# Granddaddy's Dog Was Truly a 'Wonder' to Behold

**He couldn't speak of love, but his actions spoke volumes.**

YOU HEAR a lot about dogs like "Rin Tin Tin" and "Lassie," but you seldom hear about the average dog.

Sometimes these everyday, nondescript dogs have attributes that make celebrity dogs pale in comparison.

Take "Wonder," for instance.

Wonder was really Granddaddy's dog, but he and I had a bond, up to a point. Wonder liked his space and didn't appreciate anyone pushing him too much.

Granddad and I got him back in 1943 or '44, after someone had given the dog to Uncle David, who was a policeman.

Wonder was a young dog, probably less than a year old at that point. I thought he looked good, with traces of German shepherd and chow.

Time passed, and Wonder grew into a handsome, almost regal specimen. He adopted Granddaddy, and they became inseparable.

Wonder quickly established himself as the alpha male around the Georgia farm where I lived with my mother and grandparents. He became the leader of the pack.

Some of my fondest memories are when we hunted the woods around the farm. Wonder always excelled at tracking and treeing game.

He did have his quirks. He hated baths. All you had to say was “Do you want a bath?” and he was out of there.
Yet he was fearless to a fault, whether it was a snake, another dog or an intruder. Wonder always stood his ground.

Another of his hang-ups was low-flying airplanes. If one cast a shadow, Wonder launched into a frenzy. If Granddaddy was nearby, he’d shout, “Don’t catch it!” and Wonder would dash off, barking in frustration when he couldn’t catch the plane.

I think he saved face by believing that he’d chased the monster away.

Whenever Granddaddy took naps—as he often did due to his grueling schedule—Wonder would position himself under the house, directly beneath Granddaddy’s cot.

When it was time to drive the cook and the maid back home, a distance of 6 miles, Wonder would trail along about halfway, then rest until Granddaddy came back.

Years passed, and Wonder grew old. In 1953, Granddaddy was retiring and leaving the farm, and we were moving into a new home in Savannah.

## Wonder Was Accustomed to Country Life

With good intentions, Granddaddy arranged for Wonder to live with a rural family and did so with a heavy heart. I missed Wonder terribly, and I knew my granddad did, too.

During the days that followed, we adjusted to our new surroundings. Several months later, my cousin, a friend and I decided to go camping on the old farm property.

We decided to check out the abandoned buildings. As we approached the rear entrance, a slight movement caught my attention.

With guns at the ready, we eased up the steps. I swung the door wide and couldn't believe my eyes. There, lying in a frail, emaciated heap, was *Wonder*.

How he got there, I'll never know; it was 15 miles from his new home.

He was so weak, it took a major effort to lift his head to lick my hand. His once majestic tail, now reduced to tattered bone, thunked the floor pitifully slow, once or twice. His matted, reddish brown fur was stretched tight across his protruding rib cage.

Too weak to stand, he focused his glazed, sunken eyes on me—eyes that were still trusting and so full of unconditional love that he willingly chose death over separation from those he adored.

I learned a lot about life that day, and Wonder was my mentor. Seldom before or since have I seen such love and sacrifice.

He had apparently broken free from his confinement and tracked his way back home.

I gathered him in my arms, and it was a solemn drive back. Wonder had a joyous homecoming, reunited with Granddaddy and his family.

He lived out his remaining days with the dignity and love he so richly deserved.

—Thomas B. Scott, Jr., Blairsville, Georgia