists Advisory Committee.

threatened their wellbeing. This stereotype was also depicted in newspaper articles and recruitment videos. While these were generally framed in a comical manner, they indicate that the stereotype was in public circulation. For instance, in his satirical column in the *Sunday Express*, Nathaniel Gubbins anthropomorphically constructed a conversation between a cow and a Land Girl. When discussing the use of a milking machine and the ways in which it helped speed up milking, the 'cow' states, 'Saves me too. Yer knows what to expect with that. Not like some of these 'ere novice, one day gentle, the other day rough. All depends on whether 'e turned up the night before I expect, I expect.'[97] Alluding to other wartime discourses about the sexual promiscuity of young working-class urban women in the WLA and armed forces, the novice Land Girl is also painted as inconsistent and incompetent in her treatment of animals.[98] This discourse is again drawn upon at the end of the 'conversation' where the 'cow' states, 'Cor chase me round the stack yard! You Land Girls don't 'arf treat a girl rough!' But these depictions were not limited to satirical newspaper columns. In a 1946 WLA recruitment film (mentioned in the previous section) the commentator praised the 'gentle female touch' while a Land Girl was depicted forcibly hitting a cow with a stick.[99]

The contradiction between these stereotypes highlights the ambiguity surrounding the perceived competency and legitimacy of the WLA and their place on the wartime farm. Through discrediting, or at least making light of their work with cattle, these wartime representations emphasised the temporality of the WLA and the work of women on wartime dairy farms.[100] This aligns with wider historiographical debates regarding the war's impact on the lives and opportunities of women within Britain. As scholars demonstrate in relation to mobilisation of women within the military and industry, the movement of women into 'male' roles was often represented at the time as a temporary movement for the duration of the war only.[101] The 'Cream of the Land Army' were, similarly, represented as temporary agricultural workers whose physical roles with cattle were depicted as exceptional rather than the norm. In order

[97] The *Sunday Express* column was reprinted in the *Land Girl*, January 1943, p. 3.
[98] S. Rose, 'Sex, Citizenship and the Nation in World War II Britain', *American Historical Review*, 103 (1998), pp. 1147-76.
[99] Central Office of Information, 'Women's Land Army Recruitment: Straight from the Cow's Mouth', Central Office of Information Film, 18 July 1946, British Pathe Film Archive, < https://www.britishpathe.com/video/womens-land-army-recruitment/query/straight+from+the+cows+mouth> [accessed 22 November 2017].
[100] Summerfield, *Reconstructing Women's Wartime Lives*, pp. 80-2.
[101] Summerfield, *Women Workers in the Second World War*; L. Noakes, *War and the British*.

to challenge these stereotypes and legitimise the role of the WLA working on dairy farms, some efforts were made to train Land Girls that centred on ensuring cattle productivity *and* transforming the Land Girl in the process.

Training

Formal training was not offered to all new WLA recruits, but the experience of those who did receive a short period of training at an agricultural institute, their experience sits outside the general trends and practices of agricultural education in Britain during the first half of the twentieth century. Paul Brassley remarks that it was not until the 1950s that training was available for all sections of the farm labour force, and stresses that state efforts to train the WLA was an exception, rather than the norm, amid the lack of training made available for the rest of the wartime agricultural workforce.[102] Through a focus on the 1942 training manual *The Book of Farmcraft*, and through uncovering cattle-related training practices in wartime journals, images, and testimonies, this section examines how the WLA were enrolled to harness the productivity of cattle for the war effort. Through such training Land Girls were represented as transformed and ready for work on wartime dairy farms, which responded to concerns over their perceived suitability for working with cattle.

As the previous section indicates, the unfamiliarity and inexperience of the WLA, and the threat this posed to cattle wellbeing and productivity, existed alongside the need for the WLA to counter labour shortages. This tension was displayed in training practices, especially through the use of artificial rubber udders (Figure 2.5). These dummy 'cows' were made from a stretched canvas with four rubber teats, which were strung to a wooden frame. Alongside learning the scientific aspects of dairy farming in lectures, the rubber udders offered a form of practical training for Land Girls at agricultural colleges and dairy schools, where they could attempt to master the mechanics of milking. Although, as Shirley Joseph noted, their use was represented as clean and scientific, 'the snag is that at least half the art of the expert milker consists in knowing instinctively when a cow is going to kick.'[103] But the use of rubber udders served to minimise placing stress on the cow through mishandling

[102] P. Brassley, 'The Professionalisation of English Agriculture?', *Rural History*, 16 (2005), pp. 244-5. There has been limited scholarly attention regarding the training of the WLA. Only Gill Clarke provides an overview of the various training practices offered to the WLA, while Celia Gowdy-Wygant argues that training was represented as a 'vehicle to transition [urban] women from bad to good through labour on the land.' See, Clarke, *The Women's Land Army*, pp. 80-5; Gowdy-Wygant, *Cultivating Victory*, p. 114.
[103] Joseph, *If Their Mothers Only Knew*, p. 140.

so as to prevent the withholding of milk. As Marvis Young, a former Land Girl, recalls, 'Before we were even allowed near a cow we had to learn the skills of hand milking from charts and diagrams, and even a model cow.'[104] When she was finally allowed to milk a real cow, she remembers that they 'were rather a mixed bag, as they were long past their best as high yield milkers… As a cow will not willingly give its milk to an inexperienced operator, nobody could blame those in authority for not letting us loose on the valuable cattle.'[105]

[104] M. Young, 'Life in the Women's Land Army', BBC People's War, A4112533 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/33/a4112533.shtml> [accessed 22 November 2017].
[105] *Ibid.*

Figure 2.5

E. Dunbar, ‘Milk Practice with Artificial Udders’, 1940, War Artists Advisory Committee commission, Art.IWM ART LD 766, Imperial War Museum. <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/8162.> [accessed 22 November 2017].

But while rubber udders may have removed Land Girls from working with real cows, wartime training guides emphasised the 'right' and 'wrong' ways of handling cattle to ensure productivity. This is particularly shown in the *Book of Farmcraft*. The premise of the guide centred on highlighting the 'right' and 'wrong' ways to approach farm work through the use of comparative illustrations and detailed instructions, with a section dedicated to dairy cattle. It offered parallels to the Country Code, especially as a material medium for codifying 'good' and 'bad', or 'right' and 'wrong', behaviour. As David Matless demonstrates in relation to the expansion of countryside leisure pursuits in the 1930s and 1940s, planner-preservationists constructed moral geographies of acceptable and unacceptable countryside behaviour, aimed at certain stereotyped urban 'outsider' figures.[106] *A Book of Farmcraft* offered a similar code. It constructed certain moral geographies of right and wrong farming behaviour aimed at another type of wartime urban outsider – the Land Girl. Like the Country Code, it serves to reify a particular construction of knowledge and influence behaviours.[107] But rather than constructing a form of leisured countryside citizenship that produced a vision of rural space whereby people self-governed and conducted themselves in a prescribed manner, it constructed a form of farming citizenship, which posited a set of behaviours and practices aimed at prescribing a way of encountering cattle. In this way, encountering cattle in an appropriate manner was not only necessary for ensuring milk yields were high, but was also part of the transformation of the urban Land Girl into a rural citizen and a successful wartime participant.[108]

The guide emphasised how Land Girls needed to create a sensory environment that placed the cow at ease. This would tackle any concerns that Land Girls were being particularly rough in their handling of cows. It instructed that 'at milking-time be as quiet as you can; a nervous cow may be upset by rough treatment and noise, and so may make milking difficult for you.'[109] Similarly it stated, 'never strike a cow in the stall as this will only increase her nervousness – often the reason for kicking.'[110]

[106] Matless, *Landscape and Englishness*.
[107] P. Merriman, ''Respect the Life of the Countryside': the Country Code, Government and the Conduct of Visitors to the Countryside in Post-war England and Wales', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 30.3 (2005), pp. 336-350; G. Parker, 'The Country Code and the Ordering of Countryside Citizenship', *Journal of Rural Studies*, 22.1 (2006), pp. 1-16.
[108] This taps into the argument by Gowdy-Wygant that working on the land was represented as positively transformative for urban Land Girls.
[109] Greenhill and Dunbar, *A Book of Farmcraft*, p. 22.
[110] *Ibid*., p. 21.

Land Girls were also reminded to give warning to their cow of her intention to milk, which could be done by speaking to her or gently touching her, and they were provided with physical strategies to prevent the cow from kicking.[111] These instructions demonstrate the perceived need to build a level of familiarity between human and cow. They also highlight that meeting certain visual, tactile and auditory standards was considered necessary in the making of a successful human-cow partnership.

Alongside becoming familiar with cattle, the *Book of Farmcraft* also instructed Land Girls on ways of hygienically handling cows and taking precautions with milk. For instance, it stated that 'the milk drawn from a cow must be kept absolutely free from dirt, otherwise bacteria (germs) will quickly breed and the milk will become unpleasant or even dangerous to the consumer.'[112] Moreover, it noted that the Land Girl should 'avoid getting any milk on the fingers or any part of the hand – wet milking is bad, leading to contaminated milk and sore teats… Carry a clean cloth in the pocket of your milking overall for wiping from the udder or pail any dirt which may arrive by accident, perhaps from an attempted kick.'[113] Stressing hygienic ways of encountering and handling cows reflects longer-term fears over milk contamination and the threat of zoonotic diseases, such as bovine tuberculosis, infecting the human consumer.[114] These concerns were especially heightened in the early years of the war as the numbers of people infected by bovine tuberculosis increased.[115] Anxieties that Land Girls could 'endanger themselves and others' were, then, also rooted in endangering the ordinary milk-consuming citizen. The inexperience of the Land Girl was not just represented as potentially dangerous to the cow, but also as threatening the health of the British populace in wartime, if they did not implement hygienic practices.

While training focused on ensuring Land Girls handled cattle appropriately and hygienically, governmental representations of training challenged the notion that

[111] *Ibid*., p. 20.
[112] *Ibid*., p. 18.
[113] *Ibid*., p. 21.
[114] P. Atkins, 'Milk Consumption and Tuberculosis in Britain, 1850-1950', in A. Fenton (ed.), *Order and Disorder: The Health Implications of Eating and Drinking in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Edinburgh: Tuckwell Press, 2000), pp. 83-95; P. Atkins, 'Lobbying and Resistance with Regard to Policy on Bovine Tuberculosis: an Inside/Outside Model of Britain 1900-1939', in M. Worboys and F. Condrau (eds), *Tuberculosis Then and Now* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010), pp. 189-212.
[115] Anon., 'Tuberculosis in War-time', *Public Health: The Journal of the Society of Medical Officers of Health* 2.56 (1942), pp. 15-6.

Land Girls were fearful of tending to them. Instead, the government constructed a narrative that the fears induced by these human-animal encounters were not only overcome through training, but were positively transformative for the mental strength and resilience of WLA members. This was necessary in order to promote the utility of the WLA and to normalise their place on the dairy farm. For instance, revisiting the MOI 1942 photograph series 'Battle of the Land', one photograph presents a Land Girl driving a small herd of cows down a narrow country lane at the Northampton Institute of Agriculture (Figure 2.6), the original caption stated 'all fear of cattle disappears quickly under training.'[116] Likewise, Figure 2.7 depicts a Land Girl called Iris leading a bull on an unknown farm, and the object description reads, 'Iris had previously been a typist but after four weeks training at the Northampton Institute of Agriculture, she is now confident to deal with such animals and all aspects of her work in the Women's Land Army.'[117] In a similar vein, Sackville-West describes how the fear and pain caused by the physicality of the cow would later form 'plucky and sturdy little toilers.'[118] In these representations of WLA training, overcoming the fear and potential dangers posed by cattle – both bull and cow – transformed Land Girls into confident, resilient, and fearless workers.

[116] Ministry of Information Photo Division, 'Battle of the Land: The Work of the Women's Land Army on the British Home Front, 1942', Ministry of Information Second World War Collection, D 8831, Imperial War Museum, <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205199388> [accessed 22 November 2017].
[117] Ministry of Information Photo Division, 'Battle of the Land: The Work of the Women's Land Army on the British Home Front, 1942', Ministry of Information Second World War Collection, D 8839, Imperial War Museum, <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205199393> [accessed 22 November 2017].
[118] Sackville-West, *The Women's Land Army*, pp. 28-9.

Figure 2.6

Ministry of Information Photo Division, 'Battle of the Land: The Work of the Women's Land Army on the British Home Front, 1942', Ministry of Information Second World War Collection, D 8831, Imperial War Museum <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205199388> [accessed 22 November 2017].

Figure 2.7

Ministry of Information Photo Division, 'Battle of the Land: The Work of the Women's Land Army on the British Home Front, 1942', Ministry of Information Second World War Collection, D 8839, Imperial War Museum <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205199393> [accessed 22 November 2017].

The WLA were also trained in 'modern' and scientific roles associated with cattle farming. Although following the First World War opportunities for female agricultural education increased and single middle class women started up their own independent farms and co-operatives, these were limited in scope and were inhibited by the double burden of maintaining a household and suspicion from the farming community.[119] The state's wartime intervention into agriculture helped overcome some of these inhibitions. Through investment from the Kent War Agricultural Executive Committee, a WLA managed farm was established in the north of the county, which contained a herd of pedigree Guernseys.[120] Similarly, a farm in Hatfield in Hertfordshire was requisitioned as a WLA training school, which was 'fitted up with all modern contrivances, including a Manus milking machine, electric sterilizer, etc.'[121] At both, the WLA managed the entire farm, and female head 'cowmen' were placed in sole of charge of training other Land Girls and performing roles including milking, dairying, service, calving and calf rearing. In Kent, the agricultural press also celebrated these WLA members for their 'business-like methods' and the 'quietness and docility of the stock – a sure sign of good stockmanship.' These WLA dairy farmers were celebrated as modern pioneers and successful wartime participants, who occupied positions of responsibility and management rather than domesticity and subordination.

This move towards modernisation was framed as a way to provide a place for women on the dairy farm in the future, especially considering fears over the high levels of young rural women migrating from the countryside to towns and cities during the 1930s.[122] For example, in a contributory article in the *Land Girl*, Sir E. John Russell, former Director of Rothamsted Experimental Station, encouraged Land Girls to consider farming following their time in the WLA by suggesting that with increasing levels of modernisation there was more need for 'intelligence and deftness' than physical strength, which he stated are 'qualities women will always be able to hold their own.' Moreover, he believed that with modernisation the drudgery of dairy would be overcome – factors that could attract women back into such

[119]Verdon, 'Business and Pleasure', pp. 405-13; A. Meredith, 'From Ideals to Reality: The Women's Smallholding Colony at Lingfield, 1920-39', *Agricultural History Review*, 54.1 (2006), p. 105.
[120] *Farmer and Stockbreeder*, September 1942.
[121] *Land Girl*, September 1944.
[122] S. Todd, 'Young Women, Work and Family in Inter-war Rural England', *Agricultural History Review*, 52.1 (2004), pp. 83-98.

roles.[123] Such beliefs were accompanied by increasing amounts of specialist training for Land Girls who had built up experience in dairy work. In particular, the milk-recording scheme – overseen by the MMB – relied on Land Girls to inspect the hygiene standards of farms and take samples of milk.[124] As Vita Sackville-West noted, 'this is responsible work… special training is necessary.'[125] Significantly, this role demonstrates that some Land Girls were trained in positions of authority where they could inspect the work of male farmers. Moreover, the state's training of the WLA in modern and scientific roles highlights – in a similar vein to the state's enrolment of agricultural scientists and veterinarians – that the WLA was enrolled within wider efforts to redefine notions of cattle productivity and improve the yield of the national herd.

However, it is important to note that many Land Girls did not receive training at an agricultural institute, while some did not receive any training whatsoever, but were, instead, expected to work straight away.[126] In her critique of the WLA, Shirley Joseph – a former Land Girl – noted how a friend 'had been sent to this farm as a novice for a month's training and although the farmer must have been fully aware of this he insisted on giving her skilled jobs to perform, expecting her to do them without any instruction.'[127] On her first day this friend was expected to fetch the cows in for milking, which led to her 'gingerly walking round the field' before the farmer came to her aid with 'scorn and contempt.' And 'later she was handed a bucket and stool and told to milk a cow. It was like giving a bicycle to someone who couldn't ride, and telling him to ride it to London.'[128] This highlights the contradictions between the wartime stereotypes and realities of the WLA: the Land Girl was expected to be fearful of tending to cattle, she was also seen to be 'rough' with the animals, and was simultaneously expected by some farmers to successfully work with cattle without any prior training or experience. Moreover, she was also utilised by the state in modern and scientific roles. These various constructions shaped the ways in which Land Girls, male farmers and cattle encountered one another on the wartime dairy farm.

[123] *Land Girl*, June 1944.
[124] *Land Girl*, November 1944.
[125] Sackville-West, *The Women's Land Army*, p. 31.
[126] Clarke, *The Women's Land Army*, pp. 80-6.
[127] Joseph, *If Their Mothers Only Knew*, p. 137.
[128] *Ibid*., p. 138.

Negotiating 'New' Human-Cattle Encounters

Gendered Roles on the Wartime Dairy Farm

Whether Land Girls had been trained or not, their experience on the wartime dairy farm was underpinned by working with both cattle *and* farmers and farm labourers on wartime dairy farms. These new relationships were not, however, always harmonious. As Penny Summerfield and Corinna Peniston-Bird state, 'the Second World War was one of the most contradictory periods in British history for the boundary between male and female roles.'[129] Revisiting the idea that working with cattle straddled the boundary between acceptable feminine farm work and wartime exceptionalism, this section extends the historiography of women's war work to demonstrate how working with cattle also acted as a site of negotiation and contestation regarding wartime gender roles. This was often rooted in conflicting notions concerning the suitability for such work, and notions that women were not as productive within dairy farming as their male counterparts.

Although the previous sections demonstrate that there were contradictory concerns over the Land Girl mishandling and controlling cattle, as well as about her perceived fear of these animals, her femininity did not challenge farming gender boundaries in regards to the act of milking. As already mentioned, inter-war farming literature positioned women's work with the 'lighter branches of agriculture', include dairying and milking. Likewise, milking remained 'women's work' in more remote regions with smaller-scale dairy farms, such as Wales and the Scottish Highlands, prior to the war.[130] This was accompanied by views during the war that an experienced female was better at 'maternal' roles such as milking and calf rearing. For instance, on the BBC Home Service broadcast *Farming To-Day* from November 1943, Professor H. G. Robinson of the Midlands Agricultural College noted, 'women make the best calf-rearers.'[131] Similarly, Shirley Joseph noted that 'although physical strength is not a feminine asset, many girls have, as one farmer said to me, a

[129] P. Summerfield and C. Peniston-Bird, 'Women in the Firing Lines: The Home Guard and the Defence of Gender Boundaries in Britain in the Second World War', *Women's History Review*, 9.2 (2000), p. 232.
[130] Short, *The Battle of the Fields*, p. 15.
[131] An overview of this broadcast was reported in *Agriculture – The Journal of the Ministry of Agriculture*. See, Anon., 'Cattle at the Cross Roads', p. 388.

persuasive way with animals and are generally painstaking and thorough in their work.'[132]

In contrast to the acceptably feminine role of milking, however, handling bulls prior to the war was regarded as 'men's work'. Nevertheless, Land Girls were celebrated in their 'exceptional' roles in wartime propaganda, such as in the photograph of Iris leading a bull (Figure 2.7). This depiction resembles other wartime propaganda images where women were placed in circumstances that were conventionally unfeminine, such as tractor driving, in order to celebrate their public duty and heroism.[133] However, the circumstances on the farm could differ sharply from the celebratory narratives of such images. Working with bulls could act as a site of gender contestation between Land Girls and cowmen. For example, Margaret Rumbold, after experience of working on a couple of different dairy farms, was made the 'under cowman' at Market Garden Farm in Kent, which was used for training purposes. One of her roles was leading a pedigree-bull on walks around a local village. Following an incident where she had to chase the bull back into his pen, she recalls a confrontation with the cowmen:

> He's bad tempered today. 'I'm not afraid of him', he said. I said neither am I, but I wouldn't go in there now for you or anybody else, but you please yourself, but I'm telling you he's bad tempered today. 'There's no bull born I'm afraid of', he said. I said no I'm not disputing that. But they do get cross with you when you go in like that, and if you can picture a fella coming out from a pair of horns over the top - mind you you're lucky to get flipped out but he landed in the muck and it was soft so it just knocked down his ego a bit, and served him right.[134]

Penny Summerfield suggests that women who depict their wartime work as 'heroic' when recalling it tend to view the masculinity of the men they worked alongside as impaired.[135] This is apparent in the testimony of Margaret Rumbold where working successfully with the bull acted as a way to assert a sense of heroism and pride into the narrative of her wartime life, amidst dominant post-war narratives that side-line the presence of women. The testimony also offers insights into the ways in which male farm workers – as men in 'reserved occupations' – may have associated bull

[132] Joseph, *If Their Mothers Only Knew*, p. 139.
[133] Summerfield, *Reconstructing Women's Wartime Lives*, p. 78.
[134] Margaret Mary Rumbold, Interview, 31 May 1985, IWM 8856. For another example of confrontation between Land Girl and cowmen see, Iris Hobby, Interview, 29 January 1999, IWM 18274.
[135] Summerfield, *Reconstructing Women's Wartime Lives*, pp. 148, 116-60.

work with the preservation of their masculinity, especially when faced with dominant wartime representations of masculinity as the 'soldier-hero' and the presence of young women in conventional male roles.[136]

However, the boundary between 'men's work' and 'women's work' regarding the bull was not necessarily negotiated on gendered terms: on occasion, the behaviour of the bull determined who worked with him. This was the case for Neta Hutchinson who worked on a farm in East Yorkshire. Following the arrival of a young bull on loan to the farm, the foreman put Hutchinson in charge of the bull because 'he'd been brought up with Land Army girls and he didn't like the men.'[137] This corresponds with the wartime discourse of bulls as active beings that needed to be worked *with* rather than *on*, shaping human intentions and behaviours. It highlights the need to pay attention to contemporary conceptualisations of the needs of the animal, which also shaped the boundaries between male and female farming roles.

The fact that Land Girls, such as Margaret Rumbold and Neta Hutchinson, were placed in positions of stock management and stock control – which, prior to the war, were conventional male roles – suggests that the WLA did, at times, challenge the gender boundaries inscribed in cattle work.[138] This was also reflected in the training of certain members of the WLA to occupy 'modern', technical roles, such as milk recording. Nevertheless, it is important to consider how such challenges were heavily qualified by wartime notions that the Land Girl's work was supplementary to her male counterpart and that she was not as productive as the 'cowman', even if milking was represented as an appropriately feminine role. For example, in

[136] S. Rose, 'Temperate Heroes: Concepts of Masculinity in Second World War Britain', in S. Dudink, K. Hangemann and J. Tosh (eds), *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), pp. 184-90; A. Chand, 'Conflicting Masculinities? Men in Reserved Occupations in Clydeside 1939-45', *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies*, 34.2 (2014), pp. 218-36.
[137] Neta Joan Hutchinson, Interview, 4 October 1999, IWM 19776.
[138] This reflects a marked change with the longer-term gendering of dairy farm work in Britain, Europe and North America. Over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the privileged position of the dairywoman, whose skill was 'tradition-bound' and formed through local and familial knowledge, was replaced by the 'rational' approach of the man and the spread of standardised scientific knowledge. Gradually, this resulted in the devaluing of female labour and the retreat of the dairywoman into positions of subordination and domesticity. This trend continued into the inter-war period where farming literature associated modern female work with the 'lighter branches of agriculture', which did not pose a challenge to dominant feminine norms and expectations of the period. See, D. Valenze, 'The Art of Women and the Business of Men: Women's Work and the Dairy Industry c. 1740-1840', *Past & Present*, 130 (1991), pp. 142-169; J. Bourke, 'Dairywomen and Affectionate Wives: Women in the Irish Dairy Industry, 1890-1914', *Agricultural History Review*, 38.2 (1990), pp. 149-164; L. Sommestad, 'Gendering Work, Interpreting Gender: The Masculinization of Dairy Work in Sweden, 1850-1950', *History Workshop Journal*, 37.1 (1994), pp. 57-75; S. Shortall, 'In and Out of the Milking Parlour – A Cross-National Comparison of Gender, the Dairy Industry and the State', *Women's Studies International Forum*, 23.2 (2000), pp. 247-257; M. G. Cohen, 'The Decline of Women in Canadian Dairying', *Histoire Sociale – Social History*, 17.34 (1984), pp. 307-34.

Sackville-West's account of the WLA – which was endorsed by the MAF – she compared in percentile terms the productivity of the WLA to the male farm labourer across numerous farming roles. For milking, the productivity of the Land Girl was represented as 91 per-cent of her male counterpart.[139] This perception that her gender made her less productive was also accompanied by challenges regarding her femininity.[140] For instance, in a letter to the *Land Girl*, Anne Dupuy wrote about her experience of driving cattle along the road to market. When describing the auction, she states, 'I found myself in the ring gazing at a sea of faces while I walked Annie round to the accompaniment of a wisecrack from the Auctioneer, 'Now, remember it's the heifer you're bidding for'.[141] Like the minority of female farmers in the interwar period, Anne Dupuy's femininity meant that she was an unusual, sexual, and out of place, spectacle at the male dominated cattle show ring.[142] In a similar vein, spaces of male authority were not breached when the WLA were tasked with managing dairy herds. The all-female workforce on these farms ensured that farming gender hierarchies were preserved, as Land Girls did not manage male farmers and labourers. Even when Land Girls were seen as 'experts' who occupied modern roles, such as a relief milker, such views were tempered with the notion that this was to supplement the 'real' work of the cowman who required a day off.[143]

Yet some members of the WLA actively negotiated their place and expertise on the wartime dairy farm through promoting their own, and their peers, productivity. This was most explicit in the magazine the *Land Girl*, in which editors and contributors celebrated the Land Girls' proficiency for milking cows. For instance, in a report on milking proficiency tests that were held for WLA members in Surrey and West Sussex in 1943, the writer noted how farmers expressed doubts that it would be difficult to test the milking proficiency of the Land Girl, as the cow was unfamiliar with the new milker and, as a consequence, milk output would suffer. In response, the writer reported that the milk output was higher than usual - crediting the skills of the Land Girls for this increase.[144] The *Land Girl* also published articles and letters-to-the-editors on the topic of 'Design for a Dairy'. Land Girls contributed ideas for a

[139] Sackville-West, *The Women's Land Army*, p. 97. By contrast, the WLA were framed as more productive than their male counterparts in regards to poultry rearing, which was part of the 'lighter branches of agriculture'.
[140] Summerfield, *Reconstructing Women's Wartime Lives*, pp. 80-1; Rose, 'Women's Rights, Women's Obligations', pp. 277-89.
[141] *Land Girl*, March 1944, p. 7.
[142] Verdon, 'Business and Pleasure', p. 410.
[143] *Picture Post*, 16 March 1946, pp. 20-22.
[144] *Land Girl*, December 1943, p. 11.

dairy that were premised on the principles of hygiene, utility and efficiency, painting a picture of the 'ideal' dairy farm as one that embodied scientific intervention and utilised modern methods and technologies such as the milking machine.[145] These examples demonstrate how some members of the WLA saw themselves as harbingers of futuristic, science-led practices regarding dairy farming and cattle productivity, which linked to some of the ways in which the state portrayed them. It also highlights how some Land Girls adopted and espoused state-led conceptions of cattle productivity.

Moreover, members of the WLA actively negotiated the heavily limited opportunities they were afforded and attempted to plan their own futures within dairy farming. In a letter published in the *Land Girl*, Doris Clapton acknowledged that: 'A small percentage of girls, like myself, are extremely interested in their jobs and have at the back of their minds the desire to farm on their own in peacetime.' [146] She then outlined her plan to start a small dairy farm with 15 cattle, and asked whether any other Land Girls would like to join her in setting this up. To demonstrate her sincerity, Doris also stressed that she already had three shorthorn calves and was accumulating a supply of foodstuffs in preparation.[147] In a similar vein, an article in the *Land Girl* from May 1945 celebrated the achievements of Joan Spurgin, who as the eighteenth member of the WLA had 'never even touched a cow' prior to the war, went on to take charge of the herd at her farm, and gained a certificate of merit in the Hampshire County Milking Competition and was awarded a WLA proficiency badge with 100% in machine milking and dairy work. One of the 'Old Originals' by 1945, Spurgin had also won an essay competition in the *Dairy Farmer*, and with the prize money bought a calf called 'Prize Girl' through which she intended to a start a Meon Valley herd after the war.[148] Although these are exceptional cases, they show how some Land Girls envisioned futures where the management of stock and dairy farms fitted into the realm of women's work. To further understand why some Land Girls may have wanted to carry on working with cattle after the war, it is worthwhile to consider the ways in which they encountered, and worked with, these animals.

Encountering Cattle

[145] *Land Girl*, September 1944, pp. 9-10.
[146] *Land Girl*, December 1943, p. 10.
[147] *Ibid*.
[148] *Land Girl*, May 1945, p. 5.

Revisiting the earlier argument that official wartime representations of Land Girls framed them as initially fearful and then positively transformed through their work with cattle, this final section will examine how Land Girls discussed these encounters in testimonies constructed both at the time and since. This will extend and nuance the recent study by Gowdy-Wygant who argues that through working on the land members of the WLA went through a process of physical and mental transformation that was framed in wartime discourse as a form of rural rejuvenation.[149] This sub-section argues that such feelings of transformation were rooted in the physical and intimate relationships formed with cattle. Moreover, it also uncovers how these physical and intimate relationships triggered alternative emotional responses such as grief, as well as posing physical danger to the health of the Land Girls. This highlights that cattle played a significant role in shaping the varied wartime experiences of members of the WLA.

Many urban Land Girls note how their first close, physical encounters with cattle caused considerable fear and anxiety. For instance, in a letter to the *Dairy Farmer*, Mary Robertson wrote:

> My first attempt at milking was rather an ordeal. I entered the byre – it was the first time I had seen a cow at such close quarters – and found myself confronted with four large and, as I felt, menacing beasts. The cow nearest me was being tied by a rope round her legs; she had not long calved and was rather wild. She danced in her stall and finally, to my horror, fell. I lost all my courage and turned and opened the byre door, intending to run for my life. Imagine my consternation to find a large black bull standing in the 'square' facing me. I didn't know whether to run past him or stay in the byre, but decided to stay in since the beasts inside were tied. It was a few days before I really sat under a cow and tried to milk, not very successfully I am afraid; my knees were shaking so violently that I could hardly steady the pail.[150]

Mary Robertson's experience does not appear to be uncommon. Pat Peters, who joined the WLA with romantic preconceptions of milking docile cows, remembered how she initially fed the cows by standing behind a concrete wall and throwing the hay over it before quickly retreating out of fear. When the farmer asked her to milk she recalled, 'my stomach performed a somersault and inwardly I panicked', before

[149] Gowdy-Wygant, *Cultivating Victory*, pp. 186-7. Also Sonya Rose identifies how wartime representations of the WLA were framed in terms of rural rejuvenation, see, Rose, *Which People's War?*, pp. 213-4.
[150] *Dairy Farmer*, January 1943, p. 12.

begging the farmer to give her a quiet cow.[151] These encounters were memorable and significant because they embodied the moment where any previous perceptions of farming life were met with its physical realities.

The significance of these physical realities came to the fore when cattle posed danger to the health of the Land Girl. When recalling her experiences of her ten years in the WLA, Margaret Rumbold reflected that in the close proximity of a cowshed, 'most ladies don't like cows, terrified of them really.'[152] Such fears were not unjustified. A kick from a cow impaired the use of Rumbold's hand, while another Land Girl, Iris Hobby, nearly lost her child when kicked during her seventh month of pregnancy.[153] The Land Girls' health also came under threat through the transmission of zoonotic diseases. Muriel Brind contracted Bovine Tuberculosis in her neck and underwent two operations before returning to work.[154] These testimonies highlight that the fears and anxieties of encountering cattle were also rooted in various physical dangers, which held potentially unknown zoonotic threats.

The significance of these first cattle encounters becomes more apparent if we consider the longer process of the physical urban separation of humans from large livestock. Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, sanitary interventions saw the de-animalisation (with the exceptions of pets and pests) of urban spaces. Many urban dairy producers were forced out of cities and cattle, along with other food-producing animals, were no longer thought of as 'urban' in location.[155] Instead, for many urban people at least, cattle were encountered during visits to the countryside. But here, close physical proximity was not necessarily a given. Joan Collinson recalled how on trips to the countryside prior to the war she used to avoid the cows.[156] Other urban Land Girls had never seen cattle before. Frances Walls recalls when travelling with other Land Girls on a train from Victoria Station in London to Cambridge, 'When we were on the train, going past fields, we passed cows and I said, 'We'll soon be milking them.' Some of the girls who were from London said, 'Are they cows? They're big!' When we got to Cambridge, they

[151] Peters, *Land Girls Gang Up*, pp. 179-81.
[152] Margaret Mary Rumbold, Interview, 31 May 1985, IWM 8856.
[153] Iris Hobby, Interview, 29 January 1999, IWM 18274.
[154] M. Brind, 'Cows', BBC People's War, A5929257 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/57/a5929257.shtml> [accessed 22 November 2017].
[155] Atkins, 'Animal Wastes and Nuisances in Nineteenth-Century London', pp. 19-52.
[156] Joan Collinson, Interview, 31 January 2001, IWM 21008.

gave in their notice. It was a pity because there were other jobs they could have done in the country, apart from cattle.'[157]

However, a prolonged fear of cattle is not common within testimonies. Instead, Land Girls, both during the war and since, tend to frame this fear of cattle as something that is/was overcome. For instance, Mary Robertson, in the conclusion of her letter, wrote, 'gone is the pale slim girl with the white velvety hands who climbed the hill path that day so long ago. In her place is a tanned, rotund person with rough, reddened hands who has proved her ability to do a *real day's work*.'[158] In a similar vein Pat Peters recalled, 'very slowly… the milk fell in odd drops and squirts. My vision had come true! Now I felt like a *real* land girl, now I could boast!'[159] This corresponds with what Lucy Noakes identifies through an analysis of online testimonies of people's experiences of the Blitz, whereby fear is recognised but then subsequently marginalised within testimonies. Instead, she finds that people construct narratives that align with the dominant discourse of the 'blitz spirit' where adversity was overcome.[160] Moreover, the testimonies of Mary Robertson and Pat Peters draw on a notion of personal renewal and rejuvenation. This corresponds with wartime representations – as identified earlier in this chapter – in which, by overcoming the fear of cattle, urban Land Girls were transformed into resilient, confident and fearless workers who were ready to work on the land.

Nevertheless, it is important to recognise how feelings of personal transformation were also rooted in the close and physical interaction with cattle. Recent studies in geography demonstrate how contact with farm animals can have a positive impact on people's lives, enabling feelings of self-worth and self-esteem by acting as a form of social support and by offering emotional bonds. Interacting with farm animals can then facilitate a therapeutic engagement with place.[161] For Mary Robertson and Pat Peters, their physical relationships with cattle played a significant part in forging their sense of place on the farm and in legitimising their positions as *real* farm

[157] F. Wall, 'Keeping the Cows Milked in Cambridge', BBC People's War, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/00/a4139200.shtml> [accessed 22 November 2017].
[158] *Dairy Farmer*, January 1943.
[159] Peters, *Land Girls Gang Up*, pp. 179-81.
[160] Noakes, 'War on the Web', pp. 52-6.
[161] R. Gorman, 'Therapeutic Landscapes and Non-human Animals: The Roles and Contested Positions of Animals within Care Farming Assemblages', *Social and Cultural Geography*, 18.3 (2017), pp. 315-335. For further work on the 'affective/emotional registers' between humans and cattle, especially pertaining to rurality and animality, see, O. Jones, ' 'Who Milks the Cows at Maesgwyn?' The Animality of UK Rural Landscapes in Affective Registers', *Landscape Research*, 38.4 (2013), pp. 421-42.

workers and wartime participants. For other Land Girls, physically interacting with cattle had similar positive effects. D. E. Runacles, in a letter to the *Dairy Farmer*, described her transition from a Londoner who had a 'great fear of cows' to a 'fully-fledged milker.' Her positive experience was partially facilitated by her physical interactions with cows. She wrote: 'It's the autumn I really enjoy when we start settling down for winter, whitewashing the cowshed and laying the cows in, and cold weather when we scuttle into the sheds and slap our cold hands on a lovely, warm old cow, with the place smelling of animals' sweet breath when they have been eating hay.'[162] The physical fatigue caused by milking was also felt as beneficial. For example, Anne McEntegart, in her wartime diary, noted, 'after dinner, I milked three cows and each was more successful than the last… My body is aching from head to foot. But I feel reassured in my mind, so physical fatigue is pleasant.'[163]

Feelings of transformation were also grounded in feelings of intimacy for cattle. These were predicated on the belief that cattle were individuals with personalities, which correspond with the messages identified earlier in the WLA training literature and practices. This is notably highlighted in Anne McEntegart's wartime diary under the subheading 'Personalities.' Approaching the end of her first year working on a dairy farm in the New Forest, Anne reflected, 'I think what has set me wondering most of all during this past year is the personality of the animals and how individual each one is.' For Anne, cows were not 'dull and very similar creatures', but animals with personalities more dissimilar than humans, which became especially evident during milking. Through recognising these individualities, Anne also became more aware of the individualities of her human friends and her sense of self, writing, it 'made me realise the essential 'me' in myself... It seemed to prove to me the immortality of the soul more than anything else.'[164] In this instance, the intimate relationships formed with individual cows prompted a new understanding of selfhood.

But the responses from working with cattle were not always happy for Land Girls. Instead, forming bonds with individual cattle produced varying emotional responses, including grief. These were particularly marked when cattle were slaughtered in

[162] *Dairy Farmer*, December 1942.
[163] A. McEntegart, *The Milk Lady at New Park Farm: The Wartime Diary of Anne McEntegart* (Sheffield: RMC Books, 2011), p. 18.
[164] *Ibid*., pp. 96-7.

circumstances that did not fit the normal routine of production, but were killed instead to contain outbreaks of disease or were casualties of fires or other accidents.[165] This was evident for Beatrice Smith who was traumatised by the culling of an entire herd of cattle which had contracted Foot-and-Mouth disease. In her letter to the *Dairy Farmer* she described how 14 butchers quickly arrived following the announcement of the outbreak of the disease, where the butchers soaked the hides and meticulously cleaned the cowsheds. Once this process was completed she noted, 'as I stood in the spotless, empty cowshed I seemed to see the ghosts of all the cows still waiting to be milked, and I felt a pang of sorrow for the innocent creatures I loved so much.'[166] Similarly, Barbara Anwell submitted a letter to the *Dairy Farmer* entitled 'My Family of Cows'. Although the herd she worked with did not contract Foot-and-Mouth disease, an outbreak two miles away meant, 'I suffered agonies of mind in case I should lose my family of cows. My experiences have not been sensational, but they have taught me the true values of life.'[167]

Conclusion

This chapter reveals the ways in which cattle were enrolled for the British war effort. In response to wartime demands for milk production, it demonstrates that state actors, in co-operation with agricultural scientists and veterinarians, imaginatively and physically repositioned cattle in relation to new conceptualisations of their productivity. This repositioning of cattle was premised on the introduction of scientific expertise on to the wartime dairy farm and the formation of new human-cattle relationships; demonstrated by the state's utilisation of agricultural scientists and through the introduction of schemes that enabled, and normalised, the interventions of veterinarians over the bodies of dairy cattle. This repositioning was also reliant on the reconfiguration of existing human-cattle relationships. In particular, the state engaged with the pedigree farming community, as a means of circulating and implementing scientific notions of cattle productivity at the farm level. Efforts to improve the productivity of cattle, therefore, reveals a new site of co-operation during war between state actors, agricultural scientists, veterinarians and pedigree farmers. Nevertheless, this was beset by challenges in regards to

[165] For an example of how farmers respond to the death of animals outside of the normal routines of production, see, M. Riley, ''Letting them go': Agricultural Retirement and Human-Livestock Relations', *Geoforum*, 42.1 (2011), pp. 20-1.
[166] *Dairy Farmer*, June 1943.
[167] *Ibid.*

resistant pedigree farmers and tensions between scientific expertise and experience-based knowledge surrounding breeding. As such, efforts to enrol dairy cattle for the war sheds new light on to wider historical debates about social cohesion and dissension on the British home front.

This chapter reveals the ways in which the introduction of a new agricultural workforce – the WLA – to work with cattle also facilitated co-operation and provoked tension within the farming community. The state represented this new, young female workforce as harbingers of scientific methods, which aligned with wider wartime state efforts to increase the influence of scientific expertise on the dairy farm. But this was also accompanied by contradictory discourses of gender characteristics relating to the suitability of Land Girls for such work, such as women being 'natural' milkers, while being fearful of handling cattle. Moreover, farmers stressed their anxieties about the unfamiliar relationship between the cow and the Land Girl, and the impact of such unfamiliarity on milk output. These contradictory discourses exposes how Land Girls straddled the boundary between acceptable feminine farm work and wartime exceptional male roles. This demonstrates the significance of exploring conceptualisations of human-animal interactions for providing a fuller, more complex historical understanding of women's war work.

Furthermore, by paying attention to the ways in which Land Girls wrote and spoke about their relationships with cattle, this chapter also offers another way for the historian of the Second World War to unpick the contradictory impact of the war on women's negotiation of wartime gender roles, their subjective understandings of themselves and their emotional experiences. Land Girls were constrained during the war by gendered notions of appropriate dairy farm work. Yet some actively negotiated their place and expertise on the wartime dairy farm by promoting their own productivity, while others challenged the limited opportunities they were afforded by attempting to plan their own futures within dairy farming. Furthermore, the physical and intimate relationships formed with cattle had significant, and varied, affects. Ranging from love to fear and grief, working with cattle could be both therapeutic and traumatic, whilst also providing a way in which Land Girls could prove to themselves that they were *real* farm workers and wartime participants. This shows that cattle mattered to members of the WLA, and were significantly influential in shaping their wartime identities and experiences.

Moving away from food production and into the arena of fighting, the following chapter examines the wartime militarisation of pigeons. Like pigs and cattle, the capacities of pigeons came under state scrutiny and their roles were subsequently reimagined. But rather than the state enrolling new historical actors, such as pig club members and the WLA, to work with such animals, the state enrolled pigeon fanciers to breed, rear, train and volunteer their birds for the war effort. An investigation of the enrolment of pigeons offers an opportunity to explore the co-operation, and possible contestation, between the military and civilian spheres in wartime Britain.

Chapter Three: Militarising and Regulating the Pigeon at War

Introduction

At 8.20 on 11 October 1943, an RAF Catalina Flying Boat was forced to ditch in rough waters in the North Sea due to engine failure. Unfortunately for the crew on the aircraft they encountered radio difficulties and could not send out an SOS signal. Fortunately, however, the crew had a military pigeon on-board, called 'White Vision', who they subsequently released with a message containing their position and information concerning the aircraft and crew. Bred by the Fleming brothers - civilian pigeon fanciers from Motherwell - and trained by RAF pigeoneers at RAF Sollum Voe on the Shetland Isles, White Vision arrived at her loft at 17.00 flying roughly 60 miles in very low cloud and facing head winds of 25 miles-per-hour. Through the details contained in the message, the 11 crew members were subsequently found at around midnight, although the aircraft had to be abandoned. For her role in saving the crew members, White Vision was awarded the Dickin Medal, which was commonly known as the Animals' Victoria Cross.[1]

White Vision was one of 32 pigeons that were awarded the Dickin Medal, and was one of nearly 200,000 pigeons donated by British civilian pigeon fanciers to allied forces during the war.[2] In spite of the extensive militarisation of homing pigeons during the conflict, the topic has been overlooked by academic historians.[3]As recent historiography demonstrates, militarisation is not only an economic, political, social and cultural process, but is also a 'more-than-human' exercise.[4] Militaries work with, within, and against, nonhuman animals and environments in times of peace and war.[5] As part of this militarising process, militaries have actively mobilised animals for various roles. For instance, scholars have examined how the British army during the Second World War mobilised dogs for mine-detecting purposes.[6] This research sits within a growing area of scholarship that demonstrates how canine capabilities have been harnessed by nation-states to wage war or secure and defend societies and

[1] Osman, *Pigeons in World War II*, p. 27.
[2] *Ibid*., p. 1.
[3] The role of pigeons during the Second World War has received far greater attention amongst popular historians and pigeon racing enthusiasts. For instance, see Osman, *Pigeons in World War II*.
[4] I borrow the term 'more-than-human' from, S. Whatmore, 'Materialist Returns: Practising Cultural Geography In and For a More-than-Human World', *Cultural Geographies*, 13.4 (2006), pp. 600-609.
[5] Pearson, *Mobilizing Nature*, pp. 4-6; Dudley, *An Environmental History of the UK Defence Estate*; Coates *et al*., 'Defending Nation, Defending Nature? Militarized Landscapes and Military Environmentalism in Britain, France, and the United States', *Environmental History*, 16 (2011), pp. 456-491.
[6] Kirk, 'In Dogs We Trust?', pp. 1-36.

territories.[7] Extending the focus beyond the canine, this chapter considers how the capabilities of homing pigeons were conceptualised, enrolled and harnessed by the British military and civil defence services, as a form of wartime communications. Homing pigeons were primarily used in emergencies to send S.O.S messages or for intelligence gathering purposes. They were frequently portrayed as having saved the lives of military personnel. By examining the mobilisation of homing pigeons, therefore, this chapter demonstrates how national defence was understood as a human-animal effort.[8]

Alongside their physical mobilisation, homing pigeons were also utilised in cultural terms for the war effort. In a similar fashion to the militarisation of dogs in Japan, British militarised homing pigeons were, through government propaganda, the press and private voices, figuratively manipulated to rally the human populace in the pursuit of victory.[9] Wartime representations of the exploits of militarised homing pigeons were imbued with wartime discourses of the 'soldier hero'.[10] Through representations of their actions, military pigeons then became a means for human commentators to relay and reproduce these discourses within British society. The homing pigeons' symbolic resonance lay in their popularity in mid-twentieth century British working class life. As Martin Johnes identifies, pigeon racing and fancying reveals the complexities of working-class masculinity during this time. The sport offered men – as the sport was predominantly a male activity stereotypically associated with miners and industrial workers – a diverse range of social desires including solitude, sociability, status, and intellectual reward. These social desires came from both racing the birds and the sedate and intellectual gratification of breeding and rearing them. It was also a hobby that allowed men to retreat to their pigeon lofts and from the pressures of domestic life, or share their passion with family and friends.[11] Therefore, the militarisation of homing pigeons for war not only had a profound impact on the sport, but also on working class male lives. Intersecting with recent scholarship on wartime civilian masculinities, it is possible to argue that the mobilisation of pigeons provided an opportunity for civilian pigeon

[7] Pearson, 'Canines and Contraband', pp. 50-62; C. Pearson, 'Between Instinct and Intelligence', pp. 463-490.
[8] This chapter refers to all pigeons that raced and/or carried messages as 'homing' pigeons.
[9] Skabelund, *Empire of Dogs*, pp. 130-170.
[10] For a discussion of the 'soldier hero', see, G. Dawson, *Soldier Heroes: British Adventure, Empire and Imaginings of Masculinities* (London: Routledge, 1994).
[11] M. Johnes, 'Pigeon Racing and Working-Class Culture in Britain, c. 1870-1950', *Cultural and Social History*, 4.3 (2007), pp. 361-383.

fanciers, through co-operating with the military and through the actions of their birds, to make claims for their wartime participation and masculine status. This was in a wartime climate when being in the armed forces was predominantly represented as the epitome of masculinity.[12]

But while certain homing pigeons were enrolled as allies by the British state, they were also classified as potential enemies of the war effort. As recent literature on the historical relationships between animals and borders suggests, the mobility and adaptability of animals have made them active agents in the transgression and disintegration of borders.[13] The problems caused by homing pigeons crossing borders undetected, combined with their deployment by the German army, meant that they were imagined as a potential threat to national security. As geographer Jacob Shell argues, various transport animals, including pigeons, have been historically associated with subversive or clandestine activities. In response, states have targeted these animals by destroying them or curtailing their movements.[14]

The final section of this chapter examines how British military and state officials conceptualised and targeted non-military homing pigeons as potential modes of communication for clandestine activities. Moreover, it situates these state-led regulatory efforts to police homing pigeons within wider wartime anxieties about invasion, the porosity of Britain's borders, and Fifth Column activity.[15] Situating these regulatory efforts amid these wartime anxieties is important because state representations of homing pigeons were not only imbued with these wartime anxieties, but these anxieties were also constructed and reinforced by the physical flight of 'enemy' birds. 'Enemy' pigeons then threated the British war effort by potentially aiding Fifth Column activity *and* in enabling the construction of wartime anxieties. Furthermore, state efforts to regulate homing pigeons had significant implications for the lives of civilian pigeon fanciers. An examination of the pigeon

[12] For recent studies regarding civilian masculinities in WWII Britain, see, Robb, *Men at Work*; Pattinson, McIvor and Robb, *Men in Reserve*.
[13] Pearson, 'Canines and Contraband', p. 52.
[14] J. Shell, *Transportation and Revolt: Pigeons, Mules, Canals, and the Vanishing Geographies of Subversive Mobility* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2015).
[15] For discussion of wartime anxieties about the Fifth Column and the Enemy Within, see, R. Thurlow, 'The Evolution of the Mythical British Fifth Column, 1939-46', *Twentieth Century British* History, 10.4 (1999), pp. 477-498; J. Fox, 'Careless Talk: Tensions within British Domestic Propaganda during the Second World War', *Journal of British Studies*, 51.4 (2012), pp. 936-966; W. Webster, 'Enemies, Allies and Transnational Histories: German, Irish, and Italians in Second World Britain', *Twentieth Century British History*, 25.1 (2014), pp. 63-86; S. Nicholas, 'Fifth Columnists, Collaborators and Black Marketeers: Fearing the 'Enemy Within' in the Wartime British Media', in S. Nicholas and T. O'Malley (eds), *Moral Panics, Social Fears, and the Media* (London: Routledge, 2013), pp. 162-176.

fanciers' reactions to the state's inspection of their lofts and destruction of their pigeons offers a site of tension between civilian men and the state on the home front.

Harnessing Homing Pigeons

The wartime militarisation of homing pigeons in Britain was not unprecedented. Following the formation of the Pigeon Service in March 1916, militarised pigeons were deployed in communication roles in the North Sea, on the Western Front, and were dropped by balloon into 'friendly' areas for reconnaissance and espionage purposes. By the end of the First World War, the British military had 22,000 pigeons in service.[16] The number of pigeons enrolled by the armed forces significantly declined, however, during the interwar period, but in the months leading up to the Second World War military pigeon services were again expanded. This expansion of the 'Pigeon Air Force' was reported in the *Picture Post* in April 1939, which described how plans were in place to extend the existing four RAF pigeon lofts. Accompanying an image of an RAF Flying-Boat Observer releasing a pigeon from an aircraft, and another where two RAF personnel are attaching a message to a pigeon, the article noted how this 'oldest method of communication' was again adopted to supplement the RAF's wireless equipment in the eventuality that this equipment was hampered by an electric storm, an enemy bullet, or the transmission breaking down.[17] Homing pigeons were imagined and harnessed by the RAF as an auxiliary form of communication, whose deployment, often as a last resort, heightened their importance for communicating messages that frequently 'held the balance between life and death.'[18] Furthermore, by using an old method of communications, the RAF mirrored the Army's communications doctrine at the beginning of the war, which was primarily influenced by practical rather than research-led decisions centred on technologies that could be easily provided.[19] At the outbreak of war, homing pigeons were then envisaged by the armed forces as an existing, and practical, alternative method of communication that could safeguard against the potential pitfalls faced by modern military communication systems.

[16] B. Allen, *Pigeon* (London: Reaktion, 2009), pp. 108-15.
[17] *Picture Post*, 29 April 1939.
[18] Royal Air Force, *Pigeon Service Manual* (London: H.M.S.O., 1919), p. 1.
[19] S. Godfrey, *British Army Communications in the Second World War: Lifting the Fog of Battle* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), p. 17.

Civilian government institutions and private organisations also created a role for homing pigeons within civil defence communications. This role was rooted in theories and fears of a 'knock out blow' by aerial bombardment, which dominated interwar expectations of a how future war would be fought, won and lost. Government officials, authors and the press imagined how extensive bombing on cities and civilians would not only win any future war by crushing the morale of the populace, but would also achieve victory through paralysing industry, technology, and communication systems.[20] This envisioned threat from the air led to extensive government preparations in the form of Air Raid Precautions (ARP), which attempted to normalise the possibility of aerial bombardment and prepare the civilian populace to emotionally and physically respond to this type of warfare.[21] It was amid such a climate of war preparation, and anxieties about the potential threat posed by aerial warfare, that pigeons were imagined as a back-up form of civil defence communication when other systems were paralysed. In the months leading up to the outbreak of the war, the press reported on how homing pigeons were enrolled and trialled within preparatory ARP tests as a potential back-up form of communication. Pigeons were tested in the Bedlington area of Northumberland as ARP message carriers in preparation for 'the event of telephones being put out of action in an air raid.'[22] Similarly, large businesses and ARP authorities contacted pigeon breeders for supplies of 'emergency message carriers.'[23] These anticipatory measures continued during the war, when the Home Office considered the possibilities of harnessing pigeons as a 'supplementary reserve' for Post Office civil defence communications when faced with the possibility that other communications systems would fail under 'severe air attack.'[24] These preparations highlight how the mobilisation of pigeons, as an old method of communication, was entangled within the new threats posed by intensive aerial bombardment on the home front.

In order to supply and harness homing pigeons for military and civil defence communications, the Air Ministry, in co-operation with the International Pigeon Board, established the National Pigeon Service (NPS) in February 1939. In line with

[20] B. Holman, *The Next War in the Air: Britain's Fear of the Bomber, 1908-1941* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014).
[21] S. R. Grayzel, *At Home and under Fire: Air Raids and Culture in Britain from the Great War to the Blitz* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).
[22] *Manchester Guardian*, 4 July 1939.
[23] *Daily Mail*, 14 August 1939.
[24] Memorandum – Pigeon Post Service and its Possibilities in Supplementing Civil Defence Communications, 20/11/1941, WAR: Operation of pigeon post services 1930-1945, National Archives, London, Records of the Home Office (hereafter NA, HO) 144/22131.

state efforts to promote a form of active citizenship, which encouraged and expected citizens to participate in the war effort and place the collective need before the individual, becoming a member of the NPS offered the pigeon fancier a visible way of demonstrating their commitment to the war effort. This was in a similar sense to participating in the Home Guard or enrolling in civil defence services.[25] It was also a lucrative endeavour amid the pressures of wartime rationing. NPS members were not only supplied pigeon-feed rations, but were also paid either two or four pence per bird per service flight. In return, they were required to breed and train pigeons, and needed to be prepared to place their own services and the services of their birds at the disposal of the military and other civil defence institutions. This also resulted in the voluntary donation of nearly 200,000 young pigeons by NPS members to the pigeon lofts of the armed forces.[26] To ensure that these donated birds were also appropriately trained, cared for, and harnessed, the armed forces also recruited servicemen who were pigeon fanciers in civilian life for the pigeon services.[27] Accordingly, pigeon fanciers played a part in the war effort in both civilian and military roles.

Once mobilised by the British armed forces, the capabilities of some homing pigeons were subject to experimentation. In particular, intelligence and secret services, such as M.I.14 and the Special Operations Executive (SOE), employed homing pigeons to transport information from within occupied Europe back to Britain through the co-operation of resistance movements or SOE personnel.[28] To perform such operations, the British military experimented with different ways of releasing and parachuting pigeons from aircraft at higher speeds and altitudes than before. This led to homing pigeons being parachuted over occupied Europe in brightly coloured boxes, which contained a small amount of grain and water in order to keep the pigeon alive until they were found, a written message was attached, and they were released.[29] In other instances, the RAF, building on advancements during the First World War, continued experimenting with training homing pigeons to fly at night in order to

[25] Rose, *Which People's War?*, p. 19; Noakes, 'Serve to Save', p. 735.
[26] Osman, *Pigeons in World War II*, p. 1.
[27] *The People*, 24 August 1941.
[28] G. Corera, *Secret Pigeon Service: Operation Columbia, Resistance and the Struggle to Liberate Occupied Europe* (London: Harper Collins, 2018).
[29] Report – Dropping of Carrier Pigeons by Parachute, 28/7/1943, R.A.F. Component, Middle East Pigeon Service: operational reports, statistics, messages and experiments, 1943-1944, National Archives, London, Records of the Air Ministry (hereafter NA, AIR) 23/1003; Frank Cromwell Griffiths, Interview, 24 September 1991, IWM 12270/2.

improve their efficiency and enable their release in the evening or at night when airman were stranded in the sea.[30] Similarly, the Army developed a boomerang pigeon service in the Middle East, whereby homing pigeons were trained to fly back and forth in two directions.[31] Working against the assumed capabilities of the homing pigeon, these experiments aimed to redefine and expand the parameters through which these birds were traditionally trained and harnessed.

But, as historians of technology highlight, a focus on the modern or the futuristic within histories of technology can obscure the everyday ways in which technologies were actually used.[32] The military's use of pigeons as a form of communications technology during the war was remarkably similar to their use in previous wars.[33] For the most part, homing pigeons were used to transport messages through the harnessing of their homing instinct, whereby they would home to their owners' loft, which was either the loft of an NPS member or one that belonged to the military or a civil defence institution. Militarised homing pigeons then transported S.O.S. messages from the rubber dinghies of stranded aircrew at sea, provided emergency or specialised forms of communication for the Army Signals (a notable instance was during D-Day when pigeons were used to transport messages from the front line to divisional headquarters amidst a wireless blackout to maintain secrecy), or provided the military and/or civil defence organisations, such as the police, with another form of internal communications on the home front.[34] It was the unidirectional homing capabilities of the homing pigeon that were primarily harnessed during the conflict.

[30] Royal Air Force, *Pigeon Service Manual*, p. 1. The American press reported on the British and United States militaries training of pigeons to night-fly, see *New York Times*, 27 April 1941. This was also commented on in a post-war draft technical handbook for the British military use of pigeons by Wing Commander L. Rayner. See: Draft – Technical Handbook for British Military use of Pigeons by Wing Commander L. Rayner (1946), Report on the operations of B3C in connection with suspected communications with the enemy during the Second World War – The use of carrier-pigeons by the German Intelligence Service, 1/1/1945 – 16/1/1951, National Archives, London, Records of the Security Services (hereafter NA, KV) 4/10, f. 3.

[31] Report – Boomerang Service 1943, Royal Signals: HQ Middle East Pigeon Service (Sigs), Jan-Dec 1943, National Archives, London, War Office Papers (hereafter NA, WO) 169/11222; *Racing Pigeon*, 11 October 1945; Draft – Technical Handbook for British Military use of Pigeons by Wing Commander L. Rayner (1946), NA, KV 4/10, ff. 5-6.

[32] D. Edgerton, *The Shock of the Old: Technology and Global History since 1900* (London: Profile, 2008).

[33] For a critique about viewing militarised animals as unproblematic technologies, see Pearson, 'Dogs, History, and Agency', p. 142. Pearson highlights how the harnessing of militarised animals necessitated an engagement with their physical, cognitive, and sensory abilities.

[34] For a reconstructed example of a Royal Canadian Air Force homing pigeon transferring an S.O.S. message for stranded aircrew see the film, *War Birds* (1944) by United Artists and National Film Board of Canada, held at the Imperial War Museum archive (London), CCN 215. For details about the use of pigeons by the British Army on D-Day see, Report on use of Pigeons by British Troops during Operations in Northern France, June 6th to 16th 1944, 23 July 1944, COMMUNICATIONS (Code B, 25): Use of pigeons in Operation 'Overlord', 1944, National Archives, London, Records of the Air Ministry (hereafter NA, AIR) 2/5041. For details about how the

Once deployed, the utility and success-rate of the homing pigeon came under assessment. Homing pigeon advocates promoted and celebrated the role pigeons played in military operations. Major W.H. Osman, editor of the magazine the *Racing Pigeon* and member of the military Pigeon Service during the First World War, in a BBC radio interview at the beginning of the war celebrated the role homing pigeons had played during WW1 and called for their re-militarisation.[35] Following the end of the conflict, he authored a book that detailed the 'meritorious' performances of several hundred homing pigeons, and outlined how the Air Ministry Pigeon Section dealt with 7,556 reports that were of value to the armed forces. Some of these reports included messages that helped save the lives of military personnel.[36] The success-rate of the military homing pigeon was also quantified by the military. At the end of the First World War, the RAF estimated that less than five per-cent of pigeons failed to reach their destinations with messages, and these failures were primarily due to the ignorance of the capabilities of the pigeon, a mishandling of the pigeon, or improperly attached messages.[37] By the Second World War, estimates were again made regarding the success-rate of military pigeons. *The Times* reported that, as pigeons are 'living creatures and not machines', 100 percent reliability was impossible, but that results obtained by the RAF found that their effectiveness varied between 86 percent and 96 percent.[38] Such reports were made in support of the pigeon service, potentially in order to quell any scepticism about the use of homing pigeons in a modern mechanised military.

However, while the press and military pigeon advocates positively framed the reliability of homing pigeons, perceptions of their utility varied amongst military officials. This was notable in the example of Operation Overlord, where homing pigeons were deployed on D-Day and in its immediate aftermath. Military assessments by an RAF officer (on behalf of the Air Ministry) and an Army officer (on behalf of the Army Pigeon Service) took different stances on the gains made by deploying pigeons. On the one hand, while the RAF officer's report found that of 817 pigeons released only 35.2 percent returned, these returns were made in good time and showed that a 'high degree of reliability is obtainable'. In the conclusion of

police operated pigeon post services see, Sabreur, 'The Organisation of a County Police Pigeon Service in War', *The Police Journal*, 16.1 (1943), pp. 50-4.

[35] *BBC Listener*, 26 October 1939.

[36] Osman, *Pigeons in World War II*.

[37] Royal Air Force, *Pigeon Service Manual*, p. 12.

[38] *The Times*, 19 August 1943, p. 3.

his report, he recommended the continued use of homing pigeons for similar operations.[39] On the other hand, the Army officer found the 'resultant returns [from pigeons] disappointing'. He blamed poor weather as a major contribution to these poor returns and found that the deployment of yearlings (pigeons under two years old) was also a problem, as well as issues with predicting the distances pigeons would need to fly and the locations of pigeon lofts. He also concluded - following an assessment of the condition and the time-taken of some returned pigeons - that their homing flights were greater in distance than they needed to be. This was attributed to the belief that 'with the battle zone between releasing points and home, [the pigeons] would face the noise and smoke tried to work round by an easier route.'[40] Both external factors and the perceived intentional actions of pigeons – to avoid the noise and smoke of battle – shaped assessments about their reliability as a system of communication. The different standpoints taken in these military reports highlight that outside of public discourse the reliability of the homing pigeon was open to debate.

External factors also posed a threat to the harnessing of militarised homing pigeons, in particular when they were mistaken for wood pigeons and shot by farmers and hunters. Due to their potential damage to agriculture, the state and the press targeted wood pigeons and officials from the MAF organised shooting parties to systematically destroy these birds.[41] Although it was a criminal offence to shoot homing pigeons, the state-endorsed campaign to shoot other birds meant that many homing pigeons were shot by mistake.[42] In response, the press published numerous articles that provided guidelines on how to differentiate between the two types of pigeon.[43] The state supported these press articles through their own publicity campaign, which included a poster titled 'Carrier Pigeon! Don't Shoot!' (Figure 3.1). While the poster represents the military homing pigeon as a wartime asset, whose

[39] Report upon the use of Pigeons in Operation Overlord, 26 July 1944, AIR 2/5041.
[40] Report on use of Pigeons by British Troops during Operations in Northern France, June 6th to 16th 1944, 23 July 1944, AIR 2/5041.
[41] Circular Letter to County War Agricultural Executive Committees in England and Wales: Wood Pigeons and Deer, 7/6/1940, The Wood Pigeon Order, 1940 (1940-1941), National Archives, London, Records of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (NA, MAF) 44/28. M. K. Colqhoun, *The Wood Pigeon in Britain* (London: H.M.S.O., 1951). *Picture Post*, 24 February 1940. *BBC Listener*, 18 February 1943.
[42] For legislation on shooting of homing pigeons, see, WAR: Shooting of Homing Pigeons 1940-1943, National Archives, London, Records of the Home Office (hereafter NA, HO) 45/19288. For example reports on court cases surrounding the shooting of military homing pigeons see: *British Homing World*, 3 October 1943; *The Times*, 13 July 1940.
[43] *Daily Mirror*, 26 October 1940; *Daily Express*, 25 January 1940; *Daily Mirror*, 31 December 1941; *Evening Standard*, 25 July 1940; *Racing Pigeon*, 30 January 1943; *The Times*, 3 February 1941; *Western Morning News*, 7 July 1942.

size was small and whose flight was streamlined and intentional, the poster frames the wood pigeon as the enemy, which was erratic in flight and crafty in its movement. Through this representation, the mobilities of both types of pigeon were imbued with the status of ally or enemy, dependent on their style of flight and the anthropomorphic associations – such as 'crafty' –attached to these styles. Nevertheless, confusion between the types of pigeon placed the reliability of the homing pigeon under threat.

Figure 3.1

H.M.S.O., 'Carrier Pigeon! Don't Shoot!', Poster, NA, HO 45/19288.

While mistaken identification between wood and military homing pigeons was a problem of human error, the threat posed by peregrine falcons signalled how nature was also a threat to wartime communications. These birds of prey had eyries along various parts of the British coastline, and they reportedly intercepted incoming RAF and Army homing pigeons. In spite of the protection afforded to peregrine falcons as a rare species under the Wild Birds Act, the demands of total war placed this protection in jeopardy. The Secretary of State for Air issued various peregrine falcon destruction orders over the course of war. This legislation did not allow unauthorised persons to take the eggs of, or destroy, peregrine falcons, but it permitted their destruction in various coastal locations, stretching up to ten miles inland.[44] Press reports suggest that the Home Guard were employed to carry out their destruction, and between 1940 and 1946 around 600 peregrine falcons were shot along the south coast of England alone.[45] Moreover, in response to a protest letter from the Scottish Society for the Protection of Wild Birds, a representative from the Air Ministry stated that the severity of peregrine falcon 'attacks' on military pigeons constituted a 'menace.' As such, peregrine falcons within close proximity of RAF stations or military posts were destroyed – an act justified as a necessity in the letter because the lives of aircrew personnel were seen to depend on the safe passage of military homing pigeons.[46] In effect, in order to protect military homing pigeons and the lives of military personnel, wild peregrine falcons were repositioned by the state from birds that required protection to enemies of the war effort that required destruction.

This 'official' repositioning of the peregrine falcon as an enemy of the British war effort was accompanied by cultural depictions that were infused with the language and anxieties of war. In some instances, wild peregrine falcons were represented in similar terms to enemy aircraft, where their 'attacks' on military homing pigeons led to descriptions of them in the press as the 'dive bombers of the bird world' and 'enemy interceptor fighters.'[47] This discursive militarisation of wild peregrine falcons sits within wider wartime associations between birds and aircraft. Not just the language of war, but also practices of wartime observation and surveillance in the

[44] For details surrounding destruction of peregrine falcons, see, WILD BIRDS: Peregrine Falcons: Destruction Orders, 1940-1943 (1924-1943), National Archives, London, Records of the Home Office (hereafter NA, HO) 45/19234.
[45] *Yorkshire Post*, 30 October 1940; H. MacDonald, *Falcon* (London: Reaktion, 2006), p. 142.
[46] Letter from Air Council to the Scottish Society for the Protection of Wild Birds, 7/12/1940, COMMUNICATIONS (Code B, 25): National Pigeon Service: Protection against hawks and peregrine falcons, 1939-1944, National Archives, London, Records of the Air Ministry (hereafter NA, AIR) 2/6139.
[47] *Daily Express*, 22 March 1941; *Evening Standard*, 25 July 1940.

sky – where ornithologists and aircraft observers borrowed techniques from one another – were intertwined.[48] In other cases, the press and pigeon racing advocates declared war on the peregrine falcon. The *Daily Mirror* reported on the war waged on the 'flying fifth column' of peregrine falcons, while the *Western Morning News* described efforts to locate and destroy these birds-of-prey through the metaphor of mounting a military operation – 'a careful watch will be maintained so that an effective attack can be launched at the right time. Meanwhile we are collecting all the information we can.'[49] By employing the language of war, these commentators not only positioned peregrine falcons as enemies of the British war effort, but also relayed and reproduced notions of the enemy through these natural-cultural encounters. Through these discursive acts they further legitimised the destruction of these wild birds in order to protect militarised homing pigeons.

In spite of differences of opinion in the military about the reliability of the pigeon, and the external threats that hindered their wartime roles, personal testimonies indicate that military homing pigeons were perceived to be reliable and offered a form of comfort for military personnel. This was particularly the case for RAF aircrew who carried two homing pigeons on each operational flight, which were to be released in the event of an emergency. Some aircrew remembered the role of homing pigeons as important and their use as effective.[50] For others, specific interactions with homing pigeons were also embedded within the superstitious rituals performed by aircrew before and during operations. This included a ritual where a pilot would show his homing pigeon his operational plans before a bombing raid. If the pigeon squawked, the pilot took this to mean that the plans were inaccurate.[51] Through such routines, homing pigeons were included within an array of rituals and superstitions that were performed by RAF aircrew as a means to emotionally, physically and psychologically cope with the strains and dangers posed by aerial warfare.[52] Whether or not homing pigeons were an effective and reliable means of communication, they were, by some, felt to offer comfort and luck. Homing pigeons

[48] H. MacDonald, '"What Makes You a Scientist is the Way You Look at Things": Ornithology and the Observer 1930-1955', *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Biology and Biomedical Sciences*, 33.1 (2002), pp. 66-69.
[49] *Daily Mirror*, 7 July 1940; *Western Morning News*, 4 December 1940.
[50] Frank Cromwell Griffiths, Interview, 24 September 1991, IWM 12270; John Douglas Charrot, Interview, 26 June 2006, IWM 29163/2; John Appleton, Interview, 27 June 1995, IWM 15555/12.
[51] Leonard John Barcham, Interview, 19 February 1990, IWM 11197/3.
[52] Francis, *The Flyer*, pp. 106-130; S. P. MacKenzie, 'Beating the Odds: Superstition and Human Agency in RAF Bomber Command, 1942-1945', *War in History*, 22.3 (2015), pp. 382-400.

were therefore not only harnessed by the RAF for their material role, but were also appropriated by aircrew as a psychological resource to cope with the stresses of aerial warfare.

Militarised Homing Pigeons in Wartime Culture

Beyond their material and affective roles, homing pigeons were also utilised in cultural terms for the British war effort. The exploits of military homing pigeons, especially those which were deemed exceptional, provided the military, the press and various other commentators with a site for relaying and reproducing wartime discourses. In particular, the representations of exceptional military pigeons were often imbued with the discourse of the 'soldier hero'.[53] As scholars demonstrate, the ideal of the 'soldier hero' – with its emphasis on bravery, courage, physical strength, endurance, and male bonding – significantly shaped the ideals of British wartime masculinity and contributed towards masculine hierarchies premised on the distinction between combatant and non-combatant roles.[54] Furthermore, stories about male heroism in battle and in other arenas that test men's bravery, strength and fortitude, can also be seen as 'training manuals' for masculine identity.[55] While scholars have located how such stories are told about human soldiers, which were often relayed in the press or adventure fiction for boys, little attention has been paid to the ways in which animal soldiers were represented in heroic war narratives.[56] The symbolic resonance of homing pigeons, as identified in the introduction of this chapter, meant that they were figuratively manipulated to reproduce the ideals of the 'soldier hero' to encourage wartime heroism and venerate those serving in the armed forces. Accordingly, they also served as metaphors for human soldiers.

The 'soldier hero' discourse was most explicit in the creation of the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA) Dickin Medal. Created in 1943, the Dickin Medal was inscribed with the words 'For Gallantry' and 'We Also Serve'. These anthropomorphic sentiments were infused with the ideals of bravery, humility, and devotion to duty, characteristics which aligned animals with the ideal British soldier

[53] Dawson, *Soldier Heroes*.
[54] Rose, *Which People's War?*, pp. 151-196; Peniston-Bird, 'Classifying the Body in the Second World War', pp. 31-47.
[55] Rose, *Which People's War?*, p. 160; D. Morgan, 'Theater of War: Combat, the Military, and Masculinities', in H. Brod and M. Kaufman (eds.), *Theorizing Masculinities* (London: Sage Publications, 1994), pp. 165-6.
[56] For exceptions see, Skabelund, *Empire of Dogs*, pp. 130-170; Kinder, 'Zoo Animals and Modern War: Captive Casualties, Patriotic Citizens, and Good Soldiers', pp. 45-75.

who was expected to be both brave and humble.[57] Moreover, the reasons why homing pigeons were awarded the medal predominantly centred on the speed and endurance of the bird's flight, especially when the pigeon was wounded or under duress. For instance, 'Billy' was awarded the Dickin Medal in August 1945 for delivering a message from a force-landed bomber, while in a state of near collapse and under exceptionally bad weather conditions, when serving with the RAF in 1942.[58] Mirroring the celebrated attributes of speed and endurance within pigeon racing, Billy's successful flight also mirrored the predominant reasons why RAF servicemen were awarded the Victoria Cross during the Second World War. In the RAF's wartime total of 23 Victorian Cross medals all but one went to bomber crews and 18 of those went to aircrew members whose acts allowed the plane to continue missions despite damage.[59] The concept of heroism in both of these instances was associated with acts of endurance under extreme conditions during aerial warfare. This highlights how notions of wartime heroism were applied across human-animal boundaries.

Through representations of their 'heroic' exploits some pigeons became wartime celebrities and were closely associated with the heroics of wartime airmen. One celebratory RAF pigeon was 'Winkie'. Reported in the press as the number one pigeon from the NPS breed in 1940, Winkie was accredited with saving the lives of a bomber crew on her first flight when the plane had crashed landed in the North Sea and Winkie's speedy return flight led to a quick air-sea rescue mission.[60] Subsequently, as the first pigeon accredited with saving the lives of airmen, Winkie received the Dickin Medal. Such stories were accompanied by official RAF photographs of aircrew holding their pigeons, which depicted a close connection and reliance between airmen and their birds (Figures 3.2 and 3.3). Similar exploits to Winkie's were also imaginatively reproduced in a Canadian Air Force propaganda film titled *War Birds* (1944), which shows a scene where a plane suffers simultaneous engine and radio trouble and the pilot is forced to escape from the cockpit. A homing pigeon is then depicted as being responsible for a prompt air-sea

[57] Rose, *Which People's War?*, pp. 151-196.
[58] For further details about Billy, see, Osman, *Pigeons in World War II*, p. 9.
[59] M. Smith, *Awarded for Valour: A History of the Victoria Cross and the Evolution of British Heroism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), p. 190.
[60] *Daily Mail*, 6 March 1942; *Daily Record and Mail*, 6 March 1942; *The Observer*, 15 November 1942; *Daily Mirror*, 19 February 1944.

rescue.[61] In a similar fashion to wartime representations of RAF aircrew – where certain pilots were associated with glamour and made into celebrities, and whose popular appeal was forged through the close association between aerial warfare and popular cinema – some military pigeons became animal celebrities and were featured in wartime propaganda films.[62] Their real and imagined exploits were closely intertwined with the lives of RAF personnel, in that they both saved the lives of these airmen and performed similar 'heroic' actions at a time when those who participated in aerial warfare were especially valorised for their wartime service.[63] In this way, RAF pigeons, to some extent, shared the heroic status bestowed upon wartime aircrew.

[61] National Film Board of Canada, *War Birds* (1944), Imperial War Museum Film Collections, CCN 215, Imperial War Museum, London.
[62] Francis, *The Flyer*, pp. 14-31.
[63] *Ibid.*, pp. 14-31.

Figure 3.2

Royal Air Force Official Photographer, 'The Royal Air Force in Britain, 1942: A member of the crew of an RAF Coastal Command Lockheed Hudson holding a carrier pigeon, 1942', IWM Photograph Collections, TR 42, Imperial War Museum <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205123811> [accessed 22 November 2017].

Figure 3.3

Royal Air Force Official Photographer, 'The Royal Air Force in Britain, 1942: Canadian PO (A) S Jess, wireless operator of an Avro Lancaster bomber operating from Waddington, Lincolnshire carrying two pigeon boxes, IWM Photograph Collections, TR 193, Imperial War Museum <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205188283> [accessed 22 November 2017].

These heroic representations of military pigeons also helped connect the actions on the front line with the war effort on the home front. With the exception of dogs, discourses about pigeons were probably more appealing to the public than discussions about any other militarised animal. This was because pigeons were widely owned across Britain and many people lived in close proximity to backyard pigeon lofts, and because thousands of pigeon fanciers readily volunteered their pigeons to the military and shared an emotional connection with these birds. Moreover, the naming of military pigeons, such as Winkie, reinforced their domesticity and served to make their stories more personal.[64] But this metaphorical and emotional connection to these birds was also accompanied by the military pigeons' mobility, which physically connected the 'home' and the 'front'. Through their flight back from a downed RAF bomber aircraft to a NPS member's domestic pigeon loft, the mobility of the military pigeon encompassed the parameters of twentieth century total warfare, blurring the boundaries between military and civilian life. Subsequently, they offered a symbolic site for making connections and distinctions between the 'home' and the 'front', and the military and civilian spheres.

Some commentators represented the exploits of military pigeons in a humorous light in order to celebrate the role of the military pigeon and the characteristics of the British people at war. Although the application of humour in wartime could be used to highlight the folly of authority or expose the instabilities and fragilities of social identities, it also played a positive role in war. Humour could be used to belittle an enemy, to reassure a population amidst upheaval, and to release tensions and diffuse internal antagonisms.[65] Humorous representations of military pigeons were often framed in a positive manner, with an intention to help rather than hinder or criticise the war effort. For instance, in a letter to *The Times* by an RAF bomber aircrew member, titled 'A Pigeon Unperturbed', the writer praised the actions of a homing pigeon during a barrage from German anti-aircraft guns:

> Sir, - I think your readers may wish to hear of a typical example of that well-known British sang-froid. A few nights ago, while one of our heavy bombers was over the Ruhr, being subjected to a heavy barrage of flak fire, the pigeon

[64] For a similar discussion about the metaphorical and emotional importance of militarised dogs in Japan, see Skabelund, *Empire of Dogs*, p. 132.
[65] Summerfield and Peniston-Bird, *Contesting Home Defence*, p. 105. See also, C. Peniston-Bird and P. Summerfield, ''Hey, You're Dead': The Multiple Uses of Humour in Representations of British National Defence in the Second World War', *Journal of European Studies*, 3.3-4 (2001), pp. 413-435.

> – which, as you know, is carried in case the crew find themselves in distress – laid an egg. Business as usual![66]

In this letter, the writer imbued the actions of the pigeon within wider public wartime depictions of Britishness, where the nation was composed of self-sacrificing, cheerful and tolerant people who had stoically withstood the Blitz and the other deprivations of war.[67] By calmly laying an egg during heavy fire, the pigeon was represented as an emblem of the stoic, humorous and defiant British people as a whole, in both military and civilian life. Simultaneously, the writer's ability to find humour in the event represents an effort to portray his own relentless cheerfulness and stoicism in spite of his dangerous wartime role. This was an act, no doubt, that was intended to reassure and calm not only the friends and family of RAF aircrew, but also the wider public.

Other humorous cultural depictions of military pigeons were also imbued with notions of stoicism. But rather than celebrating the characteristics of the British people en masse, these representations contained messages that criticised the attitudes and behaviours of civilians on the home front, especially in contrast to their military counterparts. For instance, the *Daily Mail* published a poem about the actions of an imaginary homing pigeon mobilised by the army in Italy. Titled 'It Might Have Been Us', it stated:

> When life seems strenuous and grim, And purpose gets a trifle dim, Instead of criticising bittaly [sic], Think of that pigeon out in Italy, Whose snow-bound unit sent him through, A blinding storm to Div. H.Q. In 18 hours of shocking weather, That little bird went hell-for-leather, Bunging himself against the blizzard, With ardour little short of wizard. And so, unerringly, to base, With triumph written on his face, They seized the message he had brought, It said: There's nothing to report. And yet… so far as one has heard; That pigeon didn't say a word.[68]

Through employing the irony of the 'voiceless' pigeon without a message to report, the poem celebrated the actions of the British Army in Italy by representing the British soldier through metaphor of the homing pigeon. By describing the difficulty of the flight and the pigeon's silence at the end of it, the poet drew upon characteristics of the 'soldier hero' – as brave, stoic, disciplined and full of

[66] *The Times*, 2 July 1941.
[67] Rose, *Which People's War?*, p. 2.
[68] *Daily Mail*, 8 April 1944.

endurance – to celebrate the characteristics and actions of the British soldier.[69] The poet also contrasted the 'soldier hero' pigeon with the negative attitudes of those on the home front in order to criticise civilians – who might be finding life 'strenuous and grim' – who did not demonstrate the self-sacrificing attitudes and behaviours expected of wartime 'active citizenship'. Representations of military pigeons, therefore, not only helped reinforce hierarchies of citizenship between the military and civilians, but also offered a means of critiquing civilians who did not display 'appropriate' attitudes or behaviours.

Military propaganda films about the militarisation of homing pigeons were, however, more serious in tone. In particular, two short films were produced by the War Office in 1941 about the military's use of homing pigeons. Titled *Carrier Pigeons* and *Winged Messengers*, both of these films aimed to demonstrate the effectiveness of the use of pigeons as a method of communication, possibly to quell any scepticism or doubts about their usage within a modern and mechanised military. The former begins with a scene of a civilian pigeon race, before discussing the importance of pigeons for wartime communication, and depicts how pigeons were born and reared by the armed forces and how messages were carried by pigeons.[70] The latter film shows how the army handled pigeons, depicts how they were volunteered by civilian owners and specifically bred, and describes how some pigeons used their civilian owner's loft where appropriate, while others became accustomed to a new home in a Royal Corps of Signals mobile loft. The film finishes with a fictional incident in which a pigeon is the agent for getting news out of a Company headquarters that has been surrounded by enemy paratroopers.[71] At the heart of these films is a message about the importance of pigeons for the war effort.

However, these films also highlight connections between the actions of the civilian pigeon keeper or racer – whether through training homing pigeons or the use of their loft – and actions on the front line, such as saving the lives of soldiers surrounded by the enemy. This mirrors wider wartime government efforts to link civilian roles explicitly with the war effort. As Linsey Robb argues, while men in civilian roles remained subordinate within wartime hierarchies of masculinity to those in military

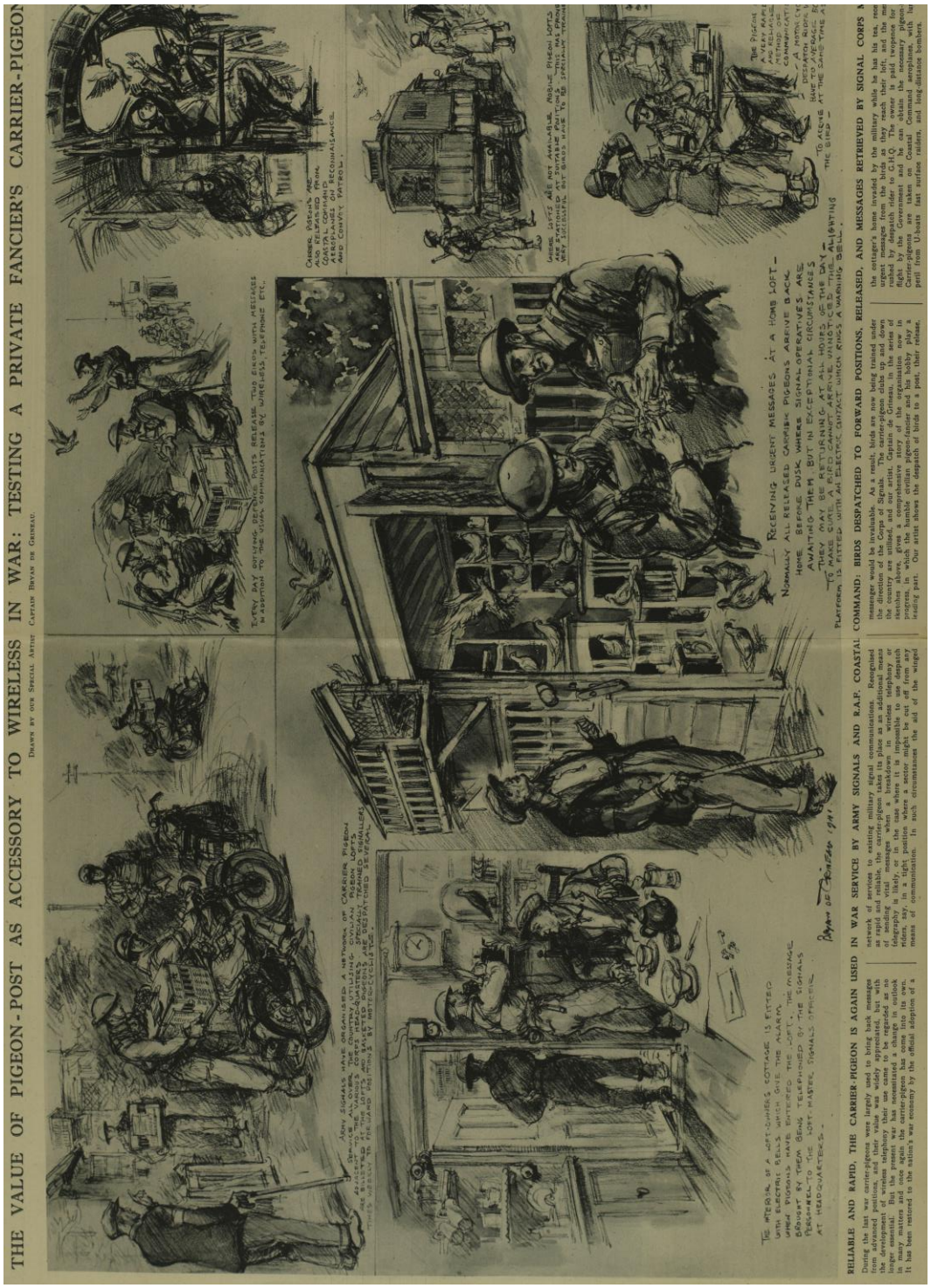
[69] Dawson, *Soldier Heroes*.
[70] War Office, *Carrier Pigeons* (1941), IWM Film Collections, COI 821, Imperial War Museum, London.
[71] War Office, *Winged Messengers* (1941), Imperial War Museum Film Collections, UKY 308, Imperial War Museum, London.

uniform, the state did attempt through various forms of propaganda to provide a valid central wartime role for industrial and agricultural workers, and had some success in portraying the 'dangerous' wartime roles of the merchant navy and the fire service.[72] Moving beyond an occupation-focused way of linking the civilian man to the war effort, these films show how the War Office, through the practices of pigeon keeping and racing, also attempted to define a place in the war effort for these men through their voluntary services and leisure activities. The pigeon fanciers' wartime contribution was then framed through their co-operation with the military, the training and volunteering of their pigeons, and the 'heroic' acts of their pigeons. Through such portrayals, the War Office not only encouraged civilians to perform their duty and active wartime citizenship, but also positioned the civilian pigeon fancier alongside his military counterpart, blurring the boundaries between the military and civilian spheres.

Such cultural depictions, however, still reinforced the hierarchical distinction between the civilian and military man. Reaffirming arguments that ideal wartime masculinity was only available to the uniformed man, when placed next to the military man, the status and masculinity of the NPS member was inferior.[73] This is clear from a cartoon and article in the *Illustrated London News* that outlined how the pigeon service functioned (Figure 3.4). Drawing on the stereotype of the pigeon fancier as an old working class male, the cartoon emphasises the age of the NPS member compared to army signaller, especially in the scenes where the NPS member is drawn leaning on his walking stick or eating at his table while the younger military men work around him. Fitting the hierarchy of wartime masculinity, the pigeon fancier, like other men in reserved occupations or those who were too old to serve in the armed forces, was subordinated beneath the idealised image and role of the 'soldier hero'.[74] This cartoon, therefore, offers an example of how, while the mobilisation of homing pigeons brought the military and civilian spheres together, it also created opportunities to draw clear distinctions between the wartime service and masculinities of those in the military and those who were not.

[72] Robb, *Men at Work*; L. Robb, ''The Front Line': Firefighting in British Culture, 1939-1945', *Contemporary British History*, 29.2 (2015), pp. 179-198; L. Robb, 'Blood, Thunder and Showgirls: The Merchant Navy on the BBC, 1939-1945', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 35.3 (2015), pp. 473-488.
[73] Rose, *Which People's War?*, p. 193.
[74] For another example of this in regards to the relationship between cultural representations of age and wartime masculinity, see, Summerfield and Peniston-Bird, *Contesting Home Defence*.

Figure 3.4


THE VALUE OF PIGEON-POST AS ACCESSORY TO WIRELESS IN WAR: TESTING A PRIVATE FANCIER'S CARRIER-PIGEON
Drawn by our Special Artist Captain Bryan de Grineau.
Army Signals have organised a network of carrier pigeon services all over the country, utilising civilian pigeon lots. The system is also used by the Navy and Air Force. Pigeons are released at the lofts and trained birds are sent out with messages by motor-cyclists.
The interior of a loft-owner's cottage is fitted with electric bells which give the alarm when pigeons have entered the loft. The message is read by pigeon Signals telephoned by the Signals personnel to the post master, Signals specialist at headquarters.
Every day outlying pigeon posts release two birds with messages in addition to the visual communications of wireless, telephone etc.
Owners' lofts are not available. Service pigeon lofts are stationed at suitable points and released by Signals personnel. Pigeons used for reconnaissance and convoy patrol.
These lofts are not available. Service pigeon lofts are stationed at suitable points and released by Signals personnel. Pigeons used for reconnaissance and convoy patrol.
Receiving urgent messages at a home loft—
Normally all released carrier pigeons arrive back home before dusk, when Signals operatives are awaiting their return. Exceptionally, however, they may be returning at all hours of the day or night. To make sure a bird cannot arrive unnoticed the alighting platform is fitted with an electric contact which rings a warning bell.
The Pigeon Service Message Method of Despatch Rider Service—Carrier-pigeons are taken on Coastal Command aeroplanes, with instructions to release them at the appropriate time. To attend to the bird—
Reliable and rapid, the carrier-pigeon is again used in war service by army signals and R.A.F. Coastal Command: birds despatched to forward positions, released, and messages retrieved by signal corps
During the last war carrier-pigeons were largely used to bring back messages from advanced positions, and their value was widely appreciated, but with the advent of wireless telegraphy their use came to be regarded as no longer essential. But the present war has shown that pigeons have their uses in many matters and once again the carrier-pigeon has come into its own. It has been restored to the nation's war economy by the official adoption of a network of services to existing military signal communications. Recognised as rapid and reliable, the carrier-pigeon takes its place as an additional means of sending vital messages when a breakdown in wireless telephony or telegraph is likely to occur, or when it is impossible to use despatch riders, say, in a tight position where a section is surrounded. It is then a useful means of communication. In such circumstances the aid of the winged messenger would be invaluable. As a result, lofts are now being trained under the direction of the Corps of Signals. The services rendered by pigeons in the country are utilised, and our artist, Captain de Grineau, in the series of sketches above, gives a comprehensive story of the organisation now in operation. Right by the Government and he can obtain the necessary pigeon
Illustrated London News, 9 August 1941.

In spite of such cultural depictions, which emphasised the differences between civilian and military men, scholars have demonstrated how civilian men have made claims to their wartime roles and masculinities. As Sonya Rose argues, 'male workers on the home front likened themselves to battle heroes while attempting to make the case that their contributions to the nation and those of men in the armed services were equivalent.'[75] Similarly, Juliette Pattinson argues that despite the feminisation of the home front in labour terms, male workers still comprised the majority of the wartime workforce. Men's status as breadwinners remained unchanged, and their masculinities were enhanced through full employment, long hours and high wages, especially when compared with the precarious employment landscape of the 1930s. Furthermore, the Second World War bolstered civilian masculinity - especially compared to the First - through the increased dangers brought by the Blitz and the bombardment of shipyards and industrial centres, while some military men, by comparison, were in less danger dependent upon their proximity to bombing and fighting. These factors, Pattinson argues, enabled civilian men to construct manly accounts of stoic endurance.[76]

As pigeon fanciers were predominantly working class males who typically worked in reserved occupations such as mining or industry, many were civilian men who had wartime opportunities to construct accounts of stoic endurance and wartime participation equivalent with men in the armed forces. But rather than solely constructing their wartime role in occupational terms, they also made claims to their wartime service – and their masculinities –through their hobby and the actions of their pigeons. The pigeon was therefore presented as a foil to emphasise the wartime agency of the pigeon fancier. It is possible to then situate the wartime pigeon fancy community within scholarship relating to 'enthusiastic geographies', or wider 'cultures of enthusiasm', in which enthusiastic hobbyists display an impassioned mood, intense feelings and/or a passionate dedication to their pastime.[77] If anything, the pigeon fanciers' visceral enthusiasm for their sport was heightened by the circumstances of war. This was notable in the editorials, articles and letters of the

[75] Rose, *Which People's War?*, p. 196.
[76] J. Pattinson, ''Shirkers', 'Scrimjacks' and 'Scrimshanks'?: British Civilian Masculinity and Reserved Occupations, 1914-45', *Gender & History*, 28.3 (2016), pp. 709-727.
[77] For studies that relate to 'cultures of enthusiasm' see: H. Geoghegan, 'Emotional Geographies of Enthusiasm: Belonging to the Telecommunications Heritage Group', *Area*, 45.1 (2013), pp. 40-46; E. Cole, 'Blown Out: The Science and Enthusiasm of Egg Collecting in the *Oologists' Record*, 1921-1969', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 51.1 (2016), pp. 18-28.

pigeon racing press. For example, an editorial in the *British Homing World* called for greater levels of propaganda to be given to the wartime role played by pigeons and civilian 'workingmen' pigeon fanciers. As the editor stated: 'Propaganda in every form should be encouraged. Great stress should be given to the value of, and work done by, our pigeons during the war period, and it should be stressed that the majority of the pigeons were given to the services by workingmen fanciers.'[78]

Similarly, pigeon fanciers justified the continuation of pigeon racing in wartime as an act of wartime service. Through training and racing their pigeons, they made claims to improving public morale and creating potential military 'recruits'. As an article in the *Racing Pigeon* stated: 'There are a number of reasons why racing must be continued as long as possible. It is certainly far more important than dog racing and horse racing. Public morale is benefited to a very great degree by an innocent recreation. Well-tested birds are required for the war effort, and it is impossible to say that pigeons will not be required in another district at any time.'[79]

This theme of training and volunteering birds for wartime service was also present in W.H. Osman's celebratory post-war account of wartime pigeons. In regards to the wartime role played by the NPS, he stated:

> What this service meant to the pigeon fanciers involved will probably only be appreciated fully by pigeon fanciers. Many of them were men who during a lifetime had built up a family or strain which had distinguished itself by consistently good performances from extreme distances in strong competition. They were called upon to send their best. At the outset there were available pigeons with peace-time racing experience from France almost down to the Pyrenees (Mirande). 27,000 birds were maintained for this operation and much information was conveyed by the successful returns despite the increasing efficiency and severity of the German counter-measures.
>
> The successful employment of pigeons for war purposes depends more upon the skill of the individual trainer than upon any other single factor, and that the successes obtained are due, firstly, to the skill and devotion of the pigeon fanciers engaged, whether as enlisted pigeoneers in the Services, or as civilian volunteers in the National Pigeon Service, and, secondly, to the

[78] *British Homing World*, 16 October 1943.
[79] *Racing Pigeon*, 31 October 1942.

> excellent average quality of what is believed to be the only munition of war which was provided free of charge, namely – the racing pigeon.[80]

As these examples highlight, the effort involved in rearing, training and eventual volunteering of homing pigeons for war was framed in similar terms to how a parent raised and sent their son to war, or how a nation sent their best young men – in similar terms to the 'Lost Generation' of the First World War – to the front line. Through taking credit for the skill and quality of 'soldier hero' pigeons, and how they performed whilst in the military, pigeon fanciers equated their hobby with military success and their wartime roles with those in the armed forces.

Regulating Non-Military Pigeons

While homing pigeons were materially and culturally mobilised as allies, they were also perceived as potential threats to the war effort, especially through their potential use for espionage purposes. The use of homing pigeons for espionage was not unprecedented at the outbreak of the Second World War. In a BBC radio broadcast in October 1939, W.H. Osman reflected on the previous wartime uses of pigeons and anticipated their future roles in the war to come. He stated that homing pigeons could not be easily intercepted, and so were used by spies from both sides in the previous war for secret communications work. In the current war, pigeons could be used again where wireless would be too dangerous or where secrecy was deemed essential. Fortunately, in Osman's view at least, the current war had not yet generated the same anxiety about the use of homing pigeons by spies, and he implored listeners 'not to imagine that a pigeon sitting on a man's roof, means that that man is a spy.'[81] However, in spite of Osman's outlook at the beginning of the war, anxieties about the threats pigeons posed to national security waxed and waned over the course of the war. Both the Home Office and Air Ministry - amongst other institutions and media outlets - conceptualised and attempted to deal with the perceived threat civilian homing pigeons posed to national security. This section examines the efforts made the Home Office and Air Ministry to regulate the non-militarised pigeon and considers how the pigeon racing community received such measures.

Part of this anxiety stemmed from the homing pigeons' mobility. Homing pigeons were understood by various militaries to not only have exceptional memories and an

[80] Osman, *Pigeons in World War II*, pp. 1-2.
[81] *BBC Listener*, 26 October 1939.

inherent homing instinct, but with specialised training, were known to be vital assets for short and long distance wartime communications. In some instances, homing pigeons could fly over 500 miles in a day.[82] Although the homing pigeons' capabilities for flying to Germany for 'spy work' were debated by correspondents in the local press in the early months of the war, pigeon races that started in France and finished in Britain were common during the interwar period.[83] Moreover, the allies parachuted homing pigeons behind enemy lines for espionage purposes. These militarised pigeons returned with messages from France, Belgium and the Netherlands. Homing pigeons were, therefore, known to be more than capable of crossing Britain's coastlines and breaching borders, flying to and from continental Europe.

The perceived threat homing pigeons posed to Britain's borders and national security was exemplified in the case of Ireland. The potential porosity of the land border between Eire and Northern Ireland, and the sea border between Ireland and Britain, caused concern for British government agencies, such as MI5, who monitored Irish-British post, wireless, cables and telephone calls for signs of Fifth Column communication.[84] Eire's refusal to allow the British use of their ports from 1940, coupled with their refusal to expel German and Japanese legations in the build-up to D-Day, were widely viewed in both official and popular opinion as acts of hostility rather than neutrality. Subsequently, as Wendy Webster notes, the Irish in Britain were sometimes regarded as spies or Fifth Columnists.[85] It was amidst this mistrust of the Irish that the MOI's Home Intelligence department – an organisation tasked with compiling daily reports on the state of popular morale – reported from Edinburgh in June 1940 that the passage of homing pigeons between Ireland and the West of Scotland was causing anxiety as a potential method of Fifth Column Irish communications.[86] This was followed by a conference in November 1940 between officials from the Air Ministry, the Home Office, and MI5, to discuss the ways in which the restrictions placed on transferring pigeons between Northern Ireland and

[82] F.C. Lincoln, 'The Military Use of the Homing Pigeon', *Wilson Bulletin: A Quarterly Magazine of Ornithology*, 39.2 (1927), pp. 72, 67-74.
[83] *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 15 November 1939; *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 21 November 1939.
[84] E. O'Halphin, *Spying on Ireland: British Intelligence and Irish Neutrality during the Second World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 61-3.
[85] Webster, 'Enemies, Allies and Transnational Histories', pp. 64-5.
[86] P. Addison and J. Crang, *Listening to Britain: Home Intelligence Reports on Britain's Finest Hour May to September 1940* (London: The Bodley Head, 2010), p. 106.

mainland Britain could be tightened.[87] Unlike the censoring of wireless, cable, telephone, and post, homing pigeons were seen to by-pass border controls and were difficult to observe. Their ability to transgress borders provided a natural threat to the British war effort that was difficult to quantify and contain. It also offered a site through which to express anxieties about an internal Fifth Column.

In spite of the difficulties of containing homing pigeons, the government attempted through various means to limit their movement across British borders. Initially, the Secretary of State for Air, Sir Kingsley Wood, instituted an order under Regulation 9 of the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act 1939, that no one was allowed to import or export live pigeons into or out of the United Kingdom except under authority of an Air Ministry licence.[88] The RAF also surveyed coastal 'colonies' of pigeons in case any 'enemy' birds were amongst its ranks, while a Special Branch committee examined the dangers posed by semi-wild pigeons lofted within church towers that could have potentially been enrolled by spies for subversive communications within Britain or abroad on continental Europe.[89] These links between the surveillance work of the RAF and the containment of enemy birds stretched beyond the homing pigeon, however, when Coastal Command and RAF reconnaissance flights surveyed and photographed fulmar coastal 'stations' for the British Trust for Ornithology.[90] The entanglement of practices of aircraft reconnaissance and bird watching highlights the militarisation of nature in the Second World War.[91] Although the danger posed by the enemy bird did not hold the same severity as an incoming Luftwaffe bomber or V2 rocket, attempts to survey and police homing pigeons and other birds flying over Britain demonstrates that aerial warfare was not just a war fought between humans and machines, but was also a war fought with and against birds.

This more-than-human conflict in the sky also involved 'battles' between different species of bird. In response to RAF anxieties about the numbers of unidentified

[87] Note of a conference held on the 20th November 1940 between Mr. Ross, Home Office, Squadron-Leader Rayner, Air Ministry, Mr. Ritchie and unidentified person from MI5, NA, HO 144/22131.
[88] *The Times*, 7 September 1939.
[89] Letter from Air Ministry to Home Office, 18 April 1944, WAR: Control of pigeons and special arrangements during the war emergency period, 6/9/1940 – 28/4/1943, National Archives, London, Records of the Home Office (hereafter NA, HO) 45/19287; Extract from resume of conference of No. 4 Region Special Branch Offices at Cambridge, 5 November 1941, NA, HO 45/19287.
[90] MacDonald, 'What Makes You a Scientist is the Way You Look at Things', pp. 58-9.
[91] For a study showing how the war, and immediate post-war period, saw, through the case study of the avocet, the naturalization of the military and the militarization of nature, see, Davis, 'Militarised Natural History', pp. 226-232.

homing pigeons seen by coast-guards heading out of Britain in early 1941, the Air Ministry called on two gunners, Robert Bromley and Ronald Stevens, both falconers, to train peregrine falcons to intercept enemy pigeons. As Bromley recalled in a post-war BBC radio broadcast, both men spent three years on the Cornish and Pembrokeshire coast locating eyries and training falcons, forming what came to be known as 'Falcon (No. 2) Interception Unit.' Although a small unit, Bromley stated, 'we stopped plenty of suspicious birds with strange markings and odd messages. But we never asked questions and we never got any answers. Our job was to stop the pigeons and send anything we found on them and the dead birds themselves post haste to the Air Ministry.'[92] These radio broadcasts were accompanied by reports of 'Falcon (No. 2) Interception Unit' in the national press. The *Daily Mirror* placed the story on its front page in June 1945 under the headline 'Jap Spy Pigeons to Face Falcon Terror', in which it reported on the secret work undertaken by Bromley and Stevens and the planned redeployment of 'Britain's secret fighter squadron' to the Far East.[93] After the war, Wing Commander L. Rayner – wartime commander of the RAF pigeon service – noted that: 'although they caught no enemy pigeons, they did demonstrate the possibilities of intercepting pigeons, for they killed or chased into cover some ten pigeons which turned out to be strays from the Army loft, or birds that had jibbed at the sea crossing to the mainland and had hung about the islands.'[94] In spite of not intercepting any enemy pigeons during the war, their continued use from 1941 until the end of the war signifies the severity to which the Air Ministry saw the threat of the enemy homing pigeon transgressing British coastlines. The mobilisation of peregrine falcons on the west coast of the British Isles, in contrast to their culling in other regions, also highlights how animal-mobilities were utilised in efforts that not only enabled, but also contained, the transfer of information.

But while the movement of homing pigeons presented a threat on Britain's coastlines, their potential movement, if appropriated by the enemy following invasion, also presented a threat to national security. In anticipation of such circumstances, the Home Office produced guidelines for local police forces and NPS representatives on what to do with the domestic homing pigeons within their localities. With the exception of military, civil defence, and police pigeons, all

[92] *BBC Listener*, 6 September 1945.
[93] *Daily Mirror*, 5 June 1945; *Manchester Guardian*, 7 June 1945.
[94] Draft – Technical Handbook for British Military use of Pigeons by Wing Commander L. Rayner (1946), NA, KV 4/10, f. 11.

homing pigeons within an area that was deemed likely to fall into the hands of the enemy were to be destroyed in order to prevent the invading force from utilising them for their own ends, alongside the dismantlement or complete destruction of pigeon lofts.[95] Although this pre-emptive plan was never operationalised, the prospect worried pigeon keepers. Their anxieties played out in the letter columns of the *Racing Pigeon*, where, for instance, one contributor noted his concern about rumours that if invasion came all homing pigeons would have been destroyed immediately. As he stated:

> As heaps of people contend that invasion is coming, is it worthwhile breeding, racing and keeping pigeons? It will be a big blow, and I was wondering if I have got hold of the right position, and will greatly appreciate your view and opinion. What is going to happen to the hobby, and how would it be possible to start again with no birds left alive?[96]

In spite of the fact that the editor of the *Racing Pigeon* clarified that only pigeons within affected areas would be destroyed, rumours that all pigeons were to be culled signal the conditional status of the homing pigeon at a moment of crisis. Pigeons' potential for crossing borders undetected was seen both as an advantage and as a threat to the war effort depending on the geographical and military context. At moments it focused anxieties about the vulnerability of Britain to enemy invasion.

Efforts to regulate the movement of homing pigeons did not, however, result in the banning of pigeon racing. Although the sport was temporarily banned from the outset of the war until late January 1940, the state only placed restrictions on the sport for the remainder of the war, with pigeon racers requiring state authorisation and the allocation of specific identity rings to race. Other sports involving animals, such as horse and dog racing, were maintained during the war due to their perceived importance for the upkeep of morale.[97] Like these sports, pigeon racing was a popular pastime in the first half of the twentieth century with tens of thousands of pigeon keepers owning 1,786,742 homing and fancy pigeons in 1940.[98] The sport

[95] Home Office circular to Chief Constables in England and Wales – Destruction of Pigeons in Invasion, 6 July 1942, INVASION: Destruction of homing pigeon lofts 1941-1942, National Archives, London, Records of the Home Office (hereafter NA, HO) 186/2885; Letter from Secretary of the NPS to NPs Official Representatives – Confidential (on destruction of homing pigeons on invasion), 1942-3, WAR: Destruction of certain homing and carrier pigeons on enemy invasion 1940-1943, National Archives, London, Records of the Home Office (hereafter NA, HO) 45/19289.
[96] *Racing Pigeon*, 14 June 1941.
[97] Huggins, 'Sports Gambling during the Second World War', pp. 670-79.
[98] Letter from War Office to Home Office, 21 October 1942, NA, HO 45/19287.

was significant for men within working class communities especially, as pigeon breeding and racing fulfilled the diverse social desires of solitude, sociability, status, and intellectual reward.[99] As the MP for Evesham, Rupert De la Bere, stated in the House of Commons in defence of the sport during wartime:

> In view of the fact that the racing pigeon is in some cases the sole source of the working man's recreation, every endeavour will be made to ensure that the racing pigeon shall not be exterminated by permitting a reasonable percentage to receive the necessary ration; and, in particular consider men in the forces, Home Guard, fire service and on munitions, who, owing to their duties, are unable to join the National Pigeon Service, and thus render their birds liable to be destroyed?[100]

Maintaining pigeon racing was, in this statement at least, and like horse and dog racing, seen to be crucial for maintaining moral amongst civilian men amidst the stresses and strains imposed by their wartime occupations and roles. Containing the movement of all homing pigeons, therefore, held the threat of undermining the contribution and support for the war effort from those on the home front.

However, while pigeon racing was maintained, the state imposed stringent measures on the domestic homing pigeon and pigeon keeping community through their policing of the pigeon loft. While under the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act 1939 pigeon keepers were required to register their birds with their local police force, policemen and NPS representatives were also granted powers to inspect domestic lofts, and policemen were given permission to destroy any birds that were un-ringed and were, therefore, unidentifiable.[101] Through such measures, the pigeon loft became a site whereby subversive or clandestine activities were perceived to take place, as they were spaces in which 'enemy' homing pigeons could be harboured. By implication, civilian pigeon keepers were also placed under suspicion by the state. Members of the pigeon racing community voiced opposition to the police and NPS inspections of their pigeon lofts. In an editorial in the *Racing Pigeon* from August 1941, the Home Office was the subject of critique for its apparent intensification of efforts to destroy racing pigeons. The editor stated, 'we have certainly not been

[99] Johnes, 'Pigeon Racing and Working-Class Culture in Britain', pp. 361-383.
[100] *Hansard Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, Racing Pigeons, 2 April 1941, vol. 370, col. 999.
[101] For full details of regarding the control of homing/racing pigeons, see, WAR: Control of pigeons and special arrangements during the war emergency period, 7 November 1939-19 August 1940, NA, HO 45/19286. And, WAR: Control of pigeons and special arrangements during the war emergency period, 6 September 1940 – 28 April 1943, NA, HO 45/19287.

advised why, after 22 months of war, it was suddenly decided that pigeons not bearing rings were dangerous to the public weal and its security and that they must be liquidated forthwith.'[102] The editor went on to note how this was not only unfair because pigeons were liable to lose rings on long flights, but also that through destroying un-ringed birds, the young birds in the nests were also destroyed. The column concluded with a critique of the Minister of Home Security, who, while promising not to abuse Defence Regulation powers and show a degree of leniency, had made a 'mental reservation to the effect that this was 'except for pigeon fanciers'.' [103] To the editor of the magazine, at least, the pigeon fancier was mistreated by the state.

Columns and letters-to-the-editor in the racing pigeon press reflected this view. In particular, through their critiques of state interference, they drew upon the centrality of occupation to conceptions of the male civilian in wartime society.[104] For instance, one correspondent equated the snooping on pigeon fanciers as an attack on miners, drawing on a stereotype that linked the occupation with pigeon racing, as well as greyhound racing and other similar sports.[105] Others challenged the occupation of the NPS official, especially through emasculating his wartime role. For example, a pigeon fancier from Poole critiqued his local NPS official for destroying his birds while he was at work. The 'brow-beating of the women-folk', while the men were absent, made the masculinity of the NPS official suspect.[106] The questioning of male identities in civilian war work reflects dominant cultural depictions of the time whereby those 'left' at home were undesirable and to some extent emasculated.[107] The masculinity of NPS officials was called into question, even by other men who also remained on the home front.

However, critiques of state interference in domestic lofts were predominantly made in regards to the rights of the wartime citizen. Through entering the domestic sphere and destroying the 'property' of pigeon fanciers, the state was accused of overstepping the British citizen's personal liberties. Columns and letters in the racing pigeon press equated the actions of 'high-handed' NPS officials with the Gestapo,

[102] *Racing Pigeon*, 16 August 1941.
[103] *Ibid*.
[104] Robb, *Men at Work*, p. 130.
[105] *Racing Pigeon*, 12 July 1941.
[106] *Racing Pigeon*, 19 July 1941.
[107] Robb, *Men at Work*, p. 10.

questioned the legality of state interference, and reflected on whether such acts of intrusion and destruction were compatible with the cause being fought for.[108] Moreover, one pigeon fancier saw the actions of the NPS as useless, expensive, persecutory and intolerable. Concluding in a letter to the *Racing Pigeon*, after indicating his place within wartime society through stressing that he did 'important' war work and had served in the First World War, while his two sons were also in the RAF, he stated: 'We put up with having homes damaged by bombs and gardens spoilt by shelters, rations, and liberties curtailed all round, but we are not going to take *unnecessary* oppression lying down.'[109] Mirroring public reaction to the MOI's 'Careless Talk' propaganda campaigns – which were concerned with censoring official information, rumour and gossip – efforts to contain the *materiality* of potential subversive communications – through inspecting and destroying homing pigeons – exposed the tensions between authority and the individual, between the state and the public, and between the rights and responsibilities of the citizen at a time of national emergency.[110] Regulating and containing homing pigeons, therefore, not only had implications for the lives of pigeons and pigeon keepers, but also signals a site of tension and contradiction for state attempts to unify a nation at war.

Conclusion

State efforts to regulate and contain homing pigeons as potential modes of clandestine activities highlights one of the many ways in which pigeons were repositioned in light of the war. As this chapter demonstrates, the British military and civil defence services physically and imaginatively refashioned the homing pigeon into a vital wartime asset that could carry 'life or death' messages. This involved the recruitment of approximately 200,000 pigeons, which were physically deployed in aircraft, on military bases, and utilised by British forces across the globe. It also involved the British military attempting to harness and develop the capacities of the pigeon for flying long-distances, at night, and as part of a boomerang service. This material mobilisation was accompanied by positive representations of the roles of militarised pigeons. The British state, military and press deployed positive portrayals of militarised human-pigeon encounters to celebrate both the roles pigeons

[108] *Racing Pigeon*, 5 July 1941; *Racing Pigeon*, 12 July 1941; *Racing Pigeon*, 19 July 1941; *Racing Pigeon*, 16 August 1941. *The Racing Pigeon*, 26 September 1942.
[109] *Racing Pigeon*, 5 July 1941.
[110] Fox, 'Careless Talk', pp. 936-966.

played in war and the close physical and emotional connections between military personnel and their animal counterparts. Through these portrayals, pigeons were imaginatively repositioned as metaphors for the 'soldier hero', especially in regards to descriptions of their 'heroic' exploits. This signals that representations of militarised pigeons were utilised to construct, and can inform historical understandings of, discourses of wartime heroism and masculinity.

The successful mobilisation of homing pigeons during the war was also contingent on the enrolment of the pigeon fancy community to co-operate with the British military and state officials. Rearing, training and volunteering their pigeons to the military offered the civilian pigeon fancier a means of performing their wartime duty either through the actions of their birds or by co-operating with the military. This was amplified by the fact that the majority of civilian pigeon fanciers were working class men who were either too old to serve in the military or were conscripted within a reserved occupation. For these men, the wartime mobilisation of their pigeons offered a means of reasserting their wartime masculinities, which were frequently portrayed as inferior to the 'soldier hero'. As such, pigeons offer another window for exploring how civilian wartime masculinities were constructed and understood, alongside recent histories that focus on work and leisure.

Nevertheless, this chapter also offers insights into the ways in which non-militarised pigeons were regulated and contained, and the implications of this for some pigeon fanciers who felt marginalised and targeted by the British state. The ability for pigeons to cross borders relatively undetected meant that they were considered a physical threat, in that they could be used for secretive enemy communications, and were rhetorically manipulated in the construction of anxieties surrounding the Fifth Column and the porosity of Britain's wartime borders. Subsequently, the domestic pigeon loft became a potential site of subversive activity that needed to be monitored. Interventions by the police and NPS officials into the pigeon loft, and the culling of some un-ringed pigeons, led to tensions between pigeon fanciers and representatives of the state. This demonstrates how the human-animal effort was not just a site of co-operation, but also a site of dissension along state-individual and military-civilian lines. The following chapter, which focuses on the militarisation of mules by the British army, also reveals how the human-animal war effort was a site of both co-operation and tension. This was instead, however, between species.

Chapter Four: Militarising Mules and the Formation of Soldier-Mule Bonds

British Imperial Forces were not only fighting against the Japanese Army in the jungle of Burma. They were also fighting against nature.[1] As a feature article in *Picture Post* in 1944 titled 'The Hell of Burma' described, soldiers from the Fourteenth Army faced vermin crawling into tents and eating mosquito nets, leeches fastening onto bare skin, unending mosquito attacks, monsoon downpours for six months of the year, the heat and humidity of both wet and dry seasons, and the diseases which such a climate brought – malaria, jungle fever, and pneumonia. They also faced dense tropical vegetation, hilly terrain, and swamped paths and roads. These, the article noted, were the 'incalculable natural enemies' faced by British Imperial Forces.[2] Like many militarised and wartime environments, soldiers not only fought with and through nature, such as mobilising topography, vegetation and animals, but also fought against it.[3] Moving through the jungle required British Imperial Forces to navigate this difficult and treacherous environment. Mules were enrolled as 'natural allies' in this fight against the jungle. This was encapsulated in the *Picture Post* article, which contains a photograph of a muleteer leading a mule up a swamped and muddy hill path, and a caption that states: 'where a tank is only a nuisance, but a mule can be a treasure.'[4] Within the jungle, like other difficult terrain such as mountains, mules offered a form of mobility that mechanised transport could not.

This chapter examines how mules were mobilised for the British war effort.[5] This process differed to the militarisation of pigeons in that mules were relatively absent

[1] I use the phrase 'British Imperial Forces' to reflect the diverse multi-ethnic range of historical actors from the British Empire and Commonwealth, which participated in the Second World War. For an overview of the role of the British Empire in the Second World War see the prologue in A. Jackson, *The British Empire and the Second World War* (London: Bloomsbury, 2006).
[2] *Picture Post*, 25 November 1944.
[3] Scholars have examined how soldiers fought with and against nature in the trenches on the Western Front during the First World War. See: Pearson, *Mobilizing Nature*, pp. 91-126; D. Brantz, 'Environments of Death: Trench Warfare on the Western Front', in C. E. Closmann (ed.), *War and the Environment: Military Destruction in the Modern Age* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009), pp. 68-91.
[4] For the concept of 'natural allies', see, Russell and Tucker (eds), *Natural Enemy, Natural Ally*; *Picture Post*, 25 November 1944.
[5] The role of mules, and other equines, by British forces during the Second World has been overlooked. There is, however, a growing literature of the role of equines during the First World War. For the role of mules in the British Army during the First World War see: A. Varnava, 'Fighting Asses: British Procurement of Cypriot Mules and their Condition and Treatment in Macedonia', *War in History*, 23.4 (2016), pp. 489-515; A. Varnava, 'The Vagaries and Value of the Army Transport Mule in the British Army during the First World War', *Historical Research*, 90.248 (2017), pp. 422-446. For the use of horses by the British and Canadian Armies during the First World War see: J. Singleton, 'Britain's Military Use of Horses 1914-1918', *Past & Present*, 139 (1993), pp. 178-203; J. Corvi, 'Men of Mercy: The Evolution of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps and the Soldier-Horse Bond during the Great War', *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, 76 (1998), pp.

from British wartime popular culture.[6] No mule received the PDSA Dickin Medal for their wartime services, nor were any individual 'hero' mules discussed in the wartime press.[7] This differed from the First World War where mules were frequently portrayed in the likes of *Punch* magazine for their role on the Western Front.[8] During the Second World War, mules were primarily used in conjunction with the 'forgotten' armies of the Far East and those who fought in the Mediterranean.[9]

To examine the mobilisation of mules by British Imperial Forces, this chapter utilises military sources (reports and training manuals) and soldiers' personal testimony. In particular, it focuses on the voices of British officers and soldiers, rather than those of colonial soldiers, due to the availability of sources and a focus on how British soldiers were refashioned into muleteers.[10] It charts the different ways in which mules and British military personnel were simultaneously mobilised for the war effort, and considers the tensions between the repositioning of the mule as a militarised *and* companion animal. By interrogating the various means by which mules were mobilised into the British war effort and the contingencies posed by this, it argues that this mobilising process was underpinned by soldiers forming bonds with their animal counterparts. These were bonds that were formally constructed through military training. They were also bonds that were informally constructed by the soldiers themselves. Moreover, these were bonds that were challenged in situations whereby mules were wounded, sick or euthanized. As such, this chapter

272-84; A. Iarocci, 'On the Threshold of Modernity: Canadian Horsepower on the Western Front, 1914-18', *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research,* 89 (2009), pp. 51-64; A. McEwen, ''He Took Care of Me': The Human-Animal Bond in Canada's Great War', in S. Nance (ed.), *The Historical Animal* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2015), pp. 272-87. For the role of horses by German and Japanese Forces see: L. DiNardo and A. Bay, 'Horse-Drawn Transport in the German Army', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 23 (1998), pp. 129-42; J. Boyd, 'Horse Power: The Japanese Army, Mongolia and the Horse, 1927-43', *Japan Forum*, 22 (2010), pp. 23-42.

[6] The opening *Picture Post* example is a rare example of how the wartime press represented militarised mules.

[7] An exception to this is the mule 'Maggie' who was present in some published wartime accounts, as discussed later in this chapter.

[8] A. Varnava, 'The Vagaries and Value of the Army Transport Mule', pp. 422-446.

[9] L. Noakes and J. Pattinson, 'Introduction: 'Keep Calm and Carry On': The Cultural Memory of the Second World War in Britain', in L. Noakes and J. Pattinson (eds), *British Cultural Memory and the Second World War* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), p. 15.

[10] Although I have only drawn on British voices, I am aware of critiques that highlight how such approaches can marginalize or obscure the history of colonised people at war. See, K. Quershi, 'Diasopric Citizenship and Militarization: Punjabi Soldiers in the World Wars', *Citizenship Studies*, 17.3-4 (2013), pp. 400-413. Further work is needed to recover the voices of colonial service personnel alongside scholarship such as, D. Killingray, *Fighting for Britain: African Soldiers in the Second World War* (Woodbridge: James Currey, 2010); K. Roy, 'Discipline and Morale of the African, British and Indian Army units in Burma and India during World War II: July 1943 to August 1945', *Modern Asian Studies*, 44.6 (2010), pp. 1255-1282.

offers a lens for exploring the emotional dynamics of the British war effort through an investigation of soldier-mule interactions.[11]

The first section of the chapter considers the re-mobilisation of mules within British Imperial Forces during the Second World War. This outlines the ways in which mules were reintroduced into the British Army and considers their expansion within wider British Imperial Forces. The second section explores the means by which mules were militarised through an examination of how they were conceptualised, trained and experimented on for the British war effort. The successful militarisation of the mules was tied to the simultaneous training of soldiers into muleteers. Subsequently, the third section employs Monique Scheer's concept of 'emotional practices' to investigate how the refashioning of British soldiers into muleteers was an 'emotional practice' that was premised on the construction of human-animal bonds, which were required so that soldier-mule partnerships operated effectively during combat.[12] The bonds that were inscribed through training were also accompanied by practices where soldiers formed emotional ties to their mules beyond the demands of military effectiveness. Utilising soldiers' personal testimonies, the fourth section explores the ways in which soldiers informally enrolled mules as companion animals that fulfilled the needs of physical comfort and intimacy. Nevertheless, the mobilisation of mules for the British war effort was not always a smooth process. The final section of this chapter investigates the ways in which mules became casualties of war, and argues that soldier-mule partnerships were blocked, or hampered, by both human and nonhuman factors.

The Re-Mobilisation of Mules within British Imperial Forces

In spite of the interwar mechanisation of the British Army, mules were extensively mobilised by British Imperial Forces to meet the demands posed by the Second World War. Over the course of the war the numbers of mules militarised grew significantly. In 1939, the Royal Army Service Corps (RASC) retained only 25 mules, as part of a single Animal (Training) Transport Company, whose role was to

[11] For studies that have explored the emotional dynamics of war in relation to military personnel see: S. Das, *Touch and Intimacy in First World War Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); M. Roper, *The Secret Battle: Emotional Survival in the Great War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010). For a case that has explored this relationship through the lens of human-animal relationships see, C. Pearson, '"Four-Legged *Poilus*": French Army Dogs, Emotional Practices and the Creation of Militarized Human-Dog Bonds, 1871-1918', *Journal of Social History*, (2018), pp. 1-30. https://doi.org/10.1093/jsh/shx090.

[12] M. Scheer, 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice (And is That What Makes Them Have a History)? A Bourdieuian Approach to Understanding Emotion', *History and Theory*, 51.2 (2012), pp. 193-220.

keep alive the technique of pack transport by maintaining a small training facility.[13] These were accompanied by 30 Indian Army mule companies, composed of approximately 10,500 mules, which were maintained during the interwar period as part of the defence of India's northwest frontier.[14] By 1946, the number of mules employed by British Imperial Forces had increased to roughly 120,000. This number was greater than the sum of all other militarised species combined, where British Imperial Forces mobilised 40,000 horses, 15,700 pigeons, 16,000 camels, 6,000 bullocks (for pack animal transport) and 5,000 dogs.[15]

This significant expansion in the number of mules mobilised for the British war effort was also accompanied by the physical movement of thousands of militarised mules around the globe. Mules were deployed in various wartime theatres, including France, Italy, Egypt, Syria, the Sudan, India, and Burma. This included the harnessing of mules in France in 1940, when divisions from the Royal Indian Army Service Corps (RIASC) were brought into Europe to fight alongside the British Expeditionary Force.[16] Following the fall of France in the summer of 1940, mules were also brought into Britain, and British infantry, artillery and service corps personnel trained with mules in the Black Mountains in Wales (Figure 4.1). Between 1941 and 1943, the total number of army horses and mules in Britain reached a peak figure of 5,450 in anticipation of being mobilised in an invasion of Norway.[17] The military veterinary services were also put in charge of purchasing mules, and both the Royal Army Veterinary Corps (RAVC) and the Royal Indian Army Veterinary Corps (RIAVC) purchased mules close to theatres of war, such as in Italy and India, and from further afield, such as the United States of America, South Africa and Argentina. [18] This required civilian and military ships to be redesigned to accommodate mules to transport them to theatres of war, with spaces allocated for ventilation and exercise.[19] The re-mobilisation of mules for the British war effort,

[13] RASC History Committee, *The Story of the Royal Army Service Corps 1939-1945* (London: Bell and Sons, 1955), p. 542.
[14] G. Dunlop, *Military Economics, Culture and Logistics in the Burma Campaign, 1942-1945* (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 116-7.
[15] *Hansard Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, Pigeons and Animals (War Use), 22 October 1946, vol. 427, col. 1452-3.
[16] *The Times*, 12 January 1940.
[17] J. Clabby, *The History of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps 1919-1961* (London: J. Allen & Co.1963), p. 41.
[18] Clabby, *The History of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps 1919-1961*, p. 40; G. T. Newport, 'A Remount Depot in Italy', *Journal of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps*, 16.2 (1945), pp. 148-151.
[19] R. K. Loveday, 'The Transport of Animals by Sea between South Africa and India During World War II', *Journal of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps*, 18.2 (1947), pp. 54-60.

therefore, redefined the spaces which they occupied, ranging in scale from the hold of a cargo ship to the mountains of Wales.

Figure 4.1

Lieutenant Taylor, 'The British Army in the United Kingdom', War Office Second World War Official Collection, H 11151, Imperial War Museum, London <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205197620.> [accessed 22 November 2017].

The re-mobilisation of mules also required the formation of British military personnel that could work with, and look after, mules. This required the expansion of certain services, such as the RAVC, which grew slowly until the spring of 1943 when the war opened up in the Mediterranean and the Far East where mules, and other pack transport animals, were favoured over mechanised transport. The veterinary profession was subsequently taken off the reserved occupations list within Britain and the army scoured veterinary schools and practices for men of fighting age.[20] It also involved the transformation of British officers and soldiers into Animal Transport Officers (ATOs) and muleteers outside of those British officers who served as ATOs in the British Indian Army. This was significant, as the average British soldier – as I discuss later in this chapter – had had little or no experience working with mules prior to the war. This differed to soldiers within the British Indian Army who had retained mules during the interwar period for use on the Northwest Indian frontier. It also differed from other colonial soldiers, such as Cypriot volunteers in the British army, who were represented as 'first class muleteers' in the British military posters.[21] The Second World War, therefore, saw the return of British muleteers – outside of the small RASC Animal (Training) Transport Company – within British Imperial Forces. The transformation of the British soldier into a muleteer, subsequently, required a period of training. However, before examining this training, it is necessary to consider how mules were militarised in preparation for war.

Militarising Mules

Like the training of human soldiers, the training of mules was a physical effort that was designed to reshape the recruit both physically and mentally, where they would be habituated to perform a variety of tasks in wartime environments. Emma Newlands, in her study of how the British Army attempted to turn civilians into soldiers during the Second World War, proposes that training was based on the control and transformation of the body. Newlands argues that this required the army to initially establish control over the recruit's body and psyche so that they would comply with military orders. Following this, instructors would transform the body so

[20] Clabby, *The History of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps 1919-1961*, pp. 33-4; Woods, 'The Farm as Clinic', pp. 478-9.
[21] British Army, 'Cypriot Serving with the British Forces', Art.IWM PST 16000, Imperial War Museum, London < http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/33041>[accessed 22 November 2017].

that it was militarily fit, orderly and productive.[22] Extending this beyond the transformation of the body of the human, it is possible to account for the ways in which British Imperial Forces attempted to control and transform mules so that they were fit for service and had ingrained within them the practices and routines that would enable them to operate effectively at war. This section briefly considers the effort involved in militarising mules, focusing on how they were conceptualised, trained, and experimented on for the British war effort.

British and Indian army training manuals emphasised the importance of treating mules with kindness so as to form effective human-animal working partnerships.[23] This was especially important when mules were initially 'broken in' at animal transport training companies. As the British Army's *Manual of Horsemastership, Equitation and Animal Transport 1937* states: 'Young mules are naturally timid and easily startled, but they are, as a rule, docile and easily broken in, if treated with great kindness and patience. Rough treatment of any kind must be avoided as likely to prove fatal to successful training.'[24] Likewise, a training manual for the RIASC notes: 'The first essential in dealing with the animal is to break down its distrust by kindness, and, once this has been done, it will give little further trouble.'[25] Countering early twentieth century stereotypes about the supposed obstinate and violent traits of militarised mules, this initial approach of kindness was framed as a necessity as mules were only seen to become 'vicious' through ill treatment.[26] Instead, mules were characterised as intelligent, docile, hard-working and amenable animals, as long as they had initially been approached and 'broken in' in a gentle and patient manner.[27]

Personal testimony provides insights into how the 'breaking in' of mules worked in practice. Philip Malins, a wartime British ATO with the RIASC, recalls how un-

[22] Newlands, *Civilians into Soldiers*, p. 53.
[23] These training manuals appear to have been used in conjunction, as they frequently recommend particular references within other manuals. Moreover, Tarak Barkawi notes that the basic training and battle drill of the Indian Army was similar to that of the British Army, although they had to be adapted to the cultural idiom and educational standards of Indian recruits. T. Barkawi, 'Culture and Combat in the Colonies: The Indian Army in the Second World War', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 41.2 (2006), p. 347.
[24] War Office, *Manual of Horsemastership, Equitation and Animal Transport 1937* (London: HMSO, 1937), p. 140.
[25] India Army General Staff, *Royal Indian Army Service Corps Training, Vol III, Transport, 1938* (New Delhi: Government of India Press, 1938), p. 98.
[26] Varnava, 'The Vagaries and Value of the Army Transport Mule', pp. 422-446; India Army General Staff, *Royal Indian Army Service Corps Training, Vol III*, p. 71.
[27] India Army General Staff, *Royal Indian Army Service Corps Training*, pp. 71-2. India Army General Staff, *Notes on Animal Transport: Military Training Pamphlet No. 29 (India)* (New Delhi: Government of India Press, 1938), pp. 1-3.

broken Argentine mules were broken in at an animal training establishment in Jullundur in India. Trainers took care in their handling of Argentine mules, as they were prone to kicking and biting on first encounters.[28] Moreover, training manuals noted how, while valuable for their hardiness and size as compared with smaller Indian bred mules, the Argentine mules' breeding in semi-wild conditions and subsequent branding and rough handling during transportation meant that their initial experiences with humans was primarily violent. Trainers had to win the trust of the mule through patience and kindness.[29] To do this, Malins recalls how the ethos of training methods revolved around gently handling mules so that they could get used to being groomed, clipped, saddled, shod and loaded. Working along the notion that 'the way to its heart is through its stomach', mules were initially touched from a distance with a 'blob stick', which was an eight-foot long pole that was padded and had fodder placed on the end. Trainers would gradually move closer to the mule, and as the mules' suspicion decreased and their confidence grew, the trainer would progressively touch all the parts of the mule, culminating with the handling of legs that were the most sensitive part of the body.[30] Through such patient and gentle tactile encounters, mules were 'broken in' and, in theory, made ready for further more specialised military training with their allocated animal transport companies.

Once at their animal transport companies, training centred on ensuring that mules were made both physically and mentally fit for service. Sharing similarities to raising the condition of human soldiers, British Army animal management manuals stressed the need to condition the body of the mule.[31] Standardised grooming routines, feeding rations, loading procedures, and march discipline were prescribed to render the body of the mule ready for long marches over difficult terrain.[32] This included showing the mule each piece of grooming and loading equipment prior to their use, to ensure the mule would learn to recognise these materials and not kick out when touched by their handlers.[33] The emotional capacity of the mule also needed to be ready for war. According to the Veterinary Department for the War Office's guide *Animal Management (1923)*, mules' 'one drawback from a military standpoint is

[28] P. Malins, 'The Indian Army Transport Mule', in B. Nicholls, P. Malins and C. MacFetridge (eds), *The Military Mule in the British and Indian Army: An Anthology* (Solihull: The British Mule Society, 2000), pp. 53-4.
[29] India Army General Staff, *Royal Indian Army Service Corps Training, Vol III*, p. 96.
[30] Malins, 'The Indian Army Transport Mule', pp. 53-4.
[31] Newlands, *Civilians into Soldiers*.
[32] War Office, *Manual of Horsemastership*, pp. 181-191.
[33] Malins, 'The Indian Army Transport Mule', pp. 53-4.

their liability to stampede under fire. This, however, may be largely overcome by training.'[34] To be accustomed to the conditions of battle, mules were forced to swim across rivers, embark on and disembark from boats, and march under conditions where the soundscape of war was simulated. This included the rattling of tins full of stone behind handfuls of fodder to ensure that mules would eat during loud conditions. It also led to mules being forced to pass repeatedly under a simulated dive bomber – a fair ground type swing which swung backwards and forwards just skimming the mules back – to ensure they kept on marching even if planes were flying low overhead.[35] Through these routines and practices, attempts were made to militarise and condition the body and psyche of the mule.

These efforts to condition the behaviour of the mule were also accompanied by military interventions over their bodily capacities. In particular, the ability for the mule to bray and alert the enemy of their presence, especially in the confines of the jungle in Burma, provoked anxiety amongst fatigued troops. This led to the performance of de-vocalising experiments and operations prior to the Chindit 'special forces' campaigns in Burma, whereby a British Army laryngologist was approached to develop a form of devocalising procedure. This initially involved three mules being placed under general anaesthetic and having their vocal chords completely excised, where the 'speaking sinew' was cut adrift by half an inch.[36] Once several veterinary officers were accustomed with the procedure, there were as many as 30 operations a day. Overall, 5563 mules enrolled in 'special forces' work were subject to the operation with 43 casualties.[37] However, this devocalising procedure was not always effective as some mules regained their 'voices' during operations, which placed their columns at risk in the relative silence of the jungle.[38] The perceived need for devocalising procedures highlights how efforts to prepare the mule for war not only exposed the potential expendability of mules as experimental

[34] Great Britain Army Veterinary Service, *Animal Management 1923* (H.M.S.O: London, 1923), p. 313.
[35] Malins, 'The Indian Army Transport Mule', pp. 53-4; India Army General Staff, *Royal Indian Army Service Corps Training, Vol III*, p. 99; Mules in Combined Operations Paper (22 February 1945), Mules in Combined Operations (Jan 1944 – Aug 1945), National Archives, London, War Office Papers (hereafter NA, WO) 203/3542.
[36] C. M. Stewart, 'The Muting of Animals for General Wingate's Force Operating Behind the Japanese Lines in Burma', *Journal of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps*, 17.3 (1946), pp. 87-92; A. J. Moffet, 'Medicine and War: The Silent Chindit mules', *British Medical Journal*, 287 (1983), pp. 1946-7.
[37] Clabby, *The History of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps 1919-1961*, p. 124.
[38] Stewart, 'The Muting of Animals', p, 91; Clabby, *The History of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps 1919-1961*, pp. 125, 138-9.

casualties, but also their ability to block or thwart military objectives through the recovery of their 'voices'.

Training British Muleteers and the Construction of Human-Animal Bonds

Preparing mules for war also required the simultaneous training of officers and soldiers to work with these animals. As previously mentioned, the demands of the war led to an expansion of British Army veterinary services in regards to pack animal transport and a refashioning of certain British soldiers into muleteers. The requirement that mules needed to be trained and treated with kindness shaped the ways in which soldiers were trained to become muleteers. Borrowing from Chris Pearson's study of the French emotional enlistment of militarised dogs during the First World War, in which he employs Monique Scheer's concept of 'emotional practices', it is also possible to view the training of soldier-mule partnerships as an 'emotional practice' that intended to create bonds between mules and humans.[39] Scheer defines 'emotional practices' 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.[40]

Pearson utilises the concept of 'emotional practices' to demonstrate how the training of French military dog handlers required the handler to adapt his own emotions to bond with the dog, which enabled the human to harness canine capabilities for military purposes.[41] In a similar vein, this section of the thesis examines how British soldiers were trained to become muleteers through efforts to manipulate their bodies and minds in order to remove the fear of, and instil an affection for, their mules. In effect, soldiers were trained to view their mules as companions. This was to ensure that the mule's capabilities would be successfully utilised in combat.

[39] Pearson, '"Four-Legged *Poilus*"', pp. 1-30.
[40] Scheer, 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice (And is That What Makes Them Have a History)?', p. 209.
[41] Pearson, '"Four-Legged *Poilus*"', pp. 11-13.

In the first instance, soldiers were taught to prioritise the care and management of their animals before looking after themselves. Soldiers were informed that: 'the importance of being a good horsemaster should be impressed on every mounted soldier. He should be taught to look upon his horse as his best friend, to study it, to take a pride in its appearance and to look after its wants before his own.'[42] While this refers to mounted horseman, the near relation of mules to horses meant that the general rules for the care of horses also applied to the mule.[43] This ethos of prioritising mules is also evident in the memories of soldier-muleteers. Ronald Nappin, a muleteer with the Welsh Regiment who served in India and Burma, remembers the extra responsibility placed on muleteers, as compared with other soldiers, which came with looking after mules. He recalls: 'whenever you stopped or whenever you came to, the animal always came first – you fed and brushed your animal before yourself.'[44] In the same way that soldiers were habituated in routines of personal cleanliness and pride of appearance through continual inspection, muleteers were taught to view the health and appearance of their animals as the reflection and embodiment of their soldierly duty.[45]

Nonetheless, tensions arose in training regarding soldier nervousness around mules. Training manuals stressed that the 'golden rule' in handling remount mules was for the soldier to be completely confident: 'Any sign of nervousness is fatal. A nervous man makes a nervous animal. No nervous men should be allowed near remounts.'[46] But for some soldiers and newly assigned muleteers, apprehension stemmed from encountering the physicality of the mule. Ivan Daunt recalls the initial difficulties of encountering and loading the mules, especially when they kicked out. For all the men in his unit, not just the muleteers, he remembers that being around and handling the mules 'took a long time to get used to.'[47] Similarly, Frederick Holloman recalls that he and the other men in his unit did not initially like the mules due to the mules' kicking and lashing out.[48] This fear of being kicked in training also led to muleteers ignoring the ethos of patience and gentle handling, where some physically retaliated against the animals. Anthony Emms recalls an incident where a veterinary officer

[42] War Office, *Manual of Horsemastership*, p. 1.
[43] Great Britain Army Veterinary Service, *Animal Management 1923*, p. 313.
[44] Ronald Henry Nappin, Interview, 29 August 2000, IWM 20593/2.
[45] Newlands, *Civilians into Soldiers*, p. 61.
[46] India Army General Staff, *Royal Indian Army Service Corps Training, Vol III*, p. 98.
[47] Ivan Decourcy Daunt, Interview, 7 March 2000, IWM 20461/10.
[48] Frederick Charles Holloman, Interview, 6 December 1995, IWM 16348/1.

complained about finding cuts and bruises on the legs of mules, which were the result of soldiers kicking back at the animals during grooming.[49] Through such instances it is clear that the physicality of the mule, combined with the initial apprehensions of soldiers, challenged and complicated the ideal of the soldier prioritising the health and condition of the animal.

This tension was exacerbated by the fact that many muleteers lacked previous experience of working with animals. In an article in *The Times*, which reported on the activities of a Transport Animal Training Company in Scotland, the 'best recruits' for the service were seen to be former drivers of horse artillery, followed by milk rounds-men and other men experienced in working with transport horses. Men who were used to 'superior racing stables' reportedly seldom took kindly to the 'inferior' task of pack transport, and farm labourers were described as having no flair for the role.[50] In spite of reports concerning the best type of recruit for the work, British Army muleteers came from a range of occupational backgrounds – many of which involved little or no contact with transport animals. For instance, many British muleteers who took part in the first Chindit expedition in Burma came from the King's Liverpool Regiment. A wartime account describes that these men primarily came from the 'smoky industrial areas of Northern England', where 'they were born and bred to town and factory life.'[51] An officer from the Chindits campaigns later recalled that: 'in many cases the muleteers had never touched a mule or pony before in their lives when they took over the animals.'[52]

Moreover, the role of muleteer has been remembered as being generally unpopular. Harry Williams, an ATO who served in Burma, remembers that calls for voluntary muleteers amongst his Brigade met with no volunteers. Instead, the men under his command were ordered into the role with little or no experience of working with animals.[53] This may have partially been due to the perceived negative status of being a muleteer. In his wartime memoir, W.F. Jeffrey notes how he was placed in charge of a unit called 'C Group', which was made up of a wireless team, mules and muleteers, the farrier, the veterinary officer, and transport officer. As he notes: 'we

[49] Anthony Charles Emms, Interview, 3 March 2001, IWM 20578/4.
[50] *The Times*, 25 September 1942.
[51] C. J. Rojo, *Wingate's Raiders: An Account of the Incredible Adventure that Raised the Curtain on the Battle for Burma* (London: George G. Harrap and Co. Ltd, 1944), p. 32.
[52] Quoted in Clabby, *The History of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps 1919-1961*, p. 133.
[53] Harry Maples Williams, Interview, 9 September 1992, IWM 12736/2.

were referred to, rather scathingly, as the 'soft belly' of the column.'[54] This negative status of the muleteer was also simultaneously countered and maintained in the press. While reporting on the training of Animal Transport Companies, an army correspondent from *The Times* noted:

> It had been thought at first that the very limited number of pack-horse companies in the Army could be manned with recruits of comparatively low physique. But it was soon realised that for man, as well as horse, this is very arduous work, demanding strength and stamina. The man, for instance, must be as fit in the feet as any infantry soldier and able to endure long stretches of trudging along mountain paths. He has also to be an alert and resourceful fighting soldier.[55]

This statement indicates a preconception that for a British Army soldier to be a horseman or a muleteer, he only required a 'low physique' and did not need significant strength or stamina. Such a preconception, while challenged in the statement, offers an image of the muleteer that does not correspond with the wartime cultural ideals of the soldier hero, whose image was tied to stories of heroic combatant roles and representations of the physically strong male body.[56] Occupied in a supportive role, the muleteer was neither the heroic combatant nor in need of a manly physique.

In spite of the negative status associated with being a muleteer, some men volunteered for the role. Michael Dent, a non-commissioned officer with the Devonshire Regiment in India and Burma, volunteered with animal transport as he had a background in farming and had previous experience working with horses.[57] Similarly, Ronald Nappin, a private initially with the Hampshire Regiment but transferred to the Welch Regiment for his post as muleteer, volunteered for the role as he 'liked animals and wanted to do something different', even if this meant, as a 'Dorset man', leaving his local regiment.[58] For other British servicemen, however, the decision to become a muleteer was made from above. Testimonies indicate that numerous artillery and mechanised transport companies were converted into animal transport companies. Anthony Emms recalls that his Royal Artillery unit were redeployed at some point during 1943-4 into a mountain battery unit, in which he

[54] W. F. Jeffrey, *Sunbeams like Swords* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1950), pp. 21-2.
[55] *The Times*, 25 September 1942.
[56] Rose, *Which People's War?*, pp. 160-70.
[57] Michael Gifford Dent, Interview, 8 June 2000, IWM 20361/1.
[58] Ronald Henry Nappin, Interview, 29 August 2000, IWM 20593/1.

was to become a muleteer. This was a 'terrific shake-up' for the men as few had any previous experience working with either horses or mules.[59] Others found that their mechanised transport units were reassigned as animal transport units in anticipation of fighting in Burma. Ivan Daunt remembers that 'one minute you were a Bren gun driver, right, next minute you're anti-tank… then you would become a muleteer.'[60]

To help inexperienced officers and soldiers overcome their fears and initial apprehensions regarding mules, certain physical tasks were practiced, which were intended to instil confidence in approaching and handling the animals. For the training of ATOs such as Philip Malins, who completed an eight week intensive course in animal transport at Lansdowne in the Himalayas, this involved a range of methods that were designed to remove any fear that they may have had of mules, and that would instead develop a confident, but also cautious and appropriate, way of handling the animals. As Malins recalls, for ATOs who would be expected to handle and inspect hundreds of mules without knowing their 'individual idiosyncrasies' – in contrast to the individual British muleteer who was assigned one or two mules to care for – confident and appropriate handling would be essential. Malins undertook tasks such as catching mules in a paddock without halters, mounting the mules and wrestling with other Officer trainees doing the same, and performing a form of mounted tug of war. British and Indian soldiers were also forced to crawl under the legs of the mules and take part in similar events to officers, such as mounted tug of war and wrestling.[61] Similar team events also took place within Britain. The *Illustrated London News* published an image of Welsh Fusiliers playing polo on mules.[62] Competitive team events were used in British Army training as a way to inculcate 'the team spirit' and promote collective discipline.[63] By including mules within these competitive events, not only would soldiers, in theory, overcome their anxieties about handling mules, but mules were also framed as team players and fellow combatants.

Beyond a confident handling of mule bodies, training efforts also intentionally attempted to create bonds between soldiers and mules. Training practices encouraged soldiers to study the individuality of their allocated animal. Military guides stated:

[59] Anthony Charles Emms, Interview, 3 March 2001, IWM 20578/4.
[60] Ivan Decourcy Daunt, Interview, 7 March 2000, IWM 20461/10.
[61] Malins, 'The Indian Army Transport Mule', pp. 55-8.
[62] *Illustrated London News*, 23 March 1940.
[63] Newlands, *Civilians into Soldiers*, p. 66.

'Animals require the same care as men, and the same things affect their efficiency and their comfort. Study your animals; get to know their individual needs and peculiarities, treat them properly and they will serve you well.'[64] Manuals also advised that man and animal should be 'correctly suited to each other' and for soldiers to look on their mules as their 'best friends'.[65] Moreover, they stressed that the individual soldier-mule partnership was not to be separated unless it was unavoidable, indicating that, unlike military equipment such as weaponry, mules should not be passed around a unit or readily reallocated to another muleteer.[66] Sharing similarities to training soldier-military dog partnerships at the British War Dog Training School, such guidance highlights that military training practices prioritised establishing intersubjective bonds between specific soldiers and specific mules. Like guidance for military dogs, training manuals represented the mule less as an interchangeable technology and more as an individual forming part of a particular soldier-mule pairing.[67]

These specific human-animal bonds were partially constituted through multi-sensory training practices. Soldiers were not only encouraged to patiently and gently handle mules, but were also encouraged to frequently speak with their animals.[68] For Frank Turner, an ATO who was assigned as a specialist on mule transport for the second Chindits campaign, cultivating an 'affinity' between soldier and mule was remembered as being paramount during training. Assigned with infantry personnel from both the British Army and the Ghurkhas, Turner recalls that his task was to 'cultivate a spirit between the mule driver and mule', which was problematic when many of these men, especially the British, were 'non-mule types'. The construction of this human-animal bond was produced through frequent tactile encounters between soldier and mule.[69] Moreover, the memories of muleteers highlight the importance of such tactile encounters for constructing bonds with their animals. Percy Routledge, a soldier who was trained as a muleteer in preparation for the second Chindits campaign, recalls how he believed his mule learned to recognise his

[64] India Army General Staff, *Notes on Animal Transport: Military Training Pamphlet No. 29*, p. 92.
[65] War Office, *Manual of Horsemastership*, p. 1.
[66] *Ibid*., pp. 191-2.
[67] Kirk, 'In Dogs We Trust?', p. 8.
[68] India Army General Staff, *Notes on Animal Transport: Military Training Pamphlet No. 29*, p. 3.
[69] Francis William Geoffrey Turner, Interview, 19 September 1991, IWM 12260/1.

voice and responded to the specific ways he touched his neck. Through such vocal and tactile encounters, he believed a bond was formed between the pair.[70]

Beyond grooming, more arduous training practices were also designed to construct soldier-mule bonds. For instance, T.W. Sams, a British officer in the RIAVC, noted in his memoir about his training course at Poona Veterinary College:

> The advice I had over the training was to develop a close relationship between animal and driver. This was done by a week of hardening up both animal and man with long exhausting walks as we helped both mule and driver to get used to each other and to the special saddles designed to carry the future loads of ammunition and reserves of food for men and beasts. Exciting times were spent surmounting obstacle courses and crossing rivers.[71]

For Sams, the development of a close relationship between mule and muleteer was developed through a combination of physical encounters and arduous training, where, together, man and mule were physically and mentally shaped into combat-ready soldiers. Other testimonies highlight how acts such as these frequent marches, which included frequent grooming, not only helped instil confidence in the newly assigned muleteer, but also helped forge feelings of affection for their mules. Anthony Emms recalls that gradually a 'rapport was established between mules and men', which was exemplified by men holding onto the tails of their mules for support when walking up hills.[72] Similarly, Frederick Holloman recalls that after his initial dislike and fear of the mules, he 'loved them at the finish' - especially once he had learnt how to handle them on marches on a short rein, which prevented him from being kicked.[73]

However, while training practices attempted to harden soldiers and mules, and construct bonds between the pair, soldier testimonies highlight that the length and type of training was highly varied. For Dominic Neill, appointed as an ATO officer prior to the first Chindit expedition in Burma in 1943, his training was rudimentary in spite of overseeing a column of muleteers. He recalls only having little guidance except for a lecture by the Brigade Veterinary Officer about the welfare of mules and how to exercise, groom and feed them. Following this, he remembers being 'left to

[70] Percy Nicholson Routledge, Interview, 1 November 1995, IWM 16269/2 and 3.
[71] Private Papers of Captain V.P. Sams, 13166, Memoir, Imperial War Museum, London, p. 10.
[72] Anthony Charles Emms, Interview, 3 March 2001, IWM 20578/4.
[73] Frederick Charles Holloman, Interview, 6 December 1995, IWM 16348/1.

get on with it ourselves – quite honestly, we did not know whether we were looking after the mules well or not.'[74] For others, however, training was described as extremely detailed. Frank Turner noted in his wartime diary that during his period of training an ATO 'grew from an untrained horseman to a groom, farrier, vet, teacher, authority on loads and even a mule-driver when necessary.'[75] These variations in experience indicate that while some ATOs and muleteers understood and practiced the routines of animal management and forged bonds with their animals, others did not. These are factors that would have implications for the survival of both men and mules during combat.

Comfort at War

Together with the British Army's efforts to instil in newly trained muleteers an affection for their mules, muleteers and other British soldiers also informally enrolled mules as sources of comfort and intimacy. This informal enrolment was not necessarily to ensure that mules operated effectively during combat, but was instead to enable soldiers to cope with the extremities of their circumstances. This section examines how British muleteers enrolled as sources of comfort and intimacy. This sits alongside histories that have examined how soldiers have fought, sustained, and physically and mentally coped with the stresses and strains of combat. Focusing on the trench environment of the First World War, scholars have considered the role of male-male intimacies, the significance of letter writing and food, and the creation of gardens, in humanising the front-line and connecting the soldier to the comfort of the domestic sphere.[76] Similar studies have explored the emotional life of RAF aircrew during the Second World War, which highlight the prevalence of fear and anxiety that occurred before, during and after their aerial operations. To counter this fear and anxiety, aircrew employed various routine and superstitious strategies as a means to psychologically cope with the strains of combat.[77]

Recent studies extend this literature by demonstrating how animals provided soldiers with comfort, intimacy and a means of mental escape. For the French Army in the

[74] Dominic Fitzgerald Neill, Interview, 10 August 1993, IWM 13299/1.
[75] Transcript of an account written by Major F Turner in August 1944, Private Papers of Major F Turner, 3994, Wartime Diary, Imperial War Museum, London, p. 4.
[76] Das, *Touch and Intimacy in First World War Literature*; Roper, *The Secret Battle*; R. Duffett, *The Stomach for Fighting: Food and the Soldiers of the Great War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012). K. Helphand, *Defiant Gardens: Making Gardens in Wartime* (San Antonio, TX: Trinity University Press, 2006).
[77] Francis, *The Flyer*, pp. 106-130; MacKenzie, 'Beating the Odds', pp. 382-400.

trenches, pet dogs symbolically and materially domesticated the trench environment and helped alleviate physical hardship, fear and boredom. Through physical proximity, they provided an emotional outlet for soldiers amidst a cultural and material environment that seemingly crushed sentimentality and the potential for intimacy. In this way, they offered soldiers a way of enduring, and emotionally surviving within, the trenches.[78] Similarly, Andrew McEwen highlights how militarised horses helped Canadian soldiers cope on the Western Front. By employing twenty-first century research into the human-animal bond, and how it can alleviate psychological trauma, McEwen demonstrates how horses provided an informal means through which human stress and anxiety was alleviated.[79] Other studies also demonstrate how militarised animals and pets provided soldiers and sailors with an outlet for emotional intimacy, and prompted outward expressions of grief following their deaths.[80]

For muleteers during the Second World War, mules offered an outlet for comfort and intimacy. This was particularly pronounced within the jungles of Burma, where many British soldiers were either trained as muleteers or came into frequent contact with these pack transport animals. Fighting in Burma was both physically and mentally draining for British soldiers. As one officer noted in his memoir after the conflict on the physical and sensory impact of the jungle environment: 'I remember that this was the first time that I realised how the jungle at night could play on your nerves, especially when you were tired and overwrought, so that a snapped twig seemed like an advancing platoon, and the soughing of the wind in the branches was if someone was whispering a word of command.'[81] Soldiers' war-strain was further compounded by the increasing brutality of warfare against the Japanese. As Tarak Barkawi highlights, various circumstances in the war in Burma intensified a feedback loop of ever more savage fighting, which generated extreme antagonism that was often narrated by participants in racialised terms.[82] More widely, the allies symbolically dehumanised the Japanese as pests in need of annihilation, which fed

[78] Pearson, '"Four-Legged *Poilus*", pp. 17-18.
[79] McEwen, 'He Took Care of Me', pp. 272-288.
[80] Phillips, 'Writing Horses into American Civil War History', pp. 160-181; Swart, 'Horses in the South African War', pp. 348-366; S. Maenpaa, 'Sailors and their Pets: Men and their Companion Animals aboard early Twentieth-century Finnish Sailing Ships', *The International Journal of Maritime History*, 28.3 (2016), pp. 480-495.
[81] Jeffrey, *Sunbeams like Swords*, p. 60.
[82] T. Barkawi, 'Peoples, Homelands, and Wars? Ethnicity, the Military, and Battle among British Imperial Forces in the War against Japan', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 46.1 (2004), p. 136.

into the performance of extreme acts of violence by both sides.[83] It was amidst these testing and, at times, brutal conditions that mules offered physical and emotional support for soldiers.

One way in which soldiers enrolled mules as a means of comfort and support was through turning the mule into a mascot or talisman. Frank Turner recalls how 'Maggie' became a well-known mule amongst his battalion. Serving as a mascot and a representative of the men and mules under his command, visiting dignitaries would meet Maggie, having heard stories about her exploits that were circulated through the British Imperial Forces in Burma. In this way, Maggie became a source of pride and comfort for the battalion.[84] Mule mascots are also evident in Charles Rojo's account of the first Chindit expedition. Narrating the retreat of Wingate's Chindit forces out of the Burmese jungle, Rojo, a war correspondent and author, described the difficulties one of the officers was having with his mule, Yankee, whose physical condition had significantly deteriorated. Yankee frequently slipped into deep pools of water and held up the speed of the column. But while other officers wanted to leave Yankee behind, Thompson, the column leader, refused. As Rojo described:

> Thompson firmly refused, insisting that a seasoned mountain artillery mule was worth his weight in gold. Secretly he had come to look upon Yankee as their good luck symbol, their talisman against disaster. Yankee had travelled with them every step of the way; he had survived the jungle and the Japs, hunger and thirst, river-crossings and mountain ranges. Somehow, Thompson felt, his future and theirs were linked. So long as Yankee stayed with them they were indestructible.[85]

Superstitious beliefs and the assignment of mascots or talisman were not uncommon for service personnel during the Second World War. Through such practices, service personnel formed coping mechanisms, which can be seen as attempts to exercise human agency in situations where they felt they had limited or no control over their futures.[86] For those like Thompson who took part in the first Chindit expedition, routes of speedy evacuation from behind enemy lines in the Burmese jungle were extremely limited. Instead, wounded soldiers were commonly left behind in the

[83] E. Russell, *War and Nature: Fighting Humans and Insects with Chemicals from World War I to Silent Spring* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
[84] Francis William Geoffrey Turner, Interview, 19 September 1991, IWM 12260/6.
[85] Rojo, *Wingate's Raiders*, p. 116.
[86] MacKenzie, 'Beating the Odds', pp. 382-400.

jungle. Talisman mules, such as Yankee, provided some soldiers with a psychological resource for coping with the extremities of their precarious situations.

Alongside becoming a mascot or a talisman, the actions and behaviours of mules offered soldiers opportunities for humour. Recent studies of soldiers' experiences in the trenches during the First World War highlight how various forms of humour were employed to emphasise courage and to cope with the extremities of combat.[87] Like performing superstitious routines, humour offered soldiers an opportunity to exert some personal control over their wartime experience.[88] During the First World War, militarised mules were commonly represented in satirical magazines, such as *Punch*, as funny and foolish animals, especially concerning tropes of obstinacy and mules throwing off their loads and kicking their handlers.[89] Similar tropes are expressed in the testimonies of British soldiers during the Second World War. For example, muleteers were commonly mocked for having had their two front teeth knocked out.[90] Wartime accounts also, humorously, describe the 'obstinacy' of the mule or the shared difficulties faced by mule and muleteer. W. A. Wilcox recalled overhearing a conversation between a soldier and an 'exasperated muleteer':

> If you was de-sexed and had to shag up those effing hills with two 'undred effing pounds on yer back, and all yer got to eat was a bag of grain an' bamboo shoots, you'd kick over the traces a bit.' The other sarcastically pointed out that he did have to climb the same hills with 65lb. on his back and what he ate was hardly steak and kidney pie.[91]

While the 'obstinacy' or actions and behaviours of a mule might have not always been humorous for muleteers, especially during moments of extreme tension or fatigue, it is clear that some soldiers drew upon these stereotypes of the mule as a site for producing humour. For the 'exasperated muleteer' in Wilcox's account, his response indicates that mules and muleteers were both downtrodden together. Making light of the situation may have been one way of coping with the difficulties that managing mules posed.

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[87] E. Madigan, ''Sticking to a Hateful Task': Resilience, Humour, and British Understandings of Combatant Courage 1914-1918', *War in History*, 20.1 (2013), pp. 76-98; J. Crouthamel, 'Cross-dressing for the Fatherland: Sexual Humour, Masculinity and German Soldiers in the First World War', *First World War Studies*, 2.2 (2011), pp. 195-215.
[88] T. Cook, ''I Will Meet the World with a Smile and a Joke': Canadian Soldiers' Humour in the Great War', *Canadian Military History*, 22.2 (2013), pp. 48-62.
[89] A. Varnava, 'The Vagaries and Value of the Army Transport Mule', pp. 428-434.
[90] Michael Gifford Dent, Interview, 8 June 2000, IWM 20361/1.
[91] W. A. Wilcox, *Chindit Column 76* (London: Longman, Greens & Co., 1945), p. 9.

Physical contact with mules could also alleviate strain, especially during moments of extreme tension. Ronald Nappin recalls an incident in the Burmese jungle where his unit was forced to hide from a passing Japanese column. To try and calm his mule and keep her quiet, he remembers stroking her nostrils.[92] Other testimonies indicate that muleteers communicated with their mules via touching or blowing up their nostrils, as a way of imitating how mules communicated with one another.[93] These tactile forms of cross-species communication were employed as a means to calm the mule. But it is also possible to interpret Nappin's stroking of his mule's nostrils as a way of alleviating his own stress, which, undoubtedly, would have been extremely high while hiding from a larger enemy force. As McEwen demonstrates with the aid of contemporary science and psychology, physical contact between soldiers and horses helped alleviate soldierly strain on the Western Front.[94] Nappin's act of stroking his mule's nostrils could then be seen as cross-species act of comfort that benefited both man and mule.

But it was not only during moments of extreme tension that mules provided support. During moments of downtime, when soldiers were in camp or resting, mules helped alleviate physical hardship and provided comfort. In the jungles of Burma it was common practice for soldiers to rest alongside their mules. This is depicted in the photograph taken by No 9 Army Film & Photographic Unit of a soldier resting alongside his mule after crossing the Chindwin River on 17 November 1944 (Figure 4.2). The framing of the photograph hints at the intimacy and bond shared between the two through the way the soldier is loosely holding the reins of the mule.

[92] Ronald Henry Nappin, Interview, 29 August 2000, IWM 20593/2.
[93] Charles Clarence Stadden, Interview, 27 January 2000, IWM 20010/5; Richard Waterhouse Hilder, Interview, 27 September 1999, IWM 19599/2.
[94] McEwen, 'He Took Care of Me', p. 280.

Figure 4.2

No 9 Army Film & Photographic Unit, 'British troops rest with their mules after crossing the Chindwin River near Sittaung in Burma, 17 November 1944', War Office, Central Office of Information and American Second World War Official Collection, SE 533, Imperial War Museum <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205205093> [accessed 22 November 2017].

Mules also helped alleviate soldierly physical discomfort when both were forced to sleep on the jungle floor. Geoffrey Button, a soldier on the second Chindit expedition, remembers sleeping alongside the mules – 'if you were lucky you managed to curl up with a mule with your head on its belly.'[95] Through such physical acts, mules could offer a form of cross-species intimacy. As the novelist and British wartime officer John Masters recalled in one of his wartime accounts about the famous mule Maggie:

> She never kicked, bucked, slipped – even on the worst ground – and she never lifted her tail while Hanley was under it. I will swear that she knew what she was doing and although I am not unduly fond of animals except cats, more than once I found myself, at night, hugging Maggie round the neck, stroking her and whispering into her ear what a good, brave, clever girl she was… beautiful, too, I would add, remembering her sex. She snickered coyly.[96]

In a front-line environment where the possibilities for intimacy were limited, such acts of cross-species physical contact signify opportunities for soldiers seeking self-assurance and comfort. This supports Emma Vickers' argument that physical same-sex – but not necessarily sexual – intimacies were a common feature of British military life during the Second World War.[97] Extending beyond the fellow serviceman or woman, mules offered a similar opportunity for physical intimacy. In the case of John Masters, for somebody who was 'not unduly fond of animals', Maggie provided this intimacy and a means of humanising the wartime environment.

Alongside the intimacy offered by mules, soldiers' testimonies also highlight the perceived important physical role mules played in enabling warfare. This was sometimes framed in respect to the mule's 'character'. In his wartime memoir, W.H. Warren, a former commander of an RIASC mule company, recalled an incident when they were under attack and the response of a particular mule. Quoting from a letter he had sent home immediately after the incident, he wrote:

> The other day we were caught by unexpected mortar-shell fire. One of our boys was wounded and let go the reins of his mules; but the mule, although hit in the leg itself, remained stock still until, on my noticing it was

[95] Geoffrey Clover Button, Interview, 10 June 1997, IWM 17471/2.
[96] J. Masters, *The Road Past Mandalay* (London: Michael Joseph, 1961; London: Cassell Military, 2003), pp. 215-6.
[97] E. Vickers, *Queen and Country: Same-Sex Desire in the British Armed Forces, 1939-1945* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), pp. 53-6.

> unattended, another driver took over. Don't let anyone tell you the mule is stupid. He's the most intelligent beast imaginable![98]

At the end of his memoir, he devotes a section exclusively to the mule. Here, he reflects on why there was a bond between soldier and mule: 'The drivers become fond of their charges because of the intelligence shown by the mule, and its ability to cope with changes in environment and work. They recognise too the mules' admirable quality of steadiness under fire.'[99] Other testimonies offer similar memories of the mules 'dogged endurance', even when they were wounded or injured with severe galls that had come from being overworked, overloaded and underfed.[100] For Dominic Neill, the mules were the 'heroes' of the Chindit expeditions, as 'they marched and marched and marched' while their galls were so severe that they smelt like 'rotting corpses'.[101] Attesting to the character of mules, these testimonies – somewhat anthropomorphically – eulogise the mules for their displays of courage, determination and stoicism. Such affectionate sentiments highlight that soldier-mule bonds were forged when the mule displayed the human characteristics of the soldier hero and fulfilled their role as brave and stoic fellow combatants.

The respect and affection held for mules also translated into acknowledgements of reliance and gratitude in post-war recollections. For those who served in the Chindits expeditions, where mules carried the majority of the soldiers' food, ammunition, and equipment, their importance for maintaining operations was significantly recognised. Testimonies include acknowledgements, such as, 'I know we couldn't have done it without the animals'[102], 'the mule was the whole key to everything'[103], and 'the mules were our God-send.'[104] This admiration for mules also extended outside of the ranks of those who worked directly with the animals. Ronald Bower, a medical officer, held a 'tremendous admiration' for both mules and muleteers.[105] Such admiration was not only framed in terms of physical support, however, but was also understood in relation to their role as live-savers. As Frank Tuner recalls, Maggie, a

[98] Private Papers of Major V H Warren, 15527, Memoir, Imperial War Museum, London, p. 26.
[99] *Ibid*., Appendix 1.
[100] Private Papers of Captain T W Groves, 15160, Memoir, Imperial War Museum, London, pp. 2-3; Walter Purcell 'Scottie' Scott, Interview, 27 November 1991, IWM 12352/4.
[101] Dominic Fitzgerald Neill, Interview, 10 August 1993, IWM 13299/2.
[102] Ronald Henry Nappin, Interview, 29 August 2000, IWM 20593/2.
[103] Francis William Geoffrey Turner, Interview, 19 September 1991, IWM 12260/1.
[104] Herbert Stephen Harwood, Interview, 18 September 2000, IWM 20769/8.
[105] Ronald James Bower, Interview, Unknown Date, IWM 23223/3.

'leader amongst the mules', carried an injured officer for days until they reached medical support.[106] These testimonies not only highlight how soldiers recognised the role played by mules, but also hint at how they understood that their lives were tied to the actions of their animals.

Casualties of War

The mobilisation of mules for the British war effort was, nevertheless, not always a smooth or unproblematic process. Both human and nonhuman factors 'blocked', or hampered, the successful utilisation of mules during the conflict. Although there are no official figures that account for how many mules were killed, wounded or suffered from various diseases during the military campaigns in Burma, thousands of mules succumbed to gunshot wounds, starvation, various gall problems and were inflicted by diseases such as surra.[107] This meant that thousands of mules became casualties of war. The deteriorating health of militarised mules, and in certain instances their deaths, led to soldierly anxiety and grief. This section demonstrates how the deployment of solider-mule partnerships for the war effort was fraught with various contingencies. It also reveals how certain mules were also repositioned as sources of human sustenance following their deaths, highlighting the wartime tensions between the mule as a refashioned form of militarised livestock and its prior status as a companion animal.

Maintaining the health and condition of mules was a cause of concern for the British Imperial Forces. This was especially for ATOs who needed to retain as many mules as possible for supply and operational purposes. In his wartime diary, M. Stratton, a commander of a RIASC mule company, notes how the death of six mules in a day's march during the retreat from Burma, which he suspected was caused by anthrax, put him 'in the devil of a stew', especially as he feared that the infection could also spread to his men. Pulling up his column by the side of the road to inspect his mules, he notes that he was assailed by General Alexander, the General Officer Commanding Burma, who was in 'fuming rage' at being held up behind his column: 'He took my name and unit and all, but I was far too worried and tired to care a

[106] Francis William Geoffrey Turner, Interview, 19 September 1991, IWM 12260/6.
[107] Clabby, *The History of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps 1919-1961*, pp. 133-141.

straw.'[108] In this instance, Stratton's anxiety surrounding the interconnected health of his men and mules surmounted any worries about offending a senior officer and the potential disciplinary implications. In a similar vein, Philip Malins noted his views on the problems faced by the overuse of mules and the subsequent development of galls and open wounds on their backs. However, while faced with the demands of keeping his column of mules operational, he worried about not giving the mules an opportunity to recover. As he notes, 'it was a good job mules could not speak or show pain like humans… I felt like a murderer loading mules in such condition.'[109] These examples highlight the uneasy tension between mule management and the demands of warfare – a tension that was laden with anxiety, guilt and strain.

This anxiety was compounded when mules started to show the strain of warfare on their bodies. Another wartime account, which focuses on the experiences of the King's Liverpool Regiment in Burma, highlights how the deteriorating condition of the health of mules shaped soldier morale. While the regiment had for the first time engaged with Japanese soldiers the previous day, the author describes how a 'general nerviness' had inflicted the soldiers due to the ailing condition of their horses and mules. While no mules had yet succumbed to wounds, disease, or had been euthanized, ten horses had been put down. Partially due to problems of maintaining appropriate feeding and grooming routines, the mules were described as 'in a sorry state, gone at the knees, and badly galled.'[110] As the conditions of mules deteriorated, some soldiers made drastic attempts to keep their mules alive and moving, even when they were physically and mentally suffering from the strains of combat. As the author noted:

> Our rations were non-existent, and we lay down tired and hungry. But not before we had given every possible attention to our one remaining mule. This was now a sorry sight. Bamboo as a sole diet did not seem to agree with it, and its galls were bad. It was bandaged with field dressings, bandages, four by two, and other odds and ends, and even had a puttee wound round its fore leg. It could not have been more carefully groomed if it had been due to step into the ring in the morning.[111]

[108] Transcript of Diary (April-June 1942), Private Papers of Lieutenant M Stratton, 15718, War Diary, Imperial War Museum, London, p. 19.
[109] P. Malins, 'The Indian Army Transport Mule', in B. Nicholls, P. Malins and C. MacFetridge (eds), *The Military Mule in the British and Indian Army: An Anthology* (Solihull: The British Mule Society, 2000), p. 68.
[110] D. Halley, *With Wingate in Burma* (William Hodge: London, 1944), pp. 78-9.
[111] *Ibid*., p. 115.

However, maintaining the health and condition of mules was also hampered by the gradual deterioration of soldiers' health and physical condition. Mules and soldiers were joint victims of the environment, long marches and a lack of food. This shared suffering is typified by Lowes Dalbiac Luard's wartime painting for the War Artists Advisory Committee (WAAC), which depicts two British soldiers struggling to help their laden pack mules move through boggy mountainous terrain in North Africa (Figure 4.3). While the painting vividly depicts the suffering of the mules, British wartime photographers and artists, in a form of displacement that would be more palatable for the observer, often presented the suffering or death of the animal as a substitute for portraying suffering or dead human bodies.[112] This specific painting symbolises the shared and connected suffering of both soldiers and mules. This joint suffering is also evident in wartime testimony. In Stratton's diary, he continually noted the deteriorating condition of his mules and men. Towards the end of their retreat out of Burma, he noted how the lack of animal rations, combined with the fact that his men were too tired to sufficiently rake jungle grass for them, meant 'the weaker mules hardly drag themselves down to the water.'[113] The condition and health and men and mules were, at times, intertwined.

[112] Gorrara, 'What the Liberator Saw', p. 305.
[113] Transcript of Diary (April-June 1942), Private Papers of Lieutenant M Stratton, 15718, War Diary, Imperial War Museum, London, p. 19.

Figure 4.3

L. D. Luard, ‘A Mountain Battery: In the Bog’, War Artists Advisory Committee commission, Art.IWM ART LD 4231, Imperial War Museum <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/17034> [accessed 22 November 2017].

Although soldiers worried about the health of their mules, they were also anxious about the prospect of leaving their animals, and were openly upset when they were forced to relinquish their charges either for slaughter or for release into the jungle. In *Wingate's Raiders*, Charles Rojo – an author and journalist who interviewed members of the Chindits and wrote an account of their expedition – describes the moment when a Burmese soldier was forced to relinquish his mules for slaughter at the end of the first Chindit expedition: 'All night he talked to them, caressed their heads, and prayed in a low monotone. At dawn he vanished into the jungle until it was all over. Afterwards he wept for three days.'[114] Rojo does not represent a similar reaction by British soldiers. This may in part be rooted in a longer tradition of imperial writings that portrayed the Burmese as being too physically and emotionally close to animals. [115] Moreover, compared with other colonised populations in India, East Africa and China, imperial representations often portrayed the Burmese as overly sympathetic to animals.[116] Nevertheless, memories of leaving mules behind provoked emotional responses in British soldiers. Some recall anxiety at the prospect of what would happen to their mules, with a level of scepticism that they would either be slaughtered at the end of hostilities, or a concern that they would fall into the hands of the Japanese who were perceived to treat animals cruelly.[117] Memories suggest that soldiers were openly upset by this prospect, and at the commencement of hostilities they would not leave their mules in Burma until the Army secured them passage back to India.[118] While for others, recalling leaving their mules in the jungle provoked an overwhelming emotional response some fifty years after the event.[119] These instances highlight the tensions between the mules' status as companion animal and as military animal, and demonstrate how such a tension could heighten anxiety and provoke distress both at the time and in memory.

This tension between the mule as a companion and as military property was explicit in representations and accounts where mules were euthanized. The purposeful killing of mules was sometimes framed in practical terms. For instance, Frank Stewart

[114] Rojo, *Wingate's Raiders*, pp. 130-1.
[115] Saha, 'Among the Beasts of Burma', pp. 910-32.
[116] J. Saha, 'Murder at London Zoo: Late Colonial Sympathy in Interwar Britain', *American Historical Review*, 121.5 (2016), pp. 1474-5.
[117] Private Papers of Major V H Warren, 15527, Memoir, Imperial War Museum, London, p. 36; Dominic Fitzgerald Neill, Interview, 10 August 1993, IWM 13299/4.
[118] Joseph Stretton, Interview, 5 September 1995, IWM 15740/2; Geoffrey Clover Button, Interview, 10 June 1997, IWM 17471/3.
[119] Dominic Fitzgerald Neill, Interview, 10 August 1993, IWM 13299/4.

recalled how some mules, which suffered from shrapnel and bullet wounds, could have been saved if it was possible to evacuate them to a veterinary hospital. However, the circumstances of the Chindit expeditions, a lack of communications and evacuation options meant that many mules died.[120] In other circumstances, mules were killed because they could impede the safe retreat of men. This occurred during the retreat of Wingate's forces back to India at the end of the first Chindit expedition in 1943. Rojo describes how Wingate ordered that all heavy equipment was to be left behind and that all the remaining mules were to be killed and eaten in order to ensure a speedy retreat. With a senior officer acting as executioner, Rojo describes how one soldier was ordered to strip naked and hold the animal's head while the officer cut the mule's carotid artery: 'There was an appalling surge of blood. The naked man stood up – a monstrous figure drenched in blood from head to foot. Veterans of three years of war slipped off, nauseated, into the jungle.'[121] The practical demands of killing mules was, as the reactions of veteran soldiers suggests, also laden with bodily repulsion, highlighting how the death of militarised animals could induce extreme distress.[122]

Memories of killing mules demonstrate how the act of execution was emotionally strenuous. In some testimonies, soldiers describe how they were advised or ordered to kill their mules, even if they did not wish to do so. For instance, Dominic Neill recalls that, towards the end of the first Chindit expedition, he was advised to kill some of the mules under his command for meat. While hesitant to perform the execution and feeling like a 'brute', he chose the 'sickliest' mule and justified the execution as an act of mercy.[123] As Joanna Bourke argues, British and American soldiers in twentieth century wars have employed differential criteria between legitimate and illegitimate killings as a way of maintaining their sanity and of insulating themselves against feelings of agonising guilt and numbing brutality.[124] While the execution of mules is different to the execution of human enemy combatants and civilians due to the highly conditional status of militarised animals at war, in Neill's case at least, he employs a strategy of justifying the execution as a

[120] Clabby, *The History of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps 1919-1961*, pp. 137-8.
[121] Rojo, *Wingate's Raiders*, pp. 129-130.
[122] For similar reactions to dead horses by veteran British officers in France during 1940, see, M. Alexander, 'War and its Bestiality: Animals and their Fate during the Fighting in France, 1940', *Rural History*, 25.1 (2014), p. 117.
[123] Dominic Fitzgerald Neill, Interview, 10 August 1993, IWM 13299/4.
[124] J. Bourke, *An Intimate History of Killing: Face-to-Face Killing in Twentieth-Century Warfare* (Granta Books, 1999), p. 229.

military command and as an act of mercy in order to legitimise the killing. [125] This may be a strategy employed to partially alleviate feelings of guilt for killing an animal that was both a companion animal and military property.

In other instances, however, the purposeful killing of mules appears to have been seen as inconsequential or fortuitous. Alexander Preston recalls an incident during the second Chindit campaign where he was forced to stop for a rest and lose his column to allow for two ponies and a mule to recover from over exertion. When a Brigadier approached and asked why they had stopped, the Brigadier took the decision to shoot the animals.[126] In another instance, Charles Stadden recalls how, while fighting in Italy, his unit had two mules that were difficult to handle and were, therefore, dangerous for their drivers. In an attempt to informally get rid of these mules, they were released on to enemy minefields.[127] These testimonies indicate that the purposeful killing of mules was not always, or at least did not appear to be, laden with emotional resonance, and that mules were subject to acts of slaughter that existed outside of official instruction.

During the first Chindit expedition, slaughtered mules also became meat for soldiers. This highlights how mules were repositioned as a form of human sustenance amidst the testing wartime conditions of the Burmese jungle. As Rojo describes in a chapter titled 'Mules for Breakfast', the retreating soldiers, who had been behind enemy lines for over three months, ate their remaining mules for breakfast, lunch and dinner over a period of six days. The few horses they had with them were also eaten on the seventh day.[128] As post-war accounts indicate, this retreat was particularly strenuous for the remaining soldiers. While the men faced torrential monsoon rain and were frequently under attack, many of them also became sick and were suffering from exhaustion. John Masters describes how over a period of 110 days during the expedition, the soldiers faced a dietary deficiency of 800 calories a day, due to supply problems, where each man lost between 30 and 40 pounds in weight.[129] Mules also faced the same problems and became increasingly lame. Dispatching these animals, and eating them, not only enabled the mobility of these retreating

[125] For an examination of the conditional status of militarised dogs utilised by the US armed forces in the Vietnam War, see, R. Hediger, 'Dogs of War: The Biopolitics of Loving and Leaving the U.S. Canine Forces in Vietnam', *Animal Studies Journal*, 2.1 (2013), pp. 55-73.
[126] Alexander Preston, Interview, 15 August 1995, IWM 15718/3.
[127] Charles Clarence Stadden, Interview, 27 January 2000, IWM 20010/3.
[128] Rojo, *Wingate's Raiders*, p. 130.
[129] Masters, *The Road Past Mandalay*, pp. 275-9.

soldiers, but also provided much-needed calories in the form of meat. As such, the draught energy they provided as transport animals was re-appropriated as calorific energy for soldier bodies.

However, the consumption of mules was not only a physical act. As Rachel Duffett highlights, the act of eating for soldiers went beyond calorific concerns, bridging the needs of both body and psyche, and intersecting between the physical and the emotional.[130] Eating mule or horsemeat crossed a cultural and symbolic taboo for British soldiers. Even when horsemeat was made available for Britons on the home front during the war amidst the demands of rationing, the sale of horsemeat was strictly regulated and the boundary between horsemeat and other meats was maintained and policed.[131] For soldiers, the bonds they had formed with these animals compounded this taboo. Accounts and testimonies indicate that while the consumption of mule meat provided not only physical, but also mental comfort, they also show how soldiers justified these acts and strategised which animals were to be killed and eaten. For instance, Frank Turner recalls how he only dispatched lame mules for meat for hungry soldiers, although, as a vegetarian, he did not consume the animals.[132] Similarly, as described previously, Dominic Neill only chose the 'sickliest'' mules to be killed for consumption. He recalls that the meat was unpleasant and he never ate mule meat again.[133] John Master's also describes how his medical officer, Doctor Whyte, reluctantly asked for a mule to be killed so he could feed the men he was treating.[134] These instances indicate how mule meat provided physical and mental sustenance for British soldiers. But they also show the complex ways in which soldiers justified these acts at the time and in memory, highlighting the uneasy tension between the mule as a companion animal and as a form of military livestock.

Conclusion

In May 1946, following suggestions that mules should be reserved a place of honour in the upcoming Victory Parade, an editorial in *The Times* paid tribute to the role of mules during the war. The article noted how the 'animal lover may even be

[130] R. Duffet, 'A Taste of Army Life', *Cultural and Social History*, 9.2 (2012), p. 254.
[131] C. Otter, 'Hippophagy in the UK: A Failed Dietary Revolution', *Endeavour*, 35.2-3(2011), p. 86.
[132] Francis William Geoffrey Turner, Interview, 19 September 1991, IWM 12260/2.
[133] Dominic Fitzgerald Neill, Interview, 10 August 1993, IWM 13299/3.
[134] Masters, *The Road Past Mandalay*, pp. 278-9.

indifferent to the idea', as compared to cats, dogs and horses, mules did not bear such a close relationship with man. Endorsing the mule, however, the editor celebrated their 'obstinacy', declaring:

> It is often obstinacy which encourages a man to persevere in what seems a forlorn and desperate hope, and if the mule can lay his ears back and dig in his heel, he can also march forward with a neat sure-footedness over country which seems impossible. He, the outcast and despised, can go where all the vast and intricate mechanical inventions of man are powerless to move, and a war which saw rocket projectiles crossing the seas and penetrating the stratosphere at a speed far greater than sound was not above relying in some measure on a method transport slow, primitive, and proved by the years. The horse has seen his glory fade since the opening days of the century, and cavalry now means mechanized cavalry, but the mule in 1945 did the work he was trained to do when the Soldiers Three were young recruits. If the mule finds his way into the procession on June 8 there will be a 'soundless clapping host' of the shades of old soldiers glad to pay their ancient friend and enemy the tribute due to him.[135]

This editorial statement summarises some conclusions that can be made from this chapter. It highlights that compared to other more celebrated militarised animals, such as pigeons and dogs, mules were culturally overlooked within wartime narratives of service. Instead, their quotidian use in warfare as a method of transport, contributed towards a lack of public and official recognition. But the statement also highlights how mules enabled and sustained warfare, especially within regions, such as Burma, in which mechanised transport proved futile. It also hints at the respect and affection soldiers held for mules. This signals how the war, in Burma at least, was a human-animal effort with both physical and emotional consequences.

However, this editorial also sanitises the role mules played in war, and overlooks the tensions and contradictions that were inherent within soldier-mule relationships. While the British military's deployment of mules enabled warfare, this was not always a smooth process, and both human and nonhuman factors blocked or hampered military objectives. Factors such as disease, hunger, wounding and death, combined with the mules' ability to kick out at handlers or refuse to move, proved problematic for muleteers and highlight how mules were also casualties of war. Simultaneously, from the construction of 'bonds' in training, the emotional investment soldiers placed in mules was also a site of tension. While mules provided

[135] *The Times*, 13 May 1946.

physical and emotional support and intimacy, by becoming mascots and/or through cross-species tactile encounters, they also provoked anxiety and grief. This highlights the uneasy binary between mules as military and companion animals. It also demonstrates the complex ways in which animals have shaped soldiers' experiences and memories. This highlights the need to extend our focus beyond the human when examining the ways humans have fought and coped with the stresses and strains of warfare, as well as for investigating the emotional dynamics of war. The effort involved in militarising mules, and simultaneously enrolling British muleteers, was therefore beset by human and nonhuman challenges.

Yet, these stresses and strains did not end once fighting stopped. Muleteers continued to express concern about their mules following demobilisation. The next chapter considers the legacy of these soldier-mule relationships, alongside the legacies of the other human-animal relationships explored within this thesis, to demonstrate how the human-animal war effort continued into the initial post-war years.

Chapter Five: Between Demobilisation and Commemoration - Human-Animal Relationships after the War, 1945-1955

Introduction

The previous four chapters have examined the effort involved in enrolling animals for war, and the ways in which the demands and circumstances of the Second World War shaped various human-animal relationships within Britain and the British Empire. They have demonstrated how animals and humans have been enrolled in tandem for the purposes of producing food and participating in combat. This chapter considers what happened to such human-animal relationships at the end of the war and asks – borrowing the title from Brian Brivati's and Harriet Jones's edited collection – 'what difference did the war make?'.[1] This question has generated a significant amount of historiographical debate, especially regarding the war's impact on society, culture, politics, the economy, and foreign relations and Empire. As Sonya Rose aptly summarises:

> The main debates about the period of World War II that have dominated a great deal of historical argumentation primarily concern the question of whether or not a new political consensus emerged during the war that was the basis for post-war social and economic reform; consideration of the extent of popular engagement in the dominant wartime national spirit and whether the nation became more unified across class and other social divisions; and controversy over whether or not the war constituted a turning point in various particular arenas of British life.[2]

The question of what difference the war made to human-animal relationships in the post-war period has yet to be explored. This chapter considers this question in relation to the specific human-animal relationships investigated in this thesis. It argues that three predominant themes emerge - demobilisation, continued enrolment (or mobilisation), and commemoration - which to greater or lesser extents shaped each of these specific human-animal relationships in the initial years after 1945.

Following the extensive militarisation of British civilians during the war, there was an equally extensive process of demobilisation. Historians have approached this topic in various ways. Rex Pope has examined the planning during the latter stages

[1] B. Brivati and H. Jones (eds), *What Difference did the War Make?* (Leicester University Press: London and New York, 1993).
[2] Rose, *Which People's War?*, p. 21.

of the war for the demobilisation of over five million British service personnel and the implementation of the process during 1945-6.[3] More recently, Martin Francis and Alan Allport have examined how the demobilised veteran was understood and represented in post-war Britain, and how veterans experienced and negotiated their return to civilian life.[4] These studies highlight how the process of demobilisation was, at times, haphazard, and offer insights into the ways in which the veteran was constructed in cultural terms as potentially 'maladjusted'. Moreover, they demonstrate how the return to civilian life could prove a challenge for many former service personnel, especially in regards to readjusting to family life and reintegrating into the civilian workplace. Moving beyond a predominant focus on white British males, David Killingray and Lucy Noakes have also explored the demobilisation of colonial soldiers and women in the auxiliary services.[5] This chapter draws inspiration from this historiography as it explores the ways in which enrolled human-animal relationships were formally and informally demobilised, and examines how this process of demobilisation was publically represented at the time and shaped by the humans involved within it.

But demobilisation, or a return to a semblance of peacetime normality, was not the only outcome for human-animal relationships at the end of the war. In some instances, those human-animal relationships that were mobilised during the war were retained in their wartime guises. The continued utilisation of these relationships intersects with other wartime policies and developments. For instance, the continued deployment of mules by British Imperial Forces was entangled within wider efforts by the British to maintain a military role and presence at a global level in the post-war period.[6] Likewise, in a similar vein to the continued use of civil defence in the face of the Cold War some militarised pigeons were retained and experimented upon in light of the need for intelligence purposes regarding emerging tensions between

[3] R. Pope, 'British Demobilization after the Second World War', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 30.1 (1995), pp. 65-81.
[4] M. Francis, 'A Flight from Commitment? Domesticity, Adventure and the Masculine Imaginary in Britain after the Second World War', *Gender & History*, 19.1 (2007), pp. 163-185; Francis, *The Flyer*, pp. 181-200; A. Allport, *Demobbed: Coming Home after the Second World War* (Yale University Press: New Haven and London, 2009).
[5] Killingray, *Fighting for Britain: African Soldiers in the Second World War*; Noakes, *Women in the British Army*, pp. 133-156.
[6] For an examination of the British Army and its role after 1945, see, D. French, *Army, Empire, and Cold War: The British Army and Military Policy, 1945-1971* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

the West and the USSR.[7] The re-utilisation of wartime human-animal relationships also occurred in the civilian sphere in regards to food production. In response to world food shortages and the continuation of rationing within Britain, domestic pig clubs were encouraged and continued to grow in scale until the early 1950s, and efforts to improve the productivity of dairy cattle was in part dependent on the continued involvement of scientists, veterinarians, pedigree farmers and the WLA. Moreover, militarised animals were also reimagined as symbols of peace or reconstruction. This chapter explores how human-animal relationships, which were reconfigured in response to the exigencies of total war, were retained, utilised and refashioned during peacetime. It signals that wartime efforts to enrol animals continued in various, refashioned guises.

The end of the war also saw the commemoration – and forgetting – of human-animal relationships that were mobilised for the war effort. Due to their lack of proximity to danger or fighting, the human-animal relationships that were enrolled for food production warranted little attention in commemorative terms. By contrast, in the years immediately after 1945, some memorials and commemorative acts celebrated the roles militarised animals played in the recent conflict and mourned their deaths. These included the awarding of dozens of Dickin Medals to pigeons and dogs between 1945 and 1947. It also included the unveiling of a few memorials, such as a sculpture of 'Jet of Iada', a German shepherd dog, in Calderstones Park in Liverpool in 1949 in recognition of his search-and-rescue role during the Blitz.[8] This was accompanied by two memorials that were dedicated to militarised pigeons in other areas of Britain. However, compared to the widespread memorialisation of horses following the Boer War, and the dozens of monuments erected in remembrance of animals during and after the First World War - which often memorialised horses - these three monuments were few and far between.[9] Likewise, mules were not commemorated in terms of either medals or monuments in post-war Britain. This sparsity may in part reflect the wider immediate post Second World War commemorative mood when there was a preference at the local level either for utilitarian war memorials - as shown by the inclusion of the names of the war dead

[7] For an examination of the continued use of civil defence in post-war Britain, see, M. Grant, *After the Bomb: Civil Defence and Nuclear War in Britain, 1945-68* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010); M. Grant, ''Civil Defence Gives Meaning to Your Leisure': Citizenship, Participation, and Cultural Change in Cold War Recruitment Propaganda, 1949-54', *Twentieth Century British History*, 22.1 (2011), pp. 52-78.
[8] Kean, 'Britain at War', p. 116.
[9] Swart, 'Horses in the South African War', pp. 348-366; Kean, 'Animals and War Memorials', pp. 247-50.

on First World War memorials - or instead to focus energies on reconstruction projects.[10]

In light of this commemorative context, this chapter examines the extent to which certain human-animal relationships were commemorated, while others were side-lined or forgotten in post-war Britain. It considers how a commemorative focus on the animal could marginalise or obscure the commemoration of the human, which was especially the case for the militarised pigeon and the civilian pigeon fancier. And it also reflects on how soldiers sought to remember their mules in spite of the marginalisation of these animals in dominant cultural narratives of the war.

Through the lens of these three main themes – demobilisation, continued enrolment/mobilisation, and commemoration – this chapter seeks to demonstrate how the war's impact on human-animal relationships was diverse and took various trajectories. This nuances what Hilda Kean regards as the 'back to normal' post-war shift in human-companion animal relationships. She argues that the wartime period was exceptional for bringing humans and companion animals closer together, but was followed by a return to pre-war conceptions of the disposability of these animals and the ways in which they were treated.[11] As she asserts: 'Animals may have boosted human morale in the war but for many they were now again just disposable things.'[12] By looking beyond the companion animal, we can observe the divergent legacies of the war on varying human-animal relationships differentiated along species lines. Moreover, these legacies were diverse and complex within particular human-animal species specific relationships, further complicating the notion of returning 'back to normal'. The remainder of the chapter will examine each of the human-animal relationships explored in this thesis separately, and will build on the specific themes and debates explored in their related previous chapters. It will conclude with a reflection on the commonalities and differences between the animals.

[10]Winter, *Remembering War*, p. 151. For a similar argument relating to a study of the United Kingdom National Inventory of War Memorials, see J. Furlong *et al*., '''They Shall Not Grow Old': An Analysis of Trends in Memorialisation based on Information held by the UK National Inventory of War Memorials', *Cultural Trends*, 45 (2002), pp. 30-3.
[11] H. Kean, *The Great Cat and Dog Massacre: The Real Story of World War Two's Unknown Tragedy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), pp. 162-170.
[12] *Ibid*., p. 163.

Pigs

In October 1945, an agricultural correspondent for *The Times* reported that the wartime revival of the pig club movement 'still makes progress.'[13] This progress was required in the immediate months following the end of war due to a world food shortage and the termination of Lend-Lease aid by the United States. Pig clubs still offered a means of increasing the production of meat, which was a commodity that remained scarce. As Frank Russell, secretary of the SPKC, wrote in the council's 1946 annual report: 'The valuable contribution made by pig clubs to the nation's food supplies must be kept up in this time of urgent need. The pig club movement can play a not inconsiderable part in lessening shortage at home and alleviating hunger and suffering abroad. We are still waging a war – against want.'[14] Adopting Beveridge's notion of the 'abolition of want' – from the influential Beveridge Report from 1944 – Russell redefined the symbolic importance of the pig club movement in post-war Britain. Instead of framing domestic pig keeping as a means of victory, he envisioned it as a movement that would play an important role in both domestic and international reconstruction. This symbolic redefinition was accompanied by little change in how pigs and pig clubs were materially utilised for aiding the nation's food supplies. Moreover, new pig clubs continued to be formed in the years following the war, and the overall numbers of domestic pigs and pig club members reached their height in 1950. This section, therefore, demonstrates how the wartime effort to revive domestic pig keeping did not end in 1945, but was in fact strengthened in the post-war period and only significantly declined at the end of rationing. The involvement of thousands of civilians in domestic pig keeping during the war was retained for the next decade.

The legacy of the war on domestic pig keeping practices was most explicitly played out in regards to the continued practice of salvaging kitchen waste for pigswill. This practice was not only vital for sustaining domestic pig keeping, but also held symbolic importance as part of the wider emphasis in propaganda which equated salvaging with wartime participation and victory. As the SPKC annual report (1947) noted: 'the bulk of the edible waste on which pig clubs have been fed has continued

[13] *The Times*, 22 October 1945.
[14] SPKC Annual Report 1946, NA, MAF 126/2, f. 14.

to be collected from the homes of members of clubs and their neighbours.'[15] This continued utilisation of kitchen waste by the domestic pig keeping movement was at odds, however, with a changing post-war ethos surrounding salvaging and disposability. Although the Second World War had changed the way people thought about recycling, this was a temporary measure rooted in the demands for national survival. Peter Thorsheim and Timothy Cooper argue that the strong association between salvaging and wartime sacrifice meant that the end of hostilities generally saw a return to pre-war patterns of waste disposal.[16]

Complicating this return to pre-war norms surrounding waste disposal, the post-war pig club movement not only continued utilising kitchen waste but also made it central to its identity. This was especially pronounced following an agreement with the MAF in 1948 whereby the SPKC was virtually banned from registering new clubs in areas where local authorities collected kitchen waste for the primary use of commercial pig-keepers and farmers. Even though the SPKC did not dispute this system, it opposed ineffective waste collection practices by local authorities. This was made evident in the SPKC annual report 1949:

> It is submitted that the effective utilisation of edible waste which is not being efficiently collected by local authorities must continue to be the primary aim of the pig club movement, also that personal collections of household waste by members of pig clubs are far more effective than those of local authorities using the street-bin system. The collection of this domestic waste should therefore be encouraged through the medium of pig clubs. This would have little or no effect on Local Authority collections (with which, it should be emphasized, it has never been the Council's policy to compete) as at present operated, but would ensure that material being wasted, would be effectively utilised.[17]

As this statement indicates, the SPKC members positioned themselves as the most effective means of utilising kitchen waste. As such, they embodied the wartime values and practices associated with salvaging, and subsequently retained and promoted these values in the post-war period. This complicates Thorsheim's and Cooper's arguments that the end of hostilities saw a return to pre-war patterns of waste disposal.

[15] SPKC Annual Report 1947, NA, MAF 126/2, f. 3.
[16] Thorsheim, *Waste into Weapons*, p. 262; Cooper, 'Challenging the 'Refuse Revolution'', pp. 730-1.
[17] SPKC Annual Report 1949, NA, MAF 126/2, ff. 6-7.

Alongside an active utilisation of kitchen waste, the domestic pig club movement was also aided during the post-war period by the MAF's approach to pig farming across the commercial sector. Rather than return to pre-war intensive indoor methods, the ministry encouraged farmers to expand their wartime practices of keeping a few pigs on every farm and aided this through heavy subsidies to encourage increased output.[18] Although some Wiltshire bacon curers objected on the grounds that heavy, fat pigs produced poor bacon, specialist forms of production were thwarted by limited pig food imports, memories of inter-war health problems and a lack of building materials.[19] Moreover, the continuation of wartime methods and concepts of efficiency led to the trebling of pig meat production between 1948 and 1954, and through the use of surplus labour and accommodation at a time of high prices producers kept their costs low and made a profit.[20] This was enabled by the government's intention to expand the pig farming sector, even if this meant allowing animals of inferior quality to become part of the breed when, prior to the war, they would have been slaughtered.[21] This approach of keeping a few pigs on every farm mirrored the small scale efforts of pig clubs which fed their pigs on the same meal allowances as farmers, as well receiving further benefits from utilising kitchen waste. Furthermore, like their farmer counterparts, pig clubs benefited from state subsidies in 1950 as meal rations for pigs were increased.[22] Consequently, pig clubs benefited from a post-war MAF that was ready to subsidise and support small scale efforts to produce heavy, fat pigs rather than specialist indoor intensive methods and breeds. The wartime practice of rearing 'inferior' quality pigs continued in the immediate years after the end of the conflict, to the benefit of the domestic pig club movement.

The extension of wartime legislation post-1945 also enabled pig clubs to continue operating in spaces where pig keeping may have otherwise been restricted. Regulation 62B of the Defence (General) Regulations, 1939, which suspended restrictions on the keeping of pigs, hens and rabbits by tenants and occupiers of land, was extended until July 1951. This was subsequently replaced by Section 12 of the Allotments Act, 1950, which continued the suspension of restrictions on the keeping

[18] Woods, 'Rethinking the History of Modern Agriculture', p. 178.
[19] *Ibid.*
[20] *Ibid.*, pp. 178-9.
[21] Martin, *The Development of Modern Agriculture*, p. 121.
[22] SPKC Annual Report 1950, NA, MAF 126/2, f. 1.

of hens and rabbits but no longer covered pigs. Instead, as a circular from Whitehall to local authorities noted, it was now within the discretion of local authorities to decide whether it was suitable to keep pigs on their housing estates. The circular supported continued pig keeping:

> In dealing with applications of this kind local authorities will no doubt bear in mind that it is still necessary in the national interest to encourage domestic food production and will not withhold their consent if it can be given without detriment to the maintenance of satisfactory standards of amenity and public health.[23]

Local authorities post-1945, however, did not always reciprocate the state's support for pig keeping. Mirroring the tensions between domestic pig keepers during the war, pre-war anxieties associating urban pig keeping with public health and nuisance still prevailed. Subsequently, the SPKC was continually forced to defend its members against the decisions of local authorities who summoned domestic pig keepers to court under the Nuisances provisions of the Public Health Act, 1936.[24] The regular success of the SPKC in defending its members in court demonstrates that urban pig keeping was still perceived to be in the national interest, even if it remained a site of tension between pig club members and local authorities surrounding the question of public health.

Although domestic pig keeping was seen to be in the national interest, the continued expansion of the pig club movement post-1945 was reliant on the economic benefits offered to individual members by the hobby – highlighting a continuation of the financial benefits that were afforded during the war years. This is clear in an investigatory report conducted in 1952 on the Nine Elms Police Station pig club in London. Following complaints from a nearby dogs home about the smell emanating from the premises where the pigs were kept, a report was conducted by a chief inspector in order to ascertain the function and legality of the pig club since its inception in 1941 until the present (1952). The report found that through selling tens, if not hundreds, of pigs annually to the MOF, the nine members of the club were making a considerable financial profit, especially when they also acquired free

[23] Circular from Whitehall to all Housing Authorities, Development Corporations, County Councils, in England, 'Keeping of Pigs, Hens and Rabbits on Local Authorities' Housing Estates' (28 August 1951), Keeping of pigs, poultry and rabbits on local authorities' housing estates: papers leading up to draft circular (1951-1955), National Archives, Kew, HLG 101/310.
[24] SPKC Annual Report 1946, NA, MAF 126/2, f. 14.

pigswill content from nearby cafes and restaurants to supplement their state granted pig meal allowance. While the report concluded that the club was in the most part legal, and beneficial for improving the nation's bacon stocks, it also found that the police officers were not declaring their profits to authorities for income tax purposes and doubted the legality of this position. Consequently, it was advised that the pig club should be shut down.[25]

These activities, which were potentially illegal, were accompanied by explicit black market activity. This was particularly notable in 1947 where there was a rapid growth in the number of slaughter licences issued to pig clubs. At the same time, the prices that store pigs were sold for at auction increased significantly as compared to the price of finished pigs sold to the MOF. As Mark Roodhouse argues, this was indicative of the avoidance and evasion of bacon and meat rationing.[26] Farmers and pig clubs co-operated to evade the rationing system where farmers sold fat pigs destined for the MOF distribution centres as store pigs, which were not controlled or regulated by the state. Pig clubs then bought these fat pigs, which were labelled as store pigs, at auction, and slaughtered them immediately after falsely declaring that they had reared the pig for the previous four months in order to secure a slaughter licence.[27] In response to allegations of illicit activity, proponents and supporters of the pig club movement defended their movement. An agricultural correspondent for *The Times* sought to distance this 'Illicit Pig Traffic' from the activities of the pig club movement, stating that 'recognised' pig clubs were not involved in this traffic, as their transactions were recorded by clubs and were known to the MOF.[28] Nevertheless, as demonstrated in Chapter One, pig clubs provided individuals with an opportunity to evade rationing regulations and secure meat amid widespread shortages. It is likely that these practices continued post-1945.

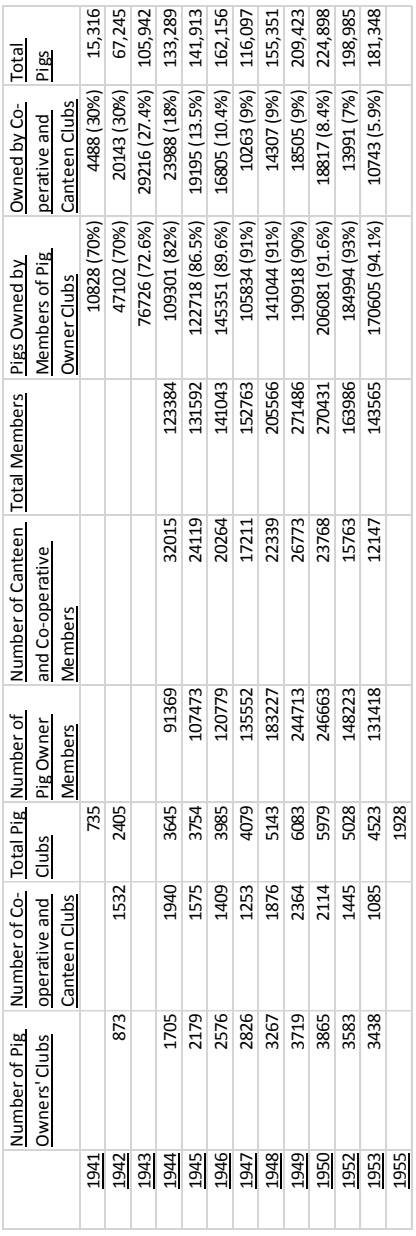
The various political, economic and social factors that supported domestic pig keeping and the pig club movement in the post-war period were reflected in the expansion in numbers of pigs, pig clubs and pig club members. The table below provides the quantitative details of this expansion (Figure 5.1). Between 1945 and 1950 the overall number of pig clubs and pig club members increased annually, and

[25] Report on Nine Elms Co-operative Pig Club by Chief Inspector 'L', 19 July 1952, NA, MEPO 2/6516. The file does not indicate whether the pig club shut down because of this.
[26] M. Roodhouse, *Black Market Britain 1939-1955* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 42-3.
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 24.
[28] *The Times*, 3 November 1947.

the number of pigs only declined in 1946-7, primarily due to a temporary drastic reduction in pig meal rations.[29] The growth in the pig club movement was mainly underpinned by a steady increase in the numbers of pig owners' clubs and members. In contrast, the numbers and memberships of co-operative and canteen pig clubs initially declined after the war and then grew again from 1947-8 until 1950, but their numbers never reached their wartime heights.[30] This may, in part, be linked to a post-war lack of popular attention paid to the co-operative and canteen style pig club. During the war, co-operative pig clubs, such as the one formed by dustmen in Tottenham, were celebrated in the wartime press. They were subsumed within, and constitutive of, the wartime domestic food and salvaging campaigns, which turned the 'ordinary' citizen on the home front into an active wartime participant. After the war, the association between co-operative/canteen pig keeping and wartime participation was irrelevant, rendering them relatively absent from government or press publications or rhetoric. The post-war continuation of the pig club paralleled the individualistic configuration of the pig club in the late nineteenth century when clubs were formed to provide mutual insurance.[31]

[29] SPKC Annual Report 1947, NA, MAF 126/2, f. 1.
[30] Pig owners' clubs consisted of members who each owned a pig but reared these collectively and partook in a mutual insurance agreement, while canteen and co-operative pig owners' clubs consisted of members who owned all of the pigs co-operatively.
[31] R. Malcolmson and S. Mastoris, *The English Pig: A History* (Hambledon and London: London, 2001), pp. 58-9.

Figure 5.1



	Number of Pig Owners' Clubs	Number of Co-operative and Canteen Clubs	Total Pig Clubs	Number of Pig Owner Members	Number of Canteen and Co-operative Members	Total Members	Pigs Owned by Members of Pig Owner Clubs	Owned by Co-perative and Canteen Clubs	Total Pigs
1941			735				10828 (70%)	4488 (30%)	15,316
1942	873	1532	2405				47102 (70%)	20143 (30%)	67,245
1943							76726 (72.6%)	29216 (27.4%)	105,942
1944	1705	1940	3645	91369	32015	123384	109301 (82%)	23988 (18%)	133,289
1945	2179	1575	3754	107473	24119	131592	122718 (86.5%)	19195 (13.5%)	141,913
1946	2576	1409	3985	120779	20264	141043	145351 (89.6%)	16805 (10.4%)	162,156
1947	2826	1253	4079	135552	17211	152763	105834 (91%)	10263 (9%)	116,097
1948	3267	1876	5143	183227	22339	205566	141044 (91%)	14307 (9%)	155,351
1949	3719	2364	6083	244713	26773	271486	190918 (90%)	18505 (9%)	209,423
1950	3865	2114	5979	246663	23768	270431	206081 (91.6%)	18817 (8.4%)	224,898
1952	3583	1445	5028	148223	15763	163986	184994 (93%)	13991 (7%)	198,985
1953	3438	1085	4523	131418	12147	143565	170605 (94.1%)	10743 (5.9%)	181,348
1955			1928						

Table - Containing details from SPKC annual reports 1941-1955[32]

[32] The information from this table has been taken from the SPKC annual reports 1941-1955 in: Small Pig Keeper's Council – Annual Reports (1941-1952), NA, MAF 126/2; Small Pig Keeper's Council; Minutes of Annual General Meetings; Annual Reports (1953-1961), National Archives, MAF 126/14. Missing information is due to a lack of details within the files and reports.

Although the pig club movement began to decline after 1950, it significantly reduced in scale following the abandonment of feeding-stuffs rationing from August 1953 and the end of meat rationing in 1954. After August 1953, members of pig clubs no longer received pig-meal allowance from the state, pig keepers were not guaranteed a buyer from the MOF, and state funding allocated to the SPKC significantly decreased.[33] By 1955, the total number of pig clubs had reduced to 1,928, which was its lowest total number since 1941. However, it is difficult to quantify the extent of this decline as the SPKC annual reports for 1954, 1955 and 1956 contain little information on the number of pigs and the number of pig clubs and their memberships.[34] But police archival records and local newspaper reports offer a means of tracing when some pigs clubs were disbanded. For instance, the police-run pig club in Hyde Park was still in operation in 1953 but had ended by 1955.[35] Similarly, the *Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser* reported on the Balsall and District pig club's annual dinner in November 1953, where members were reportedly concerned about the impact of the end of rationing and believed that the government would attempt to 'wipe them out.'[36] Two years on, the same newspaper reported again on the club's annual dinner, where it was noted that in terms of rearing pigs the club had become 'practically dormant' but members still continued to meet annually for the social occasion.[37] These instances suggest that the economic viability of domestic pig keeping, through participating in pig clubs, was significantly affected by the end of rationing.

On the whole, the end of the war saw the continuation of the pig club movement for a further decade, which was enabled by the MAF's continued encouragement to producers to rear 'inferior' quality heavy-fat pigs to meet the demands of rationing and post-war meat shortages. As such, the wartime effort to produce certain standards of pig and to practice certain forms of pig production – through the pig club movement and the utilisation of kitchen waste as pigswill – was not exclusive to the war years, but extended from 1939-1955. But in spite of this continuation after 1945, the symbolic importance attributed to domestic pig keeping and the pig club movement during the war years did not continue during peacetime. As the perceived

[33] SPKC Annual Report 1953, Small Pig Keeper's Council; Minutes of Annual General Meetings; Annual Reports (1953-1961), National Archives, Kew, MAF 126/14, ff. 2-3.
[34] No annual reports or details about pig clubs were located in the archives post 1956.
[35] Memorandum about the present position of the Hyde Park pig club (1953), NA, WORK 16/1562.
[36] *Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser*, 20 November 1953.
[37] *Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser*, 9 December 1955.

urgency of the war effort subsided, the distinct association between domestic food production and active wartime citizenship ended. Instead, the general growth of the pig club movement until 1950 can be attributed to the practical demands and economic incentives of acquiring meat amidst the scarcity of rationing, which became unviable when the MOF was no longer a guaranteed buyer for the domestic pig keeper.

But this significant decline by the mid-1950s in wartime-instigated co-operative and domestic pig clubs did not necessarily mean the end of the war's wider legacies for influencing methods of pig production. As Abigail Woods notes in a challenge to the dominant narrative that the post-war decades saw a widespread turn towards indoor-intensive and specialised forms of pig production, systems of pig farming remained diverse. New cutting techniques pioneered by Wall's meat company in the 1950s enabled heavy ungraded pigs, which were derived from outdoor farms based on wartime feeding practices, to be used for processed meat products sold by a growing number of supermarkets.[38] This suggests that while the war's impact on pig production continued until the end of rationing, more nuanced legacies continued thereafter. The next section explores the ways in which the post-war state continued to intervene in food production, involving some of the same actors as in wartime. In the case of cattle these actors were state officials, scientists, veterinarians, pedigree farmers and members of the WLA.

Cattle

In 1946 the state released a WLA recruitment film titled 'Straight from the Cow's Mouth'. Narrated by two 'talking' cows, the film stressed the urgent need for the 'gentle female touch' within dairy farming and the continued importance of the WLA in the post-war drive to increase food production.[39] As this film demonstrates, the recruitment and perceived importance of the WLA did not cease at the end of the war in 1945. But it was not just the WLA who continued to be deployed by the state to work with cattle and improve their productivity; the state also continued to call on scientists, veterinarians and pedigree farmers – to greater or lesser extents - to help

[38] Woods, 'Rethinking the History of Modern Agriculture', pp. 180.
[39] Central Office of Information, 'Women's Land Army Recruitment: Straight from the Cow's Mouth', Central Office of Information Propaganda Film, 18 July 1946, British Pathe Film Archive < https://www.britishpathe.com/video/womens-land-army-recruitment/query/straight+from+the+cows+mouth> [accessed 22 November 2017].

increase the milk output of dairy cows. This section examines the post-war legacies of these various human-cattle relationships. It briefly demonstrates how scientists, especially those related to artificial insemination, gained a greater role than before within dairy farming in the immediate years after 1945. It also briefly charts the end of a state-supported scheme for veterinarians in 1950, but signals that this was not the end of their place on the dairy farm. It then argues that the impact of war on notions of cattle productivity influenced the pedigree farming community through an analysis of the Royal Show of 1947. This is followed by an analysis of the post-war deployment of the WLA, arguing that the place of the WLA on the post-war dairy farm continued to challenge gender boundaries, remained under the semblance of the 'duration only', and persisted to be a site of contestation. It concludes with an examination of the demobilisation of the WLA in 1950 and a brief reflection on the ways in which cattle shaped the post-war lives of former Land Girls.

The state-led effort to improve the wartime productivity of cattle continued, and expanded, in the initial post-war years. In particular, the wartime state-supported scientific interventions over dairy cattle were strengthened through the introduction of an extensive programme of progeny testing, which was facilitated by the MMB under the guidance of the MAF's Livestock Division, and through the completion of the National Artificial Insemination service.[40] These post-war state-supported schemes built on the wartime repositioning of various 'expert' human actors on the wartime dairy farm, and helped further cement the network of artificial insemination scientists, veterinarians, cattle breeders and farmers, who collaborated on testing and artificially breeding cattle. This had a significant impact on the spatial and physical ways in which dairy cattle reproduced. Greater numbers of dairy cattle reproduced via the laboratory post-1945.[41] Moreover, scientific interventions over dairy cattle increased the cow's productivity during these years. Although the number of cows remained relatively static, the average milk output per cow increased from 2,300 litres in 1946-7 to 3,381 litres in 1959-60.[42] The state's impetus to enrol scientists to intervene on wartime dairy farms continued into the post-war years, normalising the place of artificial insemination within dairy cattle breeding and improving the average milk output of the cow.

[40] Wilmot, 'From 'Public Service' to Artificial Insemination', pp. 435-6; Martin, *The Development of Modern Agriculture,* pp. 111-117.
[41] Wilmot, 'From 'Public Service' to Artificial Insemination', p. 436.
[42] Martin, *The Development of Modern Agriculture*, p. 112.

The state-supported enrolment of veterinarians on wartime dairy farms also continued into the post-war period. The impact of ill health on cattle productivity had become a national concern during the war, which offered and created the scope for new state-endorsed veterinary interventions. This led to the wartime creation of a veterinary service scheme that served to 'medicalise' cattle breeding in Britain.[43] Nevertheless, as Abigail Woods demonstrates, this scheme was disbanded in 1950, as the MAF, the National Farmers Union and the National Veterinary Medical Association attempted, but failed, on several occasions to negotiate a replacement for the wartime scheme. But the failure of this scheme did not mean the end of increased veterinary interventions onto wartime farms. Rather, it was believed that dairy farmers would continue to seek veterinary input regarding the health and productivity of their cattle. As a result, veterinarians no longer required a formal scheme to promote their employment or justify their place on the dairy farm.[44]

The normalisation of veterinarians on the dairy farm was also accompanied by the normalisation, or at least adoption, of state-defined notions of cattle productivity within the pedigree farming community. As argued in Chapter Two, the state attempted to utilise pedigree farmers as leaders who would adopt, circulate and practice new ideas surrounding cattle productivity. Although members of the pedigree farming community either contested these ideas or adopted them in a piecemeal fashion during the war, through an analysis of reports on the Royal Show in Lincoln in July 1947, it is apparent that leaders within the pedigree farming community were, to a large extent, embodying and espousing these ideals. This was an event that brought together the pedigree farming community and demonstrated how they perceived, or defined, 'pedigree'. It was also the first Royal Show since 1939 and was attended by a record number of visitors, including the King and Queen.[45] In an account of the event, Alec Hobson - the former Secretary for the SPKC and, in 1947, Secretary for the Royal Agricultural Society of England (RASE) - stated:

> With all breeds judging by eye is practised, although as regards dairy cows, milk yields given on the day immediately preceding the Show will be specially considered in the Milking Trial. It should be emphasised that

[43] Woods, 'The Farm as Clinic', pp. 462-487.
[44] *Ibid*.,, pp. 482-3.
[45] *The Times*, 3 July 1947, p. 2.

> performance as a condition of entry is now an accepted principle, and that health is regarded as no less important.
>
> The 1947 Show is the first at which cattle are restricted to those from attested, supervised or licensed T.T. herds, or those certified as having passed the tuberculin test. Further plans in the direction of disease-free stock have already been fixed. In 1947 only attested and other designated cattle will be eligible; and from 1948 onwards the risk of contagious abortion will be removed by tests or vaccination with S.19.
>
> Apart from health, economic factors consequential upon performance are now receiving careful attention in relation to Royal Shows. The prize list for the Lincoln Show is a reflection of marked progress in this direction. The principal dairy breed societies not only provide special prizes for high-yielding cows and in-milk heifers, but in some cases minimum standards of entries and their antecedents are insisted upon. Here again the R.A.S.E. is not content to allow its great Show to lag behind. The problem of fixing standards for all dairy and dual-purpose breeds is being tackled; conferences with breed societies are to be held so that future shows will encourage the firmer alliance of performance to pedigree, and both to health.[46]

This extract demonstrates how the RASE adopted wartime notions of cattle productivity in the post-war period. In the first instance, although dairy cows were also judged in aesthetic terms, the introduction of milk output performance as a condition of entry signals a shift in principle within the judgement of pedigree dairy cattle, moving away from aestheticism towards productivity. This was accompanied by the introduction of restrictions regarding tuberculin testing, highlighting how the qualifications associated with pedigree were redefined in relation to a minimum standard of cattle health. Furthermore, by adopting some of the practices of the 'principal dairy breed societies' regarding minimum standards of competition entry, the RASE also sought to standardise cattle along the lines of performance (or productivity). In order to help pedigree farmers improve the health and milk output of their cattle, the RASE also hosted members from the new National Agricultural Advisory Service at the Royal Show to provide demonstrations of how new scientific methods of breeding and milking were applied in practice.[47] This furthered the contact between state-funded scientists and pedigree farmers, signalling how

[46] A. Hobson, 'The Royal Show, Lincoln, 1947', *Agriculture: The Journal of the Ministry of Agriculture*, 54.4 (1947), p. 146.
[47] *Ibid.*, p. 147.

wartime efforts to utilise pedigree farmers to practice and circulate scientific redefinitions of productivity continued into the post-war period.

Yet, Hobson also acknowledged that values such as 'ancestry', which were central to notions of pedigree and the identities of pedigree farmers, remained part of the Royal Show:

> But when all is said about performance and fashionable pedigree – fashionable because of proved worth in commerce – ancestry still means much. The Royal attracts the overseas buyer largely because of the aggregation of breeding stock second to none as regards aristocratic pedigrees. It is truly the shop window of British breeders and has done much to earn this country the reputation of being the stud farm of the world.[48]

The attention paid to 'ancestry' at the Royal Show indicates that the historic links between class and national identity, and pedigree cattle breeding, still pervaded within the spectacle of the Royal Show.[49] Mirroring the argument made in Chapter Two, this demonstrates that the pedigree farming community did not wholly adopt state-led wartime redefinitions of cattle productivity in the initial post-war years. Instead, the pedigree farming community utilised both traditional and modern methods of judging pedigree, which ultimately shaped how these animals were bred and harnessed.

Alongside state efforts to influence and utilise pedigree cattle farmers in the post-war years, the state continued to deploy the WLA to help maintain and improve the productivity of cattle. Following the war, representations of the WLA often framed them as a constituent part of this effort for productivity. This was made explicit in portrayals in 1946 of a WLA operated milk relief scheme in East Sussex. The scheme functioned whereby WLA relief-milkers were billeted in a central location to several farms. They then rotated between the farms daily to provide assistance to dairy farmers. An article in the *Picture Post* noted that while some farmers were cautious at first about allowing strangers onto their farms, they were reassured as they reportedly found that these WLA members to be 'expert milkers' and 'full-trained farm-workers'.[50] This indicates that the experience gained by Land Girls

[48] *Ibid*., p. 146.
[49] For histories linking pedigree breeding with the construction of identity centred on class hierarchies, see, Ritvo, *The Animal Estate*, pp. 45-81; Grundy, 'The Hereford Bull', p. 86; Walton, 'Pedigree and Productivity in the British and North American Cattle Kingdoms before 1930', pp. 448-9.
[50] *Picture Post*, 16 February 1946.

throughout the war years meant that by 1946 they were depicted as 'experts' and were utilised as such. Moreover, personal testimonies suggest that some Land Girls were offered modern and technical jobs in dairy farming in the early post-war years. For instance, her local County Agricultural Executive Committee offered Muriel Brind a role as a Milk Production Officer. This role involved visiting farms and testing the quality of milk.[51] Similarly, Mavis Young was offered a role with the MMB after the war, but had to turn the opportunity down to look after her sick mother.[52] These modern and technical roles align with how agriculturalists envisaged a future for women in agricultural occupations that placed intelligence and technical skill over physical labour.

Nevertheless, the promotion campaign for the milk relief scheme in East Sussex did not necessarily challenge gender boundaries within dairy farming. This was hinted at in the title of the *Picture Post* article, 'The Farmer Boy's Day Off', which highlights that the main focus of the article was to demonstrate the benefit of the WLA scheme for providing male dairy farm workers with one day off a week.[53] Likewise, the WLA produced a short recruitment film to accompany the milk relief scheme. Covering the same ground as the *Picture Post* article, the film celebrated the fact that the WLA ensured that these male farmworkers could be provided with one day off a week, and was intended as a means of not only applauding the work of the WLA, but also attracting men to come and work on dairy farms.[54] Representations of this scheme, therefore, highlight how the state continued to stress the role of the WLA in dairy farming, even if this continued in its wartime guise of being for a temporary period and for the primary purpose of supporting male farm workers.

Moreover, the employment of Land Girls on certain dairy farming roles at the end of the war raised tensions. This was especially the case when Land Girls were employed as milk recorders – a role that involved the recorder visiting a number of farms and testing the quality and quantity of milk produced – to the perceived detriment of disabled ex-servicemen. Numerous cases were brought to the MMB in

[51] M. Brind, 'Cows', BBC People's War, A5929257 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/57/a5929257.shtml> [accessed 22 November 2017].
[52] M. Young, 'Life in the Women's Land Army', BBC People's War, A4112533 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/33/a4112533.shtml> [accessed 22 November 2017].
[53] *Picture Post*, 16 March 1946.
[54] Central Office of Information, 'Women's Land Army Recruitment: Early One Morning', Central Office of Information Film, 3 June 1946, British Pathe Film Archive <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/early-one-morning/query/early+one+morning>[accessed 22 November 2017].

early 1945, when disabled ex-servicemen, some of whom had previous dairy farming experience but could no longer carry out physically demanding roles on the farm, were seen to be overlooked as milk recorders while Land Girls were appointed in the role.[55] In response, the MMB made promises to employ disabled ex-servicemen as a priority where possible.[56] This response aligned with the state's wartime, and post-war, aims and policies surrounding rehabilitation. The Disabled Persons (Employment) Act (1944) principally viewed disabled people through their employability, which was embedded within the State's wider conception that rehabilitation was only achieved when a disabled person was in work.[57] Although the cases of Muriel Brind and Marvis Young indicate that WLA members were still offered such modern and technical dairy farming roles, the preference to employ disabled ex-servicemen echoes the wider argument that the opportunities offered to women during the war did not represent any fundamental change in opinion or expectation among employers.[58] It also aligns with the key post-war image of the female wartime worker or member of the auxiliary forces returning to a normality that was symbolised by domesticity.[59]

The perception of WLA as a temporary, or 'duration only', organisation ultimately led to it being formally disbanded at the end of November 1950. This was primarily because of a shift in the numbers and gendered roles of the agricultural workforce, as well as significant decline in the numbers of WLA personnel. From 45,000 personnel at the end of the war in 1945, the numbers of Land Girls dropped to under 15,000 by September 1949. At the same time, the number of regular male agricultural workers increased from 448,000 in 1945 to 526,000 in 1949, and the number of casual female agricultural workers increased from 83,000 to 101,000 over the same period. Conversely, the number of regular female agricultural workers declined from 68,000 to 56,000. As a MAF report concluded, this increase in casual

[55] Letter from F. Wynne Owen (Regional Marketing Officer for MMB in Worcester) to J.L. Davies (Assistant General Manager of MMB) 6/1/1945, Employment of Women's Land Army members as milk recorders 1942-1946, National Archives (Kew), JV 7/78. Letter from Letter from J.L. Davies (Assistant General Manager of MMB) to J.L. Davies (Assistant General Manager of MMB) 20/2/1945, Employment of Women's Land Army members as milk recorders 1942-1946, National Archives (Kew), JV 7/78.
[56] Letter from J.L. Davies (Assistant General Manager of MMB) to F. Wynne Owen (Regional Marketing Officer for MMB in Worcester) 22/1/1945, Employment of Women's Land Army members as milk recorders 1942-1946, National Archives (Kew), JV 7/78. Letter from J.L. Davies (Assistant General Manager of MMB) to Letter from J.L. Davies (Assistant General Manager of MMB) 23/2/1945, Employment of Women's Land Army members as milk recorders 1942-1946, National Archives (Kew), JV 7/78.
[57] Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 176-209.
[58] P. Summerfield, 'Approaches to Women and Social Change in the Second World War', B. Brivati and H. Jones (eds), *What Difference did the War Make?* (London: Leicester University Press, 1993), pp. 63-79.
[59] Noakes, *Women in the British Army*, p. 135.

female agricultural workers and decline in regular female agricultural workers was an indicator that (male) farmers were more inclined to hire casual female workers. This meant that the demand for regular working urban WLA members was no longer required.[60] It also hints at the post-war return to 'domesticity', moving away from a larger regular female workforce.

But the demobilisation of the WLA did not necessarily mean the end for those members who wished to remain in agriculture. The MAF issued a guide to members of the WLA staying on the land, which offered guidance on becoming regular agricultural workers, welfare and education. The latter included courses on dairy husbandry, as well as other parts of agriculture and horticulture.[61] For those WLA members who wished to remain working with dairy cattle, there was therefore both encouragement from the state and potential discouragement from the farming community.

The destruction of most of the WLA archive materials means it is difficult to trace how many WLA members remained working on dairy farms following the demobilisation of the service in 1950. In a study that focused on the WLA in the Craven District of North Yorkshire, 18 former Land Girls were interviewed, and only one remained in dairy farming after this period when she married a dairy farmer.[62] Personal testimonies, alongside the sharp decline in numbers of WLA members by 1950, also suggest that most Land Girls left farming following the demobilisation of the organisation. Joan Collinson recalls that in 1945, those Land Girls that were married or engaged mainly left the WLA. She remained in the service until February 1949 and left to get married.[63] Similarly, Muriel Brind, who worked as a Milk Production Officer post 1945, remained in her role until getting married to an agricultural merchant in 1951.[64]

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[60] *The Times*, 1 November 1949. Memorandum – Recruitment and Training of Women; NFU Deputation (16/2/1950), Women's Land Army (WLA): policy on continued employment of women in agriculture; disbandment of WLA (1949-1952), National Archives (Kew), MAF 186/15.
[61] Booklet – 'To Members of the W.L.A. Staying on the Land', Issued by the MAF November 1950, Women's Land Army (WLA): policy on continued employment of women in agriculture; disbandment of WLA (1949-1952), National Archives (Kew), MAF 186/15.
[62] M. H. Bullock, 'The Women's Land Army 1939-1950: A Study of Policy and Practice with Particular Reference to the Craven District', (Unpublished PhD Thesis: University of Leeds, 2002), pp. 231-256.
[63] Joan Collinson, Interview, 31 January 2001, IWM 21008/9.
[64] M. Brind, 'Cows', BBC People's War, A5929257 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/57/a5929257.shtml>[accessed 22 November 2017].

In spite of the difficulties in tracing the post-war lives of former Land Girls, it is possible to see the legacy of the war and the WLA in shaping farming gender roles in the 1950s. For example, in her examination of the Young Farmer's movement in post-war Britain, Sian Edwards identifies that while the movement constructed a distinct model of femininity, this was often framed within a language of opportunity and equality. She further notes that the experience of the Second World War had led to conditions whereby 'girls were encouraged to see the importance of their role as one half of a modern and mutually rewarding farming partnership.'[65] This suggests that although many WLA members chose to leave farming, the impact of war on farming gender boundaries influenced future constructions of rural and agricultural femininity.

Though it is clear that Land Girls left the WLA for a multitude of reasons, cattle did play a role in determining why some members left the service. This was the case for Iris Hobby, who – as mentioned in an earlier chapter – was seven months pregnant when she received a kick from a cow and nearly lost her unborn child. Prior to being kicked, she had been trying, without success, to get her release papers signed. WLA officials were urged by this near fatal accident to release her from the service instantaneously.[66] In this circumstance, the kick from a cow prompted Hobby's demobilisation.

Following demobilisation, cattle continued to influence the lives of former Land Girls who had returned to occupations and lives outside of dairy farming. For some, the physical demands of handling cattle during their time in the WLA led to future health problems. As C.B. Davenage recalls:

> When I see farming today, with huge fields with the hedges all removed… Every field had a name and you knew exactly where you were working, we knew the names of all the cows, everything is so mechanised… The work was very hard and I am sure there are many who still suffer as a result of the hours spent in the cold and wet, working whatever the weather every hour of daylight, doing manual labour for which I think we were not given sufficient

[65] S. Edwards, ''Nothing gets her goat!': The Farmer's Wife and the Duality of Rural Femininity in the Young Farmers' Club Movement in 1950s Britain', *Women History Review*, 26.1 (2017), p. 29.
[66] Iris Hobby, Interview, 29 January 1999, IWM 18274.

> recognition or credit when the war ended. I myself suffered with my hands for many years and also have arthritis now.[67]

For others, revisiting and/or re-performing their wartime roles some fifty years since their time in the WLA induced feelings of pleasure and nostalgia. As Audrey Bagnall recollects:

> … my next door neighbour leaned over the garden wall and asked if I could help him with his newly acquired goat. His wife was out for the day and he had tried to milk the goat but could get nothing. I told him that I knew very little about goats and had never milked one, but I used to be able to milk a cow. So working on the principle that a goat is like a cow – only smaller and fires on half as many cylinders – I went round to make the acquaintance of 'Twinkle'. With a little talking to, a bit of patting, a pan of feed for her and some nice warm water to wash her udder, I got down to milking her. My neighbour was quite impressed when the first squirts of milk started coming into the pail. 'Twinkle' and I both gave a sigh of relief, I felt the years roll back, the milk came freely in a rhythmic duet frothing into the pail. It is forty-five years ago since I learnt to milk, I remember it all as if it were yesterday.[68]

For C.B. Davenage, the physical demands of handling cattle were seen to have contributed towards the suffering and development of arthritis in her hands. For Audrey Bagnall, meanwhile, re-performing milking, albeit not on a cow, prompted wartime memories and a sense of nostalgia. These examples hint at how cattle shaped both the bodies and memories of former Land Girls in the decades following their time in the service. This demonstrates how the war's enrolment of human-animal relationships not only carried on as a site of contestation and reaffirmation of farming gender boundaries in the post-war period, but also held longer-term positive and negative legacies for the individuals who served in the WLA. The next section moves away from examining the war's impact of human-animal relationships regarding food production, to question its impact on those mobilised for fighting.

Pigeons

On 19 July 1945, the pigeons of No. 3 Field Force of the British Army Pigeon Service – a branch of the Royal Corps of Signals – were ceremoniously released from the Olympic Stadium in Berlin on their last operational flight in North-west

[67] Quote taken from J. Mant, *Land Girls: Women's Voices from the Wartime Farm* (Stroud: Amberley, 2012), p. 176.
[68] *Ibid.*, pp. 176-7.

Europe. The pigeons carried messages to the commanders of the Royal Corps of Signals – the Princess Royal and Major General L. G. Phillips at the War Office – and to the Mayor of Brussels and the Burgomaster at The Hague, with the message:

> All ranks of the Royal Corps of Signals serving in North-West Europe with 21st Army Group desire to pay their Colonel-in-Chief their loyal and dutiful respects. This message has left Berlin while the Three-Power Conference is meeting and comes to you by pigeon. As the birds fly on their last operational duty in North-West Europe, may they symbolise to the world the reopening of free communications between the nations and may they bring the assurance that in peace, as in its first major war, the Royal Corps of Signals proudly offers you its utmost service.[69]

As this message indicates, these militarised pigeons were refashioned from messengers of war to symbols of peace and post-war reconstruction. They became, as one local newspaper article described, 'Doves of War', and symbolically embodied the association between doves and peace.[70] This resembles the post-war symbolic and material repurposing of other military resources and technologies into civilian sphere, such as the refashioning of DDT as a weapon of war to a form of pest control that could help society prosper in peacetime.[71] However, militarised pigeons were not always refashioned as symbols of peace during their demobilisation in the immediate post-war years. Indeed, 'hero' pigeons were commemorated and employed for utilitarian reconstruction practices and thousands of 'ordinary' veteran pigeons were donated to ex-servicemen and Dutch pigeon fanciers, or were disposed of. Moreover, the infrastructure of the NPS and a small number of pigeons were maintained for experimental and intelligence purposes in anticipation of a future national emergency. These various early post-war trajectories highlight how the demobilisation of militarised pigeons was not a uniform or expedient process. Rather, it was a process that was entangled with new forms of symbolic and material repositioning.

The initial post-war commemoration of military pigeons, to an extent, reflected historiographical interpretations of the commemorative mood of the period. In comparison to the commemorative practices that immediately followed the First

[69] Message reported in *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 20 July 1945. The national press also reported on the ceremony, see *Manchester Guardian*, 20 July 1945; *Manchester Guardian*, 24 July 1945.
[70] *Daily Record*, 20 July 1945; B. Allen, *Pigeon* (London: Reaktion, 2012), p. 120-1.
[71] E. Russell, *War and Nature: Fighting Humans and Insects with Chemicals from World War 1 to Silent Spring* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 165-183.

World War, Jay Winter notes that commemoration following the Second World War was generally muted. This was reflected most explicitly in the fact that the names of the dead were predominantly added to existing war memorials. There was also a preference at the local level for utilitarian war memorials, useful donations and/or projects, which fitted the post-war climate of national reconstruction.[72] The war memorials that were newly erected were often small and usually discrete plaques, such as that unveiled at St Paul's Church in Knightsbridge in 1948 for the fifty-two members of the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry who had died.[73] The two memorials that were erected for pigeons in the post-war period fitted a similar mould in that they were both relatively small, utilitarian in purpose, and formed at the local level through the public funding campaigns of the actress, director and novelist Nancy Price. The first of these was a memorial to 'warrior birds who gave their lives on active service, 1939-1945', which was erected in the garden of All Hallows-by-the-Tower church in London and unveiled in 1946 (see Figure 5.2). *The Times* offered a description of the memorial:

> The memorial consists of a small rowan tree trunk with forked branches set in a rough stone base which forms two pools for water: between the branches at different heights are wooden troughs for crumbs or other public offerings, and on the branches are birds carved in wood- pigeons, canaries, and sparrows.[74]

The second memorial called 'Warrior Birds' was unveiled in Beach House Park in Worthing, West Sussex in 1951. This was a stone based monument that was built to represent a fairy glen with water bubbling out between rocks into a drinking pool. It was inscribed: 'In memory of Warrior Birds who gave their lives on Active service 1939-45 – and for the use and pleasure of living birds.'[75] Both memorials mirrored early twentieth century traditions of memorialising animals in that they were not only made for the consumption of humans, but were also offered practical devices for birds to actively engage with, such as a drinking pool of water and a wooden trough for crumbs.[76] In this way, the construction of these memorials were aligned with wider utilitarian forms of post-war commemoration. However, the sculptor's

[72] See footnote 10 of this chapter.
[73] Pattinson, McIvor and Robb, *Men in Reserve*, pp. 290-1.
[74] *The Times*, 5 October 1946.
[75] For details of this memorial see, Imperial War Museum Online Memorial Database < http://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/40121>[accessed 22 November 2017].
[76] Kean, 'Animals and War Memorials', pp. 244-7.

intention to serve the practical needs of birds also highlights how post-war commemorative efforts went beyond the service of humans alone.

Figure 5.2

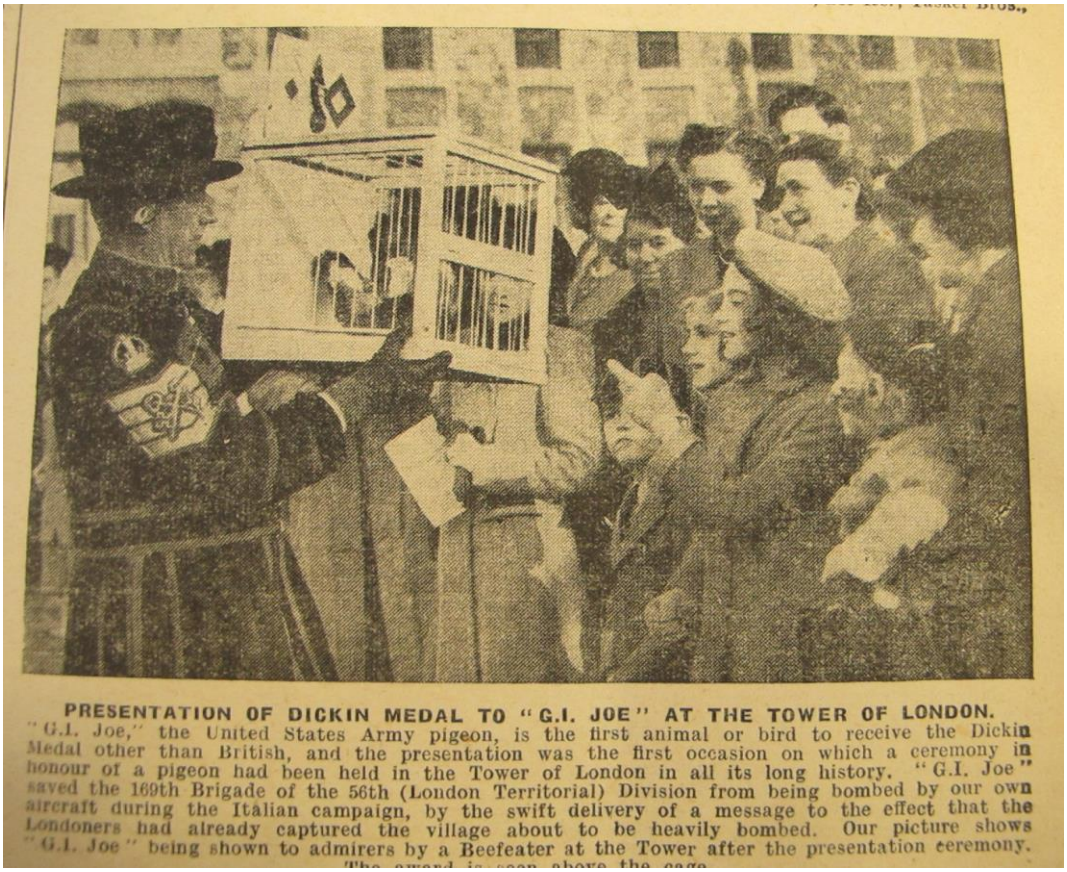
DEDICATION OF MEMORIAL AT ALL HALLOWS TO THE WAR PIGEONS
Left to Right: Mr. Tisshaw, a helper of the Rev. P. B. "Tubby" Clayton; Mr. Mann, designer of the memorial; Miss Nancy Price and Wing Cdr. W. D. Lea Rayner.

'Memorial at All Hallows, Tower Hill', *Racing Pigeon*, 12 October 1946.

Alongside these small-scale forms of memorialisation, military pigeons were also celebrated and commemorated through official public ceremonies and an increase in media attention. Although the press reported on the role pigeons played in helping locate RAF aircrew and their use on D-Day from 1943 onwards, it was only in the final months of the war, and after it had ended, that the varied roles they played were made explicit due to secrecy and security issues. For instance, *Illustrated London News* reported in September 1945 on how pigeons brought secret intelligence messages back to Britain from civilians and members of the resistance within occupied Europe, and included photographs and transcripts of the messages received. The article concluded in a celebratory and commemorative tone: 'Normally, birds race in great numbers; these messengers travelled alone, matching in some sort the courage and solitary endurance of those brave men who penned their messages.'[77] These 'heroics' were officially commemorated through the awarding of the Dickin Medal, which, for pigeons such as G.I. Joe - who was accredited with saving the lives of 100 allied soldiers on D-Day - meant an award ceremony at the Tower of London in November 1946 that was attended by hundreds of spectators as well as two army generals and a RAF wing commander (Figure 5.3).[78] Moreover, the honorary status publically accredited to veteran pigeons offered the press and pigeon fancying community with an opportunity to utilise the status of these pigeons for charitable purposes. The *People* and the *Racing Pigeon* both arranged numerous Victory Shows at the Royal Horticultural Hall in London, which displayed veteran and Dickin Medal winning pigeons, to raise money for the 'Star and Garter Home for Disabled Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen' and for the 'Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street'.[79] These Victory Shows highlight how some veteran pigeons were continually utilised in the immediate post-war years as live exhibits to help raise donations for charitable and reconstruction projects.

[77] *Illustrated London News*, 2 September 1945.
[78] *The Times*, 5 November 1946; British Pathe Newsreel, 'A Pigeon Gets a Medal', 7 November 1946, British Pathe Film Archive <http://www.britishpathe.com/video/a-pigeon-gets-a-medal/query/pigeon+dickin+medal> [accessed 22 November 2017.
[79] Details about these Victory Shows were reported in the national press. See, *The People*, 18 November 1945; *The Times*, 27 November 1945; *The Times*, 7 December 1946; *The Times*, 18 January 1947.

Figure 5.3



PRESENTATION OF DICKIN MEDAL TO "G.I. JOE" AT THE TOWER OF LONDON.

"G.I. Joe," the United States Army pigeon, is the first animal or bird to receive the Dickin Medal other than British, and the presentation was the first occasion on which a ceremony in honour of a pigeon had been held in the Tower of London in all its long history. "G.I. Joe" saved the 169th Brigade of the 56th (London Territorial) Division from being bombed by our own aircraft during the Italian campaign, by the swift delivery of a message to the effect that the Londoners had already captured the village about to be heavily bombed. Our picture shows "G.I. Joe" being shown to admirers by a Beefeater at the Tower after the presentation ceremony.

'Presentation of Dickin Medal to 'G.I. Joe' at the Tower of London', *Racing Pigeon*, 16 November 1946.

For the vast majority of veteran pigeons, however, demobilisation would not involve exhibition at Victory Shows. Instead, the British and United States militaries, through co-operation with the NPS, sought to donate several thousand of their un-needed pigeons to recently demobilised servicemen who had been pigeon fanciers prior to the war and had been registered with a homing union or club.[80] This policy remunerated servicemen who had given up their pigeons upon entering the military, and helped with the reconstruction of pigeon racing at home by filling empty lofts.

However, this policy also exposed a discrepancy in treatment between servicemen and civilians at the end of the war. Although NPS civilian volunteers received certificates of appreciation from the War Office and Air Ministry for rearing and donating their pigeons to the war effort, they were generally overlooked in early post-war forms of remuneration and commemoration.[81] NPS members continued to receive an allocation of pigeon feed from the state until September 1948 when the service disbanded, but they received no form of remuneration after the war for their pigeons that had been killed or did not return.[82] Likewise, letters-to-the-editor in the *Racing Pigeon* by non-NPS civilian pigeon fanciers expressed discontent at the lack of corn available for their birds. As members of the Homing Unions who had contributed pigeons to the armed forces, some members felt their wartime role was 'forgotten', especially in regards to a post-war lack of corn ration for their birds. As one correspondent wrote:

> Members of the various Homing Unions in the U.K. have made a grand war effort in the supply of pigeons to stock Service lofts at home and overseas. In addition they have provided and trained birds for special work with Intelligence Services. It was the pigeons of the little man which carried messages from the underground movement on the Continent to this country and, incidentally, brought the first news of the location of the 'Flying Bomb' sites, which enabled us to cripple the enemy attack on London. His pigeons, too, were used at Dieppe, D-Day landing, Falaise Pocket and Arnhem. They have carved their names in letters of gold in the Hall of Fame. What did the little man charge the State for this wonderful service? Just nothing. He gave his birds their services and his spare time for the love of his country. It is with mixed feelings that one hears of fanciers in occupied territory being

[80] *The Times*, 3 July 1945.
[81] Two printed certificates (1p each) issued by the War Office (December 1945) and the Air Ministry (May 1946) to R W Payne in recognition of his contribution as a National Pigeon Service Volunteer, Private Papers of R W Payne, 10284, IWM Archive, London.
[82] The Times, 13 August 1948.

> allowed a corn ration by the Germans, yet with the war in Europe over, the man who gave so much for so little is unable to obtain even limited corn for his birds.[83]

Moreover, their role in the war effort was often side-lined in post-war acts of commemoration. For instance, both of the memorials erected for military pigeons did not mention or make any association with the pigeon fancier. As Juliette Pattinson *et al.* identify, with the exception of firemen and those in the merchant navy, men in reserved occupations were written out of the wartime national story post-1945.[84] Civilian pigeon fanciers were also written out of the wartime national story in popular culture and forms of commemoration. This exposes, in a continuation of the war years, how the demobilisation of pigeons remained structured around hierarchical distinctions between the military and civilian spheres.

In spite of a lack of post-war public recognition, however, the NPS and pigeon fancying community were active within processes of reconstruction. As previously mentioned, the staff at the *Racing Pigeon* organised Victory Shows for charitable causes and the NPS helped organise the redistribution of veteran pigeons to ex-servicemen. These efforts were accompanied by attempts to help the reconstruction of the pigeon fancy in Holland where roughly two million pigeons had been appropriated or killed by the German army during occupation. The press reported that at the end of November 1945 around 2,000 pigeons, which had served in the Middle East, were returned to London where they were handed over to Dutch pigeon fanciers as a gift from the NPS.[85] The Dutch were reportedly so grateful for this gift that the pigeons were given a reception on arrival, which included a brass band.[86] Similarly, in a spirit of international co-operation, W. D. Lea Rayner, who had overseen the RAF Pigeon Service during the war and who was appointed as President of the British Isles Division of the International Congress of Pigeon Fanciers following demobilisation, wrote to the Secretary of State for Air in December 1946 on behalf of Dutch pigeon fanciers who sought the restitution of their pigeons from Germany. He noted that his concern for the Dutch pigeon fanciers was born out of his knowledge about the role played by Dutch agents and pigeon fanciers during the war, and how they helped relay vital information concerning the

[83] *Racing Pigeon*, 23 June 1945.
[84] Pattinson, McIvor and Robb, *Men in Reserve*, pp. 287-328.
[85] *The Times*, 3 July 1945.
[86] *Nottingham Evening Post*, 28 February 1946.

V rockets.[87] Through such gestures to the Dutch by the NPS and British pigeon racing community, pigeons were re-enrolled materially, as a means of reconstructing the Dutch pigeon fancy, and symbolically, as embodiments of international co-operation and gratitude.

The refashioning of the former military pigeon as a symbol of international co-operation and gratitude was embedded within wider associations between the dove and peace. As the beginning of this section highlights in regards to No. 3 Field Force of the Royal Corps of Signals releasing their pigeons from the Olympic Stadium in Berlin, military pigeons were symbolically transformed into doves of peace. For centuries the dove was used as a symbol of peace, but towards the end of the war, and into the post-war period, this symbolism was made explicit both within Britain and on the international stage. For instance, in his poster *Dove of Peace*, which was created for the MOI in 1944, Frédéric Henri Kay Henrion utilised the dove and the olive branch as signs of forthcoming peace and victory for Britain. The poster depicts a dove, with an olive branch held within its mouth, swooping over a silhouette of the British mainland.[88] Similarly, on the international stage, Pablo Picasso's design of the dove on the poster for the World Peace Congress in 1949 explicitly placed the dove as a modern, and post-war, symbol of peace and global co-operation.[89]

However, while former military pigeons were represented as doves of peace, a small number were retained in secret by the state in anticipation of a future national emergency. The militarisation of these pigeons during peacetime challenges the dichotomy of the pigeon as messenger of war or symbol of peace.[90] This process began in August 1945 when the War Office considered how the state could potentially militarise pigeons on a national basis during a national emergency, and made suggestions for the organisation of a special pigeon service in peacetime that would continue, and build upon, the developments made during the war when

[87] Letter from W.D. Lea Rayner to the Secretary of State for Air (18 December 1946), Correspondence about the restitution of Dutch Property 1946-1947, National Archives, London, Records of the Foreign Office (hereafter NA, FO) 943/45/1.
[88] F. H. K., Henrion, 'Dove of Peace', Poster, Art.IWM ART 15760, Imperial War Museum, London <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/12621> [accessed 22 November 2017].
[89] Allen, *Pigeon*, p. 121.
[90] For a reflection on this dichotomy, see, Allen, *Pigeon*, p. 121.

utilising pigeons for intelligence purposes.[91] Following several months of negotiations, an 'Ad Hoc Committee on Carrier Pigeons' was formally composed in April 1946, which was made up of representatives of the Admiralty, War Office, Air Ministry, Secret Intelligence Service, and the Security Service, along with a representative from the civilian pigeon fancy. The functions of the committee were to ensure that the experience gained by the use of pigeons during the war was not lost; to be responsible for matters concerning research and development in connection with carrier pigeons; to maintain liaison between departments and to collect and collate information on developments in the civilian pigeon fancy; to instigate Service research into special equipment; and to consider and collate information on foreign pigeon racing and developments on the use of pigeons by foreign powers.[92] For the British state, therefore, pigeons continued within the immediate post-war period to be envisioned as a potential means of subversive communications, as well as ways of gathering information for intelligence and security purposes.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Carrier Pigeons performed various experiments in order to maintain and develop the potential use of pigeons for intelligence gathering. These included an experiment whereby homing pigeons were flown near an atomic plant in order to test whether their homing instinct and future breeding ability was affected by exposure to radiation. Simultaneously, the committee considered whether any sensory mechanism could be attached to the pigeon, which would denote whether the pigeon had flown through an area that was exposed to gamma ray emissions.[93] Although the committee files do not explicitly state the reasons for this experiment, it is possible to deduce that its aim was to see whether homing pigeons could be used to identify where foreign powers were producing atomic energy.

In a similar vein, through the influence of the committee's civilian pigeon fancier who was the editor of the *Pigeon Racing Gazette*, the committee endorsed and helped create long distance pigeon races that went from East-West rather than the

[91] Report by the War Office on the Organisation of the Pigeon Service 1939-45 with special reference to the Special Section of the Army Pigeon Service together with recommendations for future policy and organisation, August 1945, Post War Policy on the Organisation, Control and Maintenance of Pigeons 1945-1947, National Archives, London, Records of the Security Services (hereafter NA, KV) 4/229.
[92] Ad Hoc Committee on Carrier Pigeons – Terms of Reference, Memorandum by Joint Intelligence Committee, 15 April 1946, NA, KV 4/229.
[93] Report by Captain J. Craiger - 'Columbia – Gamma', 26 July 1949, Post War Policy on the Organisation, Control and Maintenance of Pigeons 1947-1949, National Archives, London, Records of the Security Services (hereafter NA, KV) 4/230.

usual South-North – France to Britain route – through the formation of a Berlin pigeon flying club. Moreover, through the medium of the *Pigeon Racing Gazette*, the committee was anonymously able to encourage pigeon breeders to rear birds along the lines of the colour and make-up of their eyes, as this form of breeding was accredited with the production of pigeons that were capable of travelling longer distances.[94] These actions were intended to prepare the British pigeon stock with birds that would be advantageous to the intelligence services in a future national emergency centred on early Cold War lines, inasmuch as they could carry information – possibly about areas producing atomic energy – over long distances from east to west Europe. Civilian homing pigeons were then envisioned as a potential latent force, which could be made ready for mass mobilisation at a moment of war or national emergency.

Nevertheless, these experiments were short-lived. In May 1950 the Ad Hoc Committee on Carrier Pigeons was disbanded on the premise that developments in communications technologies meant that the potential utilisation of pigeons for military and intelligence purposes was regarded as redundant.[95] Alongside the demobilisation of the NPS in February 1948, which provided the infrastructure for organising and supplying the domestic pigeon populace for active service, the winding up of the Ad Hoc Committee saw the end of the British state's formal relationship with pigeons for military and intelligence purposes. This formal end to the state's relationship with pigeons was also accompanied by the winding down of public forms of commemoration towards veteran birds. The final Dickin Medal awarded to a military pigeon was presented in February 1947, while W.H. Osman's book dedicated to their wartime service and the monument to Warrior Birds in Worthing were both published and unveiled in 1951.[96] For the remainder of the twentieth century, although individual pigeon fanciers and those who worked with pigeons in the military would have remembered the wartime role of pigeons, their wartime role was largely absent within public forms of commemoration or within popular representations of the conflict. Subsequently, their wartime role, like other groups such as civilian men, women and colonial service personnel, was practically

[94] Minutes of the 4th meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Carrier Pigeons, 18 September 1947, Post War Policy on the Organisation, Control and Maintenance of Pigeons 1945-1947, NA, KV 4/229.
[95] Minutes of the 46th meeting of the Joint Intelligence Committee, 5 May 1950, Post War Policy on the Organisation, Control and Maintenance of Pigeons 1949-1953, National Archives, London, Records of the Security Services (hereafter NA, KV) 4/231.
[96] Osman, *Pigeons in World War II*.

forgotten within British cultural memory of the war until a re-emergence of public interest at the turn of the twenty-first century.[97] In a similar vein, mules were also forgotten in the British cultural memory of war.

Mules

Colonel C.H.S Townsend, a British veterinary officer who served in Italy, noted in regards to coming across an Italian Army sculpture in Rome of a militarised mule in the summer of 1944:

> The statue had been erected by Italian mountain artillery troops, not to commemorate their unit, but as a mark of appreciation to the mule in one of their campaigns… Going home that evening the thought struck me, 'We British talk a lot about cruelty to animals, and hold ourselves up to others as a nation of animal lovers, yet I doubt if we shall ever see a statue in Hyde Park erected to the honour of horses and mules lost in war![98]

Similarly, an editorial in *The Times* from May 1946 – as discussed in the conclusion of the previous chapter – paid tribute to the role played by mules during the war, but noted how the 'animal lover may be indifferent to the idea', as compared to cats, dogs and horses, mules did not bear such a close relationship with man.[99] Both of these testimonies grapple with a tension central to the demobilisation of mules at the end of the war. On the one hand, mules were practically absent in post-war forms of public commemoration and celebration, especially when compared with other militarised animals such as pigeons and dogs. On the other, soldier testimonies highlight how the process of demobilisation was laden with tributes for the role played by mules during the war, as well as anxiety and grief surrounding the act of separating with their animals. This section will briefly explore this tension before considering how mules were also re-appropriated for post-war reconstruction projects or were maintained for future military service. Like the demobilisation of pigeons, therefore, the demobilisation of mules was marked by forms of continued mobilisation and re-appropriation.

Mules were relatively forgotten in post-war forms of commemoration. This absence was most explicit in regards to the fact that no mules were awarded the Dickin

[97] For an overview of the 'memory boom' in the late twentieth century see, Noakes and Pattinson, 'Introduction: 'Keep Calm and Carry On'', p. 17.
[98] C.H.S. Townsend, 'Extracts from the Diary of a Veterinary Officer in the M.E.F. and C.M.F', *The Journal of the Royal army Veterinary Corps*, 19.2 (1948), p. 40.
[99] *The Times*, 13 May 1946.

Medal, while awards were made to 32 pigeons, 17 dogs and three horses during the war and in the immediate post-war years. This may be in part attributed to the mules' lack of proximity to the British home front. Although some military mules were trained within Britain, the majority were reared, trained and deployed in Burma, North Africa and Italy. In comparison, the majority of the pigeons awarded the Dickin Medal received it for exploits over the North Sea or within Western Europe, while over half of the dogs and the three horses awarded the medal got it for their exploits during aerial bombardment on the home front. The role of these animals in the war existed within the dominant narratives of the 'People's War' and symbolic events such as Dunkirk, the Battle of Britain, the Blitz and D-Day. Mules, on the other hand, and in respect to their role in Burma at least, were members of the 'forgotten army' of the Far Eastern campaign, whose victories were primarily fought by soldiers from Empire and Commonwealth countries. They were part of a campaign that was considered on the home front as secondary to the war with Germany.[100] These factors, combined with Indian independence in 1947 and Burmese independence in 1948, have meant, according to Mark Connelly, that there has been 'even less reason to celebrate this great imperial effort.'[101] Mules, described in *The Times* editorial as 'outcasts' and 'despised', were then far removed from those commemorated for exploits relating to the war on the home front and in western Europe, and contrasted sharply with the mobilised animals who held cultural and social capital within Britain.[102]

Although they were absent within public forms of post war commemoration, mules were remembered in soldiers' personal testimonies. As the previous chapter highlights, soldiers' personal testimonies – whether constructed in the initial post war period as memoirs, or created in more recent oral histories and written accounts – illuminate the complex relationships soldiers formed with their mules in training and in the jungles of Burma. Some soldiers eulogised the character and personalities of their mules, especially in instances where the mules displayed courage, determination or stoicism. Other soldiers' accounts note how they were reliant upon, and thankful towards, their mules, offering an explicit understanding that their lives were tied to the actions of their animals. Reflecting on the role played by mules some

[100] Noakes and Pattinson, 'Introduction: 'Keep Calm and Carry On'', p. 15.
[101] M. Connelly, *We Can Take It! Britain and the Memory of the Second World War* (Harlow: Pearson, 2004), p. 251.
[102] *The Times*, 13 May 1946.

fifty years after the war, Philip Malins, a former Animal Transport Officer with the British Indian Army, wrote: 'They will always remain at the forefront on my memory. Mules, despite their heroic performances, were awarded no medals.'[103] For Malins, it is clear that his memory of the role of mules during the war is shaped through a sense of disparity between those animals that were remembered and commemorated, and those that were forgotten. By writing about and recalling their memories of mules, soldiers then attempted to recover a place for their 'forgotten' animals in the cultural memory of the war.

But these tributes were also accompanied by memories of grief, anxiety and cynicism. Soldiers remembered feeling anxious and worried about their mules, especially when mules' bodies showed significant signs of deterioration. These feelings of anxiety also turned to grief and guilt when mules died from wounds, starvation or disease, and when soldiers purposefully killed and occasionally ate their animals. When mules did survive the war, however, the process of demobilisation did not alleviate these feelings. Soldiers recorded scenes of grief at the moment when muleteers were being redeployed or demobilised, and were forced to leave their mules behind. For instance, W.F. Jeffrey wrote:

> For two days the weather remained comparatively fair, and at intervals parties of men walked down to the airfield and boarded aeroplanes. The mules, alas, had to stay behind, and in spite of protests from senior officers, and tears from the muleteers, were passed on to the Chinese. They had deserved a better fate, but war didn't allow for sentiment over animals.[104]

The tears from muleteers and protests from senior officers highlight how the process of separation provoked grief, even if, for Jeffreys, the war did not allow sentiment for animals. Similarly, Joseph Stretton recalls, following the end of the second Chindit expedition, the muleteers crying when they were forced to give up their mules.[105] Such memories of reported grief were also accompanied by those that highlight how the splitting up of mules and men could lower morale and provoke cynicism. This was the case for Major Warren and his RIASC Company when they were returning to India from Europe in September 1945:

[103]Malins, 'The Indian Army Transport Mule', p. 73.
[104] Jeffrey, *Sunbeams like Swords*, pp. 171-2. For further context on the initial post-war relationship between British colonialism, animal welfare and the consumption of animals by the Chinese, see, S.W. Poon, 'Dogs and British Colonialism: The Contested Ban on Eating Dogs in Colonial Hong Kong', *Journal of Imperial & Commonwealth History*, 42.2 (2014), pp. 308-28.
[105] Stretton, Joseph, Interview, 5 September 1995, IWM 15740/2.

> The men, like myself, were jaded, and everyone was longing to return. Morale was seriously lowered when an edict came that we were to leave our splendid mules and horses behind. The official line was that they were destined for Greece a country which, during the German occupation, had suffered great losses of their own animals, so basic to their economy. Cynics believed our animals would instead be slaughtered for food.[106]

In both this instance and in the testimony by Jeffrey, the sense of loss and grief was not only rooted in the separation of the soldier and mule, but was also located in the perceived future prospect of the animal. The former was rooted in an anxiety of how mules would be treated by the Chinese, while the latter shows that there was a belief that mules were to be slaughtered for food.

These concerns about the future welfare of mules extended beyond the moment of demobilisation, and in some cases soldiers attempted to purchase their former military animals. This was aided by the sale of several thousand demobilised horses and mules in auctions across Britain.[107] The national and local press reported on these auction sales, and reported on stories of soldiers who had attempted to, or successfully, purchased their former military companions. For instance, the *Sunday Post* published an article by a former soldier, identified as J.H., who had served as a muleteer in Italy. J.H. was writing with the purpose of locating his mule, Sal, who he wanted to purchase following his return to Britain. The article noted how Sal, among hundreds of other mules, returned to Britain on ship via Gibraltar, and was initially quarantined at Aldershot before being sold at a horse repository in South London. Although J.H. had not yet located Sal in the numerous horse auctions that had been held in London, he described her appearance and called on readers to help him find her.[108] Similarly, the *Hartlepool Daily Mail* reported on the story of a soldier who had purchased his former army horse in Doncaster for 47 guineas, which he intended to use in his riding school.[109] These cases of soldiers repurchasing their military animals sits alongside the more widespread practice of soldiers bringing back pets, which they had acquired on service abroad and purchased back from the state once the animal was allowed to leave quarantine.[110] The demobilisation of both humans

[106] Private Papers of Major V H Warren, 15527, Imperial War Museum Archive, Memoir, p. 36.
[107] Clabby, *The History of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps 1919-1961*, p. 163.
[108] *Sunday Post*, 9 December 1945.
[109] *Hartlepool Daily Mail*, 9 July 1945.
[110] *Sunday Pictorial*, 9 September 1945; *Sunday Pictorial*, 7 October 1945. For details about the military quarantine see, Quarantine (82): Importation of dogs into Great Britain: termination of special services scheme

and animals was, therefore, not always the endpoint for individual and specific human-animal relationships that were forged during the war.

At the same time that several thousand demobilised mules were sold at home, thousands more were re-appropriated on continental Europe as a form of post-war emergency relief. Mules, that had served in Sicily and Italy, and were deemed unfit for service or surplus to requirements, were demobilised and redeployed as agricultural animals and given to farmers in Italy, Greece and Yugoslavia as part of the work performed by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRAA). [111] These former British Imperial Army mules were also donated alongside thousands of captured German army horses and mules, as well thousands of cattle and other livestock animals.[112] Forms of medical relief also accompanied this form of agricultural relief. For example, blood samples were extracted from former service horses and mules prior to the sale and/or donation – both in Britain and in continental Europe – to help assist in meeting the demand for sera by the UNRAA and other relief organisations.[113] Some former service mules were then redeployed as part of wider efforts to provide both agricultural and medical relief in post-war Europe.

However, not all of the army mules and horses in the Mediterranean area at the end of the war were shipped back to Britain or were redeployed for agricultural and medical relief. Instead, as of 12 March 1946, 1,417 horses remained in the area, while 6,349 mules and horses had either died or had been destroyed.[114] The number of army mules deployed in this region, which had totalled 20,000 in Italy alone on VE day, had become non-existent by early 1946.[115] This extensive demobilisation of mules in Europe and North Africa was in marked contrast to the continued deployment of mules in India and Burma. In continuation with their deployment on the Indian North-West frontier with the British Indian Army during the inter-war

for quarantine of dog pets (1945-1947), National Archives, London, Records of the Navy Board and Board of Admiralty (hereafter NA, ADM) 1/20854.

[111] Clabby, *The History of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps 1919-1961*, p. 95. For more context on the UNRAA see: J. Reinisch, 'Internationalism in Relief: The Birth (and Death) of UNRAA', *Past & Present*, Supplement 6 (2011), pp. 258-289; J. Reinisch, '"Auntie UNRAA" at the Crossroads', *Past & Present*, Supplement 8 (2013), pp. 70-97.

[112] For details about the capture and disposal of German army horses by allied forces see: Disposal of German Army Horses (Jan 1945 – July 1945), National Archives, London, War Office Papers (hereafter NA, WO) 219/1287.

[113] Clabby, *The History of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps 1919-1961*, p. 163.

[114] *Hansard Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, Horses and Mules (Mediterranean Area), 2 April 1946, vol. 421, col. 142W.

[115] *Hansard Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, Mules (Italy), 21 November 1945, vol. 416, col. 551W.

period, mules were retained in the initial post-war years. The personal testimonies of British officers serving in the British Indian Army from the end of the war until Indian independence in 1947 note the continued use of mules by Gurkha forces and mountain artillery units.[116] The local press also reported on the activities of Major Alder, a former Grand National jockey, whose post-war role in Burma in the British Indian Army veterinary remount division was to oversee the recuperation of mules that had seen active service, before sending them back to their units.[117] This contrast highlights the extent to which the demands of war not only led to the British Army extensively remobilising mules for use Europe and North Africa, but also shows how the militarisation of mules in the Far East by the British Indian Army was a normalised and continued process extending beyond the parameters of the conflict.

After the British Army's extensive demobilisation of mules after the war, their numbers within the army were similar to their pre-war levels. Prior to the war the RASC had retained only 25 mules within Britain, as part of a single Animal (Training) Transport Company, whose role was to keep alive the technique of pack transport by maintaining a small training facility.[118] By the 1950s, the RAVC maintained a small cadre of pack transport animals at their veterinary and remount centre at Melton Mowbray, where they trained a mounted unit of the RASC in the uses of horses, mules and other pack transport animals, alongside the training of horses and soldiers for ceremonial purposes.[119] Beyond Britain, mules were also redeployed by the British military in future post-colonial conflicts in the jungles of Korea, Borneo and Malaya. The final remaining mule company, No 414 Pack Transport Troop of the Royal Corps of Transport, which was based in Hong Kong, was eventually disbanded in 1975.[120] This event drew letters-to-the-editor in *The Times* with former muleteers and Animal Transport Officers paying tribute to the mule. As Charles MacFetridge acknowledged: 'We admired them for their individualism and character, steadfast and dogged perseverance, and sheer stoicism in appalling conditions, as in Burma 1942-45.'[121] Although the role mules played in the Second World War was 'forgotten' in the official cultural memory of the Second

[116] Alan Middleton Jenkins, Interview, 15 March 2001, IWM 21065/2; Joseph Levi Fairhurst, Interview, 30 June 1998, IWM 18347/2; James Gunn, Interview, August 2000, IWM 20493/2.
[117] *Berwickshire News and General Advertiser*, 18 September 1945.
[118] RASC History Committee, *The Story of the Royal Army Service Corps 1939-1945*, p. 542.
[119] *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, 31 May 1950; *The Sphere*, 2 April 1955; Clabby, *The History of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps 1919-1961*, p. 167.
[120] *The Times*, 5 November 1975.
[121] *The Times*, 20 November 1975.

World War, such letters highlight how soldiers remembered, and paid tribute, to mules in the decades after 1945.

Conclusion

The demobilisation of enrolled human-animal relationships did not occur immediately at the end of the war, but took on various trajectories in the immediate post-war period. In the case of food production, both the voluntary domestic pig keeping movement and the dairy farming branch of the WLA were retained in response to the demands of rationing and food shortages. But while the former increased in scale and popularity until the early 1950s, due to the practical and economic incentives offered by keeping a backyard pig in the context of rationing, the latter declined in popularity between 1945 and 1950, as the demands of active wartime citizenship and participation became less pressing, and as the gendered roles within dairy farming shaped conceptions of female roles and the balance between full-time and casual labour. The demobilisation of the WLA was also in sharp contrast to the expanded remit of scientists, veterinarians and pedigree farmers in seeking to improve the productivity of dairy cattle. For militarised human-animal relationships, the process of demobilisation differed in that while a certain number of pigeons and mules were sold or donated to pigeon fanciers or farmers in the months after the end of the war, others were retained or remobilised. In the case of demobilising mules, this, at times, was recorded as an emotional process whereby specific human-animal bonds were forcibly broken. Some former soldiers also attempted to retain these bonds through purchasing their former military animals. These various trajectories of demobilisation demonstrate that 1945 did not see a peacetime process, as Hilda Kean suggests, of ‘back to normal’.

This chapter demonstrates the multiple ways in which these human-animal relationships were, in both symbolical and material terms, continually enrolled or retained, until the mid-1950s. This signals how wartime efforts to enrol animals were refashioned to meet the demands of the post-war world. While the wartime symbolism of pigs and domestic pig keeping as an act of active citizenship was refashioned by the leaders of the SPKC as a means of waging a ‘war against want’ to meet the post-war rhetoric of reconstruction, the movement commanded less popular attention in the media and other cultural formats. Both pigeons and mules were also

symbolically and materially refashioned in terms of post-war reconstruction. The former were often represented as symbols of peace, and were utilised for charity projects or donated to pigeon fanciers in both Britain and within continental Europe as a means of filling empty pigeon lofts and as signs of co-operation, good-will and gratitude. They were also retained until 1948 in anticipation of a future national emergency. Similarly, mules were materially repositioned as agricultural and/or medical animals for post-war reconstruction efforts, and were retained in certain mountainous and jungle regions as part of the post-war British Imperial Army's aims of maintaining global influence.

Finally, this chapter has considered how human-animal relationships were commemorated, or forgotten, in the post-war period, and their place within the cultural memory of the war. Due to post-war continuity with wartime practices, and lack of proximity to fighting or danger, the human-animal relationships enrolled for food production warranted little attention in commemorative terms. This differed to a certain extent for those mobilised for fighting, but this commemorative process remained fraught with tensions and processes of forgetting or marginalisation. Pigeons were commemorated through the Dickin Medal and through the creation of two memorials dedicated to their wartime service. However, the role of civilian pigeon fanciers, as part of the civilian man more widely, was predominantly overlooked in these cases, which led to members of the pigeon fancying community voicing their frustrations at a perceived lack of gratitude for their role in rearing, training and donating their birds. By contrast, mules were overlooked within all post-war forms of commemoration. Their ties to the 'forgotten army' of the Far East, and their lack of popularity and social capital within Britain, meant that it has been primarily the soldiers who worked with these animals that have remembered their place within the war effort.

Conclusion

The British war effort was reliant on the enrolment of various species of animals in diverse and complex ways. Pigs converted kitchen waste into meat; dairy cattle produced milk for the health of the nation; pigeons carried messages for the British military that helped save the lives of military personnel and provided intelligence from occupied Europe; meanwhile mules carried food, ammunition and human bodies, and provided a source of comfort and intimacy for military personnel within various theatres of war. Officials from the Ministries of Agriculture, Food and Information, alongside military officials and the press, represented these animals, to greater or lesser extents, as symbols of the war effort. Moreover, civilian and military personnel used them to forge, and reaffirm, their wartime identities. To demonstrate the cultural and material impact of war on human-animal relationships, this thesis introduced the notion of effort and utilised it to explore how animals were enrolled for war. This included the state-led effort to work out what animals were capable of and what they could contribute towards the war. It has also demonstrated how this was a physical and imaginative effort, as it required animals to be studied, experimented on, interacted with, harnessed and written into wartime propaganda. Furthermore, it has shown that this was a collective effort, built on the simultaneous enrolment of humans to work with animals and the interactions between various historical actors. Through such an approach, it has recognised the significant role that animals played within the British war effort and offered new stories about humans at war. It has revealed how, for the British at least, the Second World War was a human-animal effort.

Through employing the concept of effort, this thesis has offered an alternative approach to agency for recovering the material influence of animals in the past. This has not been, however, to denounce the potential productive value of accrediting animals with historical agency. Rather, it has been useful for moving away from the often-slippery uses of agency regarding animals – rooted in social history and histories of capitalism – that accredits them with a form of intentionality, such as the ability to resist. Instead, this thesis has used effort in an attempt to capture how human historical actors have perceived, treated and reacted to animals as active and sentient beings, but have embedded such human-animal interactions within the wider political, social, cultural and economic structures of war that circumscribed and

dominated animal life. This has meant that it has focused on how human actors conceptualised and understood animals at the time in relation to the war. It has also meant that it has accounted for the ways in which nonhuman factors enabled and/or blocked the war effort beyond notions of intentionality. The British war effort was then a relational process that was contingent on, to a certain extent, human-animal interactions.

The British war effort was underpinned by the active enrolment of animals. This involved the formation of new animal spaces, whereby animals were physically repositioned in material spaces and discursively repositioned in a range of imaginary and cultural spaces. For instance, the SPKC refashioned pigs as economic converters of waste, moved pigs into towns and cities, and contributed towards the reconceptualisation of urban environments as inclusionary spaces for pigs to occupy. Similarly, the military identified pigeons as both allies and enemies of the British war effort, and redefined the civilian pigeon loft as a potential site of Fifth Column activity. The enrolment of animals also took place at the level of the body. Various historical actors intervened on animal bodies in regards to the ways in which the animal was perceived to benefit or threaten the human population. To improve the health and productivity of dairy cattle, the state introduced an artificial insemination scheme during the war, which shaped the ways in which dairy cattle reproduced. Likewise, military veterinarians devocalised thousands of mules in order to silence them within the jungles of Burma. The demands of the war significantly shaped how British civilians and military personnel understood, interacted with, and harnessed a diverse range of animals.

This thesis also has significantly contributed towards the growing historiographical interest in the role of animals in Britain during the Second World War. It has extended Hilda Kean's recent work on the war's impact on domestic pets through its focus on agricultural and militarised animals.[1] Different species warranted different forms of enrolment. By choosing a more diverse, and arguably more marginalised, range of animals to focus on within this research, I have highlighted the need to focus on the war's impact on animals at the species level to demonstrate that there was not one singular wartime story regarding human-animal relationships. This research has also challenged the problematic anthropomorphism inherent within

[1] Kean, *The Great Cat and Dog Massacre*.

popular histories of militarised animals. Through critically focusing on how animals were enrolled and represented during the war, rather than accrediting them with human-centric notions of bravery or duty, I have shown how humans understood, circumscribed and dominated animal life. Animals enabled and blocked human efforts to enrol them, but they did not do this in terms of human understandings of intentionality.

Although this thesis has focused on examining the history of wartime human-animal relationships, it has also revealed much about the history of humans at war. Of particular significance, it has demonstrated how humans used animals to forge, and reaffirm, their wartime identities. This was explicit in the case of civilian pigeon fanciers who, through rearing, training and volunteering their pigeons to the armed forces, and through taking credit for the 'heroic' acts of militarised pigeons, framed their past-time as an act of wartime service. This was within a context where the civilian man was seen as subordinate to the 'soldier hero' amid wartime hierarchies of masculinity. But it was also explicit for SPKC members, whose rearing of pigs was represented in the press as active wartime citizenship, and for Land Girls, whose interactions with cattle were represented and felt as physically and rurally rejuvenating, thereby legitimising their place on the wartime dairy farm. Through their interactions with animals, British civilians and military personnel negotiated their own role and place within the war effort.

In regards to offering new insights into humans at war, this research has also engaged with some of the key debates within the social and cultural history of wartime Britain. In particular, it has shed new light on the notion of the 'People's War'. As Sonya Rose demonstrates, the dominant wartime narratives of national unity and equality of sacrifice – which were central to discourses of the 'People's War' – were so fraught with contradictions across the lines of region, race, gender and class, that they did not secure social stability but instead provoked contestation.[2] Extending such work, I have shown how efforts to simultaneously enrol humans and animals reveals instances of both social cohesion and dissension between human actors at war. These played out across state-individual, military-civilian, urban-rural, class and gendered lines. As I demonstrated in Chapter Three, RAF personnel and civilian pigeon fanciers co-operated with one another regarding the military's use of

[2] Rose, *Which People's War?*.

civilian pigeons and pigeon lofts, while NPS/police inspections of pigeon lofts, and the culling of un-registered birds, caused contestation between the individual and the state. Similarly Chapter Two revealed how urban members of the WLA were forced to negotiate their position on the wartime dairy farm in the face of gendered and regional representations that portrayed Land Girls as unsuitable for undertaking certain roles with cattle. Through such instances, this research has exposed how wartime efforts for consolidating national unity and encouraging co-operation were also enabled, and thwarted, by the ways in which people represented, and interacted with, animals.

More widely, this research has shed new light on some of the dominant themes within the social and cultural history of Britain at war. It has engaged with debates regarding the relationship between war and gender, and demonstrated how civilian and military masculinities and femininities were constructed in relation to human-animal interactions. It has also shown how notions of active wartime citizenship were, in part, constructed through representations that portrayed humans utilising animals for the war effort as acts of wartime service. Moreover, it has also looked beyond established themes within the historiography of wartime Britain, such as gender and citizenship, and engaged with emergent themes that offer the historian with potentially fruitful new lines of enquiry. One of the arguably most productive areas to explore is the relationship between war and emotion.[3] This thesis has offered an initial foray into this relationship, especially in Chapter Four in regards to the formal and informal construction of solider-mule bonds. This revealed new insights into how certain British soldiers emotionally experienced the war through their interactions with mules. By shedding new light on both established and emergent themes, I have shown how animals should not be treated as another category of analysis alongside the likes of race, class and gender. Rather, I have shown how human-animal relationships played a significant role in constructing these categories in the first place.

Nevertheless, the scope of this thesis has meant that certain themes have been overlooked. In particular, this research has only focused on human-animal relationships in regards to British civilian and soldiers. The British war effort was

[3] For an emerging study on the relationship between war and emotion in Second World War Britain see, L. Noakes, 'Gender, Grief, and Bereavement in Second World War Britain', *Journal of War & Culture Studies*, 8.1 (2015), pp. 72-85.

also contingent on the mobilisation of military personnel, civilians and resources from across the British Empire. Further research may consider how other countries within the British Empire enrolled animals for the war effort. It may also consider the relationship between war, race and Empire in regards to human-animal interactions.[4] As a starting point for such research, the IWM photograph and film collections offer an extensive number of sources that depict colonial soldiers working with militarised animals. Outside of the British Empire, future research may also consider how other belligerent nations enrolled animals for the war effort and to what scale. This may provide points of contrast and comparison between various nations, pointing towards a re-interpretation of the Second World War as one that was a human-animal effort.

This thesis has also revealed the war's legacy on human-animal relationships into the initial post-war period. Although the post-war legacies differed across species lines, each of these species underwent, to greater or lesser extents, various forms of demobilisation, continued enrolment/mobilisation and commemoration. This has challenged Kean's argument that after the war human-animal relationships went 'back to normal'.[5] It has also shown the possible limitations of focusing on 1939-45 as a distinct temporal period of study. The human-animal relationships examined in this thesis changed significantly during the war years, but they also continued to change in various ways thereafter. Further research may track the place of animals within the British cultural memory of war throughout the latter half of the twentieth century. This would fill a gap between my analysis of the post-war commemoration of animals and recent studies that have considered how animals are remembered in the early twenty-first century.[6] It may also inform contemporary debates regarding the normalised militarisation of animals today.[7]

As a final note it is important to stress that this research is timely. In Britain today there is an increasing interest and awareness concerning the roles animals played in

[4] This could build on Jonathan Saha's significant and fascinating work on colonisation and human-animal relationships in British Burma. See: Saha, 'Among the Beasts of Burma', pp. 910-930; Saha, 'Murder at London Zoo', pp. 1468-1491; J. Saha, 'Milk to Mandalay: Dairy Consumption, Animal History and the Political Geography of Colonial Burma', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 54 (2016), pp. 1-12; J. Saha, 'Colonizing Elephants: Animal Agency, Undead Capital and Imperial Science in British Burma', *British Journal for the History of Science: Themes 2* (2017), pp. 169-189.
[5] Kean, *The Great Cat and Dog Massacre*, pp. 162-170.
[6] Kean, 'Britain at War', pp. 115-122; Kean, 'Animals and War Memorials', pp. 237-262; Kean, 'Traces and Representations', pp. 54-71; Baumel-Schwartz, 'Beloved Beasts', pp. 104-133.
[7] S. Johnston, 'Animals in War: Commemoration, Patriotism, Death', *Political Research Quarterly*, 65.2 (2012), pp. 359-371.

both of the world wars and other twentieth century conflicts. This is marked by the unveiling of the 'Animals in War' memorial in London in 2004, the annual remembrance services held for animals at the memorial, and the creation of the purple poppy as a symbol of remembrance for those animals that died on active service.[8] It is also demonstrated by the growing popular history market surrounding the subject. While such forms of remembrance problematically anthropomorphise the animal, normalise the contemporary militarisation of animals, and forget the wartime role of agricultural animals, they demonstrate public interest in the subject and the emerging place of animals in the British cultural memory of the war. This thesis has responded to this interest. By focusing on the 'effort' to enrol animals across both food production and fighting, it has demonstrated how the British war effort was a process that was built on a diverse range of complex human-animal interactions. This will hopefully challenge the latent anthropocentrism and exclusive focus on pets and militarised animals within contemporary popular narratives of animals at war. This approach also opens the door for further reinterpretations of the Second World War, across hitherto neglected contexts, as human-animal efforts.

[8] Baumel-Schwartz, 'Beloved Beasts', pp. 104-133.

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