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From *Looking at Photographs: Animals*

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"M. Folletete teaching his dog Tupy to jump over a brook," 1912

Jacques-Henri Lartigue, French



This photograph was made by an eighteen-year-old named Jacques-Henri Lartigue. When he grew up, he became a famous photographer and painter. But many of

the best photographs he made were the ones he created during his childhood in France around 1900.

Many families have scrapbooks in which they organize snapshots, graduation portraits, and other personal photographs. These pictures of Lartigue's started out as just that kind of family-album photography. Lartigue was too small to take part in a lot of his family's activities, so his parents bought him a camera. It was a big, heavy wooden one that he had to support on a *tripod*. He had to learn to develop his own *negatives* and print his pictures himself. With his camera, instead of just being a spectator, watching from the sidelines, Lartigue became his family's historian, making the images that recorded their everyday experiences. And one of the reasons those pictures are important today is that they let us see how a typical upper-class French family lived almost a century ago.

This picture also shows us how photography can be used to stop or "freeze" motion. Lartigue waited until the exact moment that this dog was released from the hands of his father's secretary, and then opened the *shutter* of his camera and made the *exposure* on the film. This action only lasted for a split second. Yet the dog and the man are as still as a statue; and, in this photograph, they'll stay in that position forever.

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