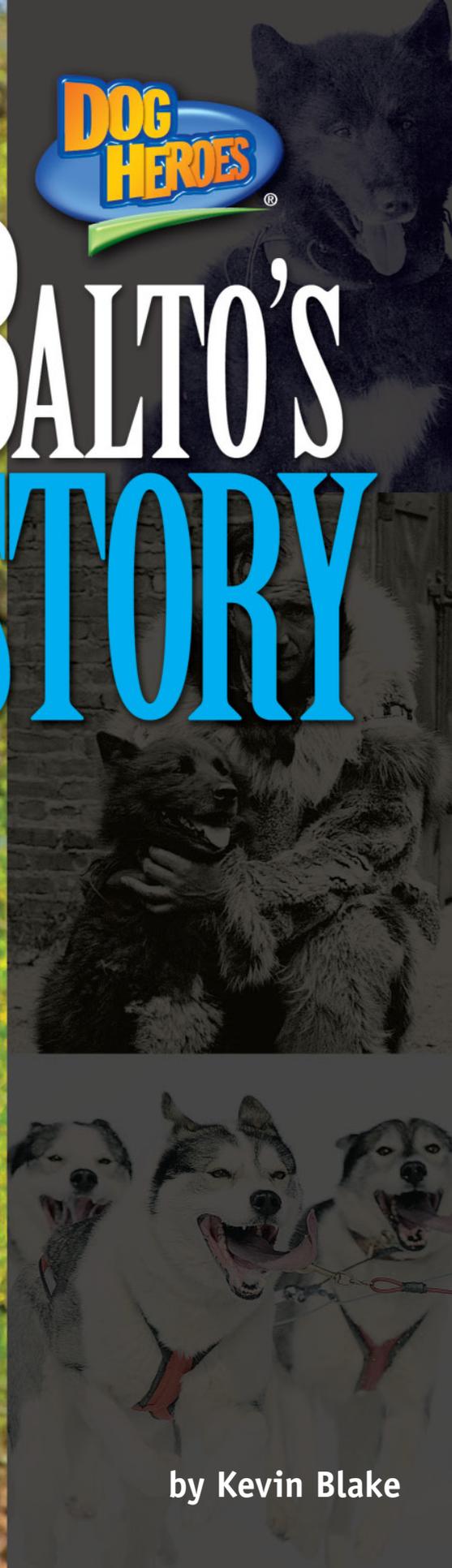


BALTO'S STORY



by Kevin Blake

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by Kevin Blake

**Consultant: Harvey Webster, Director
Wildlife Resource Center
Cleveland Museum of Natural History
Cleveland, Ohio**

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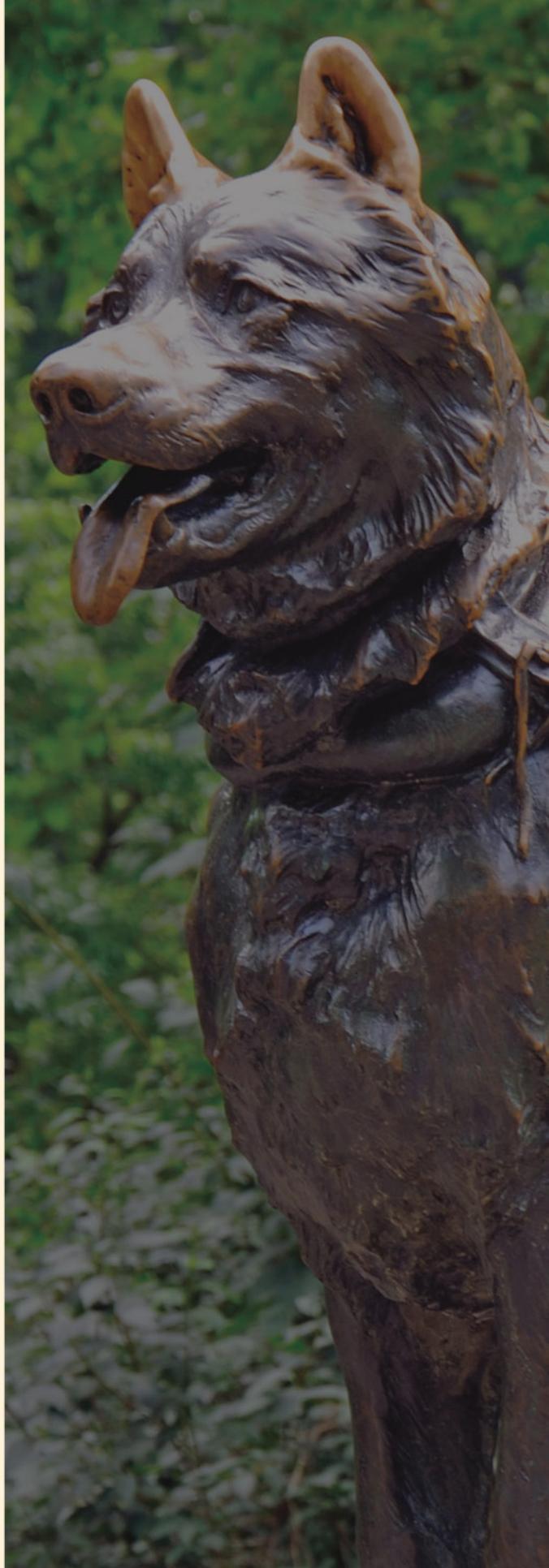
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A Daring Path

Musher Gunnar Kaasen and his **lead dog**, Balto, were battling the worst winter storm to hit Alaska in twenty years. The temperature had dropped to -50°F (-46°C). Fierce winds roared at 70 miles per hour (113 kph) as snow pounded Gunnar's sled. The blinding **blizzard** made it impossible to see.



Gunnar and Balto



At -50°F (-46°C), it's so cold that, without gloves, a person's fingers can freeze solid within minutes.

Waiting for the weather to change, however, wasn't an option. It was already February 1, 1925, and the clock was ticking fast. Fifty miles (81 km) away in Nome, Alaska, dozens of the town's children were sick and near death. Gunnar and Balto carried the only medicine that could cure them. The storm couldn't stop them. The children's lives depended on it.

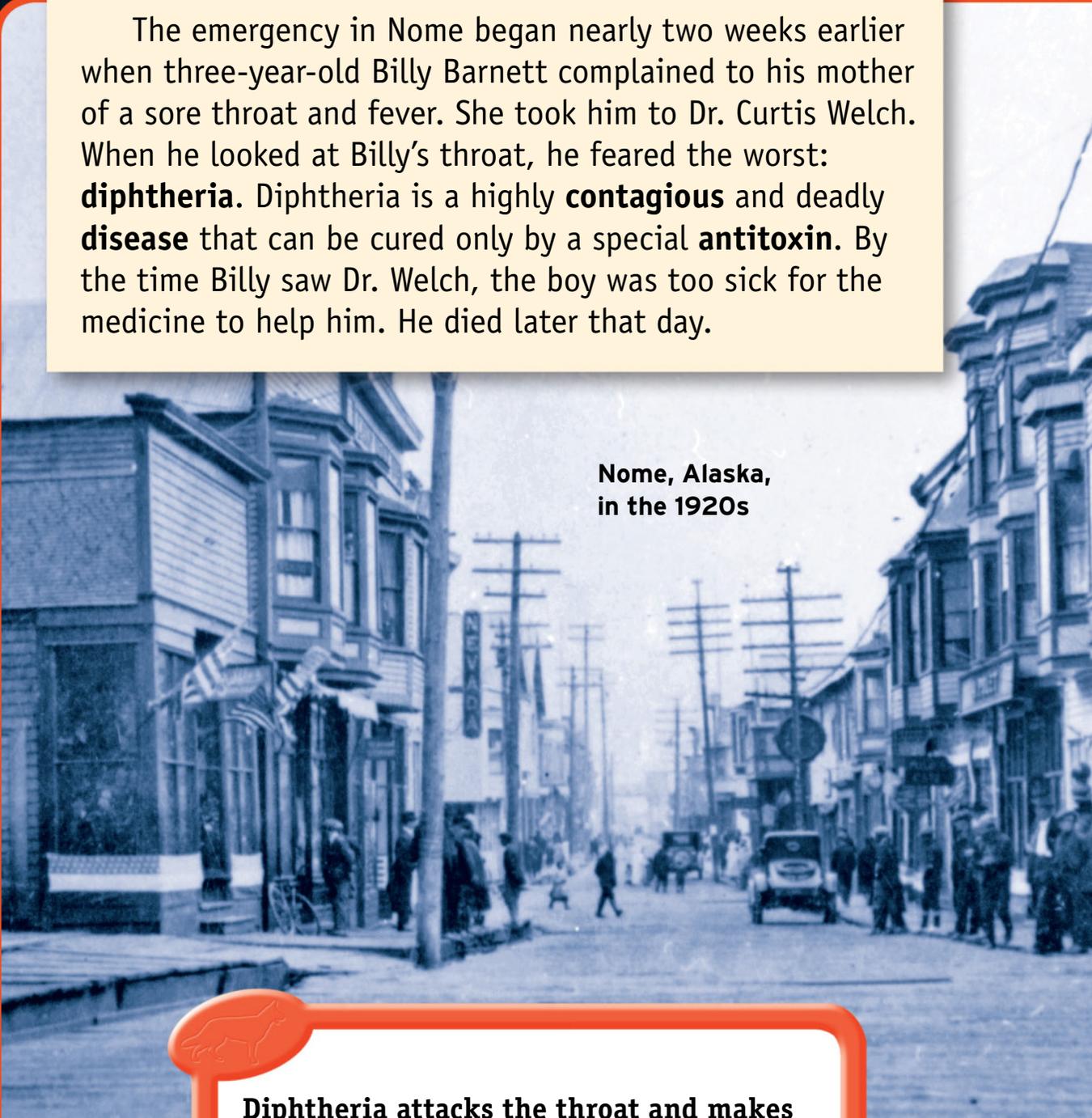


Dogsled teams race through a blizzard.

Alaska is the northernmost state in the United States.

Outbreak!

The emergency in Nome began nearly two weeks earlier when three-year-old Billy Barnett complained to his mother of a sore throat and fever. She took him to Dr. Curtis Welch. When he looked at Billy's throat, he feared the worst: **diphtheria**. Diphtheria is a highly **contagious** and deadly **disease** that can be cured only by a special **antitoxin**. By the time Billy saw Dr. Welch, the boy was too sick for the medicine to help him. He died later that day.

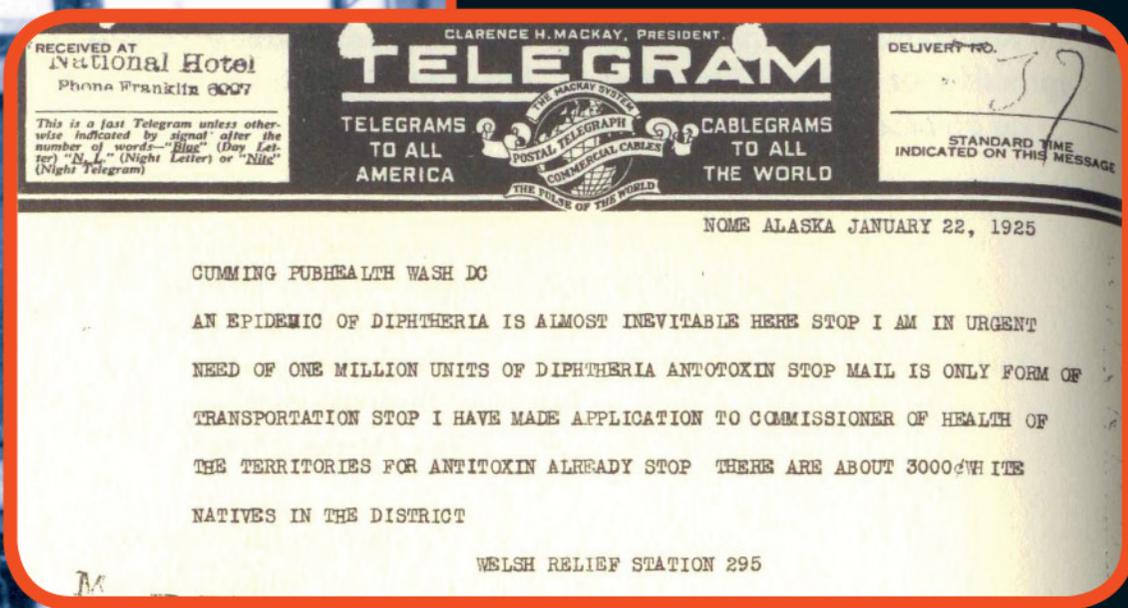


Nome, Alaska,
in the 1920s



Diphtheria attacks the throat and makes it difficult for a person to breathe. Today, diphtheria has been nearly wiped out in the United States by the use of a **vaccine**.

Over the next two days, more children became sick. It was an **epidemic!** Making things worse, Dr. Welch did not have enough antitoxin to help the sick children. He begged other doctors across the country for more medicine to be sent to Nome. Without immediate help, many would die.



Dr. Welch asks for more antitoxin in this message.

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About the Author

Kevin Blake lives in Portland, Oregon, with his wife, Melissa, and his son, Sam. He dedicates this book to both of them.

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BALTO'S STORY

It was February 1925, and musher Gunnar Kaasen and his lead sled dog, Balto, were facing the worst storm to hit Alaska in twenty years. The temperature had dropped to -50°F (-46°C). Fierce winds roared as snow pounded the sled. The blinding blizzard made it impossible to see. Waiting for the weather to change, however, wasn't an option. Fifty miles (80 km) away in Nome, Alaska, dozens of the town's children were sick with diphtheria and near death. Gunnar and Balto carried the only medicine that could cure them.

Look inside to find out more about Balto, including how he bravely guided a team of sled dogs on a grueling trip through blinding snow, over a half-frozen river, and through a mountain pass to deliver medicine to children in need.

Baghdad Pups

Balto's Story

Bomb-Sniffing Dogs

Combat-Wounded Dogs

Comfort Dogs

Disabled Dogs

Disaster Search Dogs

Dog Scouts of America

Eco Dogs

Fire Dogs

Ground Zero Dogs

Guide Dogs

Hollywood Dogs

Lifeguard Dogs

Medical Detective Dogs

Military Dogs

Pest-Sniffing Dogs

Police Dogs

Prison Puppies

Science Dogs

Security Dogs

Seizure-Alert Dogs

Service Dogs

Shelter Dogs

Skydiving Dogs

Sled Dogs

Snow Search Dogs

Soldiers' Dogs

Surf Dog Miracles

Therapy Dogs

Water Rescue Dogs

Wilderness Search Dogs

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