

双语爱读 动物星球

张煜◎丛书主编

THE LITTLE
HOMELESS
ONE

无家可归的 “雪鞋”兔

[加]查尔斯·乔治·道格拉斯·罗伯茨◎著 张煜 刘雅婷 张逸思◎译

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以动物的视角给人类以感动和反思



国防工业出版社
National Defense Industry Press



无家可归的 “雪鞋”兔

[加] 查尔斯·乔治·道格拉斯·罗伯茨◎著 张煜 刘雅婷 张逸思◎译

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PREFACE

前言

朋友，你是否思考过这样的问题：人类是否一定要凌驾于其他动物之上？人类是否必须站在猎捕者的位置上？动物身上的机智彪悍、敢爱敢恨、舐犊情深等品行是否有时已经超越了某些卑小的人类？是否可以说世间生命等价？这些正是查尔斯·乔治·道格拉斯·罗伯茨，这位现实主义动物小说的开山鼻祖在一个个动物故事中向我们提出的问题。

谈到查尔斯·乔治·道格拉斯·罗伯茨，西方读者并不陌生。他于1860年1月10日出生于加拿大的新不伦瑞克省。他是著名诗人，被誉为加拿大“诗歌之父”，他以自己的诗歌才华，被英国国王授以“爵士”称号；他又是浪漫小说作家和动物小说作家，一生中写下了多部浪漫小说和二百多篇长短不一的动物小说，畅销许多国家，成为世界级的经典作品。

我们选译的这套故事集有四个主题：《复仇的母海象》展现了动物父母对孩子的殷殷舐犊之情，《偷乘马车的红狐》刻画了机智勇敢的红狐的形象，《无家可归的“雪鞋”兔》表现了野生动物勇敢向上的品格，《驼鹿敲门》则体现了人兽之间感人的温馨情感。

罗伯茨笔下的动物世界是一个英雄的世界，这里面不乏动物英雄。红狐显示出有别于其他同类动物的智谋和胆量，善于与人周旋，与天敌较量，巧妙地 from 人类所设置的陷阱中受惠，被人类捕获后，利用自己擅长长跑的技能，成功逃脱，摆脱了被人类任意驱使的悲惨命运，其智勇双全的形象令人不禁相形见绌。红狐的身上体现了生命不止，战斗不息的野生动物精神。

罗伯茨笔下的动物世界充溢着伟大的母爱。生活在北极世界的白熊妈妈为了让刚出生不久的孩子吸吮到充足的奶汁，不惜冒着生命危险，偷袭身材庞大的海象来补充自身营养；而失去了孩子的海象妈妈则悲愤交集，穷追不

舍，充分体现出野生动物母亲的母爱情怀。美洲豹夫妇为了追回被猎人偷去的两只幼豹，历尽重重危险，美洲豹爸爸甚至失去了自己的生命。美洲豹妈妈面对不断射来的子弹，还是毅然决然地跟踪猎人，趁猎人外出之际，将自己的两个孩子一一救出来。罗伯茨笔下的动物故事也洋溢着动人的、人与动物的友谊之情。灵沃克森林里的雄鹿高大威猛，是很多猎人心仪已久的猎物。雄鹿经常光顾瑞森老汉的菜地，偷吃各种农作物。老汉刚开始时一心要报仇，拿着枪，漫山遍野地追踪雄鹿，但总是无功而返。日子久了，老汉反而被对手非凡的逃跑技能所折服。有一次，雄鹿为了躲避两个猎人的追捕，逃到了老汉的房子里，老汉看着雄鹿那孤独无助的眼神，不禁暗生同情之心。他劝退了前来寻找雄鹿的猎人，随后又用农车载上雄鹿，将雄鹿放回了原野。这样充满大爱的故事令人唏嘘不已，感动非常！

罗伯茨笔下的动物世界是一个勇士的世界，动物的生存斗争和生命习性得到了充分的揭示与渲染。为了在残酷的自然环境中生存下来，动物往往竭尽全力，战斗到生命的最后一刻。不同的动物英雄在罗伯茨的动物故事中都表现出各自的生活特性，表现出各自生命的可贵，这也是他的故事让我们深深感动的重要原因。

罗伯茨笔下的动物世界是一个体现动物情感、价值和生命意义的世界。他凝结在笔下的是对动物的尊重、对美好品质的赞美，对这些并无二致的生命的歌颂！朋友，你还记得我在篇首提出的那些问题吗？这些问题也许早已盘踞在你的脑海，也许刚刚在你的心中扎根，但毫无疑问，这些问题将横贯我们的整个生命。随着我们对自然、对人与自然的关系、对文明与自然的关系逐渐加深理解，我们会渐渐得出自己的答案。而这些答案正是我们将来的自然观。它可能变成你一生的兴趣，可能变成你奋斗终生的信念，可能决定你能否在神秘的大自然中找到生命的最终归属。

罗伯茨动物小说之所以赢得广大读者的青睐，还有另外一层原因，这就是他的笔触充满了诗人的灵秀，语言贴切传神，写作技巧娴熟，描写生动形象，惟妙惟肖，善于营造气氛，为故事的高潮奠定基础。

这一切，细心的你定会在故事中一一体会到。



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PART 1

THE DOG THAT SAVED THE
BRIDGE

勇救大桥的狗狗





The Dog that Saved the Bridge 勇救大桥的狗狗

I

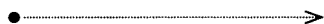
The old canal lay dreaming under the autumn sun, **tranquil**¹ between its green banks and its two rows of stiffly-rimmed bordering poplars. Once a busy highway for barges, it was now little more than a great drainage ditch, with swallow and dragon-flies darting and flashing over its seldom **ruffled**² surface. Scattered here and there over the fat, green meadows beyond its containing dykes, fat cows lay lazily chewing the **cud**³.

It was a scene of unmarred peace. To the cows nothing could have seemed more **impregnable**⁴ than their security. Off south-westward and southward, to be sure, the horizon was columned, decoratively but **ominously**⁵, by pillars of dense smoke, sharp against the **turquoise**⁶ sky. But such phenomena, however novel, failed to stir the cows to even the mildest curiosity. The spacious summer air, however, was entertaining a strange riot of noises. It thumped and throbbed and thundered. It seemed to be ripped across from time to time with a dry, leisurely sound of tearing. Again, it would be suddenly shattered with enormous earth-shaking crashes. But all this foolish **tumult**⁷ was in the distance, and it gave the cows not the slightest concern. It had not interfered with the excellent quality of the pasturage; it had not disturbed the regularity of milking-time.

Strategically considered, the lazy old canal led from nowhere to nowhere, and the low levels through which it ran were aside from the track of the fighting. The peasant folk on their little farms still went about their business, but very quietly and with lowered voices, as if hoping thus to avoid the eye of Fate.

Along the grass-grown **towpath**⁸, marching in half-sections, came a tiny detachment of long-coated Belgian riflemen with a machine-gun. The deadly little weapon, on its two-wheeled toy carriage, was drawn by a pair of sturdy, **brindled**⁹ dogs—**mongrels**¹⁰, evidently, showing a dash of bull and a dash of **retriever**¹¹ in their make-up. They were not as large as the dogs usually employed by the Belgians in this kind of service, but they were strong, and keen on their job. Digging their strong toes into the turf, they threw their weight valiantly into the **straps**¹², and pressed on, with tongues hanging out and what looked like a cordial grin on their panting jaws. They seemed desperately afraid of being left behind by their quick-marching comrades.

The little band kept well under the trees as they went, lest some far-scouting aeroplane should catch sight of them. In the south-eastern sky, presently, an aeroplane—a **Taube**¹³—did appear; but it was so distant that the young lieutenant in command of the detachment,



1. **tranquil** ['træŋkwɪl] *adj.* 安静的; 平静的; 宁静的
2. **ruffle** ['rʌfl] *n.* 褶裥; 混乱; (鼓的) 轻擂声; 急躁, 生气 *vt. & vi.* 弄皱; 激怒; 连续地轻敲; 扰乱
3. **cud** [kʌd] *n.* 反刍的食物
4. **impregnable** [ɪm'pregnəbl] *adj.* 无法攻取的; 不受影响的; 要塞坚固的; 可以受孕的
5. **ominously** ['ɒmɪnəsli] *adv.* 恶兆地; 不吉利地
6. **turquoise** ['tɜ:kwaɪz] *n.* 绿松石; 蓝绿色 *adj.* 蓝绿色的
7. **tumult** ['tju:mʌlt] *n.* 骚动; 骚乱; 吵闹; 激动
8. **towpath** ['təupa:θ] *n.* 拉船路; 牵道
9. **brindled** ['brɪndld] *adj.* 有斑的, 有斑纹的
10. **mongrel** ['mʌŋgr(ə)l] *n.* 杂种; 混血儿; 杂种动物 *adj.* 杂种的; 混血儿的
11. **retriever** [ri'tri:və] *n.* (训练成能寻回猎物的) 猎犬; 取回的人
12. **strap** [stræp] *vt.* 用带捆绑; 用皮条抽打; 约束 *vi.* 精力旺盛地工作; 受束缚 *n.* 带; 皮带; 磨刀皮带; 鞭打
13. **Taube** *n.* 天鸽座飞机

after examining it carefully with his **field-glasses**¹⁴, concluded that it was little likely to detect his dark line moving under the trees. The Taube, that execrated dove of death, was spying over the Belgian trenches, and doubtless daring a hot fire from the Belgian rifles. Once it made a wide sweep north-westward, rapidly growing larger, and the little band under the trees lay down, hiding themselves and the gun behind the **dyke**¹⁵. Then its flight swerved back over the Belgian lines, and the commander, lowering his glasses with a deep breath of relief, gave the order to march. Two minutes later, around the questing aeroplane appeared a succession of sudden fleecy puffs of smoke, looking soft and harmless as cotton-wool. One of these came just before the nose of the aeroplane. Next moment the machine gave a great swooping dive, righted itself, dived again, and dropped like a stone.

“Thank God for that!” muttered the young lieutenant, and his men cheered grimly under their breath.

Three minutes later the detachment came to an old stone bridge. Here it halted. The men began hastily **entrenching**¹⁶ themselves where they could best command the approaches on the other side. The machine-gun, lifted from its little carriage, was placed cunningly behind a screen of reeds. The two dogs, panting, lay down in their harness under a thick bush. In an amazingly brief time the whole party was so hidden that no one approaching from the other side of the canal could have guessed there was anything more formidable in the neighbourhood than the **ruminating**¹⁷ cows.

The neglected, almost forgotten, old bridge had suddenly leapt into importance. Reinforcements for the sore-pressed division to the south-east were being sent around by the north of the canal, and were to cross by the bridge. The detachment had been sent to guard the bridge at all costs from any wide-roving patrols of **Uhlans**¹⁸ who might take it into their heads to blow it up. In war it is a pretty safe principle to blow up any bridge if you are quite sure you won't be wanting it yourself. The fact that the other side has spared it is enough to damn it off-hand.

The tumult of the far-off gunfire was so unrelenting that the ears of the bridge-guard gradually came to accept it as a mere background, against which small, insignificant sounds, if sudden and unexpected, became strangely conspicuous. The crowing of a cock in the farmyard a few fields off, the sharp cry of a **moorhen**¹⁹, the **spasmodic**²⁰ gabbling of a flock of fat ducks in the canal—these small noises were almost as clearly differentiated as if heard in a **stark**²¹ silence.

For perhaps an hour the detachment had lain concealed, when those ominous pillars of smoke against the sky were joined suddenly by swarms of the little white puffs of cotton-wool, and the confused noises redoubled in violence. The battle was swaying nearer and spreading around a swiftly widening arc of the low horizon. Then another aeroplane—another bird-like Taube—came in view, darting up from a little south of west. The young lieutenant, in his hiding-place beside the bridge-head clapped his glasses anxiously to his eyes. Yes, the deadly flier was heading straight for this position. Evidently the Germans knew of that out-of-the-way bridge, and in their eyes also, for some reason, it had suddenly acquired importance. The Taube was coming to see in what force it was held.

“Spies again!” he grunted savagely, turning to explain to his men.

Flying at a height of only five or six hundred metres, the Taube flew straight over them. There was no longer any use in attempting concealment. The riflemen opened fire upon it furiously as soon as it came within range. It was hit several times; but the Taube is a steel machine, well protected from below, and neither the pilot nor any vital part of the mechanism was damaged. It made haste, however, to climb and swerve away from so hot a neighbourhood. But first, as a message of defiance, it dropped a bomb. The bomb fell sixty or seventy yards away from the bridge back in the meadow, among a group of cows. The explosion killed one cow and wounded several. The survivors, thus rudely shocked out of their indifference, stamped off down the field, tails in air and bellowing frantically.

“That cooks our goose,” snapped one of the riflemen concisely.

“Their shells’ll be dead on to us in ten minutes’ time,” growled another. And all cursed soberly.



14. **field-glasses** *n.* 双筒望远镜
15. **dyke** [daɪk] *n.* 堤; 女子同性恋者
16. **entrench** [in'tren(t)] [en-] *vt.* 确立, 牢固; 用壕沟围住; 挖掘 *vi.* 侵犯; 挖掘壕沟
17. **ruminate** ['ru:mineɪt] *vt.* 反刍; 沉思; 反复思考 *vi.* 沉思, 反刍
18. **Uhlán** ['u:láɪn; 'ju:-; u'lá:n] *n.* 枪骑士 (旧时德国和波兰的); 乌兰骑兵
19. **moorhen** ['mɔ:hen; 'muə-] *n.* 黑水鸡; 雌红松鸡
20. **spasmodic** [spæz'mɒdɪk] *adj.* 痉挛的, 痉挛性的; 间歇性的
21. **stark** [stɑ:k] *adj.* 完全的; 荒凉的; 刻板的; 光秃秃的; 朴实的 *adv.* 完全地; 明显地; 突出地; 质朴地

“I don’t think so,” said the young lieutenant, after a moment’s hesitation. “They want the bridge, so they won’t shell it. But you’ll see they’ll be on to us shortly with their **mitrailleuse**²² and half a battalion or so, enough to eat us up. We’ve got to get word back quick to the General for reinforcements, or the game’s up.”

“I’ll go, my lieutenant,” said Jean Ferréol, an eager, dark **Walloon**²³, springing to his feet.

The lieutenant did not answer for some moments. He was examining through his glasses a number of mounted figures, scattering over the plains to the rear in groups of two and three. Yes, they were Uhlans unquestionably. The line of combat was shifting eastward.

“No,” said he, “you can’t go, Jean. You’d never get through. The **Bosches**²⁴ are all over the place back there now. And you wouldn’t be in time, even if you did get through. I’ll send one of the dogs.”

He tore a leaf out of his note-book and began scribbling.

“Better send both dogs, my lieutenant,” said Jan Steen, the big, broad-built **Fleming**²⁵ who had charge of the machine-gun, unharnessing the dogs as he spoke. “Leo’s the cleverest, and he’ll carry the message right; but he won’t have his heart in the job unless you let Dirck go along with him. They’re like twins. Moreover, the two together wouldn’t excite suspicion like one alone. One alone the Bosches would take for a messenger dog, sure, but two racing over the grass might seem to be just playing.”

“Bon!” said the young lieutenant. “Two strings to our bow.”

He hurriedly made a duplicate of his dispatch. The papers were folded small and tied under the dogs’ collars. Big Jan spoke a few words crisply and decisively in Flemish to Leo, who watched his lips eagerly and wagged his tail as if to show he understood. Then he spoke similarly, but with more emphasis and reiteration, to Dirck, at the same time waving his arm toward the distant group of roofs from which the detachment had come. Dirck looked anxiously at him and whined, and then glanced inquiringly at Leo, to see if he understood what was required of them. He was almost furiously willing, but not so quick to catch an idea as his more lively **yoke**²⁶-fellow. Big Jan repeated his injunctions yet again, with unhurried patience, while his leader fumed behind him. Jan Steen knew well that with a dog, in such circumstances, one must be patient though the skies fall. At last Dirck’s grin widened, his tail wagged violently, and his low whining gave way to a bark of elation.

“He’s got it,” said Jan, with slow satisfaction. He waved his arm, and the two dogs

dashed off as if they had been shot out of a gun, keeping close along the inner base of the dyke.

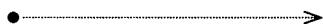
“Dirck’s got it,” repeated Jan, with conviction, “and nothing will put it out of his head till he’s done the job.”

II

Side by side, racing wildly like children just let out from school, the two dogs dashed off through the grass along the base of the dyke. Leo, the lighter in build and in colour, and the more conspicuous by reason of a white fore-leg, was also the lighter in spirits. Glad to be clear of the harness and proud of his errand, he was so **ebullient**²⁷ in his gaiety that he could spare time to spring into the air now and again and snap at a low-fluttering butterfly. The more **phlegmatic**²⁸ Dirck, on the other hand, was too busy keeping his errand fixed in his mind to waste any interest on butterflies, though he was ready enough to gambol a bit whenever his **volatile**²⁹ comrade **frolicked**³⁰ into collision with him.

Soon—Leo leading, as usual—they quitted the dyke and started off across the open meadows toward the hottest of the firing. A couple of patrolling Uhlans, some distance off to the right, caught sight of them, and a bullet whined complainingly just over their heads. But the other Uhlan, the one who had not fired, rebuked his companion for wasting ammunition. “Can’t you see they’re just a couple of puppies larking round?” he asked scornfully. “Suppose you thought they were Red Cross.”

“Thought they might be dispatch dogs, Herr Sergeant,” answered the trooper deprecatingly.



22. **mitrailleuse** [mi:'traɪ'jɜ:z] *n.* (法) 老式机枪

23. **Walloon** [wɔ'lu:n] *adj.* 窝龙人的; 窝龙语的 *n.* 窝龙人; 窝龙语

24. **Bosche** [bɔ:fʃ] *n.* 德国兵; 德国人

25. **Fleming** ['flemɪŋ] *n.* 佛兰芒人; 说佛兰芒语的比利时人

26. **yoke** [jəuk] *n.* 轭; 束缚; 牛轭 *vt.* 结合; 给...上轭 *vi.* 结合; 匹配

27. **ebullient** [i'buljənt, i'bʌl-] *adj.* 热情奔放的; 精力充沛的; 沸腾的

28. **phlegmatic** [fleg'mætɪk] *adj.* 冷淡的; 迟钝的; 冷漠的

29. **volatile** ['vɒlətaɪl] *adj.* 易变的, 不稳定的; (液体或油) 易挥发的; 爆炸性的; 快活的; 轻快的

30. **frolic** ['frɒlɪk] *adj.* 嬉戏的, 欢乐的 *n.* 嬉闹, 嬉戏 *vi.* 嬉戏

“Well, they’re not, blockhead,” grunted the cocksure sergeant. And the two rode on, heading **diagonally**³¹ toward the canal.

The dogs, at the sound of the passing bullet, had crouched flat to the ground. When the sound was not repeated, however, they sprang up and continued their journey, Leo, excited but not terrified, more inclined to frolic than ever, while Dirck, who by some obscure instinct had realized that the shot was not a chance one, but a direct personal attack, kept looking back and growling at the pair of Uhlans.

But though Leo, the exuberant, gambolled as he ran, he ran swiftly, none the less, so swiftly that plodding Dirck had some trouble to keep up with him. Ten minutes more, and they ran into the zone of fire. Bullets hummed waspishly over them, but, after a moment’s hesitation, they raced on, flattening themselves belly to earth. The German **infantry**³² were in position, quite hidden from view, some six or seven hundred yards to the right. They were firing at an equally invisible line of Belgians, who were occupying a drainage ditch some three hundred yards to the left. The two dogs had no way of knowing that the force on their left was a friendly one, so they kept straight on beneath the crossfire. Had they only known, their errand might have been quickly accomplished.

A little farther on, the grass-land came to an end, and there was a naked, sun-baked **stubble**³³-field to cross. As the two raced out over this perilous open space, the battle deepened above them. The fire from the Belgian side went high over the dogs’ heads, seeking the far-off target of the enemy’s prostrate lines. But the German fire was sighted for too close a range, and the bullets were falling short. Here and there one struck with a vicious spat close to the runners’ feet. Here and there a small stone would fly into the air with a sudden inexplicable impulse, or a bunch of stubble would hop up as if startled from its root-hold. A ball just nicked the extreme tip of Dirck’s tail, making him think a **hornet**³⁴ had stung him. With a surprised yelp, he turned and bit at his supposed assailant. Realizing his mistake in a second, he drooped the injured member sheepishly and tore on after Leo, who had by now got a score of paces ahead.

Next moment a **shrapnel**³⁵ shell burst overhead with a shattering roar. Both dogs cowered flat, shivering. There was a smart patter all about them, and little spurts of dust, straw, and dry earth darted upwards. The shrapnel shell was doubtless a mere stray, an ill-calculated shot exploding far from its target. But to Leo it seemed a direct attack upon himself. And well he knew what was the proper thing to do under such circumstances.

Partly by instruction, partly by natural **sagacity**³⁶, he had assimilated the vital precept: “When the firing gets too hot, dig yourself in.” With his powerful fore-paws he attacked the stubble, making the dry earth fly as if he were trying to dig out a badger. Dirck watched him wonderingly for a moment or two, till a venomous swarm of bullets just over his head seemed to let light in upon his understanding. He fell to copying Leo with vehement enthusiasm. In a brief space each dog had a burrow deep enough to shelter him. Dirck promptly curled himself up in his, and fell to licking his wounded tail. But Leo, burning to get on with his errand, kept bobbing up his head every other second to see how the bullets were striking.

Another shrapnel shell burst in the air, but farther away than the first, and Leo marked where the little spurts of dust arose. They were well behind him. The rifle bullets pinging overhead were higher now, as the Germans were getting the range of the Belgian line. The coast seemed clear enough. He scrambled from his hole and dashed onward down the field, yelping for Dirck to follow. And Dirck was at his heels in half a second.

The tiny canal-side village which was the goal of these two devoted messengers was by this time less than a mile away and straight ahead. When they left it with the machine-gun that morning, it had seemed a little haven of peace. Now the battle was raging all about it. The tall church **spire**³⁷, which had risen serenely above its embosoming trees, had vanished, blown off by a shell. A cottage was burning merrily. Those harmless-looking puffs of cotton-wool were opening out plenteously above the clustered roofs. But all these things made no difference to these two four-footed dispatch-bearers who carried the destiny of the bridge beneath their collars. They had been ordered to take their dispatches to the village, and to the village they would go, whether it had become an **inferno**³⁸ or not.



31. **diagonally** [dai'ægənəli] *adv.* 对角地；斜对地
32. **infantry** ['inf(ə)ntri] *n.* 步兵；步兵团
33. **stubble** ['stʌb(ə)l] *n.* 残株；发茬，须茬
34. **hornet** ['hɔ:nit] *n.* [昆] 大黄蜂
35. **shrapnel** ['ʃræpn(ə)l] *n.* 弹片；榴霰弹；零钱
36. **sagacity** [sə'gæsiti] *n.* 睿智；聪敏；有远见
37. **spire** [spaɪə] *n.* [建] 尖顶；尖塔；螺旋 *vi.* 螺旋形上升 *vt.* 给……加塔尖
38. **inferno** [in'fə:nəu] *n.* 阴间，地狱

But now the spectacle of the two dogs racing desperately toward the village under the storm of lead and shell had caught the attention of both sides. There was no mistaking them now for frolicsome puppies. There was no question, either, as to which side they belonged to. The German bullets began to lash the ground like hail all about them. Leo, true to his principles, stopped at a tiny depression and once more, with feverish eagerness, began to dig himself in. The earth flew from his desperate paws. In another minute he would have achieved something like cover. But a German sharpshooter got the range of him exactly. A bullet crashed through his sagacious brain, and he dropped, with his muzzle between his legs, into his half-dug **burrow**³⁹.

But Dirck, meanwhile, had for once refused to follow his leader's example. His goal was too near. He saw the familiar uniforms. Above the din he could detect the cries and calls of encouragement from his people. Every faculty in his valiant and faithful being bent itself to the accomplishment of his errand. The bullets raining about him concerned him not at all. The crash of a shrapnel shell just over him did not even make him cock an eye skyward. The shrapnel bullets raised jets of dust before and behind him and on either side. But not one touched him. He knew nothing of them. He only knew his lines were close ahead, and he must reach them.

The Belgians cheered and yelled, and poured in a concentrated fire on that section of the enemy which was attacking the dog. For a few seconds that small, insignificant, desperate four-footed shape drew upon itself the undivided attention of several thousand men. It focussed the battle for the moment. It was only a brindled dog, yet upon its fate hung immense and unknown issues. Every one knew now that the devoted animal was carrying a message. The Germans suddenly came to feel that to prevent the delivery of that message would be like winning a battle. The Belgians turned a battery from harrying a far-off **squadron**⁴⁰ of horse to shell the lines opposite, in defence of the little messenger. Men fell by the score on both sides to decide that unexpected contest.

And still Dirck raced on, heedless of it all.

Then, within fifty yards of the goal, he fell. A bullet had smashed one of his legs. He picked himself up again instantly and hobbled forward, trailing the mangled limb. But the moment he fell, a score of riflemen had leapt from their lines and dashed out to rescue him. Three dropped on the way out. Half a dozen more fell on the way back. But Dirck, whining and licking his rescuers' hands, was carried to shelter behind the massive stone wall of the

inn yard, where the Brigadier and his officers were receiving and sending out dispatches.

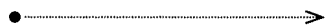
An aide drew the message from under Dirck's collar and handed it, with a word of explanation, to the General. The latter read it, glanced at the time on the dispatch and then at his watch, and gave hurried orders for strong reinforcements to be rushed up to the old bridge. Then he looked at Dirck, whose shattered leg was being dressed by an orderly.

"That dog," he growled, "has been worth exactly three **regiment**" to us. He's saved the bridge and he's saved three regiments from being cut off. See that he's well looked after, and cured as soon as possible. He's a good soldier, and we'll want him again."

译文欣赏

古老的运河梦幻般地沐浴在秋天的阳光里，两旁的河岸上一片葱郁，一片宁静，岸边两排高大的白杨树，像是清晰明确的界线。这里曾经是一条忙碌的河道，驳船来来往往，现在却只是一条大排水沟而已，只有燕子和蜻蜓会冲过来，飞过极少起波澜的水面。封闭的河堤上，长满了葱郁肥沃的野草，肥胖的奶牛随处可见，懒洋洋地趴在草地上，不停地咀嚼反刍的食物。

眼前的画面此刻的确是一片安宁。对那些奶牛来说，这里很安全，似乎没有比这件事儿更加确信无疑的了。而西南方和南方的远处，滚滚浓烟像是一根根大柱子，直冲进蓝绿的天空中，它们虽然装饰了地平线，但却透着不详的气息。这幅奇异的景象，却一点也没影响那些奶牛，她们对此根本不感兴趣。在这片广阔的天地间，夏日的空气中传来一阵奇怪又杂乱的噪声，“砰砰砰”，“咚咚咚”，“隆隆隆”。这声音听起来像是撕破了什么，其中夹杂着一种从容的撕裂声。一会儿又突然传出震耳欲聋的碰撞声。但是这些噪声都在远处，一点也没引起奶牛的注意。噪声没有影响



39. **burrow** ['bʌrəʊ] *vi.* 探索，寻找；挖地洞，挖通道；住入地洞，躲藏起来；钻进某处；偎依着 *vt.* 挖掘，挖出；在…挖洞（或通道）；使躲入洞穴 *n.*（兔、狐等的）洞穴，地道；藏身处，住处

40. **squadron** ['skwɒdrən] *n.* 空军中队；一群；骑兵中队；分遣队；小舰队 *vt.* 把…编成中队

41. **regiment** ['redʒɪmənt] *n.*（军队的）团；大量的人或物 *vt.* 严格地管制，严密地编组