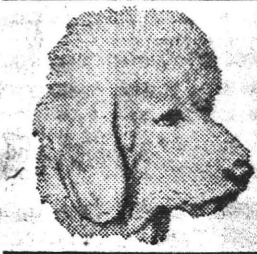
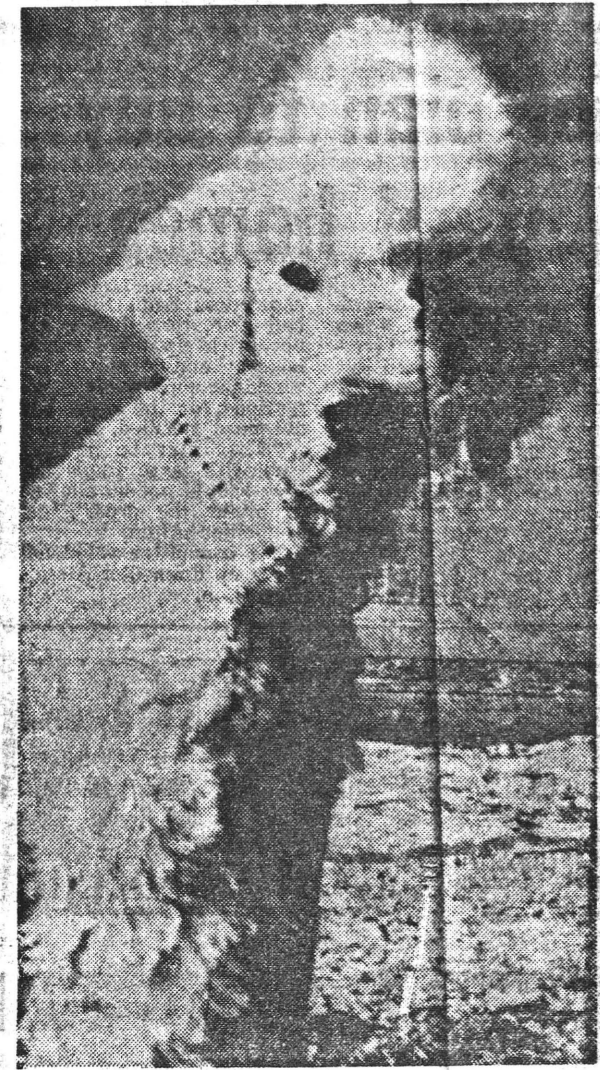


3/3/13

Reviews:

Talking Dogs



THE TALKING DOGS



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TOMORROW: ROWDON

NEW BOOKS

Turn
 the radio off
 said Belam
 the dog... 'It's too loud'!



HAVE YOU heard about the dog who walked into a living-room and asked for the radio to be turned off because it was too loud? It's not a joke.

Fraulein Dorothy Meyer, who taught a Saluki named Belam to communicate with her, claims it happened (writes Ron Thompson).

She claims a lot more, too, according to author Maurice Rowdon, who has written a book, "The Talking Dogs" (Macmillan, £5.95) about the Saluki and a poodle named Elke who were taught to "talk" by Fraulein Meyer by tapping their paws.

For example, three taps with the right paw means yes. Three taps with the left paw means no.

Fraulein Meyer spent hundreds of hours teaching

the dogs an alphabet of taps. They learned to do sums and, then, to tap letters, words, and, finally, complete sentences.

If Fraulein Meyer was able to guess the sentence after a word or two then the dogs didn't bother to finish it.

Maurice Rowdon went to Berchtesgaden, once notorious as Hitler's mountain hide-out, to see Fraulein Meyer and the dogs.

He found that Fraulein

Meyer was a former school-teacher, who had been asked by Frau Hilde Heilmair, the owner of the dogs, to set up a school for the animals.

Frau Heilmair was intensely interested in animal intelligence and had read a number of books about animals which had been taught to communicate. She wanted to start a school of her own.

Lessons began with Elke, an eager and apt pupil. Lessons started when she was hardly a year old. She wasn't too keen at first.

But, gradually, she learned the alphabet and

lustre." They asked Belam a similar question. His reply was "One rests in peace."

Maurice Rowdon reports that the dogs answered questions about God, about each other, and about the raising of puppies and their training — all from the dogs' point of view.



They also joined in family life.

STARTING TODAY...The extraordinary story that raises the question: Are dogs more human than we ever imagined?

THE TALKING DOGS

● Can dogs communicate with human beings as equals? Are they much cleverer than we thought? Do they really understand what we are saying? These are the questions raised in a remarkable new book, *THE TALKING DOGS*, serialised in the Evening News this week.

We present the evidence author Maurice Rowdon discovered when he went to Germany to see the experiments of animal teacher Dorothy Meyer who claimed she had taught a poodle and a saluki to "talk," by use of a complicated routine of paw taps, like a doggy Morse code.

Rowdon arrived as a sceptic, and left, weeks later, convinced dogs had, and can express, the whole gamut of human emotions.

● We have placed all the author's evidence in the hands of Stanley Dangerfield, one of the world's leading experts on dogs. His verdict on *The Talking Dogs* will appear later this week. What he has to say will surprise you.

● There's a chance for you to have your say, too. Already we have heard from one reader who saw a Labrador able to play dominoes—using paw tapping to indicate which piece to play. Write and tell us what you think about talking dogs.

● And your dog can join in, too, to win a year's supply of dog food! See below.



by
**MAURICE
ROWDON**

WHEN I first met Elke II, the Standard poodle bitch, and Belam, the Saluki male, on a hot September afternoon at Salzburg airport, they were sitting waiting for me with their teacher.

Elke's white fur was dazzling in the remarkably clear, mountain-reflected sunlight. Her eyes were round and black and vivaciously attentive.

At her side, Belam, taller and bonier, seemed the shyer of the two with his long sensitive nose, gazelle eyes and deliciously straggling fur.

Hideout

They had heard a lot about me. I'd been asked to write a book about them and help make their intelligence known to the world.

It was a hot, exhilarating day and we were about to drive across the Austrian border to Berchtesgaden, one of the most pleasant of Bavaria's mediaeval resort towns, once notorious as Hitler's mountain hideout.

What I witnessed in the next few days was to change my life—as it had changed that of their teacher, Dorothy Meyer. She had started from

scratch—with only printed records of previous animal tappings, from 50 or so years before, to go on.

For weeks she had worked in the dark, doubting her capacities as an animal teacher and all the less prepared for the shock of discovery when it came.

Like me, she had been ready enough to accept animal intelligence as an idea. But not to accept the reality of animals as equal beings.

The discovery that in many respects animals have a moral integrity, truthfulness and compassion superior to our own was an even greater shock.

That evening in Berchtesgaden I met Frau Heilmaler, owner of the dogs and founder of the "dog school." For some years she had been a breeder of dogs which she frequently raced at the local stadiums.

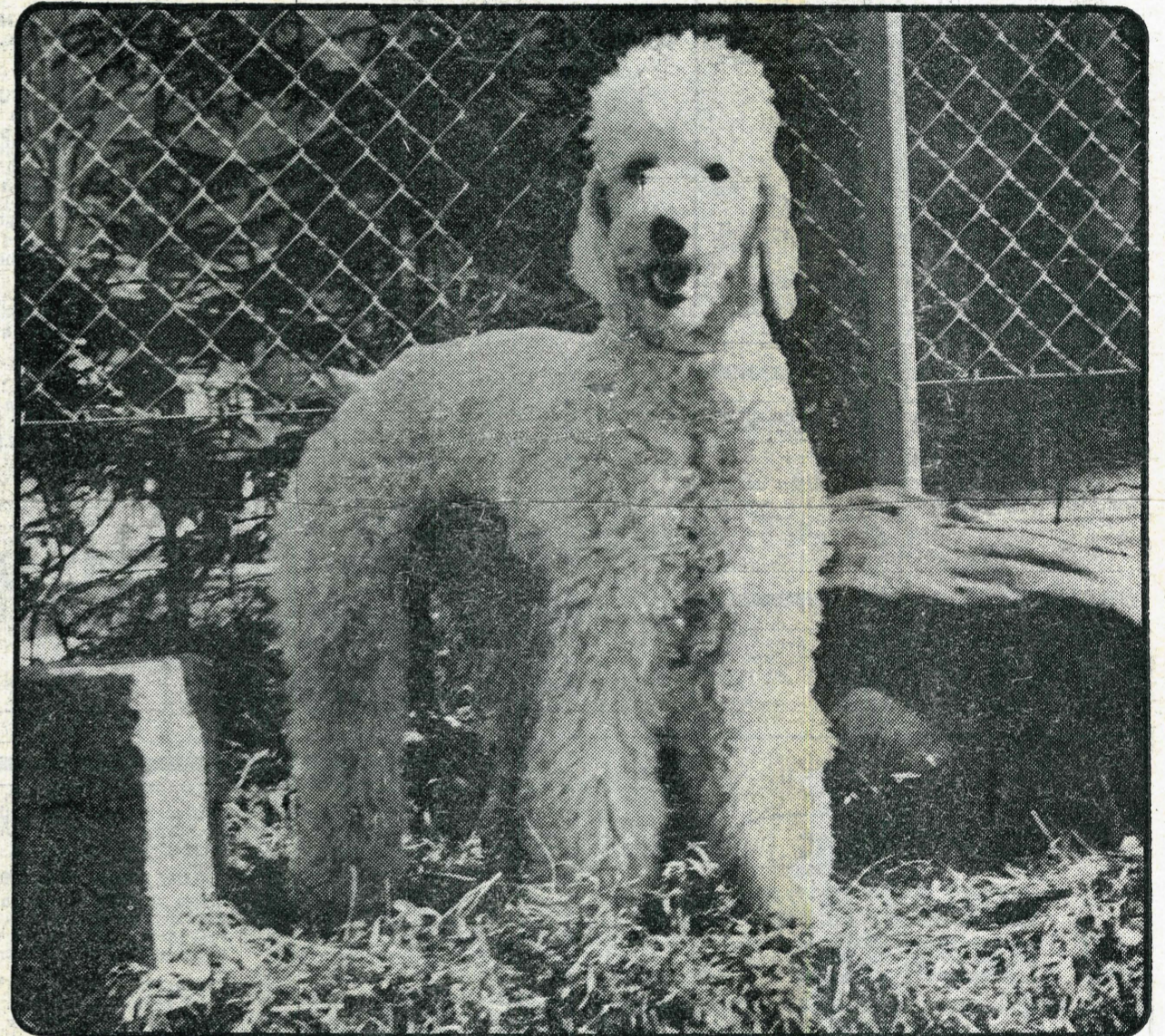
She had a flat on the ground floor of the same block as Dorothy, whom she employed. Frau Heilmaler also had a cottage some metres away, where the dogs often lived.

We settled down to coffee and cake and cream, in armchairs round a table, and the dogs began tapping their first "greetings" messages for me.

Each letter of the alphabet was represented by a certain number of paw taps. First Dorothy handed me the tapping code with the letters of the German alphabet and their tapping equivalents. For example: E=10 taps,



Dorothy Meyer, above, teacher of the talking dogs, interprets as Belam, the saluki, taps out a message in her palm with his paw. Poodle Elke II, right, welcomed author Rowdon in the same way.



They have been taught a kind of doggy Morse code by which they tap out their thoughts and feelings

Sch=22 taps. Then she held out her hand for the dogs to tap into.

Elke's message for me was firm and unhesitating.

First came nine, ten and three taps which, I found on consulting the alphabet list, made DER. Then 20 and three, for ZR. This was followed by 13, 20, 16, for IZS. And lastly five, 13, seven, for LIB.

Put together the sentence ran DER ISZ ZR LIB.

Relief

Dorothy's method was to enquire after each word whether the dog meant what she thought. The dog then tapped YES or NO. If the answer was NO, Dorothy asked for the

word to be tapped again.

It was generally clear when a word had been completed because the dog would make some movement of relief or excitement, or pause for longer than usual.

After reminding me that the dogs spelt phonetically on the whole, Dorothy asked Elke: "Do you mean Der ist sehr lieb?" (He is very nice).

YES, came back the answer (three taps of the right paw).

Looking back on my records of that first encounter, I realise that, once written out on the printed page in their phonetic form, the tappings aren't nearly as clear and understandable as I remember them to have been at the time.

It was the dogs themselves that carried con-

difficulties—rather as children, bubbling over with something to say and too excited to compose it properly, supply with their eyes and expressions what their words are short of.

A bare account cannot convey the impression both dogs give of desperately wanting to communicate with human beings. They tell their teacher they have something to say by turning to her in a certain way or by an excited look in the eye.

Pause

She then coaxes them into the tapping position at her side or immediately in front of her.

They sit in such a way that they can place a paw into her outstretched hand without overbalancing.

Then begins the slow effort of concentrating on the word to be tapped.

Sometimes there are long pauses between one letter and another, while the dog seems to lose track of what he or she wants to say. He gazes round, even nods asleep. The thread seems to be lost.

But however long the pause, he always returns to the subject, unless he's too tired to go on.

I realised that the dogs tapped their thoughts with great care. I'd somehow imagined that their messages were constructed out of a jumble of letters, but this wasn't the case (although it took more than one evening with them to convince me).

They always seemed to know what they wanted to say, though technical

difficulties sometimes stood in their way.

Undoubtedly the dogs tapped letters. But wasn't there an element of over-free interpretation on Dorothy's part?

Would these tappings turn out to be mostly a jumble of letters from which she chose—indeed, half-constructed—sentences which more or less made sense? These were the doubts of that first evening.

Precise

They weren't laid to rest at once. But as the dogs grew used to me and I learned to address them as Dorothy did, I began to find their tapped remarks were not only on the whole precise and even

terse, but strictly in line with their different personalities.

Also, I was to see much more evidence of their intelligence than just the ability to tap. They could work out arithmetical problems far quicker than I could.

I have never seen human beings calculate with the naked eye the length of a book to within a centimetre of its exact measurement, or give a solution of a mathematical problem after flashing a barely perceptible glance at the blackboard to take it in.

And I have rarely met human beings so consistently truthful as Elke II and Belam.

Who's a clever boy then?

WHETHER you go as far as author Maurice Rowdon or not, most people have stories of the intelligence and perception of dogs.

Dogs have a way of interpreting what we humans want in an uncanny way. Sometimes this has saved lives.

Here's a chance for your clever dog to win you a great prize.

Write and tell us—in not more than 250 words—about your intelligent pet. Tell us what makes you sure he is clever and of instances which show how well he understands humans.

Send us a picture of your pet, too, if you have one. For each letter we publish we will pay £5. And the best letter wins the writer a year's free supply of HAP, the new soft moist dog food made by Pedigree Petfoods.

Letters should be sent right away and must arrive before September 11. Address them to "Talking Dogs", Evening News, New Carmelite House, London EC4Y 1AQ (Comp.). If an appropriate S.A.E. is enclosed, we will endeavour to return photographs. The Editor's decision is final. No alternative prizes. No correspondence about the result. Employees of Associated Newspapers Group Ltd., or members of their families, are not eligible.

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TOMORROW: ELKE THE POODLE LEARNS TO COUNT UP TO 50

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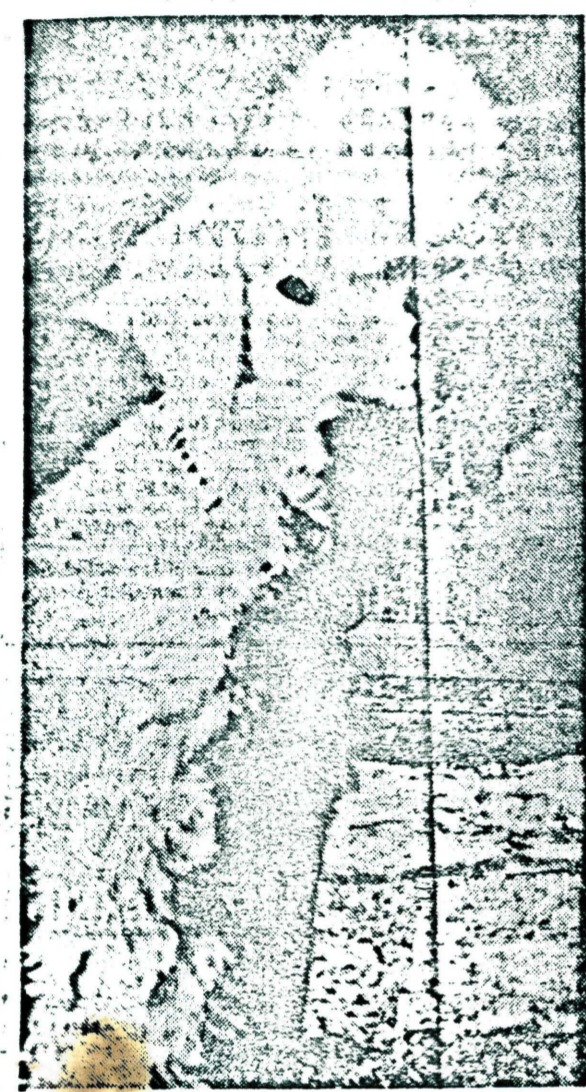
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As the words formed on my pad and she went on tapping in her deeply absorbed way, her eyes almost closed, we gazed at each other, our spines tingling with astonishment. One evening we talked again about the dogs'appings on death and began to wonder if they had anything to say about God. Elke had already indicated that she was aware of the word. Dorothy asked Belam: "What do you love more than Mami (their pet name for Frau Heilmater)?" He seemed perplexed and she added: "Do you understand?" NO. "Do you love something more than Mami?" YES. He tapped MALAGUIT, which seemed to make no sense, then he flopped out on the floor. "Do you understand the word God?" YES. "What do you think of when we use this word?"

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TOMORROW: ROWDON EXPLAINS 'WHY I BELIEVE'

Our next walk, on a bright and splendid morning took us to the Ramsau ridge, high in the hills. At the parking lot, near an inn, Frau Heilmater pointed to one of the benches and told Elke that I had been very ill at that spot, shortly before her death. She also told me she had had an irresistible feeling, at the time she was buying her, that Elke II was the reincarnation of Elke I. Elke I was Frau Heilmater's original dog pupil, but she had died midway through her training. The rough date Elke gave us the other evening for her own death — two

years and something ago — corresponds with that of Elke I's death which was two years and eight months ago. That evening Elke was coaxed into the tapping position and Mami asked her: "Do you know the bench at the inn where we were today? Were you there once before?" YES, Elke replied. "When was that? What was your experience there? What do you remember of that time?" She tapped perfectly BESONDERES MAROOD (the second word very sadly) ELKE WR (for Elke war) — especially

"How long ago?" R (or three) IARE (for Jahre) — three years. "Do you mean three years?" YES. July 1972 had been the month of Elke I's prolonged sickness, and we were now in September 1975. "Did you understand what Mami was saying to Mr. Rowdon at the bench about Elke?" YES. "So which Elke was it? Was it another Elke?" YES. "Which Elke was marod? Do you know?" She tapped ELKE UBAN BIS DOD. "Is uban right?" NO. "Do you mean uben (practise)?" YES. The sentence therefore stood for Elke uben bis Tod (elke learn, or practise, till death) — an excellent way of identifying Elke I. "Why do you say you were ill? Mami knows nothing about your being ill?" DOCH TOT GEWESE SFER ZU ERKLAREN for doch tot gewesen schwer zu erklaren (indeed been dead difficult to explain). Here she stopped. Had she described her own experience in a previous life, or her impression of Elke I's sickness from many overheard conversations, or received a telepathic picture of it, through Mami? © Maurice Rowdon 1978. Published by Macmillan (London) Ltd., at £5.95 on September 14.

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STANLEY SHIVAS



IT'S COLIN REID

IT'S MONDAY

A paw man's guide to doggy talk...!

WHAT are we to make of a claim that two dogs have been taught to 'talk' to people, using an alphabet of taps with their paws?

And not only talk in constructed sentences, but also speak English and German, solve complicated equations, do square roots and expound on their own reincarnation and the nature of death—a soft dark mist with eternal genuine lustre, remarked a Poodle poet called Elke!

That many strange and

wonderful things go on in the animal world I am prepared to admit—but this?

The claim is seriously made in a book called 'The Talking Dogs' (Macmillan, £5.95), and I confess that my first thought was to chuck it at the cat and say: 'Oh, come on, come on! Next we'll be asked to believe that little dogs laugh (pax Fred Bassett) and cows jump over the moon.'

But I didn't. I began to read it again. There was something creepy about it.

The author, Maurice Rowden, visited the dogs

—Belam, a Saluki, and Elke the Poodle—at their home in Southern Germany where they live with their teacher, Fraulein Dorothy Meyer.

In painstaking detail he documents the paw-tapping interviews on many subjects over many months. Each letter of the alphabet is given a specific number of taps and the dogs communicate by tapping their thoughts into their teacher's hand.

A Swiss TV producer tried to persuade them to use a large, doggy typewriter instead of their teacher's hand (and the

same test occurred to suspicious little me), but they wouldn't buy it. Which did nothing to dispel doubt.

That the dogs tap answers to questions seems certain (so have many circus animals—there was even 'a tapping horse' in Shakespeare's day, as mentioned in 'Love Labour's Lost'), but how does one explain the tapped thoughts of Elke and Belam?

Involuntary signals from the teacher to give the required number of taps? Or could it be telepathy? Can our domestic pots read and

(oh, creepy thought!) even influence our minds?

In a riveting essay at the end of the book the author argues that 'our claim to superiority over animals rests on our having developed the brain more than any other species. But is reason necessarily intelligent? Is intelligence necessarily mental?

'The western (chiefly 19th-century) view of the human organism as a physical apparatus governed by the brain, supplied with sense messages by the nervous system, seems to have taken us

far from nature (including our own nature).'

With our minds carefully circumscribed by reason, he asks, have we blocked out other areas of consciousness, other energy fields of an invisible world still intact in the animal kingdom?

'Western man is still perhaps waiting to reach an adequate animal level in spiritual and psychic powers, while deceiving himself that the cultivation of the brain puts him far beyond the animal kingdom.'

Psychic powers? Invisible worlds? I began to think of the way our

old cat Smokey would suddenly stare alertly at seemingly empty spaces in the room (what on earth is going on there?); and the way she could send telepathic messages from her empty plate in the kitchen. I would rise and open a tin without knowing why.

Suddenly, I tell you, goose pimples began to rise on my neck. I decided not to chuck the book at her after all. I went over to her, stroked her head and said: 'How then, Smokey, are you all right? Is there anything I can do for you at all? Just send me a message.'

Daily Mail, Monday, September 18, 1978

Lessons began with Elke, an eager and apt pupil. Lessons started when she was hardly a year old. She wasn't too keen at first.

But, gradually, she learned the alphabet and began doing sums with a smoothness which astonished Fraulein Meyer.

Belam joined the class as an interested observer, but was soon into taking lessons.

Maurice Rowdon's account of the dogs' training makes fascinating and instructive reading for anyone tempted to "talk" to their own dogs. Even more interesting, however, are the reports of the dogs' conversations, logged by Dorothy Meyer.

He, himself, was present when Elke was asked about death and, to the their astonishment, knew what it meant. Their spines tingled even more when Elke tapped out that death was "Mist with eternal genuine

They also joined in family life.

One morning Belam walked into Fraulein Meyer's livingroom where the radio was blaring and tapped "Ouch ear."

Fraulein Meyer asked: "Is the music too loud?"

Belam tapped: "Yes."

"Shall I turn it off?"

"Yes," replied Belam.

One day, Fraulein Meyer had three puppies with her at a new school and Belam was there, a star pupil who looked at the class with a benevolent superiority.

The little ones dabbled at the air with their soft, clumsy paws, sometimes toppling over from the tapping position they had been taught to adopt. Fraulein Meyer was having trouble with one called Abdul, who refused to sit in the tapping position.

She asked Belam how she could help Abdul.

Belam answered: "Tenderly guide."

story of talking dogs... the experts have their say

WHEN I first went to see the talking dogs of Berchtesgaden I expected to find two clever animals trained on circus lines.

I observed them and their teacher Dorothy Meyer very closely. I was determined not to be fooled.

Gradually I realised that they were tapping out real sentences that were, as far as I could tell, of their own invention.

What convinced me that I was in the presence of thinking creatures was living with them from day to day, going for walks and watching them tap in all sorts of situations in the woods, at the zoo, in someone's home.

When you live with a person you get to know pretty quickly whether there is an element of fake or untruthfulness in them.

What I saw convinced me that these dogs had hopes and sorrows like all of us, and were no less sensitive to the terrors and the annoyances of life than we are.

While with Elke and Belam I became convinced that the difference between their intelligence and ours was not so much quality as use.

Their whole approach to the world was different from ours.

Their ears were open to the most distant sounds, their eyes took in the scene with the briefest of a glance and their noses sought out the scents on the wind.

And their brains worked faster than we would prove in a test that they had to do with a glance that they with a long gaze. Circus... tell

It cannot just be telepathy



by MAURICE ROWDON

sensory structure and brain similar to our own.

The usual argument against animal intelligence, is that the telepathic principle is at work.

They said it about the famous stallion "clever Hans" in Berlin before the First World War, and they said it in Virginia, about the remarkable horse Lady Wonder, who died in 1957.

But how could telepathy have operated when Elke or Belam suddenly wanted to "say" something in the woods about another animal neither Dorothy nor I had seen, and while our minds were on entirely different subjects?

And what about the many occasions when the dogs tapped an urgent MUST (their codeword for "I want to leave the room")? Were Dorothy and I planting this desire without knowing it?

their ages and solve mathematical problems, aren't using their minds fully.

They are mechanical, following the cues of their trainer, in the movement of a hand or the whip.

But even this is a sign of intelligence. It requires symbolisation, which in turn requires a nervous system,

THE Talking Dogs is one of the most remarkable animal books ever written.

Some accept it. Others reject it. But nobody can put it down unfinished.

I should admit I am almost a professional doubter.

I don't believe in flying saucers, fortune telling, reincarnation or unlucky black cats.

And if I see Uri Geller bend another 50 spoons I'm still not going to believe he did it.

Additionally, a lifetime spent close to dogs persuades me that dogs are dogs and not four-legged humans.

I accept that dogs communicate. A dog with a bone soon tells another dog not to touch.

He needs no speech for this. Nor does he need it with human beings.

Leave a strange dog with an unschooled human and he will explain when he is hungry or wants exercise.

Of course he can understand some things we say because he connects a certain sound with a happening.

If I say "car" to my dogs it means an outing.

"Sit" means something to them. So does "dinner", "cat", "bone", "no", "bed" and a score of other things.

They could as easily have been trained to understand Greek or, as in Belam and Elke's case, German.

A theatre act I once saw

Give a dog a bone and he'll talk!



by STANLEY DANGERFIELD

Any word a dog knows can be used to trigger off the expected reaction.

Even so nearly all dog owners believe their own dogs understand speech.

Of course, he understands "good dog" because you make it sound caressing.

And what you called him when he offends sounds like a whiplash.

But logic cuts no ice when we talk about our own dog.

Which fact alone means that for every person who questions the facts behind The Talking Dogs there are ten who adore this remarkable story.

I finish with a true but uncharacteristic story.

I once flew out of a South American country as revolution broke out.

It was frightening but as we took off a thought appeared in my brain. "My dog is dead."

Two days later I found out that my favourite dog had indeed passed away without warning at that time some 6,000 miles away.

So here I am accepting that there was some supernatural communication between myself and a special pet yet declining to accept that living dogs can be taught to talk.

proves the point. Whatever the performer said, his dog did the opposite.

If he said sit the dog stood. If he said quiet the dog barked and so on.

He had merely taught the dog to beg when he said sleep. Jump on the table when he said down.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR CLEVER DOG

READERS are rushing in their hundreds to tell us how clever THEIR dogs are. If you think your dog is intelligent, write and tell us what makes you so sure. And send us a picture of him if you have one. For each letter we publish we will pay £5, and the best letter wins a year's supply of Hap, the new dog food made by Pedigree Petfoods. Write NOW—not more than 250

words—to "Talking Dogs," Evening News, New Carmelite House, London EC4Y 1AQ (Comp.). Letters must arrive by Monday. Include an SAE and we will endeavour to return photographs. The Editor's decision is final. No alternative prizes, no correspondence. Employees of Associated Newspapers Group Ltd. and members of their families are not eligible.

QUESTION: 'WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHOW THE WORLD THAT ANIMALS HAVE FEELINGS LIKE HUMANS?'

Elke tapped out 'YES' and our lessons began

AT THE beginning, teaching Elke was almost impossible.

Her lessons started in March, 1974, when she was hardly a year old. For the first few sessions she just wanted to have fun, offering both paws together and either giving too many taps or none at all.

It was six weeks before she learned to tap properly. She would lie on her back and roll her eyes at Dorothy, dabbing at her with uplifted paws. All she knew was how to tap YES and NO.

When counting exercises began, she took school a little more seriously. She learned to tap from 1 to 10 using both paws, though over-excitement often made her tap more than the number asked.

When this stage was securely passed, she learned to distinguish left paw from right, and to reserve the left for multiples of 10 and the right for units.

She hated this new discipline and for weeks staged a mute rebellion. She preferred to think of school as playtime, a wonderful chance to have Dorothy alone, all to herself.

Dorothy began to use the abacus to teach her first addition and subtractions.

© Maurice Rowdon 1978. Published by Macmillan (London) Ltd., at £5.95 on September 14.

and then simple multiplication: 1x2, 1x3 etc, up to 20. She was still unable to sit quietly for long, and at times would lose interest again. Nor could she control her moods. The sound of running paws would throw her into wild excitement and the lesson would have to stop.

Thought

In May 1974 Dorothy put a carpet down to mark the school area. "This is your schoolroom," she explained to her, patting the carpet.

The tea-trolley appeared with the educational equipment: abacus, cards and pencils. "This is for you, and only for you!"

Elke sniffed at it, curious and expectant, wagging her tail.

It was clearly time for Frau Heilmaier to explain the meaning of dog education to Elke. So "Mami" made a special visit to "school" and sat Elke down in front of her.

"Do you know there have been dogs who could count and read and write, and tell human beings what they thought? Would you too like

to show the world what animals can think and have feelings just like us?"

"You must decide for yourself. You may stop your lessons right away if you wish; no one is going to force you. You may tap yes or no. Do you want to go on with the lessons?"

Elke tapped YES. But later, when Dorothy started to teach her the alphabet, she tapped NO. Though still willing to oblige Dorothy by coming to lessons, she seemed tired of the whole project.

A holiday period at Frau Heilmaier's cottage followed. During which there were no lessons at all.

Was this all the rest she needed? On her return to Berchtesgaden she ran to her place on the carpet as if no longer able to wait, almost throwing herself into Dorothy's arms.

She now learned to count up to 50. Dorothy divided the beads on the abacus into 4 rows of 10, 5, 7, and 3 beads each, and began demonstrating simple adding and dividing problems. She arranged 35 beads in rows of 5 each and asked her how many

rows there were: the answer came unhesitatingly — 7.

"And how much is 7 x 5, that is all the beads together?"

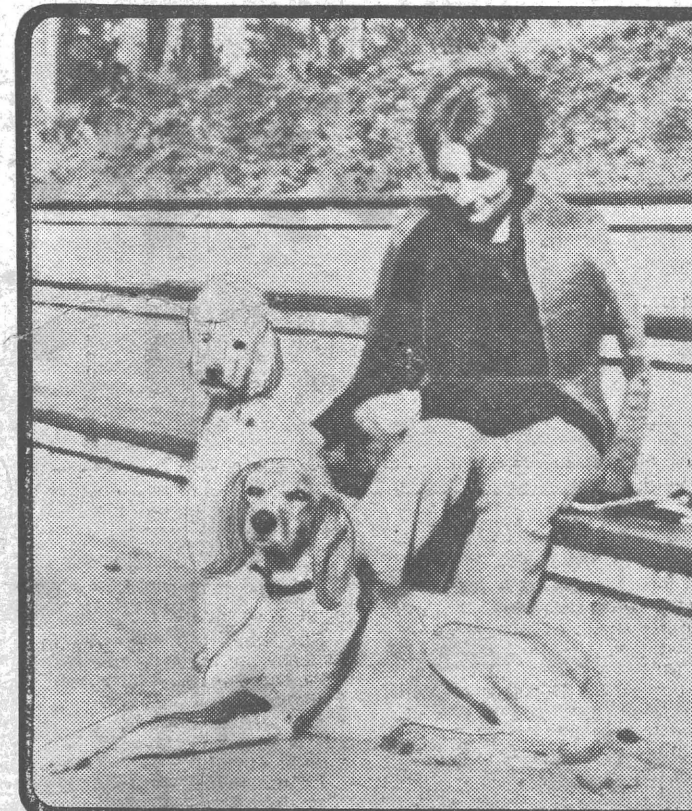
Elke tapped 35. "How many beads does each row have?"

She tapped 5. It seemed as easy as barking for her. Now came division problems: 4 divided by 2, 8 divided by 2 and so on. But how to get the concept of division into a dog's head?

Frau Heilmaier suggested showing Elke 4 rows of 5 beads each. Elke would recognise 20 easily as the total number of beads. Then she would be told: "But you see this 20 is divided into 4 parts!"

It worked. Elke began answering division problems with a smoothness that astonished Dorothy. Multiplication and division problems continued over several days, with progressively bigger numbers as the lessons went on.

It was at this point that Belam joined the class, at first only as an observer. Dorothy tried to coax him into the tapping position and



THE TAPPING CODE

Number of taps	Letter of alphabet	
1	= F	13 = I
2	= O	14 = K
3	= R	15 = P
4	= A	16 = S
5	= L	17 = T
6	= N	18 = U
7	= B	19 = W
8	= M	20 = Z
9	= D	21 = CH
10	= E	22 = SCH
11	= G	23 = O
12	= H	24 = U
		25 = X

This is the code Dorothy Meyer taught her pupils, Belam the Saluki male and Elke 11, the Standard poodle bitch (all pictured left). In answer to direct questions they tapped out three times with their right paw if the answer was YES and three times with the left paw if the answer was NO.

lifted his paws invitingly.

But salukis are much less effusive than poodles, and Belam was naturally reserved anyway. The most he would do was offer her, slowly and elegiacally, a rear paw, his huge dark eyes gazing off into some wild landscape far beyond the schoolroom, his back turned firmly towards her.

Affection

Offering the rear paw is a deeply affectionate act among dogs, more so than licking and ear-sniffing. It was one of his typical considered statements, hurrying for no

one, blandly noble, and leaving Dorothy to ask herself whether he was refusing an education or accepting one.

But later, on the day of his real lesson when he showed no response at all, he suddenly began tapping for Frau Heilmaier in her flat—four clear taps with the left paw and four with the right. Had he been learning after all? Had he started his schooling in his own unhurried way?

Dorothy felt the time had now come to teach Elke the alphabet. She made the sound appropriate for each

letter and, writing it down, explained that letters made it possible for words to be written as well as spoken.

The alphabet Dorothy adopted was largely that used by Rolf, the pioneer talking dog, trained by Dr. Paula Moeckel of Mannheim, Germany, just before the First World War. She made a few additions such as SCH (22 taps) and CH (21)—these being so common in the German language as to justify treating them as letters in their own right.

The first letters Elke learned were F (one tap), O (2), R (3), A (4), and L

(5). The first two words she learned to tap were RALF (the name of Frau Heilmaier's son) and FRO (the phonetic rendering of "froh") (glad).

Dorothy prepared cards for each letter on which its tapping value was written in the top right-hand corner, and she also wrote the letters on the blackboard, at least for the introductory lessons.

New letters followed and new words—BAL (a phonetic rendering of ball), BELLEN (to bark), DO (a pet name for Dorothy). Of course, Dorothy explained the mean-

DAY TWO OF THE TALKING DOGS

by MAURICE ROWDON

ing of each word carefully.

At this stage, like Paula Moeckel with Rolf, she constantly named objects in the flat or in the street. Later, when the dogs began tapping difficult, abstract and even recondite words, she realised how much German they in fact knew.

More letters and words were added. Elke had a sizeable vocabulary now and only five more letters remained to be taught.

When she looked at all these new words and letters on the board at the end of the day, Dorothy felt for the first time a sense of real achievement.

What an exhausting journey it had been so far; what patience one required! A classroom of 30 or 40 children seemed nothing compared with it.

For weeks, indeed from the first lesson, she had been haunted by the doubt that nothing would come of it. Now she suddenly saw ahead to the time when the dogs would be tapping not just names and baby-phrases, but messages that would surprise the world.

● TOMORROW: Belam the Saluki tells a story.

AND HOW YOU CAN WIN A GREAT PRIZE

IF you think your dog is clever he could win you a prize.

Write and tell us—in not more than 250 words—about your intelligent pet. Tell us what makes you sure he is clever.

Send us a picture of your pet, too, if you have one. For each letter we publish we will pay £5. And the best letter wins the writer a year's free supply of HAP, the new soft moist dog food made by Pedigree Petfoods.

Letters should be sent right away and must arrive before September 11. Address them to "Talking Dogs," Evening News, New Carmelite House, London EC4Y 1AQ (Comp), if an appropriate S.A.E. is enclosed we will endeavour to return photographs. The Editor's decision is final. No alternative prizes. No correspondence about the result. Employees of Associated Newspapers Group Ltd., or members of their families, are not eligible.

Is your pet a smooth haired talker?

By **RON
THOMPSON**

HAVE you heard about the dog who walked into a living room and asked for the radio to be turned off because it was too loud?

It's not a joke.

Fraulein Dorothy Meyer, who taught a Saluki named Belam to communicate with her, claims it happened.

She claims a lot more, too, according to author Maurice Rowdon, who has written a book, "The Talking Dogs" (Macmillan, £5.95) about the Saluki and a poodle named Elke who were taught to "talk" by Fraulein Meyer by tapping their paws.

For example: three taps with the right paw means yes. Three taps with the left paw means no.

Fraulein Meyer spent hundreds of hours teaching the dogs an alphabet of taps.

School

They learned to do sums and, then, to tape letters, words, and finally, complete sentences.

If Fraulein Meyer was able to guess the sentence after a word or two, then the dogs didn't both to finish it.

Maurice Rowdon went to Berchtesgaden, once notorious as Hitler's mountain hide-out, to see Fraulein Meyer and the dogs.

He found that she was a former schoolteacher, who had been asked by Frau Hilde Heilmaier, the owner of the dogs, to set up a school for the animals.

Frau Heilmaier was intensely interested in

sums with a smoothness which astonished Fraulein Meyer.

Belam joined the class as an interested observer, but was soon into taking lessons.

Maurice Rowdon's account of the dogs' training makes fascinating and instructive reading for anyone tempted to "talk" to their own dogs.

Even more interesting, however, are the reports of the dogs' conversations logged by Dorothy Meyer.

He, himself, was present when Elke was asked about death, and, to their astonishment, knew what it meant. Their spines tingled even more when Elke tapped out that death was "a soft dark mist with eternal genuine lustre."

They asked Belam a similar question.

His reply was "One rests in peace."

Maurice Rowdon reports that the dogs answered questions about God, about each other, and about the raising of puppies and their training. All from the dogs' point of view.

'Too loud'

They also joined in family life.

One morning Belam walked into Fraulein Meyer's living room where

the radio was blaring and tapped "Ouch, ear."

Fraulein Meyer asked: "Is the music too loud?"

Belam tapped: "Yes".
"Shall I turn it off?"
"Yes" replied Belam.

One day, Fraulein Meyer had three puppies with her at a new school and Belam was there, a star pupil who looked at the class with a benevolent superiority.

The little ones dabbled at the air with their soft, clumsy paws, sometimes toppling over from the tapping position they had been taught to adopt.

Fraulein Meyer was having trouble with one called Abdul, who refused to sit in the tapping position.

She asked Belam how she could help Abdul.

Belam answered: "Tenderly guide."

MACMILLAN

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SURREY ADVERTISER

GUILDFORD,
SURREY

ISSUE 18 SEP 1978
DATED

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The principal characters are Dorothy Meyer, of Berchtesgaden, in Bavaria, and her two dogs, Elke, a poodle, and Belam, a saluki. Dorothy, apparently, had spent a year or two teaching the dogs a sort of Morse code, the dogs tapping with a paw on her hand to spell out letters and numbers.

Thus, there were four taps for A, 25 for X and other letters pro rata. "No" was three taps with the left paw, "Yes" three taps with the right paw (shades of table-turning!). One sentence, used by the dogs, consisting of three words, required 259 taps and would have required, on my estimate, at least three minutes to transmit correctly.

THE TALKING DOGS by Maurice Rowdon (Macmillan, £5.95).

Maurice Rowdon, the author, spent several months studying the lengthy transcripts Dorothy Meyer had made of conversations with her dogs. He also studied the previous accounts of the hundred or more so-called talking dogs and horses that have been reported, including, inevitably, Clever Hans, the horse that could answer questions, even do simple arithmetic, by tapping out the answer with his hoof.

Clever Hans was subject to scrutiny by scientists who came to the conclusion that the horse was being guided, unconsciously, by its owner. Thus, in reply to a question the horse would start pawing the ground and would stop at the correct number guided by a flick of the eyelid, a slight movement of the hand or the general air of

expectancy of its owner in knowing when to stop.

Rowdon dismisses this explanation as nonsense and endeavours to reinstate Clever Hans and other talking animals that have received the brunt of scientific scepticisms.

The text of the present book is largely concerned with quotations of conversations between Dorothy and her dogs, to which Rowdon adds his own comments and moralisings. Some of these one can but agree with.

There can be no doubt, for example, that a dog that has lived closely with human beings for many years must have acquired a considerable vocabulary for words understood even if it cannot say them. One can accept, also, that dogs and

horses are relatively intelligent, some being more intelligent than others, and all capable of greater understanding than we normally credit them with.

It would be hard to quarrel with his contention, also, that if the human race were less conceited and had a greater sympathy for animals the world would be a better place in which to live.

The main theme of the book is, however, that a few dogs, at least, have been taught a code, a sort of complicated alphabet, by the use of which they can communicate sensibly and deliberately with human beings. Upon this the book must stand or fall, according to whether the reader finds the evidence presented acceptable or unacceptable.

The first drawback is that all the questions were, naturally, put in German, so each is accompanied by a translation, which tends to confuse any reader not accomplished in that language. This is made worse by the fact that the dogs misspell or abbreviate most words, so there had to be further interrogation of them to find out what they did mean to say. Dorothy, and Rowdon, put this misspelling down to the dogs having used phonetics. What is certain is that it imparts to the book a measure of tedium.

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EVENING GAZETTE

COLCHESTER,
ESSEX

ISSUE
DATED

15th Sept
1978

DUMB ANIMALS? MEET A WOMAN WHOSE DOGS TALK

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Fraulein Meyer was having trouble with one called Abdul, who refused to sit in the tapping position.

She asked Belam how she could help Abdul.

Belam answered: "Tenderly, guide." R.T.

BOOK LOOKS

What she was told by her talkative pet dogs

MOST pet owners have been heard to remark at one time or another: "He understands every word." Or "Look, he's telling us something."

Every Rover and Rex, Honey and Heide have, in the past, imparted some message of great import to their dotting owners.

Canine intelligence has never been in dispute. One has only to look around at the working dogs in the police force, or guide dogs which become the eyes of sightless people, to be sure of that.

Yet can a dog communicate at our level? Can he, or she, originate thought and convey that thought to us.

Interviews

Maurice Rowden in his book "The Talking Dogs" thinks they can. And he has compiled a formidable slab of statistics to drive home the point.

The book, published this month by Macmillan London (price £3.95), documents interviews — yes, inter-

views — with a standard poodle bitch called Elke II, and a Saluki male called Belam.

It tells the story of how their teacher, Fraulein Dorothy Meyer, spent the better part of 18 months teaching the dogs to tap out messages with their paws. Not merely "yes" and "no," but complex sentences.

Even more important, the author sets out to distinguish thoughts and ideas originated by the dogs themselves, rather than answers to set questions.

Fraulein Meyer sat through more than 500 lessons — well documented and taped — to bring the animals up to the standards portrayed in the book.

With the beautiful Bavarian countryside as its setting, the book deals with "chats" with the dogs from

complex mathematical problems to apparent emotional retorts from the animals ranging from love through fear to anger.

In German

The dogs "answer" questions in German, (translations provided) and use as a basic alphabet, a phonetic system.

As the interviews progressed, the author discovered a distinct character in both animals, with all the traits and idiosyncracies we associate with human beings.

It is not suggested that Fido, asleep in the corner, is capable of quietly asking you to make a fresh cup of tea, but the book does pose a number of interesting points — not least, that a dog can be trained to communicate in a way we understand.

Whether the trainer and author have made too enthusiastic an interpretation of the tappings is another question altogether.

Individual readers will themselves have their own interpretations of the statistics and comments made in the book. As for me, when my own dog taps on the door I know exactly what she means.

P.M.



Can dogs "talk"? This bouncing poodle certainly seems to be passing on a joyous message.

Is your pet clever?

Have you ever come across instances of intelligent birds or animals? Write and tell us if you have. We will pay £1 for each letter published — and there will be a special prize for the writer of the letter the Editor considers the best.

Letters ideally should not be more than 200 words. Envelopes should be addressed to the Editor, Evening Sentinel, Northcliffe House, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 5HA, and marked **Clever Animals**.

MACMILLAN

DURRANT'S 11 Northburgh Street London EC1V 0JL 01-251 4918

SURREY ADVERTISER

GUILDFORD, SURREY. ISSUE 118 SEP 1978 DATED

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EVENING TIMES

GLASGOW

ISSUE
DATED 30th Sept
1978

WEEKEND TIMES

We can talk to our animals!

BOOKSHELF

By Jack House

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cats in my time. There
was Pushkin to whom
I needed only to show
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cies.

He was an intelligent
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Only now I realise that
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I take this information
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But this account of what
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There are instances,
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Of course, I've seen the World Famous Talking Horse at Kelvin Hall and in other circuses. It counts and does other tricks, and the theory is that the trainer is giving it certain signs to show it when to stop tapping. But this account of what Elke and Belam discuss is very different indeed.

There are instances, for example, of when the dogs have taken the initiative and put new ideas to the trainers.

STARTING TODAY...The extraordinary story that raises the question: Are dogs more human than we ever imagined?

THE TALKING DOGS

● Can dogs communicate with human beings as equals? Are they much cleverer than we thought? Do they really understand what we are saying? These are the questions raised in a remarkable new book, *THE TALKING DOGS*, serialised in the Evening News this week.

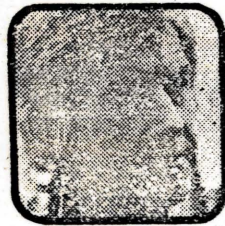
We present the evidence author Maurice Rowdon discovered when he went to Germany to see the experiments of animal teacher Dorothy Meyer who claimed she had taught a poodle and a saluki to "talk," by use of a complicated routine of paw taps, like a doggy Morse code.

Rowdon arrived as a sceptic, and left, weeks later, convinced dogs had, and can express, the whole gamut of human emotions.

● We have placed all the author's evidence in the hands of Stanley Dangerfield, one of the world's leading experts on dogs. His verdict on *The Talking Dogs* will appear later this week. What he has to say will surprise you.

● There's a chance for you to have your say, too. Already we have heard from one reader who saw a Labrador able to play dominoes—using paw tapping to indicate which piece to play. Write and tell us what you think about talking dogs.

● And your dog can join in, too, to win a year's supply of dog food! See below.



by
MAURICE ROWDON

WHEN I first met Elke II, the Standard poodle bitch, and Belam, the Saluki male, on a hot September afternoon at Salzburg airport, they were sitting waiting for me with their teacher.

Elke's white fur was dazzling in the remarkably clear, mountain-reflected sunlight. Her eyes were round and black and vivaciously attentive.

At her side, Belam, taller and bonier, seemed the shyer of the two with his long sensitive nose, gazelle eyes and deliciously straggling fur.

Hideout

They had heard a lot about me. I'd been asked to write a book about them and help make their intelligence known to the world.

It was a hot, exhilarating day and we were about to drive across the Austrian border to Berchtesgaden, one of the most pleasant of Bavaria's mediaeval resort towns, once notorious as Hitler's mountain hideout.

What I witnessed in the next few days was to change my life—as it had changed that of their teacher, Dorothy Meyer. She had started from

scratch—with only printed records of previous animal tappings, from 50 or so years before, to go on.

For weeks she had worked in the dark, doubting her capacities as an animal teacher and all the less prepared for the shock of discovery when it came.

Like me, she had been ready enough to accept animal intelligence as an idea. But not to accept the reality of animals as equal beings.

The discovery that in many respects animals have a moral integrity, truthfulness and compassion superior to our own was an even greater shock.

That evening in Berchtesgaden I met Frau Hellmaier, owner of the dogs and founder of the "dog school." For some years she had been a breeder of dogs which she frequently raced at the local stadiums.

She had a flat on the ground floor of the same block as Dorothy, whom she employed. Frau Hellmaier also had a cottage some metres away, where the dogs often lived.

We settled down to coffee and cake and cream, in armchairs round a table, and the dogs began tapping their first "greetings" messages for me.

Each letter of the alphabet was represented by a certain number of paw taps. First Dorothy handed me the tapping code with the letters of the German alphabet and their tapping equivalents. For example: E=10 taps,



Dorothy Meyer, above, teacher of the talking dogs, interprets as Belam, the saluki, taps out a message in her palm with his paw. Poodle Elke II, right, welcomed author Rowdon in the same way.



They have been taught a kind of doggy Morse code by which they tap out their thoughts and feelings

Sch=22 taps. Then she held out her hand for the dogs to tap into.

Elke's message for me was firm and unhesitating.

First came nine, ten and three taps which, I found on consulting the alphabet list, made DER. Then 20 and three, for ZR. This was followed by 13, 20, 16, for IZH. And lastly five, 13, seven, for LIB.

Put together the sentence ran DER ISZ ZR LIB.

Relief

Dorothy's method was to enquire after each word whether the dog meant what she thought. The dog then tapped YES or NO. If the answer was NO, Dorothy asked for the

word to be tapped again. It was generally clear when a word had been completed because the dog would make some movement of relief or excitement, or pause for longer than usual.

After reminding me that the dogs spelt phonetically on the whole, Dorothy asked Elke: "Do you mean Der Ist sehr lieb?" (He is very nice).

YES, came back the answer (three taps of the right paw).

Looking back on my records of that first encounter, I realise that, once written out on the printed page in their phonetic form, the tappings aren't nearly as clear and understandable as I remember them to have been at the time.

It was the dogs themselves that carried con-

vi-
sion—rather as children, bubbling over with something to say and too excited to compose it properly, supply with their eyes and expressions what their words are short of. A bare account cannot convey the impression both dogs give of desperately wanting to communicate with human beings. They tell their teacher they have something to say by turning to her in a certain way or by an excited look in the eye.

Pause

She then coaxes them into the tapping position at her side or immediately in front of her.

They sit in such a way that they can place a paw into her outstretched hand without overbalancing.

Then begins the slow effort of concentrating on the word to be tapped.

Sometimes there are long pauses between one letter and another, while the dog seems to lose track of what he or she wants to say. He gazes round, even nods asleep. The thread seems to be lost.

But however long the pause, he always returns to the subject, unless he's too tired to go on.

I realised that the dogs tapped their thoughts with great care. I'd somehow imagined that their messages were constructed out of a jumble of letters, but this wasn't the case (although it took more than one evening with them to convince me).

They always seemed to know what they wanted to say, though technical

difficulties sometimes stood in their way.

Undoubtedly the dogs tapped letters. But wasn't there an element of over-free interpretation on Dorothy's part?

Would these tappings turn out to be mostly a jumble of letters from which she chose—indeed, half-constructed—sentences which more or less made sense? These were the doubts of that first evening.

Precise

They weren't laid to rest at once. But as the dogs grew used to me and I learned to address them as Dorothy did, I began to find their tapped remarks were not only on the whole precise and even

terse, but strictly in line with their different personalities.

Also, I was to see much more evidence of their intelligence than just the ability to tap. They could work out arithmetical problems far quicker than I could.

I have never seen human beings calculate with the naked eye the length of a book to within a centimetre of its exact measurement, or give a solution of a mathematical problem after flashing a barely perceptible glance at the blackboard to take it in.

And I have rarely met human beings so consistently truthful as Elke II and Belam.

Who's a clever boy then?

WHETHER you go as far as author Maurice Rowdon or not, most people have stories of the intelligence and perception of dogs.

Dogs have a way of interpreting what we humans want in an uncanny way. Sometimes this has saved lives.

Here's a chance for your clever dog to win you a great prize.

Write and tell us—in not more than 250 words—about your intelligent pet. Tell us what makes you sure he is clever and of instances which show how well he understands humans.

Send us a picture of your pet, too, if you have one. For each letter we publish we will pay £5. And the best letter wins the writer a year's free supply of HAP, the new soft moist dog food made by Pedigree Petfoods.

Letters should be sent right away and must arrive before September 11. Address them to "Talking Dogs", Evening News, New Carmelite House, London EC4Y 1AQ (Comp.). If an appropriate S.A.E. is enclosed, we will endeavour to return photographs. The Editor's decision is final. No alternative prizes. No correspondence about the result. Employees of Associated Newspapers Group Ltd. or members of their families, are not eligible.

© Maurice Rowdon 1978. Published by Macmillan (London) Ltd., at £5.95 on September 14.

TOMORROW: ELKE THE POODLE LEARNS TO COUNT UP TO 50

3/3/13

Reviews

Talking Progs

RC

These dogs 'converse' with their owners

"The Talking Dogs," by Maurice Rowdon (Macmillan £5.95*).

SINCE other animals have like ourselves a brain, a nervous system and senses, they must be capable of perceiving, thinking and communicating.

If they were merely automata, it would be pointless to equip them with a complex marshalling of faculties designed to coordinate response to environment.

Yet many people argue that only man has reason and refuse to admit the possibility of true intelligence in other species.

It is a view peculiar to our modern western culture.

It springs inevitably from a materialistic philosophy which even denies the existence of mind itself, and regards the behaviour of all living things as merely a matter of conditioned reflexes.

The investigation of the animal mind in order to establish an intelligible dialogue between man and his fellow-creatures is not entirely new.

Human language used

No doubt most readers have heard of such pioneers in this field as Wilhelm von Ostern and Karl Krall who successively owned the remarkable horse known as "Clever Hans."

This book is concerned with two dogs, one a poodle bitch called Elke and the other a saluki male named Belam. Their owner is Hilde Heilmater and their teacher Dorothy Meyer.

They live in Austria and Bavaria with Panther the cat.

There is nothing extraordinary about these dogs except that they can communicate with human beings, using human language as the means.

In this case the language is mainly German though they can also "talk" in English.

Done by their paws

How is it done? The dogs tap with their paws a specific number of times for each letter of the alphabet.

The spelling seems to be phonetic and the arrangement of words in a sentence is often inverted.

Consequently, the order of words appears to be unnatural, which makes the meaning not always clear at a glance.

It is interesting to note that since the beginning of this century, there have been about 102 animals in different parts of the world able to communicate through tapping with human beings.

Books reviewed



by

W. H. MACKINTOSH

These have included horses, ponies, dogs and at least two cats. However, in this connection no mention is made of such extremely intelligent species as apes and dolphins.

Teaching a dog to tap requires training it in the first place to sit upright, with its body properly balanced, thus leaving one paw free for tapping without strain.

Incredible as it may seem, the teacher talks to the dog and shows it by example how many times it must tap with its paw to indicate a particular letter of the alphabet.

Great care shown

But what about the quality of the communications? It seems the dogs not only answer questions put to them, but indicate to their teacher by certain movements and looks when they want to say something themselves.

Long pauses between letters are frequent in which the animal appears to lose concentration. Nevertheless the thread of the conversation is subsequently taken up without any loss of meaning.

Maurice Rowdon noticed that the dogs seemed to take great care with what they were tapping, trying to express themselves as clearly and succinctly as possible.

Apparently they knew precisely what they wanted to say, though barriers not of their own making sometimes stood in the way of proper expression.

I suppose many readers like myself have often talked to an animal and wished the conversation could become a meaningful dialogue of the type which we hold with other human beings.

How much we could learn and how good it would be for ourselves to have our kinship with all animals brought emphatically to our attention in this manner!

Are we superior?

ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI ANIMAL HEALING SANCTUARY

will function at

BLACKHEATH HEALING CENTRE
17 Kidbrooke Grove, SE3
(Healing medium: Sylvia Broadwood)

story of talking dogs... the experts have their say

WHEN I first went to see the talking dogs of Berchtesgaden I expected to find two clever animals trained on circus lines.

I observed them and their teacher Dorothy Meyer very closely. I was determined not to be fooled.

Gradually I realised that they were tapping out real sentences that were, as far as I could tell, of their own invention.

What convinced me that I was in the presence of thinking creatures was living with them from day to day, going for walks and watching them tap in all sorts of situations in the woods, at the zoo, in someone's home.

When you live with a person you get to know pretty quickly whether there is an element of fake or untruthfulness in them.

What I saw convinced me that these dogs had hopes and sorrows like all of us, and were no less sensitive to the terrors and the annoyances of life than we are.

While with Elke and Belam I became convinced that the difference between their intelligence and ours was not so much quality as use.

Their whole approach to the world was different from ours.

Their ears were open to the most distant sounds, their eyes took in a scene with the briefest flash of a glance and their noses sought out the smells on the wind.

And their minds worked faster than ours. They would prove in a tapping that they had taken in more with a glance than you had with a long gaze.

Circus animals who count up to certain numbers, tell

It cannot just be telepathy



by MAURICE ROWDON

their ages and solve mathematical problems, aren't using their minds fully.

They are mechanical, following the cues of their trainer, in the movement of a hand or the whip.

But even this is a sign of intelligence. It requires symbolisation, which in turn requires a nervous system,

sensory structure and brain similar to our own.

The usual argument against animal intelligence, is that the telepathic principle is at work.

They said it about the famous stallion "clever Hans" in Berlin before the First World War, and they said it in Virginia, about the remarkable horse Lady Wonder, who died in 1957.

But how could telepathy have operated when Elke or Belam suddenly wanted to "say" something in the woods about another animal neither Dorothy nor I had seen, and while our minds were on entirely different subjects?

And what about the many occasions when the dogs tapped an urgent MUST (their codeword for "I want to leave the room")? Were Dorothy and I planting this desire without knowing it?

THE Talking Dogs is one of the most remarkable animal books ever written.

Some accept it. Others reject it. But nobody can put it down unfinished.

I should admit I am almost a professional doubter.

I don't believe in flying saucers, fortune telling, reincarnation or unlucky black cats.

And if I see Uri Geller bend another 50 spoons I'm still not going to believe he did it.

Additionally, a lifetime spent close to dogs persuades me that dogs are dogs and not four-legged humans.

I accept that dogs communicate. A dog with a bone soon tells another dog not to touch.

He needs no speech for this. Nor does he need it with human beings.

Leave a strange dog with an unschooled human and he will explain when he is hungry or wants exercise.

Of course he can understand some things we say because he connects a certain sound with a happening.

If I say "car" to my dogs it means an outing.

"Sit" means something to them. So does "dinner", "cat", "bone", "no", "bed" and a score of other things.

They could as easily have been trained to understand Greek or, as in Belam and Elke's case, German.

A theatre act I once saw

Give a dog a bone and he'll talk!



by STANLEY DANGERFIELD

proves the point. Whatever the performer said, his dog did the opposite.

If he said sit the dog stood. If he said quiet the dog barked and so on.

He had merely taught the dog to beg when he said sleep. Jump on the table when he said down.

Any word a dog knows can be used to trigger off the expected reaction.

Even so nearly all dog owners believe their own dogs understand speech.

Of course, he understands "good dog" because you make it sound caressing.

And what you called him when he offends sounds like a whiplash.

But logic cuts no ice when we talk about our own dog.

Which fact alone means that for every person who questions the facts behind The Talking Dogs there are ten who adore this remarkable story.

I finish with a true but uncharacteristic story.

I once flew out of a South American country as revolution broke out.

It was frightening but as we took off a thought appeared in my brain. "My dog is dead."

Two days later I found out that my favourite dog had indeed passed away without warning at that time some 6,000 miles away.

So here I am accepting that there was some supernatural communication between myself and a special pet yet declining to accept that living dogs can be taught to talk.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR CLEVER DOG

READERS are rushing in their hundreds to tell us how clever THEIR dogs are. If you think your dog is intelligent, write and tell us what makes you so sure. And send us a picture of him if you have one. For each letter we publish we will pay £5, and the best letter wins a year's supply of Hap, the new dog food made by Pedigree Petfoods. Write NOW—not more than 250

words—to "Talking Dogs," Evening News, New Carmelite House, London EC4Y 1AQ (Comp.). Letters must arrive by Monday. Include an SAE and we will endeavour to return photographs. The Editor's decision is final. No alternative prizes, no correspondence. Employees of Associated Newspapers Group Ltd. and members of their families are not eligible.

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YORKSHIRE EVENING POST

LEEDS,
YORKSHIRE

ISSUE
DATED 16 SEP 1978

Talking dogs? Maurice knows they exist

BOOKS

HAVE you heard about the dog who walked into a living room and asked for the radio to be turned off because it was too loud? It's not a joke.

Fraulein Dorothy Meyer, who taught a Saluki named Belam to communicate with her, claims it happened.

She claims a lot more, too, according to author Maurice Rowdon, who has written a book, "The Talking Dogs" (Macmillan £5.95) about the Saluki and a poodle named Elke who were taught to "talk" by Fraulein Meyer by tapping their paws.

For example: Three taps with the right paw means yes. Three taps with the left paw means no.

Fraulein Meyer spent hundreds of hours teaching the dogs an alphabet of taps.

They learned to do sums and, then, to tap letters, words, and, finally, complete sentences.

If Fraulein Meyer was able to guess the sentence after a word or two — then the dogs didn't bother to finish it.

Maurice Rowdon went to Berchtesgaden, once notorious as Hitler's mountain hide-out, to see Fraulein Meyer and the dogs.

He, himself, was present when Elke was asked about death and, to their astonishment, knew what it meant. Their spines tingled even more when Elke tapped out that death was "a soft, dark mist with eternal genuine lustre".

They asked Belam a similar question. His reply was "one rests in peace".

Maurice Rowdon reports that the dogs answered questions about God, about each other, and about the

raising of puppies and their training. All from the dogs' point of view.

They also joined in family life.

One morning Belam walked into Fraulein Meyer's living room where the radio was blaring and tapped "ouch ear".

Fraulein Meyer asked: "Is the music too loud?"

Belam tapped: "Yes".
"Shall I turn it off?"
"Yes," replied Belam.

He found that Fraulein Meyer was a former school-teacher, who had been asked by Frau Hilde Heilmaier, the owner of the dogs, to set up a school for the animals.

Frau Heilmaier was intensely interested in animal intelligence and had read a number of books about animals which had been taught to communicate.

She wanted to start a school of her own.

Lessons began with Elke 1, an eager and apt pupil. Her lessons started when she was hardly a year old. She wasn't too keen at first.

But, gradually, she learned the alphabet and began doing sums with a smoothness which astonished Fraulein Meyer.

Belam joined the class as an interested observer, but was soon into taking lessons.

Maurice Rowdon's account of the dogs' training makes fascinating and instructive reading for anyone tempted to "talk" to their own dogs.

Even more interesting, however, are the reports of the dogs' conversations logged by Dorothy Meyer.

The final part of the

THE TALKING DOGS Day 3: A door opens on the animal world

Belam tells a story and taps out a message of love



Belam, the saluki, becomes a proud father.

Maurice Rowdon's *The Talking Dogs* is a study of canine communication

They really lap up all that praise

THERE is nothing new about animals that "converse" by tapping or barking or growling.

Bears, horses and dogs were doing it long before the Middle Ages and Banks' talking horse was a London sensation in Shakespeare's time.

And in the thirties Marcus La Touche had a very famous talking dog called Marquis.

It is no great mystery. In circus slang it is called the Joey Pony.

If you stand beside a Shetland pony and scratch the upper part of a foreleg with your thumb nail, the pony will presently start to paw the ground. At the moment you stop scratching (and the pony stops pawing), move your foot a couple of inches.

After training, the pony will either paw or stop pawing according to the position of your shoe: a simple case of transferred reflex.

But, and here the whole thing starts to get eerie, with some animals you can gradually stop moving your foot altogether and just **THINK ABOUT MOVING YOUR FOOT**. The animal now responds to a signal you didn't give!

Willed

Early this century in Germany, the most outstanding exponent of advanced High School riding was Therese Renz. She experimented with reducing the "aids," the muscular pressure of fingers on reins and heels on flank, almost to vanishing point.

Sometimes, on days of rare empathy with her horse, she could ride a magnificent series of movements and changes without making any muscular signals at all. She simply *willed* the horse's movements.

At this level of communication, called symbiosis, it seems that the rider's mind takes over the muscles of the



by EDWARD CAMPBELL

mount and two bodies share a single nervous system.

Not one rider in ten thousand ever approaches this but the idea is well known.

And that is very much what I believe is happening between Dorothy and her dogs.

She wants her dog to tap five times to indicate the letter L and a certain something, communicates stop and start signals to the doggie paw-tapping.

All the rest follows. The "communication;" the astonishing messages of mutual understanding (and revolt!); and the seemingly miraculous intelligence of a Saluki and a poodle.

But I don't think it is telepathy.

Behaviourists would probably say that the trainer makes involuntary muscular contractions when tapping is to start and stop; and the dog, which has an instinctive perception of body language anyway, acts upon these signals.

The signals can be so minute that the average person is totally unaware of making them.

This theory is illustrated by the case of the Polish sensitive Wolf Messing. He used to leave a room, or even the building, while a group picked some object, a ring, a picture, a bit of string, anything.

On returning he would take someone by the hand, usually a woman, and start to walk around the room. Gradually he would examine all the objects and finally he would announce the chosen one.

He had trained himself to evaluate the minute muscular contractions which the girl involuntarily made as they approached or receded from the object.

So it is *just* minute and unsuspected body signals? Again, I don't think so.

When I was young and very foolish I trained a group of three lions and a brown bear.

With one lioness, Delia, I had a very high degree of empathy and taught her to walk 16 feet along a double tightrope.

When the trick was fully established I noticed an extraordinary thing.

If we were working to a scant audience, the act was trained in a small provincial menagerie, and she got only a modest round of applause, she would jump down to her "home" position at the end of the trick.

Applause

But if we had a good Saturday night audience and she got a real burst of applause, she would, without any cue from me, turn round and do the walk back again as an encore!

I decided that close association with a human had given her an ego. She did a double stunt when she thought it was worth it, or out of sheer vanity.

But I'm still not sure.

I don't think animals receive telepathically, I think they receive emotionally; not concepts, not images but feelings.

Subconsciously I suspect that I wanted Delia to do an encore. I sent out a pulse of emotion that "approved."

The lioness reacted as she had been conditioned to react, i.e. "approval signal, therefore walk it again."

Quite simply she responded to a feeling in terms of its circumstances and its history of conditioning.

I believe Dorothy Meyer subconsciously *wants* to prove that dogs think and talk and she radiates, albeit unconsciously, precisely the emotion which will cause the dog to confirm her wishful thinking.

**BRITAIN'S
BIGGEST
EVENING
SALE**

**The News
tonight**

Amazing story of the dogs that talk

TODAY the Evening News begins one of the most remarkable animal stories ever told.

This important series is based on the results of an astonishing investigation into the question which has intrigued people for centuries:

Can dogs talk? Can they communicate with humans, understanding what is said and conveying their own messages?

These are the issues raised in the book **THE TALKING DOGS**. Start reading it in the centre pages today.

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WILTS & GLOUCESTERSHIRE STANDARI

CIRENCESTER,
GLOUCESTERSHIRE

ISSUE
DATED 17 NOV 1978

'The Talking Dogs' by Maurice Rowdon (Macmillan £5.95) documents an experiment in communication between a woman living in southern Germany and the two dogs: Elke a poodle, and Belam a Saluki. She taught them to use their paws to communicate by tapping. This amazing book describes in detail the process of teaching the dogs to do sums, and then to tap letters, words and, finally, complete sentences. The time came when they were even capable of giving advice to their owner!

J.H.C. LAKER

McMillan PC

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THE NORTHERN ECHO

DARLINGTON,
DURHAM

ISSUE
DATED

1 DEC 1978

Dog talk

The Talking Dogs. By Maurice Rowdon (Macmillan £5.95).

MAURICE Rowdon was asked to write a book about two dogs which were supposed to be able to communicate with people. Trained and taught by their owner, a poodle and a saluki were reputed to be able to talk by using a system of tapping with their paws based on a particular code.

The author reports what he witnessed and says that at first he had doubt about the extent of the talking, wondering how much was over-free interpretation by the teacher. The reader must draw his own conclusions as to whether this is the case right through the reported conversations, for Maurice Rowdon says the experience changed his attitude and way of thinking not only about dogs but about all animals and made him wonder if a closer relationship on a different plane with the animal world would be of benefit to man.

W.D.S.

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EVENING SENTINEL

HANLEY
STAFFORDSHIRE

ISSUE
DATED

20 SEP 1978

BOOK LOOKS

What she was told by her talkative pet dogs

MOST pet owners have been heard to remark at one time or another: "He understands every word." Or "Look, he's telling us something."

Every Rover and Rex, Honey and Heidi have, in the past, imparted some message of great import to their doting owners.

Canine intelligence has never been in dispute. One has only to look around at the working dogs in the police force, or guide dogs which become the eyes of sightless people, to be sure of that.

Yet can a dog communicate at our level? Can he, or she, originate thought and convey that thought to us.

Interviews

Maurice Rowden in his book "The Talking Dogs" thinks they can. And he has compiled a formidable slab of statistics to drive home the point.

The book, published this month by MacMillan London (price £2.95), documents interviews — yes, inter-

views — with a standard poodle bitch called Elke II, and a Saluki male called Belam.

It tells the story of how their teacher, Fraulein Dorothy Meyer, spent the better part of 18 months teaching the dogs to tap out messages with their paws. Not merely "yes" and "no," but complex sentences.

Even more important, the author sets out to distinguish thoughts and ideas originated by the dogs themselves, rather than answers to set questions.

Fraulein Meyer sat through more than 500 lessons — well documented and taped — to bring the animals up to the standards portrayed in the book.

With the beautiful Bavarian countryside as its setting, the book deals with "chats" with the dogs from

complex mathematical problems to apparent emotional retorts from the animals ranging from love through fear to anger.

In German

The dogs "answer" questions in German, (translations provided) and use as a basic alphabet, a phonetic system.

As the interviews progressed, the author discovered a distinct character in both animals, with all the traits and idiosyncracies we associate with human beings.

It is not suggested that Fido, asleep in the car, is capable of quietly asking you to make a fresh cup of tea, but the book does pose a number of interesting points — not least, that a dog can be trained to communicate in a way we understand.

Whether the trainer and author have made too enthusiastic an interpretation of the tappings is another question altogether.

Individual readers will themselves have their own interpretations of the statistics and comments made in the book. As for me, when my own dog taps on the door I know exactly what she means.



Can dogs "talk"? This bouncing poodle certainly seems to be passing on a joyous message.

Is your pet clever?

Have you ever come across instances of intelligent birds or animals? Write and tell us if you have. We will pay £1 for each letter published — and there will be a special prize for the writer of the letter the Editor considers the best.

Letters ideally should not be more than 200 words. Envelopes should be addressed to the Editor, Evening Sentinel, Northcliffe House, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 5HA, and marked Clever Animals.

P.M.

NEW BOOKS

Turn the radio off said Belam the dog... 'It's too loud'!



HAVE YOU heard about the dog who walked into a living-room and asked for the radio to be turned off because it was too loud? It's not a joke.

Fraulein Dorothy Meyer, who taught a Saluki named Belam to communicate with her, claims it happened (writes Ron Thompson).

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Maurice Rowdon reports that the dogs answered questions about God, about each other, and about the raising of puppies and their training — all from the dogs' point of view.

They also joined in family life.

One morning Belam walked into Fraulein Meyer's livingroom where the radio was blaring and tapped "Ouch ear."

Fraulein Meyer asked: "Is the music too loud?" Belam tapped: "Yes." "Shall I turn it off?" "Yes," replied Belam.

One day, Fraulein Meyer had three puppies with her at a new school and Belam was there, a star pupil who looked at the class with a benevolent superiority.

The little ones dabbled at the air with their soft, clumsy paws, sometimes toppling over from the tapping position they had been taught to adopt. Fraulein Meyer was having trouble with one called Abdul, who refused to sit in the tapping position.

She asked Belam how she could help Abdul.

Belam answered: "Tenderly guide."



THE TALKING DOGS



Elke the poodle after death

effect on me than any otherappings I witnessed at that time.

Frau Heilmater leaned forward to Elke and asked: "What is it when one dies, my love?"

ZOE SCHWIER for zu schwer (too difficult) came the answer.

"Do you mean too difficult to say?" Dorothy asked her. "If you do, tap three times. Or do you mean too difficult for your heart? If you do, tap five times."

Elke tapped five times. To make the question

clearer Dorothy asked again: "What do we mean by after death?"

EIN ZARTE she began to tap; at the second word she became very tense, almost trembling, her head down in concentration. Then came the word DUKLE.

"Do you mean dunkle by this word?" YES.

Then came NIEBEL MIT ETERNISCHE ECHT SCHAIN. The whole sentence stood for ein zarter dunkler Nebel mit eternischen echten Schieim (a soft mist with eternal genuine lustre).

As the words formed on my pad and she went on tapping in her deeply absorbed way, her eyes almost closed, we gazed at each other, our spines tingling with astonishment.

One evening we talked again about the dogs'appings on death and began to wonder if they had anything to say about God. Elke had already indicated that she was aware of the word.

Dorothy asked Belam: "What do you love more than Mami (their pet name for Frau Heilmater)?"

He seemed perplexed and she added: "Do you understand?" NO.

Do you love something more than Mami?" YES. He tapped MALAGRIT, which seemed to make no sense, then he flopped out on the floor.

"Do you understand the word God?" YES. "What do you think of when we use this word?"

LEBEN UBER IHN BIS ODEM ALLE (live by him until breathing ends) he tapped. Alle is a colloquial expression for "gone," ended," and Odem is an old, poetical word for "breath."

How did that word reach him? For it rarely, if ever, figures in daily speech.

"Can you say something more about God?"

IS SCHEN I HIML UND MID NGEL he tapped for ist schon im Himmel und mit Engel (is beautiful in heaven and with angels). We laughed — where had the cliché come from?

We had been discussing

reincarnation We decided to ask Elke.

"Have you ever died?" Dorothy asked her. YES.

How long ago? Do you know?" YES.

She then tapped O (the tapping for this could also mean two) followed by IARE which was clearly her phonetic rendering of Jahre (years).

"Do you mean two years and something?" YES.

"Have you died only once?" YES.

"Can you say more about death?" YES.

"Or about God?" YES.

She then tapped ER EIN

TOMORROW: ROWDON EXPLAINS 'WHY I BELIEVE'

ZO ZART MATERIA for er eine zu zarte Materia (he a too fine — or soft — matter). Materia is a word used in philosophical discussion, meaning substance.

"Do you really mean Materia?" YES.

"And who is er (he)?" GOD for Gott (God), she tapped.

Our next walk, on a bright and splendid morning took us to the Ramsau ard, high in the hills.

At the parking lot, near an inn, Frau Heilmater pointed to one of the benches and told Elke that I had been very ill at that spot, shortly before her death.

She also told me she had had an irresistible feeling, at the time she was buying her, that Elke II was the reincarnation of Elke I.

Elke I was Frau Heilmater's original dog pupil, but she had died midway through her training.

The rough date Elke gave us the other evening for her own death — two

years and something ago — corresponds with that of Elke I's death which was two years and eight months ago."

That evening Elke was coaxed into the tapping position and Mami asked her: "Do you know the bench at the inn where we were today? Were you there once before?"

YES, Elke replied. "When was that? What was your experience there? What do you remember of that time?"

She tapped perfectly BESONDERS MAROOD (the second word very sadly) ELKE WR (for Elke war) — especially sick Elke was.

"How long ago?" R (or three) IARE (for Jahre) — three years.

"Do you mean three years?" YES. July 1972 had been the month of Elke I's prolonged sickness, and we were now in September 1975.

"Did you understand what Mami was saying to Mr. Rowdon at the bench about Elke?" YES.

"So which Elke was it? Was it another Elke?" YES.

"Which Elke was marod? Do you know?" She tapped ELKE UBAN BIS DOD.

"Is uban right?" NO. "Do you mean uben (practise)?" YES.

The sentence therefore stood for Elke uben bis Tod (elke learn, or practise, till death) — an excellent way of identifying Elke I.

"Why do you say you were ill? Mami knows nothing about your being ill?"

DOCH TOT GEWESE SFER ZU ERKLEREN for doch tot gewesen schwer zu erklaren (indeed been dead difficult to explain). Here she stopped.

Had she described her own experience in a previous life, or her impression of Elke I's sickness from many overheard conversations, or received a telephatic picture of it, through Mami?

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Published by Macmillan (London) Ltd., at £5.95 on September 14.



IT'S COLIN REID

IT'S MONDAY

A paw man's guide to doggy talk...!

WHAT are we to make of a claim that two dogs have been taught to 'talk' to people, using an alphabet of taps with their paws?

And not only talk in constructed sentences, but also speak English and German, solve complicated equations, do square roots and expound on their own reincarnation and the nature of death—'a soft dark mist with eternal genuine lustre,' remarked a Poodle poet called Elke!

That many strange and

wonderful things go on in the animal world I am prepared to admit—but this?

The claim is seriously made in a book called 'The Talking Dogs' (Macmillan, £5.95), and I confess that my first thought was to chuck it at the cat and say: 'Oh, come on, come on! Next we'll be asked to believe that little dogs laugh (pax Fred Basset) and cows jump over the moon.'

But I didn't, I began to read it again. There was something creepy about it.

The author, Maurice Rowden, visited the dogs

—Belam, a Saluki, and Elke the Poodle—at their home in Southern Germany where they live with their teacher, Fraulein Dorothy Meyer.

In painstaking detail he documents the paw-tapping interviews on many subjects over many months. Each letter of the alphabet is given a specific number of taps and the dogs communicate by tapping their thoughts into their teacher's hand.

A Swiss TV producer tried to persuade them to use a large, doggy typewriter instead of their teacher's hand (and the

same test occurred to suspicious little me), but they wouldn't buy it. Which did nothing to dispel doubt.

That the dogs tap answers to questions seems certain (so have many circus animals—there was even 'a tapping horse' in Shakespeare's day, as mentioned in 'Love Labour's Lost'), but how does one explain the tapped thoughts of Elke and Belam?

Involuntary signals from the teacher to give the required number of taps? Or could it be telepathy? Can our domestic pets read and

(oh, creepy thought!) even influence our minds?

In a riveting essay at the end of the book the author argues that 'our claim to superiority over animals rests on our having developed the brain more than any other species. But is reason necessarily intelligent? Is intelligence necessarily mental?

'The western (chiefly 19th-century) view of the human organism as a physical apparatus governed by the brain, supplied with sense messages by the nervous system, seems to have taken us

far from nature (including our own nature).'

With our minds carefully circumscribed by reason, he asks, have we blocked out other areas of consciousness, other energy fields of an invisible world still intact in the animal kingdom?

'Western man is still perhaps waiting to reach an adequate animal level in spiritual and psychic powers, while deceiving himself that the cultivation of the brain puts him far beyond the animal kingdom.'

'Psychic powers? Invisible worlds? I began to think of the way our

old cat Smokey would suddenly stare alertly at seemingly empty spaces in the room (what on earth is going on there?); and the way she could send telepathic messages from her empty plate in the kitchen. I would rise and open a tin without knowing why.

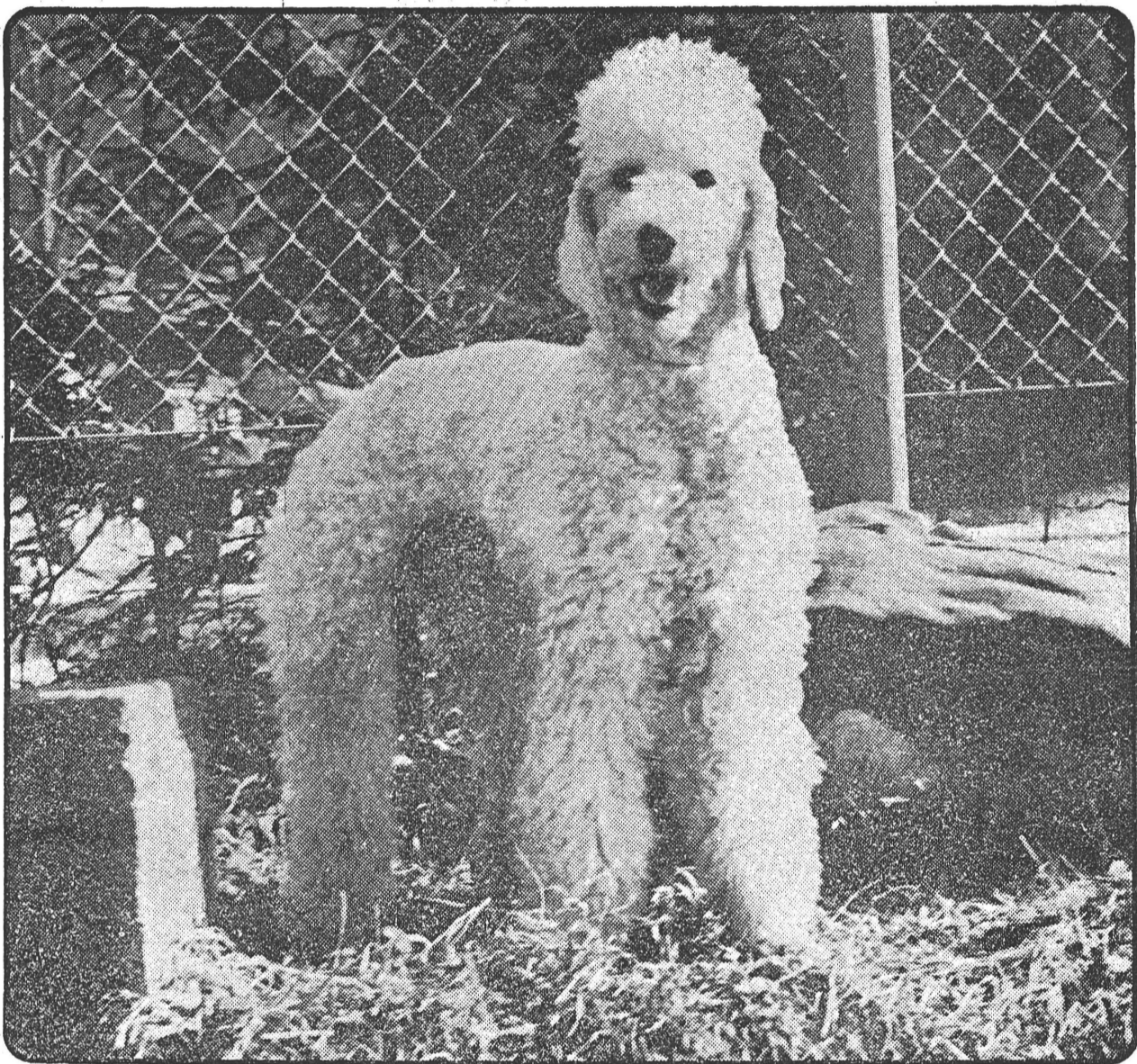
Suddenly, I tell you, goose pimples began to rise on my neck. I decided not to chuck the book at her after all. I went over to her, stroked her head and said: 'Now then, Smokey, are you all right? Is there anything I can do for you at all? Just send me a message.'

Daily Mail, Monday, September 18, 1978

story that raises the question: Are dogs more human than we ever imagined?

TALKING DOGS

They have been taught a kind of doggy Morse code by which they tap out their thoughts and feelings



of the talking dogs, interprets as Belam, the saluki, taps out a message in her palm with his paw. Poodle Elke II, right, welcomed author Rowdon in the same way.

to be tapped again. As generally clear a word had been used because the dog made some movement of relief or excitement or pause for longer than usual. This reminded me that the word was spelled phonetically. The whole, Dorothy said, like: "Do you mean 'sehr lieb'?" (He is very dear). Dorothy came back the next day (three taps of the paw). This brought me back on my realization that, once out on the printed page, their phonetic tapplings aren't as clear and understandable as I remember have been at the time. I have seen the dogs themselves that carried con-

viction—rather as children, bubbling over with something to say and too excited to compose it properly, supply with their eyes and expressions what their words are short of. A bare account cannot convey the impression both dogs give of desperately wanting to communicate with human beings. They tell their teacher they have something to say by turning to her in a certain way or by an excited look in the eye.

Pause

She then coaxes them into the tapping position at her side or immediately in front of her.

They sit in such a way that they can place a paw into her outstretched hand without overbalancing.

Then begins the slow effort of concentrating on the word to be tapped.

Sometimes there are long pauses between one letter and another, while the dog seems to lose track of what he or she wants to say. He gazes round, even nods asleep. The thread seems to be lost.

But however long the pause, he always returns to the subject, unless he's too tired to go on.

I realised that the dogs tapped their thoughts with great care. I'd somehow imagined that their messages were constructed out of a jumble of letters, but this wasn't the case (although it took more than one evening with them to convince me).

They always seemed to know what they wanted to say, though technical

difficulties sometimes stood in their way.

Undoubtedly the dogs tapped letters. But wasn't there an element of over-free interpretation on Dorothy's part?

Would these tapplings turn out to be mostly a jumble of letters from which she chose—indeed, half-constructed — sentences which more or less made sense? These were the doubts of that first evening.

Precise

They weren't laid to rest at once. But as the dogs grew used to me and I learned to address them as Dorothy did, I began to find their tapped remarks were not only on the whole precise and even

terse, but strictly in line with their different personalities.

Also, I was to see much more evidence of their intelligence than just the ability to tap. They could work out arithmetical problems far quicker than I could.

I have never seen human beings calculate with the naked eye the length of a book to within a centimetre of its exact measurement, or give a solution of a mathematical problem after flashing a barely perceptible glance at the blackboard to take it in.

And I have rarely met human beings so consistently truthful as Elke II and Belam.

Who's a clever boy then?

WHETHER you go as far as author Maurice Rowdon or not, most people have stories of the intelligence and perception of dogs.

Dogs have a way of interpreting what we humans want in an uncanny way. Sometimes this has saved lives.

Here's a chance for your clever dog to win you a great prize.

Write and tell us—in not more than 250 words—about your intelligent pet. Tell us what makes you sure he is clever and of instances which show how well he understands humans.

Send us a picture of your pet, too, if you have one. For each letter we publish we will pay £5. And the best letter wins the writer a year's free supply of HAP, the new soft moist dog food made by Pedigree Petfoods.

Letters should be sent right away and must arrive before September 11. Address them to "Talking Dogs", Evening News, New Carmelite House, London EC4Y 1AQ (Comp.). If an appropriate S.A.E. is enclosed, we will endeavour to return photographs. The Editor's decision is final. No alternative prizes. No correspondence about the result. Employees of Associated Newspapers Group Ltd., or members of their families, are not eligible.

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POODLE LEARNS TO COUNT UP TO 50

STARTING TODAY...The extraordinary story that raises the question: Are dogs

THE TALKING DOGS

● Can dogs communicate with human beings as equals? Are they much cleverer than we thought? Do they really understand what we are saying? These are the questions raised in a remarkable new book, *THE TALKING DOGS*, serialised in the Evening News this week.

We present the evidence author Maurice Rowdon discovered when he went to Germany to see the experiments of animal teacher Dorothy Meyer who claimed she had taught a poodle and a saluki to "talk," by use of a complicated routine of paw taps, like a doggy Morse code.

Rowdon arrived as a sceptic, and left, weeks later, convinced dogs had, and can express, the whole gamut of human emotions.

● We have placed all the author's evidence in the hands of Stanley Dangerfield, one of the world's leading experts on dogs. His verdict on *The Talking Dogs* will appear later this week. What he has to say will surprise you.

● There's a chance for you to have your say, too. Already we have heard from one reader who saw a Labrador able to play dominoes—using paw tapping to indicate which piece to play. Write and tell us what you think about talking dogs.

● And your dog can join in, too, to win a year's supply of dog food! See below.



by
**MAURICE
ROWDON**

WHEN I first met Elke II, the Standard poodle bitch, and Belam, the Saluki male, on a hot September afternoon at Salzburg airport, they were sitting waiting for me with their teacher.

Elke's white fur was dazzling in the remarkably clear, mountain-reflected sunlight. Her eyes were round and black and vivaciously attentive.

At her side, Belam, taller and bonier, seemed the shyer of the two with his long sensitive nose, gazelle eyes and deliciously straggling fur.

Hideout

They had heard a lot about me. I'd been asked to write a book about them and help make their intelligence known to the world.

It was a hot, exhilarating day and we were about to drive across the Austrian border to Berchtesgaden, one of the most pleasant of Bavaria's mediaeval resort towns, once notorious as Hitler's mountain hideout.

What I witnessed in the next few days was to change my life—as it had changed that of their teacher, Dorothy Meyer. She had started from

scratch—with only printed records of previous animal tappings, from 50 or so years before, to go on.

For weeks she had worked in the dark, doubting her capacities as an animal teacher and all the less prepared for the shock of discovery when it came.

Like me, she had been ready enough to accept animal intelligence as an idea. But not to accept the reality of animals as equal beings.

The discovery that in many respects animals have a moral integrity, truthfulness and compassion superior to our own was an even greater shock.

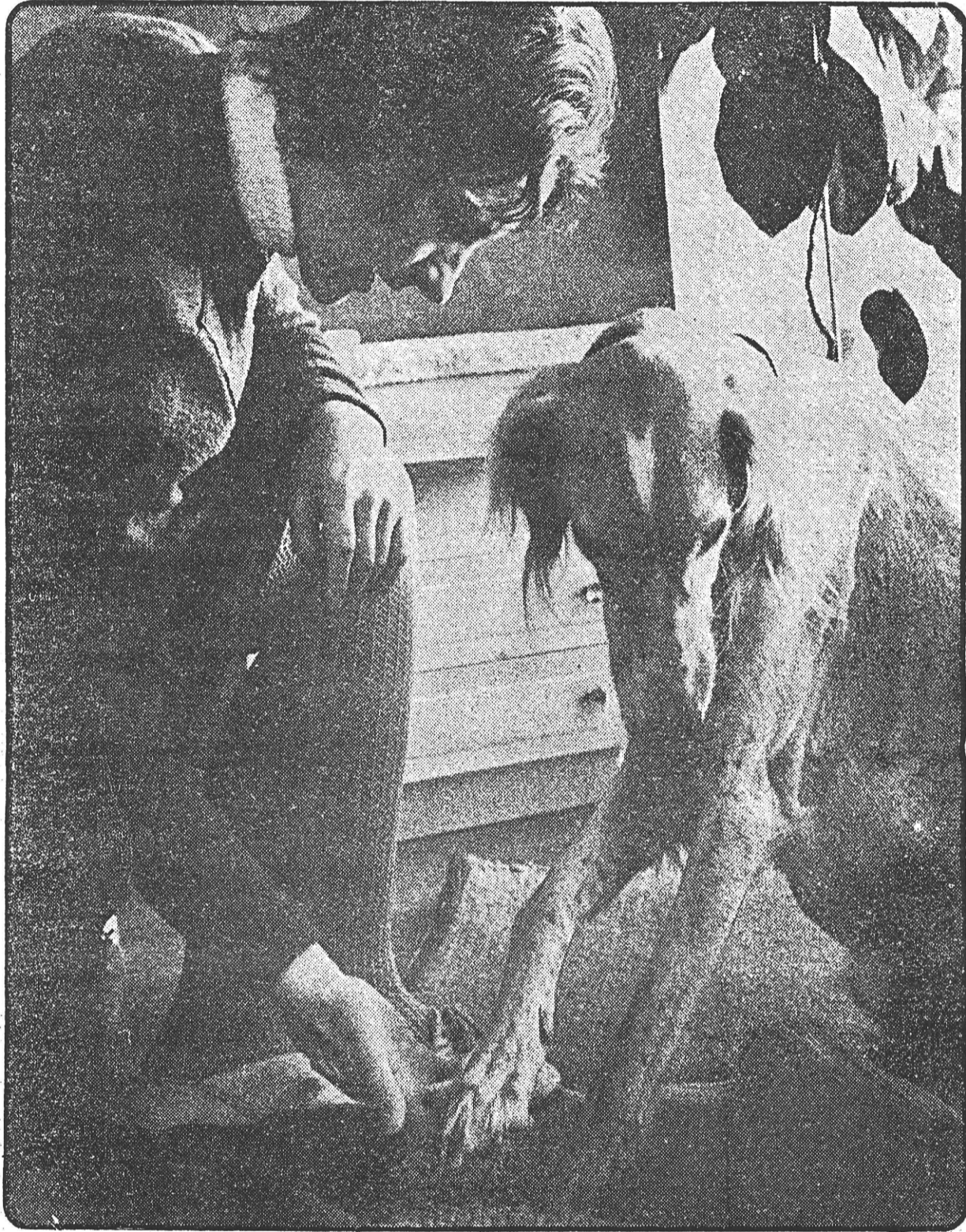
That evening in Berchtesgaden I met Frau Heilmaler, owner of the dogs and founder of the "dog school." For some years she had been a breeder of dogs which she frequently raced at the local stadiums.

She had a flat on the ground floor of the same block as Dorothy, whom she employed. Frau Heilmaler also had a cottage some metres away, where the dogs often lived.

We settled down to coffee and cake and cream, in armchairs round a table, and the dogs began tapping their first "greetings" messages for me.

Each letter of the alphabet was represented by a certain number of paw taps. First Dorothy handed me the tapping code with the letters of the German alphabet and their tapping equivalents. For example: E=10 taps,

scratch—with only printed records of previous animal tappings, from 50 or so years before, to go on.



Dorothy Meyer, above, teacher of the talking dogs, interprets as Belam, the saluki, taps out a message in her palm with

Sch=22 taps. Then she held out her hand for the dogs to tap into.

Elke's message for me was firm and unhesitating.

First came nine, ten and three taps which, I found on consulting the alphabet list, made DER. Then 20 and three, for ZR. This was followed by 13, 20, 16, for IZS. And lastly five, 13, seven, for LIB.

Put together the sentence ran DER ISZ ZR LIB.

Relief

Dorothy's method was to enquire after each word whether the dog meant what she thought. The dog then tapped YES or NO. If the answer was NO, Dorothy asked for the

word to be tapped again.

It was generally clear when a word had been completed because the dog would make some movement of relief or excitement, or pause for longer than usual.

After reminding me that the dogs spelt phonetically on the whole, Dorothy asked Elke: "Do you mean Der ist sehr lieb?" (He is very nice).

YES, came back the answer (three taps of the right paw).

Looking back on my records of that first encounter, I realise that, once written out on the printed page in their phonetic form, the tappings aren't nearly as clear and understandable as I remember them to have been at the time.

It was the dogs themselves that carried con-

viction—rather as children, bubbling over with something to say and too excited to compose it properly, supply with their eyes and expressions what their words are short of.

A bare account cannot convey the impression both dogs give of desperately wanting to communicate with human beings. They tell their teacher they have something to say by turning to her in a certain way or by an excited look in the eye.

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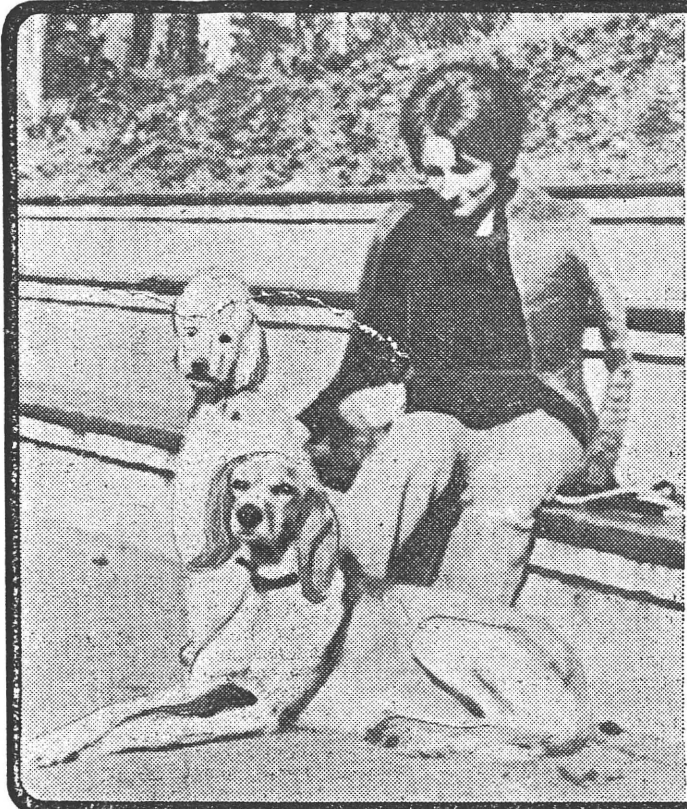
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TOMORROW: ELKE THE POODLE LEARNS TO COUNT UP TO 5

WORLD THAT ANIMALS HAVE FEELINGS LIKE HUMANS?'



THE TAPPING CODE

Number of taps	Letter of alphabet	
1	= F	13 = I
2	= O	14 = K
3	= R	15 = P
4	= A	16 = S
5	= L	17 = T
6	= N	18 = U
7	= B	19 = W
8	= M	20 = Z
9	= D	21 = CH
10	= E	22 = SCH
11	= G	23 = O
12	= H	24 = U
		25 = X

This is the code Dorothy Meyer taught her pupils, Belam the Saluki male and Elke 11, the Standard poodle bitch (all pictured left). In answer to direct questions they tapped out three times with their right paw if the answer was YES and three times with the left paw if the answer was NO.

DAY TWO OF THE TALKING DOGS

by MAURICE ROWDON

AND HOW YOU CAN WIN A GREAT PRIZE

ing of each word carefully. At this stage, like Paula Moeckel with Rolf, she constantly named objects in the flat or in the street. Later, when the dogs began tapping difficult, abstract and even recondite words, she realised how much German they in fact knew.

More letters and words were added. Elke had a sizeable vocabulary now and only five more letters remained to be taught.

When she looked at all these new words and letters on the board at the end of the day, Dorothy felt for the first time a sense of real achievement.

What an exhausting journey it had been so far; what patience one required! A classroom of 30 or 40 children seemed nothing compared with it.

For weeks, indeed from the first lesson, she had been haunted by the doubt that nothing would come of it. Now she suddenly saw ahead to the time when the dogs would be tapping not just names and baby-phrases, but messages that would surprise the world.

● **TOMORROW:**
Belam the Saluki tells a story.

IF you think your dog is clever he could win you a prize.

Write and tell us—in not more than 250 words—about your intelligent pet. Tell us what makes you sure he is clever.

Send us a picture of your pet, too, if you have one. For each letter we publish we will pay £5. And the best letter wins the writer a year's free supply of HAP, the new soft moist dog food made by Pedigree Petfoods.

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lifted his paws invitingly. But salukis are much less effusive than poodles, and Belam was naturally reserved anyway. The most he would do was offer her, slowly and elegiacally, a rear paw, his huge dark eyes gazing off into some wild landscape far beyond the schoolroom, his back turned firmly towards her.

Affection

Offering the rear paw is a deeply affectionate act among dogs, more so than licking and ear-sniffing. It was one of his typical considered statements, hurrying for no

one, blandly noble, and leaving Dorothy to ask herself whether he was refusing an education or accepting one.

But later, on the day of his real lesson when he showed no response at all, he suddenly began tapping for Frau Heilmair in her flat—four clear taps with the left paw and four with the right. Had he been learning after all? Had he started his schooling in his own un-hurried way?

Dorothy felt the time had now come to teach Elke the alphabet. She made the sound appropriate for each

letter and, writing it down, explained that letters made it possible for words to be written as well as spoken.

The alphabet Dorothy adopted was largely that used by Rolf, the pioneer talking dog, trained by Dr. Paula Moeckel of Mannheim, Germany, just before the First World War. She made a few additions such as SCH (22 taps) and CH (21)—these being so common in the German language as to justify treating them as letters in their own right.

The first letters Elke learned were F (one tap), O (2), R (3), A (4), and L

(5). The first two words she learned to tap were RALF (the name of Frau Heilmair's son) and FRO (the phonetic rendering of "froh") (glad).

Dorothy prepared cards for each letter on which its tapping value was written in the top right-hand corner, and she also wrote the letters on the blackboard, at least for the introductory lessons.

New letters followed and new words—BAL (a phonetic rendering of ball), BELLEN (to bark), DO (a pet name for Dorothy). Of course, Dorothy explained the mean-

Is your dog trying to tell you something?

THE next time your dog starts tapping the ground with its front paw, pay attention.

It could be trying to complain about the food or to lay the groundwork for a philosophical discussion.

In Bavaria in southern Germany a poodle called Elke and a saluki called Belam have been talking to their mistress since 1973, using their paws to signal an alphabet of taps.

Silly

The conversations, which began with words like man and ball, now include subjects like the afterlife and the existence of God.

Talking animals have been around for a long time.

A tapping horse mentioned in Love's Labours Lost who could do "strange and wonderful things by the arts of magicke" was later burned at the stake with his master "as one witch", while in the 1900s Clever Hans a stallion who could count, spell, add, subtract and read clocks and maps, became world famous.

By and large, however, talking dogs and the rest have had a bad press as a regular feature of the silly season, along with

by Dan
Lees

the Loch Ness Monster and pavement fried eggs.

But now, with scientists making serious efforts to communicate with apes and dolphins, Elke and Belam could stand a chance of getting through to us, especially as they seem to have a great deal more to say than most of the others.

Former personnel consultant Dorothy Meyer and her friend Frau Heilmaier began by teaching the dogs to count and then to do simple sums.

When they could divide and multiply they were introduced to the letter tapping code: One tap for F, two for O, three taps for R and so on up to 25 taps for X.

After weeks of patient work the dogs' vocabulary included words like gut for good, dumm for stupid, katze for cat, and wurst for sausage, with Belam lagging behind Elke.

But even Elke was only tapping out words suggested to her or written up on the blackboard.

Then Dorothy began asking her pupils questions like "do you remember the name of this sign?" which demanded a definite answer and provided for a controllable response.

After nine months of lessons Belam, asked what he had seen in the wood, replied raven, confirmed that he meant a bird, and added that it had pecked him.

Another great breakthrough was to teach the dogs personal pronouns proving that the animals had a sense of identity.

By 1975 the dogs were spelling out words that they had overheard rather than been taught and giving their thoughts on the after life as "a soft dark mist with eternal genuine lustre".

Conclusions

In *The Talking Dogs* (Macmillan, £5.95) Maurice Rowdon, who spent some time in Germany with the dogs and their teachers, tells the story of their achievements in such painstaking detail that only two conclusions are possible.

Either the two German ladies and their pets have made the sort of breakthrough that warrants an immediate investigation by the most highly qualified scientists available.

Or they are consummate liars and confidence tricksters with Mr Rowdon as their dupe or their accomplice.

Meanwhile I shall be careful about what I say in front of our cat.

You never know whom she might repeat it to.



The talking dogs: A howler, or a sc...
advance? A/c