

Veteran's Memoir Exposes Animal Cruelty and Birth of War Paws Charity

Dai chronicles a decade of military and security service across Afghanistan, Iraq, and Africa, and the dogs that inspired a global rescue mission.

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“

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Dai Matthews, author and Welsh Guards veteran

veteran Dai Matthews announces the release of *Dogs Make Me Smile: War Paws*, a memoir that traces his journey from a Welsh mining town to the front lines of Afghanistan, the oilfields of Iraq, and the founding of War Paws. A charity dedicated to rescuing animals affected by war, conflict, and neglect.

Drawing on more than two decades of service with the British Army's Welsh Guards and subsequent close protection and security work across Iraq, Kenya, Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Mozambique, Dai delivers an unflinching first-hand account of the cruelty inflicted on animals in regions where war, poverty, and indifference leave them

with no voice and no protection. The book also pays tribute to the fallen soldiers Dai served alongside, including comrades from Operation Herrick 10 in Helmand Province.

"Unless you see with your own eyes as I have, you will not believe the untold cruelty to animals all over the world," Dai writes in the book's foreword. "Animals during disasters, war, or conflict have nothing and are left to perish in silence and agony, unless one of the very few volunteer organisations help."

At the heart of the memoir is the origin story of War Paws, the charity Dai founded after a series of harrowing experiences in southern Iraq, where roadkill, deliberate poisonings, and the incineration of stray dogs were everyday events. What began as one man's efforts to feed and protect a pack of abandoned puppies on a remote oilfield grew into an organised rescue operation that continues to rehome and rehabilitate animals from conflict zones today.

In his author's note, Dai describes the book as a record of "loss, survival and conscience, in the middle of conflict, where violence and destruction seem to define everything," adding that "unexpected moments of compassion revealed that even in the darkest places, trust and humanity survive." Alongside its military narrative, the book is also a witness account of animal

cruelty, environmental damage in the oilfields, and the forgotten creatures of war.

The 273-page memoir is divided into 36 chapters spanning 1984 to the present day, covering Dai's enlistment into the Welsh Guards, his deployment to Afghanistan, his security career across Africa and the Middle East, and the formative incidents that led to the founding of War Paws. The author cautions in his foreword that the book is "not politically correct" and reflects heartfelt beliefs based on real experience.

Dogs Make Me Smile: War Paws is available now on [Amazon](#) in paperback, hardback, and eBook editions.

About the Author

Dai Matthews is a former British Army soldier who served with the Welsh Guards, including a tour of Afghanistan during Operation Herrick 10 in 2009. After leaving the military, he worked in close protection and security across Africa and the Middle East, where his first-hand experience of systemic animal cruelty led him to found War Paws, a charity dedicated to rescuing and rehoming animals affected by conflict and neglect. Originally from Pontypridd, Wales, he continues to support War Paws's ongoing rescue operations.

Dai Matthews

War Paws

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