



The Adventures of Meg

By M. M. McCallum

Rex in the Black

Meg trudged homeward. Her carrier bag dragged heavily on her shoulders. For the first time she was covering her magazine route alone. Rex was gone. Dear faithful Rex who pulled a sleigh in winter and kept wagon wheels rolling in summer;...Rex who knew every stop on the route had simply disappeared.

"Is that you Meg?" called Mother as the door closed behind her. "Did you see any sign of him?"

"No Mum" answered Meg. "Everyone is keeping their eyes open for him, but it's been three days now. Oh; I miss him so

"I know dear" said Mum smoothing Megs bowed head with her gentle hand. "I know, we won't give up hope, but come now, it's Carnival Week and you have things to do.

"Oh Mum, not without Rex, I couldn't."

"Yes Meg, you have made promises and they must be honored. It's a hard lesson to learn so young, but we'll all help."

"Do I have to go to the dogsled races to-morrow? After skiing along the trails on the practice runs, with Rex keeping pace with the lead dog of that team from the south-west, these last three weeks; I know I will break down and cry without him."

"Your friends are counting on you Meg."

Saturday dawned crisp and clear.

The doorbell clanged and boots clattered through the house. The gang had arrived and Meg was swept along on a tide of festivity.

Arriving at the starting point of the races, they stood their

skis and poles on end in a handy snow-bank.

Roaming here and there through the crowds pressing upon the packs of dogs, sleds and drivers, Meg recognized many of them.

Yes, there was the team wearing number three, that she and Rex had kept company with.

"Why" said Meg to herself, "he has a new lead dog; an all black collie, that's unusual.".....

Just as Meg edged forward to get a closer look, the warning whistle blew. "Clear the track!! Starting time 30 seconds. Off the track please."

Meg squirmed to the front row keeping her eye on the three team. They were acting very unsettled.

The new lead dog whined and looked from side to side; the starters pistol sounded; the drivers whip curled through the air.

The sudden sting of the lash startled the black into action. Lunging forward in the harness, he led the pack out of the throng of dogs, sleighs and drivers.

Meg watched them almost out of sight. A frown creased her brow. Suddenly she whirled, ran to her skis, and with fast driving strokes set after the teams.

With a tremendous burst of speed, Meg came in sight of the leading number three team.

Now she was sure. That body; that run. It just had to be Rex. Blinded by tears, Meg stopped. There was just no way she could catch them.

A flurry of snow made her turn to find that her friends had caught up to her.

Meg explained her wild dash, and heads nodded in agreement. "Could be" said Bruce. "I've never seen a pure black collie before; and I know that team.

It's a new lead dog alright. Uncle Jed is one of the judges. Let's get back and talk to him."

Four hours later Meg was still standing by the finish line. The crowd that had left earlier was beginning to drift back.

Meg could hardly breathe. Her heart was in her throat.

"Oh! please, please let it be Rex, she whispered."

"Here they come" went up a cry from the judges stand. The crowd went still, You could hear the scream of steel runners on the packed snow; the jingle of sleigh bells and the creak of leather harness...and over all, the ominous crack! crack! of the whip.

"It's number three, number three coming in first," someone shouted.

Meg's whole body strained to see. A sound passed her lips. "Rex" she cried "Rex, come."

Well, that collie's ears shot right up. He shook all over. He fairly leapt in the traces.

With a magical burst of speed he headed for Meg, dragging his teammates right off their weary feet.

The crowd closed around the driver. Uncle Jed wrenched the whip from his hand.

"Begorra, 'tis a hiding yourself should be getting for this day's work!! You have harnessed your last dog in these parts. I'll see to that." "Come lassie, loose your dog and get that devil's black dye washed out."

... and Meg and Rex wept and laughed and barked and tumbled together over and over, leaving smudgy patches in the snow.

Patches as dark as the mind of the man whose only thought was o win; and cared not how he played the game.

Hearing for every living person

At the 123rd Annual Communication of Free Masonry held last July at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto, Project H.E.L.P. was introduced to the Masons present from all of Ontario as a means to celebrate their 125th Anniversary.

This project was to raise a hopeful figure of \$350,000.00 to be invested and with the interest each year, financially assist a team of Doctors in Toronto do research for the hard of hearing. This figure has now reached far beyond Grand Lodges' expectations and could reach half a million dollars because of donations from non-masons as well as masons. However, the more money received, the more benefit to the program.

Masonry has never been known to advertise its charitable projects such as scholarships

from the Masonic Foundation, assistance to the needy through their Benevolence Fund, and of course, the Shiners Sick Childrens Hospitals. Due to the popularity of this Project, Grand Lodge has felt non masons as well as masons should get involved. Many of us know personally of people afflicted with this hardship and what financial assistance would mean.

Russell Lodge 479 has become very involved in this Program and would welcome all donations so as to boost their own objective. It is important to know that every donation goes directly in full to the Project. There are no administration costs held back.

If you desire to donate, make your cheque payable to Keith Boyd, Chairman of Project H.E.L.P. for Russell Lodge 479, and you will be given a deductible Income Tax Receipt.

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Executive elected

The annual meeting of the Russell Agricultural Society was held on Jan. 29 in the Dr. Frank Kinnaird Community Centre.

The guests and members enjoyed a Pot Luck supper prepared by the ladies. Jim Rowan, president of the Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies District no. 1 was guest speaker for the evening. Gaston Patenaude, reeve of Russell Township, brought greetings from the municipal council.

Dairy Princess Margaret Van Mansteren of Sarsfield talked about her activities for the year.

One of our past presidents, Carman James showed very interesting movies he had taken at last year's fair.

Mr. Rowan chaired the meeting for the election of officers for the coming year. President is Barry McVey, 1st Vice-president is Ian MacGregor, President of the Ladies Section is Naomi Eadie, Directors are Clelland Hamilton, Maynard Cherry, John Acktereekte, James Eadie, Keith Boyd, Mona Saunders, Doris Graham, Mary Heymans, Diny Acktereekte, Eric Campbell, Jack James, Barry Boothe, Jerry Smit, Douglas Cherry, Leo Bekkers, Harry Nooyen and George James. Auditors elected were Marjorie Wouters and Harold Gamble. George Young is the Secretary.

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