

COMMEMORATIVE BOOKLET



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Seventy-five Cents



Arthur Treadwell Walden

IF Arthur Walden were a young man today, chances are he'd be making a bid for a seat on the first rocket to the moon, for he loved adventure. Though his father, the Rev. Treadwell Walden, was a Boston Episcopal rector of high station, this vivid, restless son caused the sleepy little valley of Wonalancet to shake hands with Alaska and the South Pole. For it was Walden who introduced Wonalancet to the sled dog, and to thousands of people the two have been synonymous ever since. He spent seven years in Alaska freighting with dog-teams for a living during the Gold Rush, before settling down in Wonalancet.

Admiral Byrd's first trip to the South Pole was an adventure after Arthur's own heart. He and Chinook made a trip to Boston to interview Byrd who had received the appointment and Walden came back in charge of all dogs for the Expedition. More than a hundred dogs were conditioned at that time at his Kennels.

In his book *Little America*, Admiral Byrd wrote: "Had it not been for the dogs, our attempts to conquer the Antarctic by air must have ended in failure. On January 17, Walden's single team of thirteen dogs moved 3,500 pounds of supplies from ship to base, a distance of 16 miles each trip, in two journeys. His team was the backbone of our transport."

An incomparable storyteller, Arthur Walden and his wife, Katharine Sleeper, a Boston girl brought to the mountains for her health, made of their inn at Wonalancet Farm the focus for a new kind of attractiveness in country living.



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CHINOOK

Chinook

NOT all Tamworth's notables walked on two feet. For Tamworth claims as her own the lion-hearted husky, Chinook, called by Admiral Byrd the greatest dog of his time — the lead-dog of super-intelligence and unerring instinct on the trail, who wrote the first pages of sled-dog history. He won in New Hampshire the first Eastern International Sled-dog Race, Canadians and Americans, point to point, three days, 123 miles.

A lead-dog must be able to command obedience and to control the entire pack — he is king in his domain. Walden boasted that he rarely gave Chinook a command — he seemed to know instinctively what to do.

Chinook was eleven when he went with Walden to the Antarctic. The work of the dog-teams was grueling, "but," says Arthur, "his traces were never slack." However, to conserve the dog's strength, a Chinook son or two were trained to relieve him on routine trips, when he usually followed alongside. He enjoyed the freedom, but it may have led to the breaking of his heart. He was never known to avoid a scrap if challenged, no matter what odds were against him.

A couple of his progeny charged him one day and for the first time in his life bowled him over before he knew it. He was on his feet instantly, and though his antagonists were younger and more agile, he held his own for several minutes of battling.

Next morning he was at the head of the team again, until after the worst of the pressure ridges on the trail had been passed. Then he was loosed with just his collar on. The team had gone a couple of miles further when his master noted that Chinook was not in sight.

He was never seen again. Next day all teams that could be spared joined in the search, but a bad storm early in the day obliterated all tracks. Admiral Byrd ordered that all fliers be on the lookout for Chinook, but no sign of him was ever found. The following spring, heavy scratches on the wall down in a deep crevasse were seen. They might have been made by a dog.

"He was always careful in avoiding crevasses," said Walden, "and there isn't a chance that he lost his way. It is my belief that he was broken-hearted over not holding his own in that minor squabble, and deliberately went away to die by himself in the most God-forsaken spot on earth." One of the strangest things about his disappearance is that the night before, he woke me up twice by placing a forepaw on my face, just as his father Kim did the night before he died. Perhaps it was a way of telling me goodbye."

Today, Chinook Trail is the road that leads north from Tamworth village to the intervale and to Chinook Kennels with its log-cabin layout and its exceptional Sled-dog Museum. Dogs and drivers have been trained here for polar expeditions, and for Army service during the last war. The delicate racing sledges were put together by the expert old-time cabinet-maker, Chester Bickford. Since Milton Seeley's death, his wife, Eva Seeley, has continued to breed and handle Siberian Huskies and Alaskan Malamutes, two breeds founded by them and registered in the American Kennel Club. Lately the Chinook Memorial Foundation has been organized to carry on both kennels and museum (see *National Geographic* for September '66).