



With his wife, Honey, and the inevitable Chinook, Perry Greene takes time out for a waterborne picnic on the Medomak River near Waldoboro, Maine. He has been a lumberjack, trapper and prospector, still holds a Grade A guide rating and world's records with the ax and saw.



The boy, one of Perry's four grandchildren, has nothing to fear from the dog's mighty jaws. Chinooks never bite humans, although they will hold down intruders until their master arrives on the scene.



He does the lumberman's backhand kiss, during which a slip means, at best, an altered profile.

Prodigious Perry Greene

By JOHN DURANT

At 55, he is the Joe Louis of axmen. He can yank you across a table without spilling a glass. He is the world's only breeder of the Chinook, a dog just as remarkable as he is.

PERRY GREENE is fifty-five years old and a grandfather, but he can still do the lumberman's backhand kiss with an eleven-pound ax. Only a few young men can do it with a five-pound ax, fewer still with an eleven-pounder, but a grandfather of four doing it with the heavy ax is unheard of. Here's how Perry does it: He grasps the end of the handle in his right hand with the ax head down, holding it out at arm's length directly in front of himself. Then with a twist of his wrist he swings the head upwards, his arm still straight out so that the eleven-pound head is now a couple of feet above his upturned face. With agonizing slowness he lowers the blade inch by inch until the edge just touches the skin of his nose. That's the kiss. A slip or a momentary weakening of his arm muscles during the performance would mean the loss of his nose at least, but Perry continues to horrify his wife, Honey, by nuzzling the blade at least once a week. When he finishes he always spits on his forearm and shaves off a patch of hair with one stroke of the razor-sharp blade.

"Shucks, it ain't as dangerous as it looks," he says in the pleased manner of a small boy who has just frightened his best girl by walking an eight-foot fence.

Perry has been handy with an ax ever since he was fourteen, when he went to work as a chopper in a lumber camp on the headwaters of Maine's Penobscot River. An even six feet then and weighing 180 pounds, he told the lumber boss he was twenty-two so he could get a man's

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A magnificent all-around dog, the Chinook is particularly notable for his intelligence and gentleness—as granddaughter Jane, the young lady in the case, might testify.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY IVAN DMITRI



The girl is inspecting a dog packsaddle. Chinooks can carry up to 40 pounds without trouble.



Perry's Chinooks are equally effective on water, land and ice. They hold the sled-dog record for the longest trip of its kind ever made in the United States—502 miles in 90 hours, with an 800-pound load.

PRODIGIOUS PERRY GREENE

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wages. Today, forty-one years later, he is two inches taller and ten pounds heavier, but there is no fat on his tough, straight body. His arm and back muscles are as hard as steel bands, and he moves with the springiness of a perfectly trained athlete of twenty-five. His waist has been size thirty-four since the Taft Administration.

Perry has spent most of his life outdoors. He has been at various times a lumberjack, trapper, Rocky Mountain gold prospector, shipyard worker, farmer and guide. He is the world's champion wood chopper, world's champion crosscut sawyer when teamed with Joe King, of Rockland, Maine, and the only breeder in the world of the Chinook dog, a unique American breed.

In January, 1940, he completed the longest sled-dog trip ever made in the United States when he traversed the state of Maine from its northeast corner at Fort Kent on the Canadian boundary to the state's southwest extremity at Kittery, across the river from Portsmouth, New Hampshire. With a team of seven purebred Chinooks hauling 800 pounds of equipment and provisions, and with thirteen-year-old Johnny Gephart as passenger, he made the 502-mile trip in ninety hours' running time. He did it to prove that his big tawny dogs were superior to the Husky, the Malamute and the Eskimo breeds in strength and endurance. There was no doubt in his mind about his Chinooks being the best all-

around dogs in the world, but he wanted to show that they were unexcelled in the harness. The test satisfied him. The time of the run was remarkable in view of the handicaps he encountered—icy roads swept clear of snow, gravel-covered roads and car traffic during the second half of the journey. All seven dogs emerged from the ordeal in perfect condition. They even gained a few pounds, and not a dog was limping as the team drew into Kittery, despite the fact that Perry didn't cover a single paw with a boot at any time during the trek.

"That's the first thing the sled drivers wanted to know," says Perry. "How many boots did I have to put on. When I told them none they wouldn't believe me. That's what happens when you use those tender-footed little Huskies. They go lame. Not my Chinooks. They're bigger by twenty, thirty pounds and they got the toughest feet of any breed." After the trip he put his team through a speed trial and covered a mile and a quarter in three minutes flat. "That's a lot faster than the Swedes can run," he says.

Perry lives on his eighty-acre farm in Warren, Maine, with his wife and father-in-law, Dad Fowle. Down the road a piece live his daughter and son-in-law and their four children. It is difficult to say whether Perry's place is a farm, a kennel, a trophy museum or a children's playground. He has several head of Guernseys, ten registered Ayrshires, pigs, chickens, cats and thirty Chinooks. Inside his ten-room frame house, crowding every mantelpiece and corner stand, are a couple of

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Last Word From the Rear Rank

A P O S T W A R A N E C D O T E

OUR naval boot company was glumly trudging along a hot and dusty road on the outskirts of San Diego. The training march had exhausted us and, to make matters worse, the petty officer commanding our group was a disciplinarian who insisted on our maintaining perfect step and keeping complete silence in the ranks—we couldn't even talk or sing, as most hiking companies were allowed to do.

Suddenly three small youngsters dashed out into the road and began scampering along beside the marching sailors at the end of the column. Some of the men, especially those who had children at home, couldn't

resist bending down and playing with the friendly kids.

The petty officer was up front on the opposite side of the column, where he couldn't see what was going on. But his eager ear caught the forbidden talking in the ranks. He swung around. "Knock it off back there!" he roared.

The morale of the men at the rear, which had perked up a little, plummeted back to zero. One fellow, though, just couldn't help voicing his opinion of the dreary situation. "Hell!" he muttered fiercely. "They won't even let us fraternize with the natives!"

—ROBERT M. BARTON,
ETM 3/c, USNR.

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dozen trophy cups, medals, scrolls, and a collection of seventy-two steel axes weighing anywhere from three ounces to twenty-two pounds. On the walls hang dog harness, crossed snowshoes, salmon rods, shotguns and rifles. On his desk, his papers in permanent disorder are weighed down by a mounted fawn, a stuffed pheasant and a machete. Through this maze of curiosities his grandchildren and the neighborhood kids rush in and out, chasing dogs and puppies, whooping and making the screen doors slam like the sound of nickel firecrackers. None of this bothers the Greens or Dad Fowle, who sits in his Boston rocker reading the Bangor Commercial unperturbed amid the constant swirl of activity. Once in a while, when the noise becomes unbearable, Perry lets out a wall-shaking "Quiet!" and things are calm for a moment. To flavor the scene there is generally a strange guest or two in the house, asked there by Perry, who has a weakness for inviting anyone he takes a shine to. This often happens while he's on tour with a sportsman's show in the winter months showing his Chinooks. He will get to chatting with someone who shows an interest in the dogs and invite him to Warren for an indefinite stay. It seems to work out pretty well.

"We had a couple last summer who stayed for seven weeks," Mrs. Greene said. "We liked the wife very much. We had had luck last September, though—a woman artist who couldn't stand the smell of cigarette smoke. She only lasted a week."

Perry is a hearty soul, big and friendly. His features are hard and sharp, giving him an expression of fierceness at times. He has dark-gray eyes with the Indian's Roman nose and high cheekbones, the heritage of his Mohawk ancestry. He says that in his lumber-camp days he was renowned as a battler, and he still has a bad temper.

"Time was when I'd get up from a lobster dinner for a fight—but I wouldn't now," he said.

"No, now he fights right at the dinner table without getting up," Dad Fowle said. Mrs. Greene shushed him, but he went on anyway. "A fellow come in here uninvited for supper one time last winter. None of us liked him much. Perry and him got to talking and finally arguing louder and louder. He got hot and says to Perry, 'Put up or shut up.' That was a mistake. Perry reached across the table like he was going after the bowl of steamers. He grabbed him by the throat and hauled him up off his seat right across the table without upsetting a cup and set him down hard on his back on the floor. 'Now I put up!' Perry yelled. It took five cops over in Rockland to put that same fellow in jail once when he was drunk. Shows how strong Perry is. That fellow never stopped in here again for dinner, I can tell you."

It is easy to see how Perry could have done that when you look at his huge hands and forearms. From years of swinging an ax they are as solid as the oaks he has felled.

Perry entered his first chopping contest when he was forty-three years old, at an International Guides' Tournament in Boston. Against a field of forty-eight Canadian and American expert choppers, all young men of brawn, he was best ax and made a new world record of thirty-four seconds.

In an official chopping match the contestants stand on an eight-by-eight-inch hard-pine square timber and at a signal start hacking at the

wood between their feet. Anything goes. You can use any type of ax, regardless of thickness, breadth of blade or width of ax head. Perry used Old Sweetlips, the eleven-pounder he does the lumberman's kiss with. It was remarkable enough that Perry, at forty-three, the oldest contestant, should not only win but in doing so lower the world mark by two seconds. But that was just a starter. He bettered his own record the next time out, and as he grew older he improved. His time crept down to twenty-nine seconds, twenty-three seconds and then nineteen. It was at this point that Perry, at forty-eight, decided to have his first drink. A doctor he was talking to one day stated that he thought a man was a fool to drink much before he was forty, but a bigger fool if he didn't drink at all after that age. This impressed Perry, who figured he had already thrown away eight years of his life. He started on wine and promptly shattered his own world mark again, getting it down to seventeen seconds. Then he tried rock and rye, and in a couple of years his time sped to an unbelievable fifteen and three-fifths seconds, where it stands today, unchallenged. He has met and defeated the foremost exhibition choppers and lumberjacks of Canada, Australia and the United States, including Alaska. No man has ever approached his time; the nearest threat is a distant thirty-two seconds, twice as slow as his record mark. At fifty-four Perry found himself the Joe Louis of the ax world. There was no one around for him to lick, so he retired as the undefeated champion.

"I got two other world records those youngsters can shoot at, both soft pine, but I'm proudest of my eight-by-eight hard pine. I don't think that will ever be broken," he says.

Perry is no shrinking violet when he discusses his supremacy with the ax. His forthright statements about his own ability have often irritated his

fellow Maine guides, some of whom look upon him primarily as a carnival man. Perry, however, is an experienced guide with a Grade A rating, the highest the Maine Guides' Association offers. Of the state's 3300 licensed guides, fewer than 7 per cent have passed the strict Grade A requirements, which are based on canoeing in white water, general guiding and organizing ability, and aptitude with the skillet. Perry, who is licensed to guide in every Maine county, says he has traveled the state by more methods of locomotion than any other man alive—by canoe and boat over most of its waterways, by wagon, both horse and ox drawn, by dog sled, airplane and train.

It was his prowess with the ax that brought him the ownership of the Chinook kennels. Fifteen years ago, when he was appearing in a sportsman's show in Boston he saw a team of Chinooks, exhibited by Mrs. Julia Lombard, of Wonalancet, New Hampshire. The lead dog, a 120-pound giant named Chugash, caught his eye and he asked Mrs. Lombard if he could take the animal for a run on Boston Common during the slack hours of the show. For a week he took Chugash out every morning, unleashed, and never once did the Chinook attempt to leave his side. "He used to circle around me and run five miles while I was walking one," is the way Perry tells it, "but he was never farther away than arm's length at any time."

The show closed, a year went by and the following winter when he walked into the crowded Boston Garden the big dog, instantly recognizing him, sprang out of his booth and jumped all over him. From then on he couldn't see enough of Chugash and the other Chinooks. Every year he used to work the dog out on Boston Common and every year Chugash used to bolt for him as he entered the Garden. (Continued on Page 68)



"Sometimes I wonder whether men are going to find Marilyn attractive."



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When Mrs. Lombard decided to give up her kennels in 1939 she picked Perry as her successor because of his great fondness for the dogs. He told her he couldn't pay a quarter of the amount the kennels would bring in a public sale, but that didn't matter to Mrs. Lombard, who was satisfied that he would care for the dogs and preserve the Chinook strain. It was a fortunate choice, for Perry has a tremendous pride in the dogs and has refused many tempting offers for them. He will not sell an unspayed female for any price, thus maintaining complete control of the breed.

The origin and development of the breed is a secret known only to four people—Arthur Walden, a prospector and polar sled-dog driver, Mrs. Lombard, Perry and his wife. There is no question about the Chinook's being a distinct breed, for it has bred true for over twenty generations. The fact that it is not registered with the American Kennel Club means little to the more than 400 owners of Chinooks in every part of the country. "I could register them if I wanted to," Perry said. "The AKC requires eight generations of true breeding and I have papers which show three times that many, but I don't want to develop a show dog. Those show dogs are getting more streamlined every year, and that means a narrower head. I don't want the brains bred out of my dogs." He held up his index finger. "Look at that finger. You can't get any brains into it. It's too narrow. You got to have some room there, some width, and that's what my dogs have got between their ears—room for brains."

Perry will not reveal the complete history of the Chinook strain, but this much he will tell: More than a quarter of a century ago, an unusually large dog with coat and proportions totally unlike any of its brothers appeared in a litter of dogs owned by Arthur Walden. The dog was a sport, a phenomenon of nature that occurs once in a million times. As the dog grew up, Walden, an experienced breeder, recognized in him the characteristics he had always been looking for—intelligence, disposition, obedience, combined with power and endurance. He bred the

dog, now named Kim, to a small black and white female whose identity Perry won't reveal. In that litter all the dogs retained the same physical characteristics and qualities that had made Kim such an outstanding animal. They, in turn, bred true, and a new strain of dog came into existence, which Walden called the Chinook breed. Among them was a dog he named Chinook, who became the lead dog under Walden on Byrd's first Antarctic expedition. As time went on Walden found he couldn't be away on expeditions and at the same time supervise his kennels, so he turned them over to Mrs. Lombard, who knew canine bloodlines and the value of selective breeding. It was under her influence that the Chinook's gentleness of nature was stressed. She bred them for intelligence and disposition without sacrificing their ruggedness and stamina.

My guess is that there is a bit of the bar sinister somewhere in the line, perhaps a dash of Alsatian and Saint Bernard. One thing the four people who share the secret of the Chinook are firm about is that there is no strain of Husky or wolf in them. Whatever is in them, the breed is now standardized and has been for many years. There are no throwbacks in any litter, and the line is pure and established.

The average Chinook weighs between 90 and 110 pounds, has a thick, tawny coat, furry arched tail and a chest of amazing breadth. It has a long muzzle and pointed ears. A strikingly handsome animal, it bows to no breed as an all-around dog—as a guardian, a house pet, a work dog and a water dog. But it is the Chinook's intelligence and gentleness that make him so outstanding. No Chinook has ever been known to bite a man, yet the dog will threaten anyone if it is necessary to protect its master. That was proved one night by what happened at Perry's place. He was awakened by an unearthly growling and screaming in the yard. He rushed out in his night-shirt and found Beering, his pet, standing over a man who lay flat on his back, pinned to the ground, with Beering's huge paws on his shoulders. The dog's snarling face was inches away from the man's, but except for a probable life-long future of hideous nightmares,



Roy
WILLIAMS

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

there was no other harm done to the man, who turned out to be a chicken thief.

"Lucky I was home or Beering might of kept him pinned there two, three days," Perry grinned.

The Chinooks are noted for their friendliness with other dogs and will fight only as a last resort—only if they are attacked. "They won't fight unless they get jumped, and I don't mean just growled at," Perry explains. "I mean the other dog has to really jump them first." He rummaged around his desk and found a letter from the mother of a boy in Worcester, who owned a four-year-old Chinook. "She says the boy gets hauled to school every day by the dog, no matter what month," he said, reading. "Sled in winter and cart when the snow melts. Well, the lad was being hauled along in a cart the other day when a big police dog ran out of a yard and leaped right on the Chinook's back. The boy sat frozen in his seat, too frightened to move, while the dogs went at it. It didn't last long, though. The police dog got a bad mauling and quit and, by Godfrey, the Chinook was still in harness and the cart wasn't even upset when the battle was over. They can fight, all right, when they have to. When they're attacked they rise up on their hind legs and strike out with their forepaws, like a boxer."

Perry's price for his pups is \$150 each and in the six years he has owned the kennels he has sold about 180 of them. In every case, he says, a sale has resulted in a personal friendship with each new owner. He is particular about people who want to buy his pups, and he will not sell them at any price unless he's convinced that they will be properly raised. Nor will he ship a pup anywhere. He either brings the pup to its new home or the buyer comes to Warren, and sometimes that doesn't do any good.

When I was at Perry's place last summer, a chauffeur-driven car came into the driveway one afternoon and stopped in front of the kitchen door. A man and his wife and their seven-year-old daughter got out of the car and came into the house. The man, who had corresponded with Perry about buying a pup, had driven 180 miles from Boston to pick it up. While they were talking, the daughter, a terror, ran wild around the kitchen, flinging spoons to the floor and making a general headache of herself. Perry put her in his lap at the table, where she promptly took a swipe at the pup. That was enough. Dad Fowle exchanged looks with Perry, put his size-ten hat on and left the house. The man started to count out his money but Perry, grimaced, stopped him and told him to put it back in his pocket. He told him the pup wasn't for sale and showed him the door. After they had gone he said, "I wouldn't let one of my pups go into a home like that for any amount of money. If they can't bring up a kid right, then how are they going to raise a pup? That kid might ruin the dog's disposition and give a bad name to the breed."

Perry handles his dogs with the patience and affection of a thoughtful father bringing up his own children. He never raises his voice to them above conversational tones, and he is always instantly obeyed. His two favorites, Beering and Riki, are allowed in the house and have the run of the yard, free from the kennels. The farm faces on auto-clogged U. S. Highway Number One, where a dog would risk being killed if he ventured out on it. I asked

him if he wasn't worried about his dogs getting run over.

"No," he said. "They're too smart. They know there's danger out there and they never go on the road. I didn't have to teach them, either. They just know it." We were sitting on the front porch at the time, when Beering suddenly jumped up and darted for the highway. Then I witnessed an incredible example of the Chinook's inherent brain power. It was a kitten that had caused Beering to step on the highway for the first time in his life—a kitten that was wandering on uncertain legs and now stood in the middle of the road. Beering stood over it for a moment, then reached down and gently picked it up in his huge maw, where it almost disappeared from sight. He brought it back safely into the yard, put it down, and then took his place beside us again. It was like a prearranged act, for we had a moment before been talking about the dogs' going on the highway. Even Perry was left gasping by the sight.

I had now seen and heard so many things about the Chinook's human intelligence that I wasn't much taken aback a couple of days later, when I heard about a dog over in Camden who would dive into twelve feet of water and retrieve coins on the bottom. I tracked the yarn down to Frank Gilmore, a twenty-five-year-old veteran who owned a Chinook named Trondak. When I asked him if it was true that his dog would go under water for coins he said, "Not quite true, but if you want to go swimming with us this afternoon in Lake Megunticook I think I can show you something."

When we got to the lake, Gilmore struck out for a rock about 100 yards offshore, with Trondak swimming beside him. He mounted the rock, dived off, and the dog was in the air in a dive before Gilmore hit the water. "Watch this!" Gilmore shouted, and thrashed around in the water as if he were drowning. Trondak sped toward him, head and chest high in the water and, seizing him by the wrist, began to drag him toward shore. Then Gilmore said, "Here's what they mean about his diving." Gilmore went under. The dog circled around frantically for a moment, and then he, too, disappeared completely from sight. For several seconds both man and dog were under water, and when they came up Trondak had the wrist hold again and was making for the beach.

Perry wasn't much surprised the next day when I told him what I had seen Trondak do. He is convinced that no other dog in the world can match the Chinook in all-around ability, and nothing would please him more than to be able to give one to every person who could meet his strict requirements. He will be nearer that goal a year from now, when he can devote all his time to raising his beloved dogs.

He has sold his farm and all his stock and is now building a house near Waldoboro, with kennel room for three times the number of Chinooks he now has. There will be a special room for Dad Fowle in the new house, but Mrs. Greene is firm about eliminating all guest rooms.

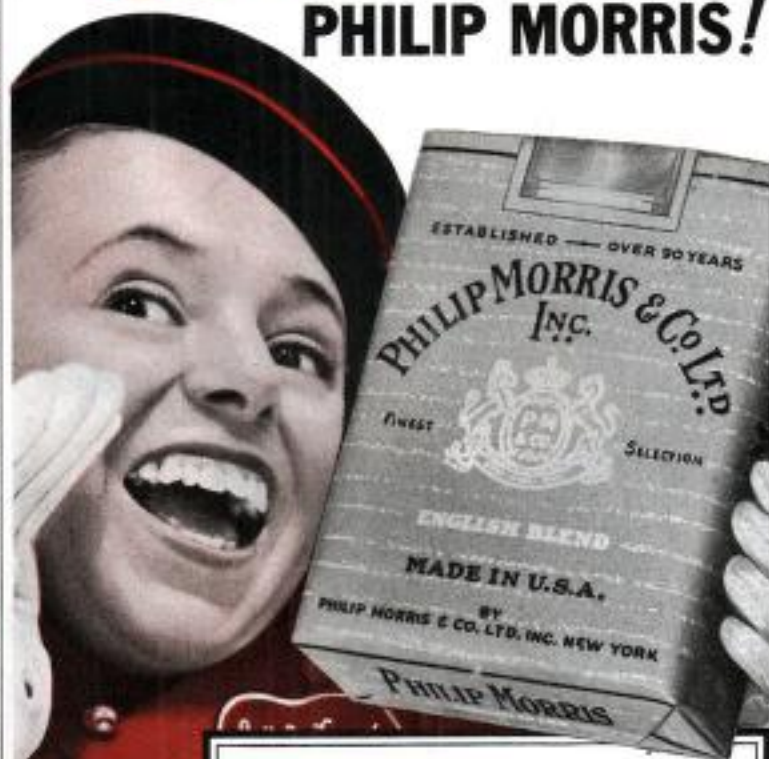
"You know how Perry is," she said. "He'd like as not fill up the whole house with strangers, just so long as they admire our dogs. If we built spare rooms the house would be so crowded we'd have to sleep in the kennels."

"Why, Honey," said Perry. "What would be the matter with that?"

THE END

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