

# Stories of the world's bravest dogs

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## STORIES OF THE WORLD'S BRAVEST DOGS

By DAVID MACLUIRE.

The report that the monks of the famous St. Bernard Hospice in the Alps are to found another such institution in Tibet shows that, spite aeroplanes and motor-cars, the day of the great life-saving dogs is by no means ended.

During the last few years the St. Bernard dogs have had few opportunities of distinguishing themselves. Travellers on foot are rarely seen in the Great St. Bernard Pass in winter nowadays, but the dogs have lost nothing of their sagacity and they will probably gain fresh laurels in the snowy wilds of Tibet.

Their history has been a proud one and many of these devoted creatures have achieved fame. Some years ago a special medal was struck and presented to one of the dogs of the Hospice in memory of its having saved the lives of no fewer than 22 snow-bound travellers.

*Plucky to the Last.*

Unhappily it lost its life a few months later when striving to add to its record. A courier had rested the night at the Hospice during a violent snow storm, and though it still raged when dawn appeared he was so anxious to reach the village of St. Pierre that he pushed on spite the entreaties of the monks. He was, however, lent the aid of two guides and two dogs, one of them being the proud wearer of the medal.

After fighting their way through the blinding storm under the guidance of the dogs an avalanche reverberated down one side of the pass and overwhelmed the party. Rescue was out of the question, but when eventually the bodies were dug out of the snow, it was found that this wonderful dog had died trying to dig his way out.

Still more poignant is the story of Barry, who has become one of the most famous dogs in the world. This fine fellow saved over 40 lives during 12 years' active work.

But wise as he was he could not hope to avoid the fate that awaited him one dark afternoon. A traveller delirious with the high altitude and completely lost saw Barry looming out of the snow. Little guessing that the dog had come to guide him to warmth and shelter, the traveller took Barry for a wolf and shot him.

Though in great pain, Barry made his way back to the Hospice and bayed loudly to summon the monks. His action was not unavailing though for the monks followed the trail of blood and rescued the traveller. Barry died from the wound shortly afterwards but his memory was not allowed to die for his body was preserved and placed in a museum at Berne.

*Rescue Work.*

In Paris, too, a huge memorial was set up to the dog in the well-known animal cemetery on Wreckers Island — a lasting memorial to one of the greatest dogs in history.

Contrary to the general belief it is not in rescue work that the dogs are chiefly engaged. They act as guides, and by some uncanny instinct follow the "Pass" even when it is buried many feet beneath the snow.

Travellers follow them with implicit faith. Without them a journey over the Great St. Bernard in winter would be impossible, for very often even the monks and guides cannot find the way.

When the dogs are looking for lost travellers they always hunt in couples, and if a man is found, one stays with him while the other summons the monks.

The dogs are equipped for first-aid. Round the neck of one is a little barrel containing a warming liquor made from cherries. The other dog carries a "palstot" with which the benighted traveller is able to cover his body, while the dog who is with him licks his face to keep him warm.

Besides rescue work thousands of feet up in the Alps, the St. Bernard has saved many from drowning. Some years ago there were so many deaths from drowning in the Seine at Paris that the authorities decided to instal a number of St. Bernards along the banks.

They were taught to rescue people from the water, dummies being used for the initial stages of the training. For many years they formed one of the most remarkable features of the Paris embankments, and were instrumental in saving many lives.

In course of time their services became less and less required until they were finally disbanded, but not before they had all been found good homes.

This winter we shall probably read of yet more rescues being made by the St. Bernards in the Alps. When travellers and the mountaineers are buried beneath avalanches their aid is indispensable.

Recently a number of students were buried. Dogs were led to the spot and immediately began burrowing. By their aid the bodies of the overwhelmed men were actually dug out still warm.

In the far-off Tibet high up in the Himalayas the dogs and their devoted masters will continue their great work. They will be away from the blaze of publicity and little will be heard of their deeds, but it is certain that they will save hundreds of men from death.

*Newcastle Weekly Chronicle.*

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## FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Saturday, January 7th, 1933, from 7-1 a.m. — Swiss Mercantile Society Ltd., — Fancy Dress Ball — at the Midland Grand Hotel.

Wednesday, January 11th, at 8.30 p.m. — Swiss Gymnastic Society — General Meeting — at Swiss Club, 74, Charlotte Street, W.1.

Wednesday, January 18th, at 7.45 p.m. — Nouvelle Société Helvétique — Monthly Meeting to be followed by a causerie by Dr. F. Rollier on "Leysin, Héliothérapie et cure de travail" with lantern slides, at "Swiss House," 34/35, Fitzroy Square, W.1. Everybody cordially invited.

Wednesday, January 18th, 1933 — Swiss Mercantile Society Ltd. — Monthly Meeting at 8 o'clock, preceded by a supper at 7 p.m. After the Meeting a lecture will be given by J. Locke, Esq. on "Life in Russia to-day," at "Swiss House," 34/35, Fitzroy Square, W.

Wednesday, February 1st, at 7.30 p.m. — Société de Secours Mutuels — Monthly Meeting, at 74, Charlotte Street, W.1.

Saturday, February 4th, from 7 p.m. to 1 a.m. — Swiss Mercantile Society Ltd. — Annual Banquet and Ball, at the Midland Grand Hotel, St. Pancras, N.W.1.

Saturday, March 25th, at 7 p.m. sharp (Reception 6.30) — Swiss Club Birmingham — Dinner and Dance — at the Grand Hotel, Birmingham.

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## MARIAGE.

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Sonntag, den 8. Jänner 1933.

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7 Uhr abends, Gottesdienst,

Dienstag, den 10. Jänner.

3 Uhr nachm., Näherein im "Foyer Suisse".

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Sprechstunden: Dienstag 12-2 Uhr in der Kirche.  
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