Bobbie the Wonder Dog

"Bobbie the Wonder Dog" of Silverton, Oregon, was the canine hero in a story that, in the 1920s, became a national sensation. On a February day in 1924, the 2-year-old scotch collie-mix dog appeared on the door step of his owners, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Brazier. What amazed them was that they had not seen their dog since he disappeared six months earlier from a car trip in Indiana. Bobbie—mangy, scrawny, feet worn to the bone—appeared to have walked back the entire way by himself.

The local paper, the *Silverton Appeal*, printed the story of Bobbie's cross-country trek and it quickly spread to newspapers across the country. The Braziers received hundreds of letters from people simply addressed to "Bobbie, the Wonder Dog" or "Silverton's Bobbie." Some people claimed they had seen Bobbie and were able to identify him by several distinguishing marks.

Officials from the Oregon Humane Society launched an investigation into the Brazier's claims and were able to confirm to their satisfaction that Bobbie did indeed travel 2,800 miles in the dead of winter to return to his home.

Bobbie was a much-celebrated dog: He received medals, keys to cities, and a jewel-studded harness and collar; He was the guest of honor at the Portland Home Show where over 40,000 people came to view him; He was presented with his own dog-sized bungalow.

Bobbie's story was featured in "Ripley's Believe It or Not," and a book called "Bobbie, a Great Collie" by Charles Alexander. Bobbie played himself in a silent film entitled "The Call of the West" a reel of which is in the archives of the Oregon Historical Society Research Library.

Upon his death in 1927, Bobbie was buried with honors at the Oregon Humane Society. Portland's mayor gave the eulogy and later Rin Tin Tin laid a wreath at his grave.

Written by Susan Stelljes

Further Reading:

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Brazier, G.F. "Bobbie: The Wonder Dog of Oregon." From *Animal Pals,* Curtis Wager-Smith, ed. Philadelphia: Macrae Smith Company, 1924.
http://silvertonor.com/murals/bobbie/bobbie_wonder_dog2.htm

Stelljes, Susan *Wonder Dog, the Story of Silverton Bobbie.* Portland: For the Love of Dog Books, 2005.

"Call of the West," featuring the wonder dog Bobbie. Oregon Historical Society. Film.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rot22X4Z0ys&feature=youtu.be

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