

CHAPTER 3

TEMPERAMENT AND TRAINABILITY

In order to truly understand the temperament of these dogs...we again have to go back to the origin of this breed. Only after we have a complete concept of their roots...all the way back to the wolf, will we be able to fully understand the type of intelligence that they possess.

In my first article, I dedicated several pages to LONDON, copies of newspaper articles written about him, from all over the US and Canada are available through the SSDCA, INC, so I will not repeat them here...but in order to understand them better we need to take a little "glimpse" at the extreme capabilities of these dogs! These dogs were the most intelligent, dedicated domesticated animals to be found anywhere. Anyone that has ever owned a good one would swear that these dogs were part human. Yet, unfortunately most of the people that had never met one, could be very skeptical. Then... seemingly out of nowhere London came forth to win the hearts of even the strongest skeptics. Anyone that has not read Chuck Eisenmann's book, "Stop! Sit! and Think!" needs to do so right away. His newest book, "A Dog's Day in Court." will not only give you a much fuller psychological understanding of our K-9 friend, but it will also help you to deal with the most common K-9 behavior problems. But above all else, if you really have a love for these dogs, it will make you cry when you read how London said "good-bye" to his fans.

Yes, London could even talk! This fact along with many other unbelievable feats have been documented in tons of newspaper clipping from all over the U.S. and Canada. Due to lack of space, we will list only a few. Hopefully the following examples will give you a slight "feel" for the type of intelligence all of these dogs possessed.

Please take into consideration that the authors were unbiased and very skeptical editors and reporters who had never met either the owner, nor his dogs, prior to their appearance for these interviews.

1. Edmonton, Alberta:

"London, T.V.'s "Littlest Hobo," has shattered another skeptic. He and his three brothers, attractions at the northwest Canadian Trade Fair, gave me a three hour press conference in their motel room Monday, with very little coaching from their owner, Chuck Eisenmann. They undermined every suspicion I ever had about the "intelligence" of trained dogs.

When I first entered the room, Chuck murmured something in French, before I could say "bonjour," London's brothers escorted me across the room while London smartly closed the door.

As I subsequently searched in vain for hidden hand signals or obscure inflections, Chuck put on a dazzling demonstration of his dogs' facility in German, French, and English plus hand signals. Insisting that London's amazing ability is not based merely on "habitually learned" commands, but rather on "intellectually learned" associations. Chuck asked the four year old T.V. star to get something to clean my dusty shoes with. London trotted back into the room with a shoe brush.

I devised a scheme to expose any trickery by Mr. Eisenmann. To do this, both his voice and person had to be separated from London. Amused by the obvious motive, Chuck agreed to the scheme and left the room. From the hallway he called to London, "you do what our visitor asks you to London." I whispered, "go touch the picture on the wall." He paused for a moment, then with another "it's o.k." from Chuck, casually walked across the room, stood up on his hind legs and placed both his forepaws on the picture. At that moment, the "intellectual learning" theory for dog training won another convert.

Pottstown, PA-The Mercury-Robert J. Boyle

Among the guests at the Holiday Inn, Monday, were three "gentlemen" who astounded visitors with their mental capabilities. The trio put on an exhibition of mental prowess that would have Einstein buffs changing allegiance. They demonstrated their talents in French, German and English. The three brains were London, Thorn and Toro, massive German Shepherds. I came to stay ten minutes, and I stayed an hour and a half. I've seen trained German Shepherds used by police departments, but you can't compare Eisenmann's dogs with these.

"His dogs aren't trained, they're taught!!"

"When we entered the Inn, the three dogs were sitting and were surrounded by a group of twenty people. Eisenmann never commands the dogs, he speaks to them softly."

"Toro, would you limp, please?" Toro got up and limped holding up his right paw. "Now, would you drag your rear legs, Please?" He did. There's no doubt that they do think. "Gentlemen, come here, please," he said, and the trio walked to him. "L-a-y" he said, and they lay down. "S-i-t" he spelled out and they sat.

"London, would you please find the youngest girl in the room?" The dog walked around and decided Colleen, twelve, was the youngest. He took her hand in his mouth and brought her to Eisenmann.

"Now, would you bring me the youngest child?" The dog walked to Jody, seven, and brought him back.

Eisenmann said to Thorn, "Please get me something with print matter on it." The dog went to a counter and came back with a map of Altoona. "I'd prefer a magazine, Thorn." The dog went back to the magazine rack and picked out McCall's. "Would you get me a daily newspaper now, please?"

At this stage, a man entered the lobby and stopped at the registration counter. He didn't see the dogs immediately, but he was carrying a newspaper under his arm. Thorn, taking Eisenmann's request literally, went up to the man, took the newspaper, and returned it to Eisenmann.

Eisenmann then asked London to find a art work depicting a horse, the dog ambled around the room and finally came upon a wall plaque of a horse above a lounge chair and pointed his nose at the horse. He was then asked to find something hand-lettered instead of printed. He went to a hand-lettered sign.

"Now is there a printed sign here?" Eisenmann asked. The dog looked around and pointed to a printed sign. When Eisenmann figured they had performed enough, he asked, "Gentlemen, would you like some water now?" The three of them hopped up and walked towards the door. As they approached, a woman entered. The three dogs stopped, stepped back, and allowed her to pass.

Unfortunately, most Shepherd owners are not aware of how to bring these magnificent animals to their full potential. Mr. Eisenmann has clearly explained that if you insult their intelligence by using commands like, "Sit, Stay and Come" and thereby treating them like dogs, they will end up acting like dogs.

Yet, many, many, owners of these animals can quickly attest to the fact that these shepherd were much more than "just dogs!" Testimonials can be heard from everyone that had a real specimen of the old (German) Shepherd dogs.

Maintaining this type of intelligence is the goal of every dedicated Shiloh Shepherd breeder. In order to accomplish this, the original "Thuringer" blood must continue to be carefully woven in along with the strong "mountain" Shepherd blood.

Any dog that fails to pass the intricate ISSR tests, is eliminated from the gene pool! Only the best possible specimens are allowed to pass on their special qualities to future generations. The ideal "Shiloh" is a loyal companion, because he possesses that "human" intelligence, along with the courage to protect his family, at any cost! He is gentle and loving, especially with children, and never displays "Extreme Aggression" unless his family is in danger! He is **Very** easy to train, because he wants nothing more than to "Please" his master. He will give you his heart...completely...and all he asks in return is that you love him!

There are several popular training methods employed today; ranging from the VERY HARSH, to the "treat-play" variety. Let's take the time to carefully examine a few:

- 1.) The "harsh" methods are usually referred to as "Khoeler" "police-attack" "command-control" "attack-dog" etc...even though they may use different names..they all have the same BASIC CONCEPT. The "trainer" gets his dog to "perform" a certain way, when a particular command is given...In order to accomplish this type of behavior control quickly, painful-and degrading "abuse" must be inflicted on the poor animal over and over again, until he loses his will to resist...and slowly becomes no more than a ROBOT. You will hear much talk about the trainer having to establish the 'ALPHA' role with the dog, before real training can begin...NEVER NEVER!!! LET SUCH A TRAINER TOUCH YOUR DOG! The ONLY dog that EVER needs such methods is a TOTALLY-OUT-OF-CONTROL MANIAC!! Your dog is not really being trained. "He" is only learning to respond in a certain way, to a command...mostly out of fear, of the consequences ..if he does it wrong! When you take him home, and he soon discovers that YOU won't choke or beat him if he "goofs off". YOU WILL REALIZE THAT YOU HAVE A BIGGER PROBLEM ON YOUR HANDS THEN YOU STARTED WITH!!!
- 2.) The opposite extreme comes in the form of "TREATS"!! Some trainers feel that you need to be CONSTANTLY "rewarding" your dog EVERY TIME he does something right...This method actually works quite well...until you run out of "treats"!! As soon as he discovers, your "bag" is empty...he will go off and "do-his-own-thing." You will be standing there (red faced) calling COME BOZO! COME! and he will look back, remember your EMPTY "treat bag" and KEEP-ON-TRUCKING!! YES, you need to reward your dog...just like you reward your CHILD..but not CONSTANTLY!! Besides, the "attitude" you're portraying, and the treats themselves could eventually just BORE your dog, then what are you going to do? By now he thinks that you're some kind of a CLOWN with a "treat bag" and he has lost all respect for you, as a figure of AUTHORITY that he has to obey!
- 3.) If you STOP trying to TRAIN your dog, you will learn that TEACHING him can be a LOT more rewarding. Most people NEVER consider the possibility of "teaching" their dog the same way they would teach a SMALL child!! For Example: If you see a two year old trying to knock-over a lamp..do you 1.) Lift him OFF THE GROUND (BY HIS HAIR) slap his face, scream at him, and WARN him that the NEXT time will be a LOT WORSE!!?...or 2.) Do you run over to him with an ICE CREAM CONE, and say..no honey, don't touch the lamp, and I'll give you a "treat"!!?...or 3.) do you handle the situation GENTLY but FIRMLY, attempting to TEACH him the PROPER way to behave in a house? Why don't you TRY this "method" with your dog...You may be PLEASANTLY SURPRISED at the results!