Father Hubbard Writes About "Mushing" in Alaska With Dog Team 1,600 Miles

"Glacier" Priest Tells of Wolf-Dogs, Their Characteristics, Speed and Fighting Proclivities—Eskimos Surprise Him with Gregorian Chant

The Rev. Bernard R. Hubbard, S.J., of Santa Clara University, Cal., known the country over as the "glacier" priest, has a most interesting article in the February 13th issue of The Saturday Evening Post, entitled "Mush, You Malemutes." It is the story of a 1,600-mile trip by dog sled in the wilds of Alaska, with death riding by his side more than once, and with the hospitality of the Eskimos a joy to his heart. There are delightful sketches of the wolf-dogs who draw sleds for travelers in the far North, and touches of comedy and of pathos that make his article most interesting and most readable. Some selections from the article are given below:

Father McElmeel met me at Nenana. Square-shouldered, blue-eyed, steel-gray-haired, Father Mac, as he is known all through Alaska, was reputed one of the best mushers of the Yukon and had gathered a team of dogs for me along the 400-mile route from Nulato to Nenana.

Dogs! All the dog stories I had ever read came to my mind, and now I had the chance to see how true they were—the famous Alaska Husky, the Malemute, the Siberian—all faithful companions of man in his conquest of the North. Father McElmeel led me over to Archdeacon Bentley's, where the dogs were kept. The archdeacon was along the upper Yukon with his team, so kindly Mrs. Bentley put the dog houses at our disposal.

Three-Quarters Wolf

"This is Snookum," said Father McElmeel, flashing an electric torch on a magnificent brute chained to the nearest dog stall. "Better not touch him," he cautioned, "until you know him better, as he is three-quarters wolf."

Snookum inspired fear at first sight. He stood stiff-legged and motionless, with ears held back and head lowered, and his gleaming eyes followed one's every movement warily. His muzzle was crisscrossed with scars and his head and ears bore marks of many a fierce battle.

We crunched over the snow toward our cabin. "What's that?" I exclaimed, as a high-pitched, long-drawn wolf howl broke the frigid silence.

"That's the leader giving the dog opera the note," laughed Father Mac. "Now listen."

The Call of the Wild

The first howl was succeeded by another from a different quarter, then another, then a bark or two, followed by a series of yelps, and then, from several hundred throats at once, bedlam broke loose. It was the famous bedtime chorus of the Alaskan wolf dog. Almost impossible to describe, it was weirdly inspiring. It sent a shudder down your back. It sounded like the cry of lost souls. It was the call of the wild. When the first dog started, every dog in Nenana leaped up from snug slumber and, pointing his nose at the moon, howled dismally. Soon all the howls blended into one volume of sound that reminded me more of the New Year's Eve midnight clamor of San Francisco heard from suburban foothills than anything else. The volume of the dog chorus rose until it sounded as if scores of steam calliopes had got stuck with the stops wide open on the high notes, and then, right at the height of the crescendo, the chorus stopped as suddenly as it began, and the silence of the Alaskan night continued. I heard the dog opera every night for the next four months, and it was always weirdly the same.

On the Trail

We crossed the river and followed the trail into the woods on the northern bank. Fine stands of spruce and fir and birch decked in snow lined the trail and fifty-two canine feet went with the regularity of engine pistons as the swish of the sled runners played the only accompaniment to the pat, pat, pat, pat. It was twenty degrees below zero, just ten degrees less than the thirty degrees below of ideal mushing weather. I began to catch the exhilaration and thought that there was really nothing to it. The dogs had steadied down to a trot. Father Mac put on the brake and stopped the team.

"Hop off," he said to me, "and take charge. It is your team and you'd better begin right now." He handed me the whip and took his foot off the brake as I stood clumsily on the runner. Suddenly the dogs leaped ahead and I took a header into the snowy bushes off the trail.

"I expected that to happen," Father Mac said, seizing the sled bow and clamping on the brake. "Never let your foot off the brake until you are sure of your control of the sled. If you lose your sled in the North, you lose your life. The dogs get away. Then you freeze up, because all your furs and sleeping bag are on the runaway sled."

I never forgot the lesson.

A Fight in the Snow

A dog musher has to keep his attention as constantly riveted on his dogs as an automobile driver on his steering wheel. I did not know this though. I was getting drowsy and turned around to see how Father Mac was coming along. I must have turned around too long, for things began to happen very rapidly. Snookum had become interested in a bush and had stopped. Snookum was way up in the swing, right after the leader, and when he stopped, naturally the whole team stopped. I was supposed to jam the brake down and keep the line of dogs strung out. Instead of that, though, I allowed the heavy sled to keep on going and pushed the dogs together, telescoping the whole team. When an Alaska dog feels anything touch him, the wolf instinct to lunge out comes to the fore. Bill, the wheel dog, bumped Warrior, and Warrior turned to fight. Prince leaped in to help Warrior, since, in a gang fight, the two always stuck together. Pete jumped Snookum and they went at it in real shape. Toxin stepped aside, protecting himself from the flying fangs, for Toxin was a Siberian, and Siberians dislike fighting. Margie crouched down into the snow and let the pack fight it out over her. I was hoping the females wouldn't fight, as they usually fight to the death. But Nancy got excited and in the struggling mass picked out her rival, Daisy, and called her something very awful in dog language. Daisy made a flying leap over Snookum and closed in on Nancy, and varicolored fur flew.

"Stop them!" yelled Father Mac coming up on the run. "You will have a bunch of dead dogs if you don't hurry up."

Results of the Brawl

Every man to his own hobby. When did I know about stopping such a big dog fight? I knew how to take pictures, though, so I buzzed my motion-picture camera at the scene while Father Mac stopped the fight. After all, that was his hobby. It took a lot of strenuous whip work to unlock head holds and leg holds, and the harness was in an awful tangle.

"Pretty lucky," Father Mac muttered. "You usually lose a dog or two in a fight like that." Snookum's nose had a few more rips, Pete's ear was bobbed a bit more, Bill had a cut on his leg and Nancy had a bloody lip, but no serious damage was done.

Katmai a Real Pet

Katmai, my real pet of the whole pack, was the five-o'clock whistle, and let the whole world know about it if I was ever late with the dried fish. He became my special pet in a peculiar way. When you feed Alaskan dogs you have to be very careful. It is a business proposition with them and they don't want to be bothered with etiquette. If you delicately hand a wolf dog his dried fish, you are liable to lose half your hand in the operation; consequently, you must forward-pass the fish to him, being careful that his neighbor does not intercept and run for a touchdown. I wanted Katmai to become tame, so I handed him his fish one day. He did not snap at my hand, but let out a growl when I did not let go fast enough. I slapped his nose, gave him a talking to and left him in displeasure. Toward evening I walked to the stalls. Standing out of his stall, Katmai was waving his big fox-brush tail, dancing on his front paws, and rah-rahing softly. He evidently had something very important to tell me. He greeted me effusively and then turned like a flash into his stall and came out with a bit of dried fish in his mouth. This he set gently at my feet and looked up at me with his big brown eyes, seeming to say most apologetically, "That was a very unfortunate mistake—my growling at you. Here is this piece of fish to show you that I did not mean it."

Home-Cooked Food

Ivan's wife, beautiful little Maggie, with her youngest, Theresa, strapped to her back, met us at St. Michael. She busied around and prepared one of the finest meals I ever ate—home-made bread, potatoes, reindeer roast, and a fine chocolate cake and canned peaches for dessert.

A certain type of explorer likes to paint the Eskimos as filthy, degenerate, and lacking all refinements of civilization. My only reaction is that people who are looking for such characteristics can always find them anywhere they go. I have found the Eskimos, as a race, peaceful, generous, quick to learn, and with a contentment superior to our restless civilization.

The Magic North

The sun dipped far to the north and stayed long on the horizon, a blood-red disk. Pat, pat, pat, pat went the feet as every dog pulled strongly. They were racing directly into the disk of the setting sun, and as the roseate ice turned to purple, the full spell of the magic north took hold of us all. "Nice work, Nancy! Dear old Prince! Snookum, you wolf! Keep it up, Katmai! Warrior, Pete, Bill, Daisy, Margie!" You never travel silent on your sled. You sing and whistle, and keep up a continual communication with your dogs. They need encouragement, and deserve it.

The Dogs at Night

By day the dogs get tired and hot, and occasional rests are needed. At night, though, they begin to freshen up and appear tireless. Perhaps it is the wolf that comes out in them under the Arctic stars, and they think they are part of the pack going to their kill. It soon grew dark, but it was clear and the myriad diamonds of heaven twinkled overhead, while a few streamers of the Northern Lights added their magic to the Arctic night. I could barely make out the bobbing, shadowy shapes of my dogs, but could [illegible] ... [illegible] ... joyable of the whole winter as we pulled in to [illegible] ... We bedded the dogs down comfortably, gave them an extra good feed and Ivan and I crawled into our sleeping bags and slept soundly on the floor of the little mission chapel.

Eskimos at Mass

I had intended to say Mass quietly by myself very early in the morning. [illegible] ... [illegible] ... but next morning the little chapel was packed to standing room by the devout children of the north who, to my surprise, assisted intelligently at Mass, and both in Inuit and in Latin sang some of the finest Gregorian chant I ever heard even in a cathedral of Europe.

Stricken with the Flu

I was very weak. My lungs felt [illegible] ... cracked until it was uncomfortable, and I was a long way from Holy Cross. Still the merciful cold froze up everything at night and the spring thaws delayed their death march. When the thermometer rises well above freezing and stays there, the lower Yukon becomes a floating hell of water, and to be caught out in a dog team is death.

I have no very clear recollection of the places where I stayed or the people I met on that last hundred miles, but one day I left the river to climb up the bank on a portage. A native boy was ahead. It was the mail team I was chasing, and my dogs, averaging fifty miles a day, had caught it. The driver told me Holy Cross was just around the bend. Half delirious with joy, I went along the line of dogs, hugging and kissing them and telling them we had beat the spring thaws to Holy Cross. The mission buildings soon came into sight. White-bearded, white-haired old Father Lucchesi, veteran missionary of the North, came out of the house to meet me.

"Welcome," he said. "Come in. You look spent. Let the boys take your dogs to the barn."

A Wonderful Trip

"If I lose my sled, I lose my life," I muttered. "Gee, Daisy" and I insisted on putting my own dogs away. After all, I was not entirely responsible. I was sick. All I could see were strange faces bobbing around that at times looked like pink elephants and Kodiak bears. One with the headdress of the Sisters of St. Ann seemed kindly, and I was prevailed to follow her to the hospital. She was Sister Epiphane, the trained nurse. She plastered me up with antiphlogistin mud and off I went to bed. Eleven died at Holy Cross of the flu during the epidemic, but I didn't. Three days after my arrival the spring thaws came and the whole country became water. My dogs had pulled me through sixteen hundred miles, and my proudest boast is that in spite of everything I didn't lose or maim a single dog. Can you blame anyone for loving Alaskan dogs?

Prelates Give Pope $50,000 For the Poor

Vatican City, Feb. 19—On Thursday afternoon last week, the eve of the 10th anniversary of his coronation, the Vatican prelates presented Pope Pius XI a purse of approximately 1,000,000—equal to $50,000 in American money. The purse was collected through the Vatican newspaper, Osservatore Romano. In presenting the purse the prelates asked the Pontiff to use the money for the relief of the unemployed, and for others suffering from the present economic depression. The Pope responded that he would be most happy to do this, and he graciously thanked the donors and asked God to bless them.

Hundreds of telegrams of congratulation and good wishes came to the Pope from all parts of the world on Friday, anniversary of his coronation. They brought joy to his heart, and gladness to his soul.

Bicentennial Mass to be Celebrated Here

One of the very first events inaugurating the nation-wide observance of the bicentennial of the birth of George Washington will be the Mass to be celebrated by a collateral descendant of Washington at St. Mary's Church, Alexandria, Va., on Sunday, February 21. Notable church dignitaries, church officials, diplomats of foreign countries and members of the George Washington Bicentennial Commission will attend. Historic St. Mary's Church, at the initial planning of which George Washington was present, appears above. Inset, upper right, George Washington; upper left, Archbishop John Carroll, friend and contemporary. Inset, below, Father Richard Blackburn Washington, pastor of Sacred Heart Church, Hot Springs, Va., and a great-grand-nephew of George Washington, who will be celebrant of the Mass.

Desserts for Children's Parties

By BETTY BARCLAY

Here are two novel, attractive and delicious desserts for groups of children enjoying a party dinner. [illegible] dishes will come back clean.

Kiddies' Farm

1 package lemon-flavored gelatin
1 pint boiling water
¾ cup coconut, tinted green
Animal crackers

Dissolve gelatin in boiling water. Pour into large platter and chill until firm. Sprinkle with coconut. Arrange animal crackers on gelatin pressing them down to hold them upright. Serves 8.

Orange Gelatin

1 package orange-flavored gelatin
1 pint boiling water

Dissolve gelatin in boiling water. Turn into individual molds. Chill until firm. Unmold. Garnish with whipped cream and sections of orange, free from membrane. Serves six.

Household Uses for Lemons

To Replace Vinegar: Lemon juice may be substituted for vinegar in any recipe that calls for the latter, except pickling.

To Sour Milk: Lemon juice added to sweet milk will sour it suitably for cooking.

For Stewing Dried Fruits: Add a small amount of lemon juice and grated lemon rind in stewing such dried fruits as prunes, figs, peaches and so on.

In Cooking Meats: Tough meat will be made tender by adding a teaspoon of lemon juice to water in which they are boiled.

Mocha Sauces

By BETTY BARCLAY

One trick that many housewives must learn from hotel and restaurant chefs is how to provide variety in the daily menus by preparing simple, inexpensive variations of standard dishes. An example of this is the use of coffee as a flavoring, particularly in sauces. Here are two easily made mocha recipes:

Mocha Hard Sauce for Puddings

Make a coffee extract, using ¼ cup finely ground coffee, 2-3 cup sugar, 1 cup boiling water and ½ teaspoon vanilla. Mix the coffee and sugar and add boiling water. Boil 10 minutes, then strain through a double thickness of cheesecloth. Add vanilla, pour into a bottle, and store in a cool place until used.

Mocha Sauce for Ice Cream

Scald 1½ cups of milk with ¼ cup finely ground coffee and let stand 20 minutes, then strain. Mix 1-3 cup sugar, ½ tablespoon cornstarch and 1-16 teaspoon salt, and pour over it gradually the hot coffee infusion. Cook 5 minutes while stirring constantly. Serve hot.

—o—

I can affirm for certain that those who love God and their neighbor are tried like gold in the furnace.—St. Francis Xavier.

—o—

In the adversities which God sends us He wills nothing but our justification and sanctification.

Centenary of the Death Of Charles Carroll, Staunch Champion of Independence

Last of Signers of the Declaration of Independence Died One Hundred Years Ago—Friend of Washington and an Unselfish Patriot

In 1832, just 100 years ago, occurred the death of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, known as the last signer of the Declaration of Independence because he was the last of the signers to die. This centenary is appropriately remembered by an interesting story of the main events of Carroll's life in the current February issue of the Little Flower Monastery Messenger, published by the Benedictine Missionary Fathers of Newton, N. J.

Not only was Carroll the last signer but he lived to a more advanced age than any of his colleagues, so that in his own span of life he saw this country transformed from a little band of colonies into a world power. He was 95 when he died.

"When he went to the Continental Congress in 1776," says the article, which was contributed by Marie P. Davidson, "he was 39 years old; and more than a half-century later was still active enough and public-spirited enough to take part in laying the cornerstone of the first American railroad.

Ardent from Beginning

"An ardent member of the 'Sons of Liberty,' Carroll was among the earliest to defy England on the 'taxation without representation' contention, and soon after the Boston Tea Party, he was a moving spirit in a similar incident in the harbor of Annapolis when the Peggy Stewart was burned with her cargo. He did not hold back until the Colonies were sure of success. He was in the fray from the beginning, when it took great faith in the justice of their cause to make the most ardent believe the poor young colonies had any chance against the forces the old country could muster against them.

Loyal to Washington

"One historian has said of Carroll that he 'devoted more of his time and more of his money to the cause of the people than any other patriot.' His aid in frustrating the cabal which sought to depose General Washington and put in his place General Gates is a matter of record.

"Benjamin Franklin was also his friend, and they were closely associated in seeking abroad aid to carry on the struggle for freedom. Martin H. Glynn, former Governor of New York, writes of the patriot in this connection: 'The world will never know how much the United States owes Charles Carroll of Carrollton for the help we received in France in the Revolutionary War. The men who helped Franklin in France were the men most responsive to the old association of the Carrolls in France.'

"Best loved of the stories about Charles Carrol of Carrollton in his native state (Maryland) has to do with the signing of the Declaration of Independence. As the patriots were affixing their names to the document, those who had already signed were standing about joking with each other, as legislators are wont to do, asking whether they would 'hang singly or hang together' if their plans failed. Someone pointed out that Charles Carroll, who had the most to lose in worldly goods and high position, was saying nothing. 'He is safe enough,' another replied. 'There are so many Charles Carrolls.' Whereupon, tradition has it, Charles Carroll picked up the pen again and added after his name the description which would identify him—'of Carrollton.' Many years later Chauncey Depew called this 'the only title of the Revolution, Charles Carroll of Carrollton.'"

The writer suggests that the career of Charles Carroll, who was at once a staunch Catholic and a great patriot, is the answer to all who question whether the two roles are compatible.

The article notes that when the State of Maryland was asked by the Federal Government to name two of its most illustrious sons, so their statues could be placed in the Capitol at Washington, Charles Carroll was one of the two designated; yet the City of Baltimore, with which much of his career was associated, has never erected a suitable memorial to this great patriot and last signer.

"But, after all," concludes the writer, "he does not need it. Charles Carroll lives in the memory of his countrymen."

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