

## **Paw Prints in Human Antarctic History: The Use of Sled Dogs in Antarctic Exploration**

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Exploring the history of humans' employment of canines in scientific research and exploration in Antarctica, and the imprint this has left on both the frozen continent and the humans themselves.

Most sledge dogs were killed or lost during these Antarctic expeditions of over a century ago. Some became culinary fodder for men and dogs alike. Countless canines were swallowed by the ice – some canine skeletons perhaps are still preserved in the crevasses into which they fell during many a sledge tour.

The Madrid Protocol in 1991 brought an end to canine presence in Antarctica, limiting the alien species allowed to invade the native land to humans only. While technology and evolved thought have eased some of the burdens of humans working in Antarctica, replacing the sled dogs with modern vehicles and machinery, the companionship and partnership of dogs have not been replaced. Their imprint, only a memory now, is a significant one, and a lesson to be learned regarding the use of animals for human purposes.