

moors, he noticed a 'foreign' gentleman buying a working collie from a local shepherd. He later learned that this was a German agent sent over by the German Government to purchase a large quantity of Collies for its army.

This chance encounter encouraged Richardson to purchase a Collie and, receiving invaluable training hints from the shepherd, was amazed at the marvellous rapport between Collies and their masters, especially in searching and returning to a given spot. In Richardson's own words: "*I thought it might be interesting to see what the Germans were doing with their (collie) dogs, so hearing of a training school in Lechernich, where they were being collected, I went over there and stayed for some time. I found a fine collection of collies, which were training for finding the wounded. They wore Red Cross jackets and were very well broken (trained). One of these I purchased and brought back with me.*"

When World War I broke out in 1914, Richardson managed to convince the British War Department of the value of using dogs, and he was granted permission to open the first War Dog school in Shoeburyness in Kent, for which he was given the honorary rank of Lieutenant Colonel. The south coast of England was felt to be an ideal location for this training school, as the dogs could familiarise themselves with the constant sound of gun-fire from across the Channel.

*Prior to World War I the breeding and exhibition of Rough Collies was a most popular pastime but, because of hostilities, the situation declined rapidly due to the difficulties of employing staff and obtaining sufficient food for the dogs. Many of the larger commercial Kennels closed down, whilst others reduced their stock dramatically and employed local girls to help with daily kennel management and exercise.*

*During the early years of both World Wars several good Collies were deliberately exported to the United States of America in an effort to preserve English blood-lines and form the foundation stock of a number of American Kennels.*

*Collie Kennels on the European mainland unfortunately suffered a similar fate to that of British Kennels, though there has since been a remarkable recovery. British Collie breeders are justifiably proud that so many of today's Rough Collies, the world over, are descendants of those early British exports.*