

Harry Riley, a young farmer living near Woodstown, pastures his horse in a field through which runs a muddy creek. The other day one of the horses came up in a gallop to the fence surrounding the house and whinnied loudly. Then it wheeled around and ran toward the creek, but no special attention was then paid to it by the family.

Again the beast appeared, dashing up over the hill, and neighed frantically at the fence. Farmer Riley went to the horse and patted it soothingly on the nose, whereupon the animal seized him by the coat sleeve and pulled him up against the fence, as to haul him over it. The horse soon released Riley and then ran a few feet toward the creek, wheeled about and again came back, whinnying excitedly.

The strange actions of the horse finally convinced Riley that something was the matter, and when he started to follow, the delight of the beast was manifest. The intelligent animal led Riley to the bank of the stream, at a spot nearly concealed by bushes, and there in the quickmire, with only half its head visible, was the other horse, buried and slowly sinking.

Riley quickly summoned the help of neighboring farmers with shovels and ropes, and after several hours of hard work, succeeded in extricating the horse from what would certainly have been its grave, had it not been for the intelligence and faithfulness of its mate.

Delphos Courant,

Oct. 24, 1900

Another Smart Horse

“Experience has convinced me that there is such a thing as horse sense,” says a veterinary surgeon. “A friend of mine had a beautiful chestnut driving mare that was subject to spells of colic. About a year ago she got very sick, and Jones the owner, brought her over here for treatment. I cared for her, and she seemed as grateful as a human being might, rubbing her nose against my coat sleeve, and showing her affection in her dumb way.

“One day about six months ago, up she came to the door of my shop, moaning and evidently suffering acutely. I treated her again and she got better. I found out later that there was no one home that day, and that she had worked her halter off and set out to find the doctor.”

“Curious circumstance,” said the man who heard the story.

“But that’s not all,” said the doctor. “Three days ago I came down to my office in the morning. There lay the chestnut mare in front of the door, dead. She had taken sick, had made her way to the shop in the night, and found nobody there to give her medicines and she died. Now, if this story isn’t proof that a horse can reason, I would like to hear something better to beat it.”

Delphos Herald,

Sept. 7, 1900

Faithful Companion

in the Bible

In the Old Testament Book of Tobit, Tobias sets off on a trek to collect a debt to help his blind father. He is accompanied on his journey by the angel Raphael and a small dog. After all the adventures have finished, he returns home, the dog running ahead to announce his arrival. Tradition maintains that this dog even proceeded Tobias into heaven. It is this story that accounts for the sustained popularity of the name Toby for dogs.

From The Intelligence of Dogs

By Stanley Coren

St. Patrick and the Dogs

Patrick MacAlpern's life was strangely entwined with dogs. Around A.D. 400, at age sixteen, Patrick was abducted by Irish marauders. He was enslaved and kept as a shepherd for six years, his sole companion being a dog. In response to a dream, he made his way to the coast, where he found the ship that the dream foretold would return him to his own land.

The ship was from Gaul, and the master put it into Irish waters in order to get a cargo of hunting hounds, which were bringing fabulous prices on European markets. Not surprisingly, as a penniless slave, Patrick was received unsympathetically when he tried to gain passage. However, just as he was leaving, he was suddenly called back. Over one hundred great Irish wolfhounds now packed the holds and filled the deck of the ship. Taken from their masters and

their familiar surroundings, the giant dogs were frantic and furious, ready to attack anyone who came near. Some of the sailors had noticed that during Patrick's brief visit to the ship, he had spoken with some of the dogs and seemed to have a calming effect on them. Therefore, in exchange for feeding, cleaning up after, and otherwise caring for the dogs — Patrick received passage to the continent.

The ship was badly underprovisioned and reached a ruined and deserted section of Gaul with nothing left to feed dogs or men. Because the dogs were worth more than the ship, the crew abandoned the ship and set off on foot, heading inland. With no inhabitants or food in the area, the dogs and men were soon in jeopardy of dying of starvation. The shipmaster, who had learned that Patrick was a Christian, turned to him and in a taunting manner said, "If your god is so great, then pray to him to send us food."

Patrick did so, and the story goes, a miracle occurred. A herd of wild pigs appeared, seemingly from nowhere. Instead of bolting and running as might be expected, the swine stayed long enough for the starving men, with the assistance of the dogs, to kill some of them, providing meat for all. Patrick's reputation rose considerably, and after the dogs were sold, the crew made a gift to him of some food and money to help him on his way.

Many years later, he returned to Ireland, and his goal was to preach Christianity. It seems the news that a strange ship had just landed, from which emerged white-robed men with clean shaved heads who chanted in a strange tongue, prompted an Irish prince to go to the coast to investigate the situation, accompanied by his large hunting dog. Dichie decided that the best course was to kill these odd clerics and be done with it. With a shout, he set his dog at Patrick. The dog lept forward in full fury, but when Patrick uttered a short prayer, the dog halted, grew quiet and then approached Patrick and muzzled his hand. Dichie was so touched by this scene that he aided Patrick's mission in Ireland in many ways.

The point of these stories seems to be that the dogs could somehow sense or respond to Patrick's piety. According to Irish folklore, Patrick repaid dogs for their deference to him by allowing the legendary character Oissain to take hounds to heaven with him when he died, where we can suppose that they are keeping Tobias's little dog company.

By Stanley Coren

Window to the Past - Very smart animals

Written by Robert Holdgreve
Saturday, May 25, 2013 12:38 AM -

Dog, Trapped in

Sweltering Car

Honks For Help

Gardner ran an errand and took Max with her. When she came home a short time later she went inside the house, forgetting Max was still in the car. The dog saved his own life by honking the horn to get himself out of a very, very overheated car.

Dog Leads

Police to Fire

Buddy and his owner, 23-year-old Ben Heinrichs, were in the family workshop, April 4, when a heater ignited chemicals. Heinrichs, who sustained minor flash burns on his face, dashed out. He then told Buddy, "go get help." The dog took off and found a trooper responding to a call about the fire. Buddy led the officer to the house and the trooper guided firefighters to the scene.

Window to the Past - Very smart animals

Written by Robert Holdgreve
Saturday, May 25, 2013 12:38 AM -

Kishta the

Smart Cat

My husband's home office is off limits to felines. The door knob to this and every other room is the lever type. The first time hubby went through his door and shut it in Kishta's face, she looked at the door knob and then at me and waited until I left so I wouldn't see her and stop her. Within minutes, she had figured out how to jump and hang onto the lever just right to open the door. The other cats promptly learned her trick by observing her. When I lock a door with a key, she eyes it thoughtfully when I lay it down, but there are limitations I guess.

Sasha, a cat, was observed getting a water-carrying cotton sponge out of a drawer and carry it to her water dish, used the device to dip water onto her cat food which was obviously too dry. This qualifies as a tool use.

From the Internet