

*Extract from:*

**The Police Dog: History, Breeds and Service**  
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**Chapter 10**

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## **The German Police Dog Heritage**



Although the ancient people of north central Europe coalesced as modern Germany relatively recently, in 1871 under Prussian domination, their history goes back to the epic conflicts with Roman armies and a central role in the Holy Roman Empire of the middle ages. European affairs since Napoleon have been largely a process of conflict and war, of integrating this powerful emerging state as a peaceful member of a stable family of European nations, a process which came to fruition and prosperity with the merger of east and west upon the dissolution of the Soviet Union in the final decade of the twentieth century.

These Germans are a people with a strong and compelling canine heritage, and from the beginning of the modern police dog era were enormously effective at promoting their breeds to the public, to police agencies and to the military at home, in the rest of Europe and particularly in America. Although other nations, such as Belgium and the Netherlands, have a long and honorable police service heritage, in the public eye it has been German breeds which first came to exemplify the culture and capture the imagination.

## **The German Shepherd**

Throughout the world the German Shepherd is the quintessential police dog. So universal is the association that for many – being unaware that others also serve – they are one and the same thing. From the inception of the studbook in 1899 this incipient breed was swept up in an unprecedented wave of popularity; by the First World War many thousands were in homes across Germany, and thousands were to serve in the looming catastrophe. In the aftermath this popularity went worldwide, for the German Shepherd came home with the troops to America and within a decade became our most popular breed. Even in pre WWII Japan there were popular large scale national clubs and military training programs involving thousands of dogs. The breed dominates the German canine world as no other breed does anywhere – annual registrations currently run two to three times that of the breed in second place, the Dachshund.

### ***The Early Years***

In Germany during the latter half of the nineteenth century interest in consolidating the indigenous shepherd's dogs into a formal breed was growing, corresponding to similar efforts in England, Belgium, the Netherlands and elsewhere. Early conformation shows with shepherd dog entries are mentioned in Hannover in 1882 and Neubrandenburg in 1885, with an entry of about ten dogs, apparently in some instances literally brought from the fields and meadows.

The first formal effort at breed establishment was the Phylax<sup>1</sup> Society formed on the 16<sup>th</sup> of December 1891 by a Graf (Count) von Hahn and Captain Riechelmann-Dunau, named after his dog Phylax von Eulau<sup>2</sup>. This society was focused on creating an ornamental breed, for many featuring a wolf like appearance<sup>3</sup> for commercial appeal, and fortunately withered on the vine as a consequence of internal conflict and a lack of clearly defined purpose. According to von Stephanitz:

"The original intentions of the founders of the Society whose aim, along with ours, were directed to the improvement of the breed of the working dog, were unfortunately suppressed in the first breeding Society of our race, the "Phylax" by their one sided emphasis on the purely fancy dog breeds. The natural result was that the Phylax, which was limited in general to Northern and Central Germany, began at first to pine, and finally become extinct. (von Stephanitz, 1925)

Although the formation of a national breed club and the studbook was not to take place until 1899, for a number of years there had been ongoing breeding and conformation exhibition by an actively expanding community of enthusiasts, including a certain young Calvary officer.

The man destined to formalize the German Shepherd as a breed and provide leadership through the formative years, Max Emil Friedrich von Stephanitz, was born into a prosperous, noble family in Germany on December 30, 1864. More precisely, he was born in the city of Dresden in the Kingdom of Saxony, as Germany as a nation did not yet exist. Upon the completion of his education his desire was to become a gentleman farmer; but respecting the wishes of his family he entered the military as a career officer. Von Stephanitz had long been interested in the biological

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<sup>1</sup> Phylax is from the Greek for a guard or sentinel.

<sup>2</sup> Possibly same as Phylax von Waldenreut, the sire of Krone vom Park.

<sup>3</sup> (Delinger, Paramoure, & Umlauff, 1976)



Max von Stephanitz

sciences and while serving with the Veterinary College in Berlin gained extensive knowledge of anatomy, physiology, evolution, breeding concepts and general principles of animal husbandry.

In 1898 von Stephanitz was promoted to the rank of Rittmeister or Cavalry Captain and then retired. The conventional version of this story is that because of his marriage to an actress, Maria Wagner, which was regarded as beneath his social status, he was asked to leave the service, bringing his military career to an end. This does not entirely ring true. Other authorities<sup>4</sup> report that he was forced into retirement because of illness, specifically hemorrhoids. Given that he was a reluctant lieutenant in his middle thirties, not the fast track in any man's army, it is entirely plausible that his prospects were unpromising, that he wanted out and that his superiors were more than willing to see him go, in which case illness or the social status of his wife would have been more excuse than cause and his promotion a fig leaf in deference to his social position.

In any event, upon retirement he purchased an estate near the city of Grafrath in Bavaria, 25 kilometers directly west of Munich in the south of Germany. Here he commenced the active process of formalizing and promoting the German Shepherd, and chose Grafrath as his kennel name. The first mention of a dog owned by von Stephanitz was the female Freya von Grafrath, purchased in 1897. The original breeder, name and ancestry seem to be lost to history, and there are no records of descendants.

The real beginning came at an all-breed dog show in Karlsruhe<sup>5</sup> in 1899, at which Von Stephanitz and colleague Artur Meyer came upon a dog that entirely caught their attention, exemplified their vision of the German Shepherd: Hector Linksrhein, a dog out of herding lines.<sup>6</sup> Hector, bred by Friedrich Sparwasser of Frankfurt, had been born January 1, 1895. This dog was of Thuringian stock and had passed through the hands of several breeders, including a man named Anton Eiselen, before coming into the hands of von Stephanitz. Litter mate Luchs Sparwasser, SZ-155<sup>7</sup>, was also to emerge as a foundation of the breed. Upon purchase Hector was according to the custom of the time renamed as Horand von Grafrath so as to carry the von Stephanitz kennel name and became the first German Shepherd in the SV studbook as SZ-1.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> (Garrett)

<sup>5</sup> Karlsruhe is just west of Stuttgart, very close to the now French province of Alsace.

<sup>6</sup> According to (Garrett) there is no evidence that either Hector or his parents ever actually served as herding dogs, the process of breed creation beyond the original function was already ongoing.

<sup>7</sup> SZ is the designation of the German studbook or breeding registry for the GSD.

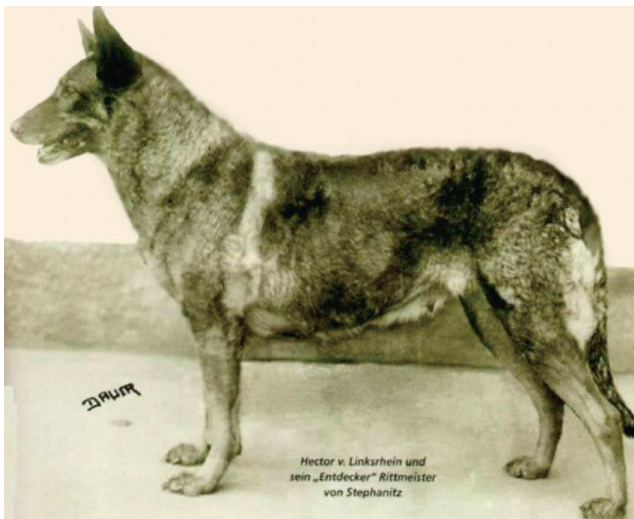
<sup>8</sup> Studbook entries at this time were not necessarily ordered by date of birth or chronological sequence. Many dogs that had been born in previous years, such as the parents of Hector or Horand, would eventually be included with higher numbers.

This Hector was not an unknown dog emerging mysteriously out of the fields but rather the result of the ongoing breeding program of Friedrich Sparwasser:

Roland  
Pollux, SZ-151, born 1891  
Courage  
Kastor (von Hanau), Grey, SZ-153, born 1893  
Schäfermädchen von Hanau SZ-154  
Horand von Grafrath SZ-1  
Grief Sparwasser, white, born 1879  
Lene Sparwasser, Grey, SZ-156  
Lotte Sparwasser

The proprietor of the above mentioned Hanau kennel was a man named Wachsmuth, who according to von Stephanitz had a long term commercial operation, spanning some forty years, including advertisements for "Thuringian Shepherd Dogs" in the journals of various foreign countries in the later 1800s. (von Stephanitz, 1925) Although not well known today, the name Wachsmuth does surface fairly regularly in researching the literature and old records.

Comments with the pedigree indicate that Pollux was well-built, strong and tall, grey in color but with a coarse head resembling that of a wolf. The white male Grief Sparwasser is significant in that difficulty in eradicating this recessive color from the lines would persist for a century.<sup>9</sup> Neither Horand nor his parents are credited with an HGH or herding title, and apparently Horand never actually served in the pasture. Later on von Stephanitz would put great emphasis on including proven working stock with the HGH title.



Horand von Grafrath (SZ 1), formerly Hektor Linksrhein. Von Stephanitz paid 200 Marks for him in 1899, a substantial sum at the time.

There were two predominant regional populations of native shepherd's dogs from which the breed was drawn:

Germany, typically with erect ears and the general appearance of contemporary specimens, though more lightly built. The Sparwasser line was typical of this "Thuringian blood." Von Stephanitz mentions Sparwasser in a favorable light and relates that his first dogs came from the Hanau Kennel of Herr Wachsmuth, mentioned above. (von Stephanitz, 1925)

One of these resources was the shepherd's dogs of the highlands of the Thuringian region of central

The second important breeding resource was the shepherd's dogs of the Wurttemberg region in the vicinity of Stuttgart in southwestern Germany, described

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<sup>9</sup> This does not imply that this dog is the primary source of the white coats, for the genetics for white were widespread in the primitive stock on the farms and pastures.

as larger, stronger and more heavily coated. Representing this branch of the family were the kennels *von der Krone* of Anton Eiselen located at Heidenheim and *vom Brenztal* in Giengen. Von Stephanitz mentions that the Wurttemberg dogs had a tendency to problems with standing ears, while the Thuringian stock tended toward a high tail carriage; sometimes "fixed" artificially, that is surgically, only to return in subsequent generations to the dismay of unwary purchasers.

Although Horand would become the founding prototype or ideal of the breed because of his physical and moral attributes, his influential progeny had already been produced when he was purchased by von Stephanitz. In the words of the founder:

"Unfortunately, I must admit that all of this was not accomplished in my Kennel; I was not so fortunate with him as were his previous owners..." (von Stephanitz, 1925) p. 136

Ultimately Horand von Grafrath was bred 53 times to 35 females. Probably the most illustrious of his progeny was the male Hecktor v. Schwaben, out of the female Mores Plieningen, with the HGH herding certificate and out of two undocumented dogs known as Franz and Werra. The blood of Hecktor is said to flow in every German Shepherd Dog's pedigree, but he was bred by H. Drieger and born January 5, 1898, and thus whelped long before Horand came into the hands of von Stephanitz.

The fact of the matter is that less than a dozen von Grafrath dogs bred or owned by von Stephanitz are prominent in the breeding records, and by about 1905 even this minor level of activity abated. The only really prominent von Grafrath dog was the 1904 Sieger Aribert von Grafrath, selected by von Stephanitz himself, who at the time declared he would no longer show his own dogs. Aribert is not especially prominent in modern German Shepherd blood lines.

Thus we can see that the process of creating the German Shepherd was the work of a community of dedicated breeders and enthusiasts leading up to the founding events of 1899. Because of his wealth, social status, drive and dominating personality von Stephanitz receives and deserves the lion's share of the credit and recognition, but we must not forget the contribution of so many others who played key roles in the creation of this noble breed. According to Garrett, men such as Sparwasser were selling dogs on an increasing scale even outside of Germany prior to the involvement of von Stephanitz, and actively promoting them at the various dog shows. The existence of the Phylax society a few years earlier is evidence that this was an ongoing process when von Stephanitz first became involved.

On the 22nd of April 1899 von Stephanitz, Artur Meyer, Ernst Von Otto, Anton Eiselen and others gathered together in the city of Karlsruhe in Baden, on the occasion of a dog show, to found a club. The *Verein für Deutsche Schäferhunde* (SV) or in English the *Club for the German Shepherd*, would become among the world's largest and most prestigious. The remaining founders seem to be lost to history. Headquarters for the club were initially in Stuttgart, but moved to Munich in 1901. In taking an overview of the literature and resource material it becomes apparent that the founding events and kennels were in the deep south of Germany, with Stuttgart a focus point in the south west and Munich even further south close to the Austrian border.

A registration book was created and Horand v Grafrath became the first registered German Shepherd Dog. On September 20, 1899, the SV adopted a breed standard based on the proposals of Meyer and Von Stephanitz and later held its first Sieger Show at Frankfurt-am-Main, using the titles Sieger and Siegerin. Von Stephanitz became the founding president and held the post until the year before his death, almost forty years later. Artur Meyer became secretary and conducted the affairs of the club from his home in Stuttgart. Unfortunately, Meyer passed away soon thereafter, putting an increased burden on the president. (Strickland, 1974) At

the passing of Meyer von Stephanitz took on his office as secretary in addition to the presidency, solidifying his control over the breed, registry and club which he would not relinquish until shortly before his death, more than three decades later. By 1903, when the SV Magazine came into existence, there were almost 600 members.

From von Stephanitz forward until the end of the twentieth century the SV president would judge the males at the annual Sieger show and the National Breed Warren the females. In general a benign dictator in the early years of breed establishment has been a pattern in various successful breeds, as in the case of Dr. Reul for the Belgian Shepherd, for it provides one founding vision and consistency in selection. The spirit of these shows was somewhat different from the typical dog show of today in that the judge was expected to know the dogs and their lines and select those most suitable for breeding so as to guide the breed as a whole in the desired direction rather than the most impressive dogs on that day. This in general was an effective mode of operation in the beginning, but the problem with dictators is that down the road eventually you get a bad one, and he usually insures that his successors are cut out of the same cloth. Subsequent to WWII the SV leadership gradually fell into the hands of an overt show line cabal, exacerbating the ongoing split of the German Shepherd into show and working lines.

Horand and also Luchs Sparwasser, his brother, were inbred intensively to consolidate the bloodline, but as mentioned this in reality had little to do with von Stephanitz. Horand's best son, Hecktor von Schwaben, the second German Sieger, was mated with his half-sister as well as through daughters of his own sons, Beowulf, Heinz von Starckenberg, and Pilot III. Intense inbreeding also concentrated undesirable recessive characteristics originating from the mixing of the original strains. To compensate for this, Von Stephanitz then encouraged unrelated blood of herding origin through Audifax von Grafrath and Adalo von Grafrath and perhaps others. The breed progressed rapidly; if registration numbers were used consecutively, without skipping any, then they were pushing a hundred thousand total registrations by the beginning of the WWI, on the order of five to ten thousand registrations per year.

Police style trials, which would eventually evolve into the Schutzhund venue, began in Germany in 1901 testing the dog's abilities in tracking, obedience and protection. In the early years there was great emphasis on the herding title, the HGH, especially on the part of von Stephanitz. There were championships for herding and police work, beginning in 1906.

From the beginning in late 1899 both the SV membership and annual puppy registrations expanded exponentially, making the German Shepherd among the most popular breeds worldwide. By the time of the First World War the SV had become one of the world's larger canine organizations with over fifty thousand members and six hundred local clubs. Overseas popularity came quickly, as these events indicate:

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|------|--|
| 1908 | First GSD Registered with the AKC.                         |
| 1913 | GSD Club of America founded.                               |
| 1919 | The English Kennel Club began a registry.                  |
| 1925 | Replaces the Boston Terrier as first in AKC registrations. |

In his book *German Shepherd Dog History* Gordon Garrett mentions that in visiting herding trials in Germany even in recent years there was a class for 'Alt Deutsch Schaferhunde' or Old German Shepherd Dog; that is the actual working lines the modern German Shepherd was created from, bred only according to their herding function. Garrett mentions that these dogs, without registration records, were included in German Shepherd lines well into the 1930s. There is some indication that a tendency to long coats and whites may go back to this, but von Stephanitz was convinced that returning to the old herding lines was necessary for

the vigor and resilience of the breed. Such a resource would not be an entirely bad thing even today.

By 1923 SV membership had grown to 57,000<sup>10</sup> and 900 local clubs. Even in these early years the separation into working and show lines was becoming increasingly apparent; with show lines becoming more and more distant from the dogs on the trial fields and in police service.

### ***The Founder's Touch***

Max von Stephanitz is a legend and an enigma. He was a man obsessed with projecting the German Shepherd as the predominant police breed worldwide, and he succeeded in this. He was not the only one, but he was the indispensable force; he had the money and the social position at a time when social position still mattered enormously, and could be as ruthless and aggressive as necessary. His military connections were indispensable, as the German army had for many years been committed to developing dogs for war service, providing money, training programs and support. This is made quite evident by the fact that thousands of dogs, the vast majority German Shepherds, went immediately into service at the outbreak of the war. There can be little doubt that von Stephanitz promoted and enabled this, thus advancing the cause of the SV and the German Shepherd.

His 1925 book, *The German Shepherd Dog in Word & Pictures* is an enormous, 700 page tome, much of it very heavy reading, no doubt exacerbated by to the difficulty of dealing with an English translation. At heart this book is a promotional project, propaganda, as much as history. Many pages are devoted to reports and pictures of obscure breeds or varieties in remote places such as Serbia or Turkey, but with little mention of competitive German breeds or other prominent personalities. Much of it concerns issues of husbandry – breeding, whelping, puppy raising and so forth – much better explained elsewhere after a century. While he always told the truth as he saw it, he did not necessarily tell the whole truth when it did not serve his ends, but that is because his purpose was to promote and sell as well as enlighten and explain.

But on a second or third reading, after years of related search, there is substantial value, fascinating and revealing details to be teased out based on hard won knowledge of the era. As a student of canine affairs in the Low Countries, his notes on Dutch and Belgian affairs ring true as the words of a man who had been there.

As well as a military officer von Stephanitz was an academic, well versed on the science and practice of animal husbandry and veterinary medicine of the era. As has been mentioned the military was not his preference, but taken up as an obligation to his family. The first section of the book is a long discussion of animal evolution, scientifically outdated and thus uninteresting but representing the prevailing science of the era. There is a long, and quite interesting, discussion of the herding and herd guardian functions by a man who grew up in an era when these dogs were still in the fields, would provide the rootstock of his incipient breed.

Some contemporary readers, particularly the especially sensitive and politically correct, tend to be disturbed or horrified upon reading this book. Ardent feminists with only a shallow view of history will be particularly horrified. Von Stephanitz was a man of his time, a man of the nobility, of privilege and status, a career military officer in one of the most rigorous military cultures of history, in every sense a

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<sup>10</sup> (Strickland, 1974)

member of an elite class which embraced expansion of German territory and influence as god ordained destiny. Just as did Americans of the era, who saw the "winning of the west" as a birthright in spite of the fact that much of it was held by indigenous Americans, the Spanish and the Mexican nationals.

Von Stephanitz embraced the necessity of preserving racial purity and the superiority of the European Caucasian, the white man's burden, as a given, his obligation of his class. Washington and Franklin owned slaves. Lincoln emerged from this culture, had married into a prominent slave holding family, seeing it as an opportunity for advancement. Although over their lifetimes each of these men made strides toward a more liberal personal perspective they remained men of their times, as did von Stephanitz. My view is that this horror of the generally held historical values and mores is childish and naïve, a consequence of a culture so bound up in fashionable political correctness that we have become a generation largely unable to deal with reality in an ever evolving, complex and morally ambivalent world.

Von Stephanitz was a worldwide promoter of his breed, judging major conformation shows in London and visiting the United States on promotional tours. In 1930 Mrs. Geraldine Rockefeller Dodge, wife of the owner and President of Remington Arms Company, brought von Stephanitz over to judge German Shepherds at her Morris & Essex dog show in New Jersey, the largest one day show in the world at the time. The entries were so numerous that the males were done the day before the actual opening of the show.

The man was obsessed with his canine crusade, and as is typical of dog obsessed family life, where children either get enough early or are hooked, of his two children his son Otto grew up with little interest in the dogs while his daughter Herta became actively involved in the affairs of the club and the dog show world. (Strickland, 1974) Herta von Stephanitz published a little known German Shepherd book of her own about 1940, and was tangentially involved in breed affairs after the war.

Von Stephanitz was without doubt the strongest and most influential personality over most of four decades, but he did not have complete control of the breeding direction. As the judge of the males at the annual conformation championship, that is, the person who selected the Sieger each year, he was able to wield great power. Every breeder ultimately wanted to create a Sieger, to join the elite circle, which meant that one ignored the leader with great caution. But the histories of the era indicate that many breeders charted their own course, and many dogs obviously downplayed by von Stephanitz nevertheless were widely used at stud. (Garrett) Although the 1904 Sieger, Aribert von Grafrath, was bred and selected as Sieger by von Stephanitz, at that point in time he announced his decision to cease showing his own dogs, at least at the Sieger show. Thus he relinquished potential prominence as a breeder in order to focus on his leadership role.

Much of the contemporary literature portrays von Stephanitz as the all-powerful and benevolent founder of the breed; but there is much more to it than this. Men such as Wachsmuth, Sparwasser and Eiselen had been actively breeding and showing prototype lines for a number of years, there was an ongoing community effort well before he became involved. The first mention in the literature of a dog actually owned by von Stephanitz was the female Freya von Grafrath, purchased in 1897, and there is no indication that he was a known figure prior to the purchase of Horand / Hector.



Aribert v Grafrath, born 1903:  
     Russ HGH  
         Russ (Ruede) HGH  
             Molli HGH  
 Audifax von Grafrath HGH  
         Woerro HGH  
         Fanny HGH  
             Fanny Hundin HGH  
 Aribert von Grafrath  
         Pollux  
         Kastor 1893  
             Schäfermädchen von Hanau  
     V Horand von Grafrath (  
         Greif (Sparwasser)  
         Lene (Sparwasser)  
         Lotte (Sparwasser)  
 Sigrun von Grafrath  
         Max von der Krone HGH  
         Tilly von der Krone 1896  
             Lida 1 von der Krone HGH  
     Mira von Grafrath HGH  
         Lida 2 von der Krone

Von Stephanitz was the ultimate promoter and public relations man, and he incessantly promoted himself as well as the breed, which meant down playing all others. As a modern point of reference, it is perhaps useful to compare von Stephanitz to Steve Jobs of Apple computer fame, both driven men very concerned with their personal legacy and capable of being ruthless and uncaring of others perceived as standing in the way of their personal agenda. Jobs was an incredibly gifted promoter with enormous, instinctive insight into what would sell, but he did not invent or create anything. In a similar way, von Stephanitz was an enormously effective leader with an unerring sense of promotion, but not really a breeder. Both men had a hard side, but famous and successful men are not necessarily nice men.

Occasionally today's show oriented breeders question the commitment of von Stephanitz to police work, claim that the breed is to be versatile and that there are other, equally valid, arenas such as search and rescue. This is a thinly veiled dilution of character standards, and the best response to this is a direct quote:

"The ideal of the Society was to develop Police trial Champions out of Exhibition Champions, our shepherd dog therefore, was further developed by dog lovers as a working dog. The Standard by which he would be judged and approved was this, namely: -utility is the true criterion of Beauty. Therefore our dogs exhibit everywhere to-day (in a fittingly developed frame, and never as the caricatures of Nature, the greatest of all teachers) a build of body, compacted and designed for the highest possible efficiency, spare and powerful, with wonderfully well-proportioned lines which immediately attract the connoisseur, who soon recognizes that it imparts to its owner a swift, easy gait, a capacity for quick turning and powers of endurance."  
 (von Stephanitz, 1925) p163

There are perpetual claims that the German Shepherd is a versatile dog serving in many non-aggressive roles such as guide dog for the blind, search and rescue and various popular play sports, and that these are of equal value to the police or military roles. This is more or less innocuous chatter up to a point; but when this is extended to claim that such work is equivalent as a verification of character for breeding purposes it must be vigorously denied. It impossible for a working dog to be such an excellent search dog or assistance dog so as to be designated as breeding worthy on this basis alone, for the aggressive attributes are and must be fundamental to the definition of the breed.

## ***The Dogs of War***

In the great nineteenth century colonial empire building era Germany, which emerged as a major European power only with the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, was aggressively expansionist, seeking colonial territory in parity with the French and British empires, particularly in Africa. This was by no means unique, for in a similar way the United States engaged in the blatantly expansionist Mexican war (1846), aggressive western expansion marginalizing the indigenous population and the initiation of hostilities with the Spanish primarily to expand territory, power and influence, as in the acquisition of the Philippine Islands. Subsequent to the Franco-Prussian War the Germans strove for military parity or superiority on every front, as in the launching a massive capital ship construction program intended to gain parity with the British navy, unprecedented for an historically land based power.

This expansionist propensity extended to things canine, for the German military was soon engaged in seeking out ways and means of utilizing dogs in war, encouraging and subsidizing civilian training and breeding. In 1884 a war dog school was established at Lechernich, near Berlin, which produced a training manual for military working dogs in 1885. In this era the Germans were enamored with purity in breeding, which extended to the preference for purebred dogs rather than cross breeds or the undocumented working dogs of the fields and pastures. This caused them to overlook their own best dogs, still herding in the fields, to focus on established breeds, many of them British such as the Airedale or Collie. In his 1892 book on the war dog the well-known German animal painter and illustrator Jean Bungartz made an impassioned case for the Scotch Collie. (Britanica)<sup>11</sup>

The establishment of the German Shepherd as a formal breed in 1899 and the phenomenal growth over the next fifteen years under the leadership of von Stephanitz was the pivotal event in the evolution of the modern military and police dog, for in terms of sheer numbers everything else became preamble. The Germans and the German Shepherd would be the worldwide backbone of military and police canine applications for a century.

When war came, the German army was ready with trained dogs, placing 6,000 in service at the onset of hostilities. According to records of the *German Society for Ambulance Dogs* at Oldenburg, of 1,678 dogs sent to the front up to the end of May 1915, 1,274 were German Shepherds, 142 Airedale terriers, 239 Dobermans and 13 Rottweilers. (Britanica)

This immediate surge of dogs to the front was the fruition of a strong, formal, ongoing working arrangement for war preparation between military authorities and the SV. Every training club was a reservoir of working dogs, and the infrastructure, the lists and plans, were in place.<sup>12</sup> Von Stephanitz, SV president, was a retired German Cavalry captain and would have remained a part of the brotherhood of officers, well aware of his obligations as a military officer. He would quite naturally have retained his military associations and viewed overt preparation for war and promotion of the German Shepherd as entirely compatible, desirable and natural ends, serving the expansionist German national cause.

There is a tendency to down play the later military associations of von Stephanitz, but we know from his own words that he was back in uniform in 1914:

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<sup>11</sup> Bungartz was an activist and promoter as well as an illustrator and author. He founded a German association for red cross or ambulance dogs in 1893 and established a breeding and training facility.

<sup>12</sup> (Richardson, *British War Dogs, Their Training and Psychology*, 1920)p151

"In 1915 I saw no dogs in Belgium with the stock, for which the War was probably responsible." Later on the same page: "This experience I had nearly every day in West Flandres with the service dog of my regiment who accompanied me all over my area. Among the Walloons, South of the Mass, where the terrible closing stages of the War led me, the dogs had already been appropriated throughout the district for training in the Intelligence Service." <sup>13</sup>

This directly confirms the massive German confiscation of Belgian working and police dogs, setting back their working culture for two generations.

About 7,000 German Shepherds died during the First World War serving as messengers, telephone cable pullers or medical search dogs. The initial German success led to French and British efforts to launch their own programs, but it would be two or more years into the war before their efforts would begin to have practical effect. Subsequent to the war much of the German military establishment was formally dismantled under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, but the heart of the German officer corps went underground, even then preparing for an eventual reemergence.

### ***Show Lines and Working Lines***

Although there are references in the literature and promotional material which claim Schutzhund to have been created about 1900 as a foundation on which the German Shepherd was built, this must not be taken too literally, especially in light of the fact that there is no explicit use of this term as late as 1925 in the seminal von Stephanitz book. Von Stephanitz did in fact put increasing personal emphasis on working titles, especially as the show elements, active even in these early days, came to the forefront, but much of his early focus was on herding titles such as the HGH. Schutzhund is the German word for protection, and in this generic sense they were evolving a variety of tests and trials under evolving rules and procedures. In the early years the PH or police dog title was featured, and the actual use of the Schutzhund title does not appear until much later.

As an example, the 1902 GSD Sieger Peter von Pritschen, listed in historical documents as "SZ 148, KrH PH, Champion 1902." Here we have:

SZ 148	SV registration number 148
KrH	Kriegshund or war dog.
PH	Police dog ("Polizei Hund")
Champion 1902	1902 Sieger.

Thus although various police trials and certifications began well before 1910, Schutzhund titles as such did not begin to become common in German Shepherd pedigrees until the 1920s, and the program as we know it today would not emerge until the post WWII era.

In 1924 an extensive program for the breeding and training of working German Shepherds began at *Fortunate Fields*, the estate of Dorothy Eustis in Switzerland. Eustis, an American heiress from Philadelphia, and Elliot Humphrey began an extensive, innovative program of breeding and training German Shepherds for police service. The Fortune Fields project was much more than just a breeding and training program, it was a research project dedicated to exploring the ultimate potential for

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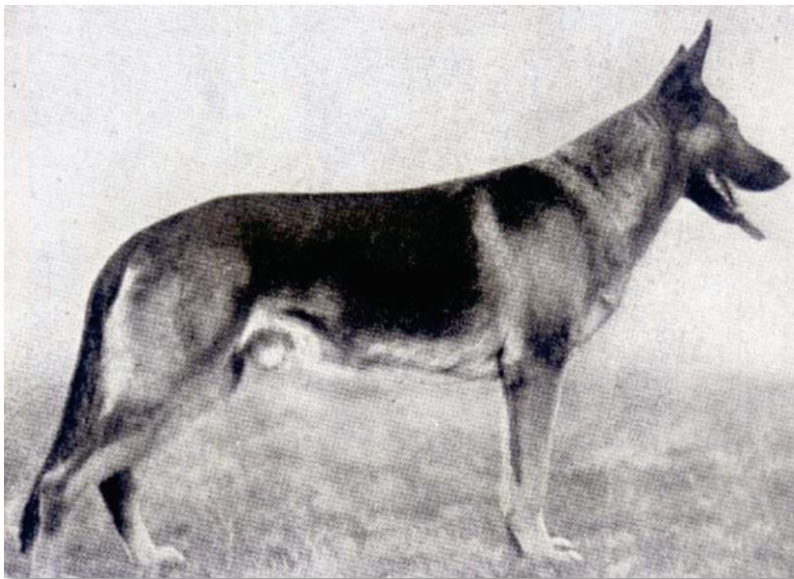
<sup>13</sup> (von Stephanitz, 1925)p186. This is entirely plausible in that he would have been 50 years old in 1914. Intelligence Service probably refers to search and tracking operations.

canine service to mankind. Extensive and meticulous records were kept and analyzed to identify correlations between physical and character attributes and propensities. In this era before computers and spreadsheets this would have certainly been an enormous amount of work. Although the focus was on this police service, from the earliest days there was also a great interest in guide dogs for the blind, and when the *Fortunate Fields* program wound down as the Second World War approached Eustis became a founder of the guide dogs for the blind movement in America. Interestingly enough, they mention that in their program the police dogs were almost all males and the guide dogs all females.

Humphrey and Lucien Warner produced a 1934 book *Working Dogs* with an extensive report on this program and a broad discussion of working dogs in general, which is even today an important reference work. In this book they take notice of the separation of German Shepherd lines for work and show, even in the very early years:

"It will be remembered that at the turn of this century the German Shepherd as a breed began to split into two strains. The one produced beautiful dogs, including *all* the show winners. The other produced working dogs, including *all* the working champions. No dog of the championship strains born since 1909 has produced winners in *both* show and working classes. Thus the cleavage is complete."  
(Humphrey & Warner, 1934) p226

But when you look at the early pedigrees and the literature going back to the beginning, as in the Garrett book, there are many dogs with the HGH herding title and the PH or police dog title, but few early dogs with an indicated Schutzhund title. A bit later you begin to see the ZPR, which was a relatively easy companion dog test, soon abandoned as not sufficiently rigorous. Schutzhund means protection dog, and was apparently limited to this in early versions, with the obedience and tracking added later. Schutzhund titles begin to show up in the 1920s, but over the years there was a lot of variation in the rules, trial procedures and breeding requirements. The gun test was apparently added later in the development, when von Stephanitz ran a surprise gun test for the males in the Sieger class, and most of the dogs ran. The process of tightening up, for instance requiring the Schutzhund III for the select



Klodo vom Boxberg set a new direction for the breed when von Stephanitz made him Sieger in 1925.

or V males, came sometime after WWII. It was, and still is, very much a work in progress. The working requirement for the select class was raised from Schutzhund I to II in 1947. (Delinger, Paramoure, & Umlauff, 1976)

In studying the various early references it is quite apparent that von Stephanitz personally was pushing very hard for the inclusion of herding blood, breeding to dogs actually in herding service, even after WWI and in general seems to have been serious about work. But reading between the lines

it seems likely that even then many breeders were primarily concerned with the conformation show wins and pushing back against stronger requirements. There is a general tendency to think in terms of the good old days when everybody was serious about work and character, but the conflicts between work and show, cited as a reason for failure of the Phylax society, have been endemic from the beginning, are based in human nature.

Maintaining working character in face of the pressure to win in the show ring was a never-ending challenge from the beginning. This is a revealing episode from the Garrett book:

"In one account of the 1921 Sieger show it is reported that near the end of judging for the final day, von Stephanitz entered the ring, raised a pistol and started firing in the air. The account said that he shouted as he was doing this, yelling at them to get the shy dogs out of the ring. From what I can gather it appears that was probably the first gunfire test in German dog shows. It has now become commonplace in every show in Europe. There was criticism for the lack of warning for the tests.

"From the reports it seems that almost all the dogs ran from the ring, with tails between their legs, even before von Stephanitz started yelling. Another account of the incident has a car backfiring in the first instance, not a planned test at all. By this account it was then that von Stephanitz came in the ring firing his gun when he saw the reaction the noise had caused.

"There is no disagreement on accounts about this part, Harras von der Jüch stood tall, sound and proud through the whole incident. He was the best of those passing. Von Stephanitz made him Sieger. By the following year the traditional lines were back in the front of the line at the big show. As we look at the only picture available of Harras it is not hard to understand. He looks very high and shows what has to be a terrible front, very straight in upper arm, short. As shown by his pedigree, he is a Nores son.

"He produced well and a few of his offspring are shown above. It is not known whether temperament was as much a problem by '22 with the top dogs but for sure the doubtful were left at home. It is also not known whether they kept the test going at that time but if not it soon returned to stay." (Garrett)

### ***Rise of the Third Reich***

In the post war era the German Shepherd prospered mightily, for by the end of 1932 there had been 441,000 entries in the SV registration book. (Strickland, 1974) This prosperity is all the more remarkable because it occurred in a nation undergoing enormous stress and strife, living under post war punishment by the victors and then the worldwide depression of the 1930s, circumstances which paved the way for Adolph Hitler and his Third Reich.

In the 1930's Germany was in increasing distress and Hitler was on the path that would lead to a second tragedy in a generation. As in all walks of life, SV members also affiliated with the Nazi party would have had the potential to take advantage. It is said that they began to interfere, to cut von Stephanitz off from his life's work; and that when he resisted they threatened him with a concentration camp.<sup>14</sup>

This has elements of plausibility, but other authorities indicate that he was becoming increasingly erratic as a judge, question the wisdom and consistency of his Sieger selections beginning in 1930<sup>15</sup>, and increasingly overbearing and domineering. Power does corrupt, even the best men, and the reports of concentration camp threats come from an interview with his wife many years later, after the deprivations of the war, the remembrances of an old woman, loyal to the memory of her late husband as the great man, likely oblivious to the realities of dog club intrigue and power struggle.

Finally, in failing health, he gave up his office. A year later on April 22, 1936, the anniversary of the foundation of the SV, Max von Stephanitz passed away, his personal crusade at an end, as the shadow of the coming tragedy fell across Germany and the world.

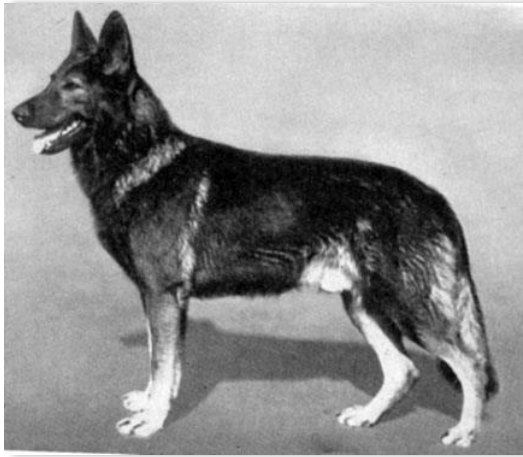
Some ultra-liberal academics make sport of portraying the German Shepherd as a symbol and instrument of oppression, of rampant militarism, of colonial subjection and Nazi oppression, citing use in concentration camps and other applications. While the German Shepherd was popular with Hitler personally and many others, and big aggressive dogs were present in colonial outposts everywhere, such dogs were popular and sought after by broad elements of society. I most certainly admire and respect such dogs, and expect that this would apply to most of my readers. On the other hand, von Stephanitz and the others involved were men of their times, tending to be upper class and very conservative; it is likely that many of their views would be very unfashionable today and thus downplayed.

Hitler was supported early on by the military as an offset to rising socialism and as supportive of the growing underground military, and the political views of most military officers, active and retired, would likely have been to some extent sympathetic in the early days. Americans such as Charles Lindberg and Joseph Kennedy were favorably disposed to the Hitler regime in the prewar era; I see no rational reason to be especially critical of these German Shepherd founders on political, moral or philosophical grounds. As I have noted, these are men of their times and can only be judged in the context and mores of their era.

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<sup>14</sup> (Strickland, 1974)

<sup>15</sup> (Haak & Gerritsen, 2007), also (Garrett)



Othello vom Bergnest, born 1938

Soon after the passing of von Stephanitz, in 1937, the SV did away with the annual Sieger title, which was not awarded again until 1955. Instead there was the selection of an elite group of males to establish up a recommended breeding pool. Whether this reaction was an unwillingness to give such unlimited power to another man, that is, select one from what were surely a group of rivals, or a more broadly based egalitarian impulse is difficult to say from this great distance in time.

In the lead up to WWII the emergence of the Nazi regime in Germany and the increasingly intrusive control of their bureaucrats in canine

affairs, especially those concerning potential police and military applications, disrupted breeding programs and the ongoing operation of existing organizations. The German military took the dogs they wanted, which along with the general deprivations of war on the civilian populations to some extent curtailed the breeding program.

On the other hand, the Wehrmacht was much less gentle in the Netherlands and Belgium and here also took whatever they wanted, dogs included, with devastating consequences for the Belgian Shepherds and the Bouviers. Unfair as it may be, the deprivations in an occupied nation are in general markedly more severe and brutal than in the homeland of the occupiers.

Although many nations suffered grievously during and after the two world conflicts, German territory was never occupied in the first war, and while the civilian population suffered as WWII advanced and defeat loomed, on the whole the deprivations of occupied nations such as Poland, Belgium and the Netherlands were significantly greater than in the German homeland. The Belgian and Dutch breeds in particular were set back grievously during these two brutal German occupations.

### ***Post World War II Germany***

WWII brought on a dark age for the German canine world that did not abate until the reemergence of organizations and competitive events in the later 1940's. It was at this time that Schutzhund as we know it today began to emerge in terms of rules, organizations and procedures. Schutzhund titles as German Shepherd breeding prerequisites and as requirements for advanced conformation placements increasingly came into existence in this era. The DVG, the largest of about five important all breed German Schutzhund organizations, emerged at this time, being essentially a new beginning from a combination of several organizations dating back to the 1903 era. (Patterson & Beckmann, 1988)

In addition to the slightly antagonistic relationship between the SV and the all-breed organizations typified by the DVG, there are oblique references in many of the sources that would indicate an increasingly less than cooperative relationship between the breed and amateur training organizations on the one hand and the German military and police on the other. The roots of these animosities run deep. Konrad Most is well known worldwide by reason of his famous 1910 book, his articles in various scientific journals and many leadership roles over sixty years of police and military service. Yet the only reference to Most in the von Stephanitz book is a disparaging remark relating to training principles. (von Stephanitz, 1925)p 325

This disengagement between military and police agencies on the one hand and the working canine community seems to have had a number of difficult to quantify causes. For one thing, military intrusion on canine affairs was generally much more invasive and destructive than in the prior war. Also, the post WWII German military establishment was under direct allied control, with many senior officers lost in the war, executed or imprisoned in the post war Nuremburg trials. After WWI the military establishment was greatly reduced but remained intact and went underground, immediately beginning preparations for the resumption of war. None of this existed after WWII. The intimate connection with the German officer corps, embodied in von Stephanitz, was gone or at least greatly diminished. But beyond all of this was an increasingly lucrative market for softer companion dogs, both foreign and domestic.

In the later 1940s Germany was divided into four zones by the victorious occupying nations; East Germany, and their Shepherd community, would remain isolated for nearly half a century, until the fall of the Berlin wall in the early 1990s. This tended to retard recovery and it was several years before the prewar activity levels could be reestablished.

From 1938 until 1954 the SV did not select a Sieger and Siegerin but rather an elite group, a select class or Ausleseklasse. The given reason was to deemphasize the breeding to a small number of dogs and to help maintain overall genetic diversity. This may have been an admirable concept in an idealistic sort of way, but a grand winner is a big part of the publicity aspect of any dog show and thus was eventually reinstated.

The postwar period saw the reestablishment of the international organizational structures, with the German national club, the SV, as a member of the German equivalent of the AKC, that is the VDH or *Verband fur das Deutsche Hundewesen*. The VDH is in turn a member of the FCI.

In response to economic recovery programs such as the Marshall Plan, registration numbers recovered rapidly, with 11,000 in 1945 expanding to 40,000 in 1948 including East Germany. By 1966 there was substantial progress with 17,000 puppy registrations in 1961 increasing to 23,000 in 1965. (Delinger, Paramoure, & Umlauff, 1976) The SV membership was at 45,000. For the Sieger show in Mannheim in September there were 662 entries including about 35 foreign entries, probably including exported dogs returning for the competition. SV President Dr. Werner Funk judged the males and Herr W. Trox did a female class of 96 bitches. Funk's comments included a warning to breeders to be careful of an increase in size beyond the standard.

In 1983 there were 13,170 Schutzhund trials with 45,111 entries under SV auspices. Since there are several other organizations, such as the DVG, and since there is some competition by other breeds, the totals would be significantly higher. (Hasbrouck, 1984) The same source indicates that 4,269 German Shepherds became breed certified, that is, passed a Schutzhund Trial, a Koer Classification and a radiographic hip examination.

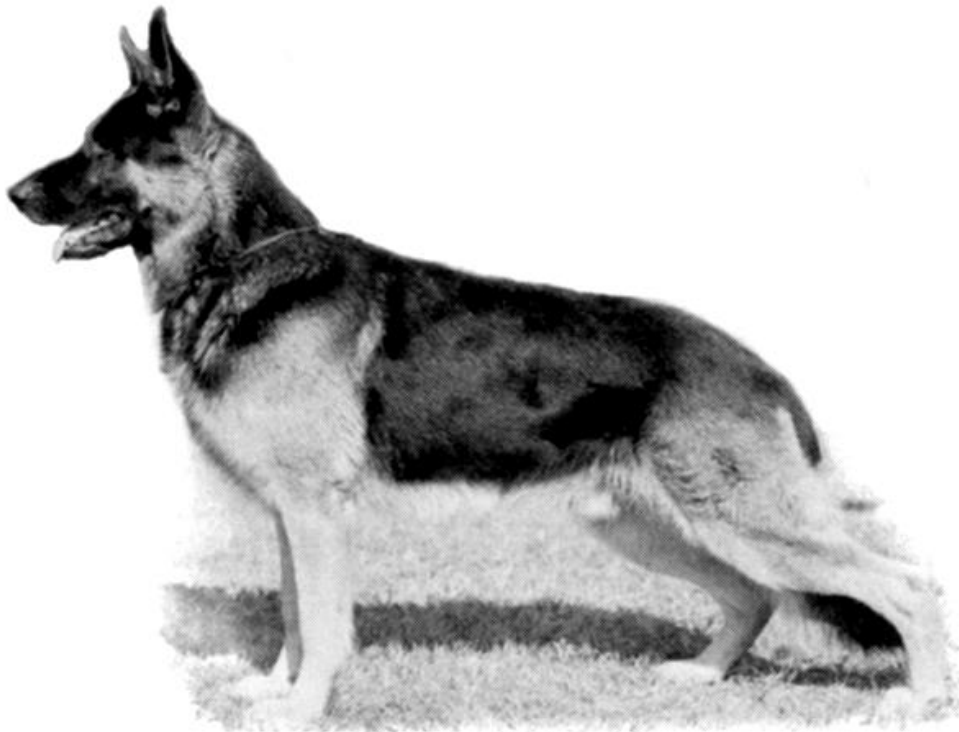
By 2010 over two million German Shepherds had been registered with the SV, roughly twenty thousand pups a year over the first century. As of 2011, the SV or national club had nearly 80,000 members, 19 Landesgruppen or regional divisions and more than 2,200 local clubs.

GSD German registrations for 2006 were 16,908, ten times larger than any other working breed. This popularity is worldwide, with 11,025 French and 43,575 American registrations in this year for example. The GSD is the most popular registered dog in France, Belgium and the Netherlands as well as Germany.



As these numbers indicate the SV is a very large organization. As in most canine organizations, most of the local administrative work is done by large numbers of dedicated local, regional and national officers and loyal club members. In addition to this, the SV main office has grown to a significant professional staff, with 65 salaried employees in the early 1990s. (By 2010 this was down to about 50.)

But there is a fly in this ointment: the 2012 count of 12,786 German puppy registrations is less than half of the number a decade earlier in 1997, which had been 29,824. German Shepherd popularity is in steep decline, worldwide as well as in Germany. This trend is not specific to the GSD, but rather reflects a worldwide decline in purebred dogs, with particular emphasis on the larger breeds.



Bernd Vom Kallengarten Born October 23, 1957

## **Germany Today**

National registries for purebred dogs are the foundation of modern breeds, a record or data base providing ancestry details of all included dogs and related information. These national registries are interlinked through the FCI or formal arrangements with non FCI nations to make the overall system a virtual international registry for each breed. In most instances information is submitted as a litter registration form indicating the name and registration number of the sire and dam, without any independent verification process. Usually there is no quality standard, as long as the parent names match up with the existing records, the forms are filled out properly and the fees are provided the puppies are eligible for individual registration. These systems are of course subject to fraud, that is, false indication of the parents, which can be perpetuated through generations. Recent years have seen some tightening up such as requirements for submission of DNA samples for the sires as a means of verification. But even accurate records in no sense certify or verify the quality of the dogs being bred in terms of soundness, type or character.

Most often these systems are run by a national registry such as the AKC or the national FCI organizations such as the VDH. This is necessary because many individual breed clubs are small, disorganized or lack ongoing continuity of leadership and administration, are simply not capable of maintaining long term records.

The German Shepherd, and some other breeds, is different in that the SV, the German national breed club, kept its own stud book or breeding records from the beginning, setting its own standards for registration eligibility and instituting rigorous systems both to qualify the parents according to quality and accuracy, that is, insure that the sire and dam are correct. Litters are examined by representatives of the SV (the breed wardens) rather than relying entirely on owner provided information. On paper the German way of breeding would seem to be both rigorous and admirable.

In order for a litter of puppies to be registered with the SV both parents must meet a formidable set of prerequisites.<sup>16</sup> These include :

- A Schutzhund or IPO title, which requires the BH with a rigorous stability and character evaluation as a prerequisite.
- An endurance test, the Aus dauerprufing or AD test, which is essentially trotting beside the handler on a bicycle for a little over 12 miles to demonstrate endurance and vigor.
- A radiographic hip examination providing certification of freedom from disqualifying hip dysplasia.

Once these preliminary requirements are satisfied, each dog must be presented for a formal breed survey where a judge or Koermeister evaluates and rates the dog according to suitability for breeding. This classification can be:

- Koerklasse 1 (Kkl1) Recommended for breeding.
- Koerklasse 2 (Kkl2) Suitable for breeding.

The judge may also find the dog unsuitable and thus not give any rating at all, precluding registration of offspring. As part of the breed survey and as a preliminary to each conformation show under SV auspices the dog must pass a brief protection

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<sup>16</sup> Some details are omitted for the sake of brevity; there are for instance temporary and life time Koer certifications. Also the requirements presented are for "pink papers," that is full certification. There are also registrations possible with lesser requirements referred to as "white papers" (actually light green), but these are unusual today.

evaluation, including an attack on the handler and a courage test. There is also a gunshot test. The Koermeister does a complete, written physical evaluation of the dog noting details of coat color and texture, head shape and size, angulation, eye color and many other details, making special note of significant deviations from the standard. These Koer reports form a permanent, publically available record which provides an enormous reference base for historical purposes and future breeding decisions.

The attack on the handler begins with the dog at heel position, walking toward a blind or hiding place concealing the decoy with a padded sleeve and stick. At a distance of approximately twenty feet, on the judge's signal, the decoy emerges from the blind and steps toward the dog in a threatening manner, to which the dog must respond with a firm bite or grip and is then subjected to two sharp stick hits on the rib cage. The attack on the handler exercise had been an integral part of the Schutzhund I and IPO I tests but was removed in 2007, supposedly because it was too aggressive a picture for public view but in reality because too many dogs and especially bitches were failing.

In the courage test the dog is sent against a distant decoy running toward him in a threatening manner; the decoy slowing as the dog engages for a safe but challenging grip. Done properly and with intensity these tests effectively demonstrate the requisite courage, stability and confidence; but properly means real intensity in the decoy, that is, moving toward the dog directly in a very aggressive way and, once the dog engages, driving the dog, that is, stepping into the dog in an intense way and striking measured, sharp stick hits. The validity of the test depends on the integrity of the decoy and the judge, which have enormous discretion over the real challenge to the dog, with ultimate responsibility on the judge who can reject a decoy unwilling or unable to test the dogs adequately.

Done inappropriately, the test easily degenerates into a decoy showing a timid presence, essentially feeding the dog the sleeve as a play object and concealing rather than threatening with the stick which hardly touches the dog. Every show breeder knows where to find such accommodating decoys and judges. This is because under incessant pressure from the conformation element, who control the SV, the decoy work has become so weak and the judging so lenient that these tests have degenerated into little more than playing at tug with the sleeve, a pretend test.

Thus in all but name a two tier IPO trial system has emerged, featuring soft trials with easy decoys and understanding judges for the show dogs and real trials for the real dogs. Sometimes the trial is complete fiction, with the paper work appearing at the central office as if by magic, without a dog ever stepping on the tracking or trial fields. Thus the route to the Sieger show has become a special trial for the dogs of the elite, continually diluted, often on their own training field with decoys carefully selected to go easy. These are of course fantasy titles meaning nothing, but somehow everybody is obligated to pretend that they are real. The transition from Schutzhund to IPO has been a consequence and extension of this trend.

As mentioned each SV sanctioned conformation show features a preliminary attack on the handler and courage test, but they are a charade where dogs are applauded for tugging on sleeves fed to them by absurdly soft decoys, and dancing with dogs right into show ring has become the norm. It is well known that the decoys are made aware of certain dogs, seen as important to breeding or belonging to especially well connected insiders, that must pass and be made to look as good as possible. Max von Stephanitz would most surely roll over in his grave.

The result of all of this is that the breed is more and more divided into two increasingly divergent cultures, with their own breeding lines, people, standards and heritage. Popular books and magazines, especially official breed publications, including web sites, increasingly pander to this fantasy world, are little more than

fawning propaganda, promoting the pageantry of the conformation shows and brushing reality aside.

Each year the SV conformation exhibitions reach a climax at the Sieger show, where the SV president selects the Sieger and a number of select males, which are a de facto breeding recommendation; and since the same man will judge the dogs the next year and the one after that until he expires or degenerates into complete senility the show breeders are strongly motivated to breed according to his selections. The conventional narrative focuses on these show winners, their progeny and how these lines propagate over the years. Most of the photos in most of the books, magazines and on the internet are of elaborately stacked dogs with the fashionable banana back and extreme rear angulation.

But there remains another, parallel, universe, a separate world of real German Shepherds: the dogs, breeders and trainers so many of us came to admire and respect, still found on trial fields and in in police and military service worldwide. The divergence between these dogs, this old heritage, and the elite show dogs paraded at the Sieger show is ongoing and increasing. But the house divided cannot stand, and while the old guard will stand firm until the end younger enthusiasts have more choices. The Malinois is increasingly predominant in police and military service and international competition, and if current trends continue unabated may become the de facto standard in the serious working dog world. The bubble, immense rapidly increasing popularity, is common in the conformation world. German Shepherd popularity has always been based on the police dog persona, acquired for the perception of reflected virility and manliness of the owner. But registrations have been plunging for two decades, especially in Germany, and the bubble is bursting. If the hard core working community is able to stand strong and weather the storm, this may be a good thing, provide a new beginning.

### ***The Eastern Lines***

At the close of the WWII Germany was divided into four occupation zones, administrated by the various allied powers. The three western zones were soon integrated into West Germany, but the Russian zone remained separate and became a satellite state under permanent Russian control. East Germany, more formally the Deutsche Demokratische Republik (DDR), became a tightly controlled socialist state. More importantly for our story a police state, for the government had enormous need for effective dogs to secure their borders, to keep their citizens from escaping, and to maintain order over a captive population. Dogs such as the German Shepherd, and to a lesser extent the Giant Schnauzers and Rottweilers, became a state priority, and for half a century, half of the life of the breed, there was a flourishing German Shepherd community separated from the west. This may have been a societal tragedy, but for the German Shepherd dog it was a stroke of good fortune, for the DDR dogs became a breeding resource virtually unblemished by the show dog fashion endemic in the free world. After the fall of the Berlin wall, the DDR dogs became widely available in the west and very popular among the working community.

The DDR lines are typically more robust and massive, moderate in angulation, darker in pigmentation and coat color and serious in character. In other words, what a German Shepherd was supposed to be in the first place. My only reservation would be that while power and muscular construction are desirable, overall size needs to be moderate in the interest of agility, endurance and a long and active service life.

Czechoslovakia has a long history with the German Shepherd dog, reflecting the large ethnically German segment of the population, concentrated in the so called Sudetenland portion of the Bohemian and Moravian border regions, roughly three and a half million of the fourteen million Czechoslovakian total in this era. The Czech

community was active from the early years, for Klodo vom Boxberg was the Czechoslovakian Sieger in 1923 before going on to fame in Germany as the dog von Stephanitz selected to change the direction of the breed. Under the post WWII Communist regime security was state priority number one, and the Czech Border Police instituted a comprehensive breeding and training program with complete focus on police dog capability, all or most of the stud services coming from actual border patrol males. These dogs also became a valuable breeding resource and subsequent to the fall of the Soviet Union increasingly available in the west, where these lines remain popular among many trainers. The Czech lines are generally similar in appearance and character to the DDR lines.

Belgium, Holland and France have had enthusiastic German Shepherd training communities for many years, prior to the 1970s the German Shepherd was the predominant competitor in the French Ring Sport.

### ***The Color Code***

Apologists for the German show lines like to portray these dogs as beautiful, correct in structure and noble in appearance, and imply or claim that the working lines should be altered in this direction. Nothing could be more absurd; these show lines are an abomination, an embarrassment to the heritage and an insult to the memory of the founders. The American lines are perhaps worse, but there is some excuse in the sense that in the formative years the Americans were distant from the functional working culture in the homelands; you can forgive them to some extent because they really did not know any better.

Over recent years, the German show line selection has placed increasing emphasis on the so-called black and red color configuration. These dogs typically have a black saddle shaped area on the back and extending down the tail and a black muzzle, with the rest of the body having a rich, mahogany color described as red. Some commentators claim that this preference is based in the belief that these colors provide a less intimidating appearance than the darker dogs.

The working lines have more diversity in coat color and texture, as these things are secondary considerations in such circles. Many working line dogs are described as sable, which often means a grey or wolf color. Actually the term sable refers to a pattern of coat color and texture rather than a specific color, that is the banding of color in the individual hairs. Often the hairs are of various colors with black or dark tips. Variation in the outer coat or guard hairs and the softer under coat can often contribute to this appearance. Running your hand or a brush against the grain of the sable coat will often produce a strikingly different color and texture. There is often a great deal of variation in appearance of the coat, color and texture, as the pup matures into the ultimate adult configuration.

Max von Stephanitz is quoted as saying "No good dog is a bad color," and the dogs he used in the foundation included white or light colored dogs. White herding dogs of undocumented origin were included at least into the 1930s, after WWII the white coats were excluded in the standard, and the long coats strongly discouraged.

There are even today people who breed selectively for the white coat as a novelty, and a number of clubs for white German Shepherds have come into existence and been recognized by various kennel clubs, sometimes as a separate breed. In general they are not taken seriously by mainstream enthusiasts. White German Shepherds are virtually never seen in police service, military service or serious working trials.

As a general principle coat color is properly a secondary consideration in breeding selection, less important than structure and character but nevertheless a legitimate criteria. This is especially true in the early years of breed development, and the

inclusion of dogs with white or partially white coats was an occasional practice at least through the von Stephanitz era. The lighter coats were, properly, bred out over time, thus including new blood and enhancing desirable characteristics without permanently changing over all color in the breed.

Thus in individual situations if a dog or bitch is of sufficient merit it can be an appropriate breeding and the color dealt with latter. Such dogs should in general not be shown for to do so sends entirely the wrong message to the public at large. At this point in time there is nothing in contemporary white lines to merit inclusion in any mainstream breeding program.

**SV Under Siege**

Max von Stephanitz had a firm hand at the helm of the SV for the first thirty five years, and his successors have also held power long term, once in office being virtually beyond recall, serving until death, poor health or ongoing senility brings the regime to an end. As this list of SV presidents indicates, relatively few men have served:

Max von Stephanitz	1899 – 1935	von Grafrath
Dr. Kurt Roesbeck	1935 – 1947	
Casper Katzmair	1947 – 1953	
Dr. Werner Funk	1953 – 1971	vom Haus Schutting
Dr. Cristoph Rummel	1971 – 1982	vom Aegidiendamm
Herman Martin	1982 – 1994	von Arminius
Peter Mesler	1994 – 2006	von Tronje
Dr. Wolfgang Henke	current	

German VDH German Shepherd Registrations	
2012	12,786
2011	13,339
2010	14,501
2009	15,870
2008	16,854
2007	16,868
2006	16,908
2005	18,278
2004	19,874
2003	19,882
2002	20,352
2001	21,372
2000	20,872
1999	23,839
1998	27,834
1997	29,824
1996	30,802
1995	29,805
1994	28,730
1993	27,648

This was in the beginning the strength but in the end the flaw, for power enabled the promotion of the breed nationally and internationally, charting a steady course through hardship and war. But power corrupts, and eventually those at the top yielded onto temptation, began to manipulate and connive to advance dogs, kennels and fashionable type in service of money and prestige. Fashion dogs appeal to feeble and narcissistic people and were bred accordingly, projecting this far into the future. The Martin name comes to mind as a tipping point.

The power of the SV president has been strong, almost absolute, over the elite show lines, where the money is, because he designates the Sieger and select dogs and has enormous influence in the selection of conformation judges and the evaluation of the females. But the SV bureaucracy has relatively little direct influence over other breeders, especially of the working lines, and trainers who to a large extent regard the bureaucracy as effete and mildly annoying. This is a good thing, for the working lines prosper because they are increasingly outside of the mainstream German show community, outside of Germany itself or carrying on the DDR or Czech lines. A consequence is that the center of gravity of the working lines, the real German Shepherds, is increasingly outside of strong SV influence.

In a business and fiscal sense, the SV is in serious trouble. Beginning in the middle 1990s puppy registrations began a precipitous decline that within a decade saw registrations cut in half, as illustrated in the table. When registrations decline so steeply, the flow of money follows and also drops; and

bureaucrats and commercial breeders live on the steam of money, that is registration and show fees as well as puppy sales. Since registrations are still declining at a ten percent yearly clip the crisis is ongoing; fewer pups mean fewer litters, and fewer litters mean fewer trials and less training for the IPO titles necessary to qualify the breeding stock. There is a consequent over supply of judges and officials on all levels, which is not a serious financial problem but a generally demoralizing trend. The SV maintains a large office complex with a paid professional staff of about fifty, an increasing burden in light of plummeting revenue.

The response has been to throw the working heritage under the bus and put emphasis on pet sales and programs such as agility and other pet activities. Go to the SV web site to see how far you have to drill down to find a photo of a dog actually biting a sleeve, or a mention or emphasis on police service or the IPO trial program. So many of us had such faith in these Europeans; perceived them as serious men about serious dogs, turned in this direction because of frustration and impatience with the play dog atmosphere of the AKC world. How ironic to find that under pressure the SV has turned into another Mickey Mouse organization no better in any way than the AKC, even worse when you think of the noble heritage that is being shamed.

These disturbing trends have become evident at the highest levels on the international sport fields. At the 2012 FCI IPO World Championship (20-23rd September in Zalaegerszeg, Hungary) the first four places went to a Malinois. Even more striking, the first six German placements were Malinois, and the seventh was a Boxer; not a single German Shepherd from the homeland, where they created the sport. Perhaps the greatest irony is that Germany was the first place nation, with a team made up entirely of Malinois.

To keep things in perspective, this downward trend extends beyond the German Shepherd to all purebred dog, especially the large and more robust; in the United States and most of the rest of the world total all breed annual canine registrations have been falling rapidly. In 2007 total German (VDH) registrations were 114,670 and in the most recent 2012 listing this had fallen to 79,934. It is difficult to know to what extent this represents a decline in the companion canine population or if increasing numbers of people are simply breeding dogs without bothering with the formalities. At any rate, it would seem that the credibility of the purebred dog is in decline worldwide.

## **WUSV**

In May of 1968 a European union of German Shepherd clubs (EUSV) was formed with these founding members: Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Great Britain, Holland, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia and the Federal Republic of Germany. In 1975 this was expanded into a world union (WUSV) which currently has 82 member associations in 73 countries. While there is a great deal of verbiage about worldwide friendship and camaraderie, some of it real, the Germans retain tight control and never lose sight of the underlying marketing and propaganda functions; money does matter.

Because of conflicts in canine politics, the United States has two separate entities in the WUSV: the original GSDCA in 1975 and then later a USCA entry 1983. Almost as in an official religious mystery, these two members somehow constitute a single membership. Since only one team per member nation is permitted at the UWSV IPO championship, the selection of the American team has been the source of strife and conflict over the years, with sometimes both USCA and GSDCA being able to designate part of the team and more recently with a selection trial to designate a team. The convoluted, ongoing political conflicts and struggle between USCA and GSDCA over representation in the WUSV is a 25 year holy war with no end in sight.

One of the most popular and visible aspects of the WUSV is the annual working championship, held in various nations, including the United States. The 2011 WUSV IPO (Schutzhund) championship was held October 6 through 9 in the city of Kiev in the Ukraine. There were 108 individual entries from a total of 33 nations, 20 with full teams, including a 5-member team from the United States. The first two individual places went to Finlanders with third to a Belgian and fourth to a German.

Team results are based on the total of the three highest scores. There were twenty teams with three passing scores, in rank order: Finland, Germany, Switzerland, Slovakia, Holland, Russia, Italy, Hungary, Austria, Belgium, Ukraine, Czech Republic, France, Brazil, Kazakhstan, USA, Taiwan, Canada, Spain and Japan.

In the 1990s American teams featuring people such as Gene England and Gary Hanrahan did extremely well, but primarily with dogs purchased as trained and titled winners, often with behind the scenes financial backers. The Germans did not seem to mind their own dogs coming back and doing well, because it was a reflection of their breeding and training, good advertising for their working dog business ventures. In recent years the all-breed FCI IPO Championship has gradually become more prestigious, and increasingly dominated by the Malinois.

In the 1920s and 1930s the German Shepherd became enormously popular across the world, in nations as diverse as Japan, Argentina and the United States. Beginning in the Meiji period (1868-1912) Japan became increasingly industrialized and westernized; adapting many customs and fashions of the modern industrial West, such as dress and industrial technology. Japan also became aggressively expansionist, dominated by military leadership with the Emperor as a figure head. This extended to things canine as the Japanese military imported large numbers of dogs, especially German Shepherds, and built up their training and deployment programs. The beginnings of this came when Japan occupied German held territory in China post WWI and thus came into possession of the initial German Shepherds. Deployment was greatly extended during the Japanese occupation of Manchuria in the 1930s, providing the experience and breeding base for the oncoming war in the Pacific. Popularity among Japanese civilians also was immense, with several national level clubs and a translation of the von Stephanitz book in the 1930s. There was a substantial Japanese canine program in WWII.



### ***Home With the Troops***

Although a few German Shepherds had come to America prior to WWI, highlighted by the first AKC registration in 1908 and the founding of an American GSD club in 1913, the real advent of American popularity began as dogs came home with the troops. A vigorous community of enthusiasts emerged post war resulting in the founding of regional breed clubs, magazines and prominent breeding programs. In the twenties and thirties men such as Lloyd Brackett and Grant Mann in Michigan based breeding programs on imports, including several German Siegers and other conformation show winners.

In the post WWI era the America evolution of the German Shepherd followed the German lead as many prominent German show winners were imported for exhibition and breeding. This was possible primarily because of the difficult economic conditions in Germany, to some extent a consequence of reparations and other sanctions imposed after the war. At that time America was overwhelmingly the most prosperous nation on Earth, and we were not at all reluctant to throw a little money around.

Throughout the twenties and thirties a number of Siegers and other prominent show winners were sold to America. Klodo vom Boxberg in 1925, Utz vom Haus Schütting in 1929 and Pfeffer von Bern in 1937 are only a few examples. These dogs brought fame or at least notoriety to their new owners, predominating in the American show ring, often only really competing against the other big money imports. But it was like a grass fire, meant relatively little in the long run, for a decade or so later these dogs and their progeny were out of the limelight, and new wonder dogs from Germany were again the way to importance in America.

By 1925 the GSD had replaced the Boston Terrier as the most popular American breed, with AKC annual registrations building up from 2,135 in 1920 to a peak of 21,596 in 1926. Since the all-breed total was 59,496 that year this amounted to 36 percent of AKC registrations. Popularity persisted for a few more years and then crashed with the economy to 1,333 in 1932 and just 792 in 1935. (Goldbrecker & Hart, 1967)

The Second World War brought all of this to an abrupt end, and after the war the Germans were in disarray, with many dogs lost and dog breeding taking second place to national recovery. Gradually post WWII American registrations began to rise with 4,921 in 1947, 17,400 in 1954 and on to a peak of 111,355 in 1971. By 2006, the last year the AKC published statistics, they were back down to 43,575.

Early in the 1950s the Germans were on the rebound and the Americans were still the people with the money, so a fresh wave of German imports inundated existing American lines, emerging as prominent winners on the show circuit and as breeding stock. Notable imports of this era included Ingo von Wunschelrute, Bill von Kleistweg, Harold von Haus Tigges, Ulk von Wikingerblut and Bernd vom Kallengarten. Perhaps the best known was Troll von Richterbach, born 1953, who became the paternal grand sire of Lance of Fran-Jo, the most prominent American stud dog of the modern era.

The 1960s saw the emergence of a new, more independent direction. The import flow ceased abruptly like someone turned off the spigot and nobody even paused to look back; for the rest of the century American breeding and lines went their own way with very little foreign influence. Relentlessly tight breeding on Lance and his even more extreme progeny became the mantra of the day, and they followed like lemmings over the cliff.

American breeding never had any pretense of working character, and even in AKC obedience the American show line discards had to creep off to their own specialty shows not to flounder. The problem was that the American shepherds evolved strictly as show dogs, without any expectation or real appreciation for

working capability. There can be little doubt that many German dogs lacking in courage or overly sensitive to gun shots, of little value in Germany, found their way into the American market, and, more importantly, into our breeding lines. American breeders of the era talked openly of gun shy German dogs being a really good deal, an opportunity to acquire an attractive import with an impressive pedigree at a very modest price.

In America the German Shepherd community from the beginning was a world unto itself; those attending an ordinary (all breed) dog show would tend to see relatively few German Shepherds. The reason was that across America there had emerged numerous AKC affiliated German Shepherd specialty clubs conducting an entire, year long, circuit of single breed specialty shows. In the AKC system, the winning dogs are awarded championship points according to how many dogs are in the competition so as to prevent going to out of the way shows to accumulate points. Since the specialty shows were heavily attended there would usually be major points, but often there were only one or two points and few majors at other all-breed shows. (Selected all-breed shows were traditionally heavily attended, virtual specialties, apparently this got around by word of mouth.)

Over the years there was a cadre of inordinately influential specialist German Shepherd handlers who lived on the show circuit. Beyond this first rank of five to ten there were many regional handlers who did not support themselves entirely on the circuit but were very active regionally and at major specialty shows. These handlers had enormous influence, to the point where it was very difficult for the outsider to compete, and one could remain an outsider for a very long time. Money, big money, always bought immediate insider status. Over the years, Jimmy Moses was always the big name.

Years and years ago when I was a little bit involved in Shepherds and still naive enough to take these American lines seriously I had occasion to pick up a specialty judge at the airport, a dentist from New Orleans I think, and escort him to the hotel and show, so that he would not be in contact with the competitors prior to going into the ring. Although I did not quite understand the connection at the time, this judge seemed preoccupied, even obsessed, with getting Jimmy Moses to come down and handle some of his dogs.

Naturally, at the show Jimmy won just about everything, each class was essentially a contest for second place. When the specials, dogs already holding the championship, came into the ring Jimmy took first place at the head of the line, apparently automatically conceded as his rightful position. He stood there with his dog for a moment; then carefully wrapped the leash around his hand just right, gave it a nice tug, looked at the dog, looked down at himself. You could just hear him thinking "Yep, this is the dog, I am Jimmy Moses, the sun is shining and all is right with the world." Then he looked up, looked around at the owner, Art Saltz I think it was, a relatively big name. He got this terrible look on his face, unwound the leash, held up an open hand to the judge, put his hands on his hips and reamed – gave him a real tongue lashing. It has been years, but the words were to the effect: "You idiot, you can't double handle from there, get down at the end where you belong." The owner scrambled into the indicated place, and Jimmy once again went through the process of carefully arranging the leash. He looked at the judge, smiled, and nodded his head. The judge gave his little return smile, waved them to go around and pointed his finger right at Jimmy and the dog before they had done a half circle, before some of the dogs even started to move out. Would you believe it, that judge evaluated all of those dogs and determined that Jimmy had the very best one in all of fifteen seconds? Yes indeed, Mr. Moses had handled yet another dog to "Best of Breed, Best of Specialty Show." The dog, Sabra Dennis of Gan Edan, was apparently well regarded in these circles, for he went on to become Grand Victor in 1981. When

they were doing the photos, the judge was heard imploring Jimmy "After all I have done for you today, when are you going to come on down to handle my dog?"

Double handling, attracting the attention of the dogs from outside the ring, is technically not permitted by the AKC but always goes on at Shepherd specialties. Although there was never much effort to enforce the ban, at one particular show there was an AKC representative present: taking note of an owner/judge outside of the ring double handling for Jimmy Moses, he suggested to the judge that he should, in consideration of his position, set a good example and obey the rules. Art looks at the rep, looks back at Jimmy, considers his options and says something to the effect "You do what you have to do, I know what I have to do" and went on with his double handling.

It has been said that Joan Firestone, of rubber company fame, spent well over a quarter million dollars having Moses show a dog named Manhattan for a year; but she did wind up with the really big tin cup at the Westminster show in New York in 1987, so I suppose it must have somehow seemed worthwhile to a person of means whose life was so devoid of meaning that such things seem important.

On a certain level all of this is little more than gossip, but it serves to illustrate the dynamics of the show dog world where professional handlers, a politicized judging culture, elaborate promotional campaigns and enormous amounts of cash have become determining factors in establishing champions, specialty winners and thus trend setting prototypes. The resulting fashions and trends lead other breeders and judges – profoundly ignorant of canine history and the relationship between physical structure and working function – to blindly emulate the "winning" breeding on a journey to nowhere. If this were only a matter of determining who got to take home the tin cups and silk ribbons, and whose dogs got their photos in the *German Shepherd Dog Review*, it could be dismissed as an elaborate diversion for shallow people with empty lives, a meaningless charade. But for those with a passion for working dogs there are serious, ongoing negative consequences, for this show system is the driving force of breeding selection, resulting in a process where fashionable "type," ever more extreme angulation and over extended side gate, rather than a physical structure conducive to excellence in real work, are predominant determining factors.

### **Commentary**

The work of the shepherd's dog, particularly the tending style dog with large herds to manage and control, requires stamina, endurance, quickness and enough size and intensity to intimidate the sheep and repel predators. These are in general very much in line with the physical requirements of a modern police dog, which is one of the reasons why they emerged from the historically herding breeds rather than the mastiff style estate guardians. Such dogs must have an efficient stride, which requires medium size, length of body and some flex in the back, and moderately pronounced angulation for reach in front and drive from the rear. A moderately deep chest accommodates heart and lung function for distance and stamina, but avoids excessive chest width which compromises efficient stride and agility. The emphasis in the cattle herding and droving breeds, such as the Rottweiler or Bouvier des Flandres, is more on power, agility and quickness, which requires a shorter back, a more square structure viewed from the side and more moderate angulation, and thus sacrifices to some extent the longer stride, speed, stamina and endurance. Neither herding heritage requires the extreme depth of chest of the coursing hounds such as the Afghan; the shepherd's dog needs to cover distance efficiently, but not with the extreme distance speed of the coursing or sight hound.

The essential point is that when any physical attribute – angulation for a longer stride or the deeper chest for longer distance, high-speed endurance – is emphasized

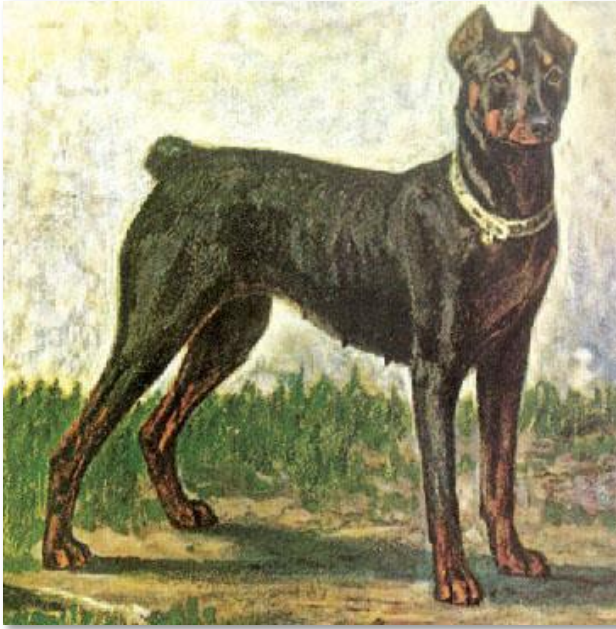
other attributes such as agility or power are compromised. Each breed and each working environment requires its own set of interrelated structural compromises to optimize performance, which is why herding dogs in new regions such as Australia or Argentina tend to be new variations rather than directly imported European herders. These are the basic structural determinations made by nature and man to produce diverse herding lines according to need in terms of stock attributes, existing predator threat and prevailing terrain. But the conformation systems, in both Germany and America, have taken the basic herding requirement of an efficient stride and endurance and over time degenerated into an obsessive preoccupation with exaggerated, pointless front and rear reach to the exclusion of balance, deleterious to other, equally fundamental, physical and performance attributes, most especially agility. These banana dogs, monstrosities of the show ring, extreme in angulation and wobbling in the rear, hardly capable of standing upright, would be of little practical use in an actual herding or police service environment, their only real function being to circle the show ring and induce the judge to point his finger.

In looking back to the earlier German Shepherds, even as recently as the 1950's, there was much more similarity in structure to the Belgian Malinois and the early Dutch Shepherds, although these dogs were always moderately less massive and muscular. This was the general structure that generations and centuries of service in the pasture produced, the result of practical breeding for a real herding function. The Malinois of today, and also to some extent the working line German Shepherds, retain much of this basic structure for a good and simple reason: it works.

Von Stephanitz famously observed that form must follow function; but from the beginning American breeders and fanciers were in denial, culturally compelled to ignore the practical aspects of service and deployment. Virtually none of the American breeders or judges had participated in any sort of police training, had any real familiarity with or understanding of the actual function of the breed, because the American canine culture was viscerally hostile to any sort of real aggression in any dog. Also, in this era there were only a few police canine operations, mostly small, fragile and short lived. The question becomes how can you breed for and preserve the form if you do not comprehend the essentials of the function? The answer is that you cannot, and the consequence is that breeding selection was according to fashion rather than function, and fashion is inherently a political, social and money driven process with nothing to do with the consequences in terms of physical type or performance.

The Germans of course retained the Schutzhund requirement for breeding, and in general maintained the traditional physique longer. But beginning in the 1970s the Schutzhund trial itself was compromised. The scaling wall was replaced by the A frame, which is lower than the scaling walls used in KNPV and the national Ring sports. There is no broad jump or ditch jump, and the high jump at one meter is not especially demanding. Aspects of the trial proving difficult for the dogs were remedied by compromising the functional tests rather than breeding dogs capable of performing to the existing standards. The focus changed from performance to obedience, to the detriment of physical excellence. The cane stick became the padded stick, the pursuit and turn in the courage test was abandoned, the attack on the handler was removed. Even more seriously home field trials with very lenient judges and accommodating club decoys became increasingly available, and if this was not sufficient it was possible to fraudulently submit the paper work, providing a Schutzhund title to a dog never having stepped foot on a trial field. The Americans were ignorant, and while they may have clung tenaciously to their ignorance they were less blameworthy than the German show breeders, who knew the heritage full well, and betrayed it for money, pseudo prestige and personal aggrandizement.

## The Doberman Pinscher



Richard Strebel drawing, 1903

Most of the police breeds, such as the German Shepherd and the Malinois, were created by seeking out regional dogs of an existing function and type, and then selectively breeding from within this foundation stock to solidify physical appearance and character attributes. In a sense the foundation of these breeds had been established over time as stockmen and farmers made breeding selection according to the demands of their work, and the formal breed founders, the men who created studbooks and breed clubs, were merely consolidating and completing the work of generations of herdsman, making formal an already existing breed in the rough.

The creation of the Doberman Pinscher was different in that existing lines of dogs were combined to create a new breed with a specific purpose

and corresponding physical and character attributes appropriate for that purpose. While the Doberman is a prime example of this process, the details remain murky. What is well accepted is that in the 1880s, Louis Dobermann, along with several associates, was combining various sorts of dogs so as to produce a line useful in their work as night watchmen and perhaps also dog catchers and tax collectors. This was taking place in in the German town of Apolda, 155 km west of Dresden in Thuringia. The associates mentioned include a man named Rebel who was a night watchman. Also mentioned is a prominent cattle merchant by the name of Stegmann whose business involved importing stock from Switzerland for breeding purposes, creating the need of vigorous dogs to drive and protect the cattle, and also the drovers who would likely have carried significant cash for their business transactions.

This was an informal process in the sense that while they were serious and careful in their selection no long term breeding records were kept, for these were working men likely lacking the leisure and inclination to create records or to foresee that this line of dogs would endure in the long term. Throughout history men, individually and in cooperating groups, have been creating their own lines for their own purposes, most of these being transient, creating no enduring records, eventually lost to memory with the passage of time.

Louis Dobermann<sup>17</sup>, since his name has come to also be the name of the modern breed, is often taken to be the founder, but the reality is a little more nuanced. William Schmidt, the leading American authority, mentions in his well-known book, with editions starting in 1926 and running on into the 1950s:

"The name was taken from a man named Louis Dobermann (1834 - 1894), who held the various positions of night watchman, scavenger

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<sup>17</sup> Several variations appear in the literature, including Friedrich Louis Dobermann and Friedrich Dobermann.

and dog catcher in the city of Apolda, at the time the breed became known. No one is in a position to state whether Dobermann had anything to do with the origin of the breed other than his name. He was a fancier of dogs and well acquainted with many breeds, although it must be doubted whether the ultimate breed the Doberman pinscher was his goal." (Schmidt, 1935)

Even those who credit Dobermann as the literal founder concede that he left no written records and had been gone for a number of years before others took on the task of setting up a book of origins, formal clubs and the infrastructure of a modern breed. On the other hand Dobermann was well known as favoring and breeding aggressive dogs which may well have been known colloquially by his name, which thus became attached to the breed even though he may have had little to do with the formal creation. Thus it becomes a matter of semantics, of precisely how the term breed founder is defined.

What is clear is that when Louis Dobermann passed away in 1894 there was no formal breed in existence, and the use of his name, dropping the final n, was an indication of the esteem and respect in which he was held. Whether the founding breeding stock was actually the direct result of the breeding of Herr Dobermann or more or less independently selected and combined by the later founders such as Göller in the same general style has been obscured by the passage of time. If the man was not literally the founder of the breed, he was evidently well regarded by those who did found it.

Although details are scant, it is generally accepted that the founding stock contributing to the initial amalgamation included primitive Rottweilers, German Pinschers, Beauceron and perhaps other regional predecessors to the modern German Shepherd, that is the regional Thuringian shepherds, to produce a breed synthesized from the ground up as a protection dog. It is to be remembered that terms such as Rottweiler were colloquial in this era before formal breeds, referred to type and function just as describing a man as a cowboy referred to his line of work rather than whether he was black, white or Hispanic.

Otto Göller(1852–1922), a distillery owner in Apolda, was the man who at the turn of the century brought the modern Doberman into existence as a formal breed. He seems to have operated on a relatively large scale, for it is said that at times his kennel, *von Thuringen*, held 80 or more dogs.

In 1899 Göller founded the German national Dobermann Pinscher club, which was in turn recognized by the German Kennel Club. It is speculated that it was Göller who incorporated the Greyhound, which would account for a larger and more massive dog compared to the original pinscher or terrier type. Other early figures were Philip Gruening and Goswin Tischler(1859–1939), owner of the kennel *Von Grönland*. Both men were located in Apolda. Other early breeders included Gustav Krumpholz and Wilhelm Kippel.

In about 1925 the most prominent American authority of the era, William Schmidt of Milwaukee, commented in his book:

"Within a short period of eleven years (in 1910) at the Sieger show in Cologne, Otto Settegast finds the breed to have reached a high degree of perfection. There was an entry of 142 Dobermans. At that time the red and tans were yet superior to the black and tans. The years following 1910 brought about a change. Dogs that were too tall and not typical in head made their appearance. It took again a number of years to weed out such animals." (Schmidt, 1935)

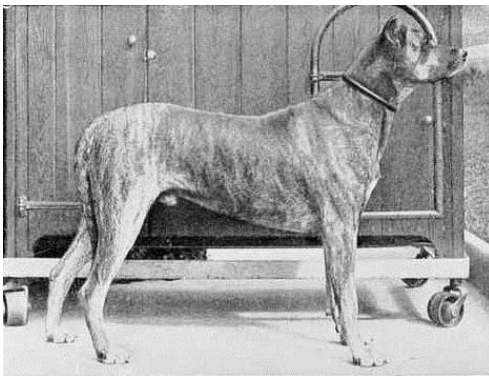


Black and Tan Terrier of the era (Drury, 1903)

Unfortunately, Mr. Schmidt does not go on to offer an explanation for this turn of events. More recently references such as Gerritsen and Hack<sup>18</sup> provide more information, to the effect that the inclusion of "Black and Tan Terrier" and also the Greyhound were involved in this, although details remain murky. An exact definition of Black and Tan Terrier is a bit difficult to pin down, but seems to be a general reference to relatively large, especially robust terriers of the English and Welsh country side. In any event, exactly what actually was imported and bred into the Doberman is likely to

remain a mystery.

Terriers are well known as feisty and animal aggressive, which is of course why they were incorporated into the Pit Bull Terrier and other fighting stock. The original Doberman breeding lines were famously intense, and this terrier blood created more volatility in the breed and more propensity to animal aggression. Otto Göller is said to have been opposed to this for several reasons, including opposition to the use of English rather than German blood, opposition to the more elegant and fragile type and opposition to the introduction of terrier like character attributes. Although the concurrent introduction of both terrier and Greyhound blood makes it difficult to sort out cause and effect, in general more elegance and refinement, and a dog higher in the leg, were the desired physical attributes. The black and tan color variety seems to have come from the terriers.



Great Dane of the Era

In reference to the Greyhound influence, Gerritsen and Hack comment: "It is known that about that time a very savage black Greyhound bitch was used, and from the exterior and speed of the modern Doberman it appears to have considerable Greyhound influence. This Greyhound was used in order to get the more aristocratic expression and outline in the Doberman Pinscher, but also caused problems in the type of heads, height of the dogs, and the closeness to the Greyhound-type, not to mention the changes in the character of the Doberman."

In time the Doberman came to have influential advocates, such as Konrad Most, the man most associated with the evolution of the police dog in Germany, famous for his 1910 training book referred to even today. Most bred Dobermans under the kennel name *von der Sarr* in the town

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<sup>18</sup> (Haak & Gerritsen, 2007)

of Saarbrücken, west of Stuttgart on the French boarder.<sup>19</sup> He was a passionate proponent of both canine police service and the Doberman Pincher, conducting elaborate demonstrations and seminars in Germany, Austria and elsewhere.

According to the German stud book, there had been a total of 207 registrations through 1905 and a total of 1200 through 1912, the last book before the war.<sup>20</sup> (In comparison, prewar German Shepherd registrations were about 100,000.) As a consequence of these activities, and an indication of the promotional efforts of the originators, by 1911 there were 360 Dobermans among the 1300 police dogs in 400 German police canine units. (Schmidt, 1935) If these numbers are accurate, it would mean that more than a fourth of the Dobermans of the era were in actual police service, a very large amount.

Through 1933 48,000 had been registered in total, with an average of about 5000 a year toward the end of this period. In the modern era the Doberman has been much less numerous in the homeland, for there were only 757 registered in Germany in 2006, down to 616 in 2011.

The German Doberman club did not hold a Sieger show until after the war, in 1920. In this era they selected two Siegers, one black and tan and one of any other acceptable color combination. Two Siegerins were also selected in the same manner. There is no mention of work or character requirements. (Schmidt, 1935)

The first Dobermans came to America relatively late, around 1908. The *Dobermann Pinscher Club of America* was founded in 1921 and adapted the German Standard. The Doberman experienced a huge American surge in the 1970s, going from 18,636 in 1970 to 81,964 in 1978, a hefty 20,000 more than the German Shepherd. In subsequent years a surge in Rottweiler popularity would produce a fall as dramatic as this rise. There were 11,546 American registrations in 2006, fifteen times as many as in Germany itself.

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<sup>19</sup> It would perhaps seem odd that the book of a Doberman man would have only German Shepherd photos, but what is available is the English translation of 1954, the year Most passed away, which states that the photos presented were not original but rather were taken in England for this edition.

<sup>20</sup> (Schmidt, 1935)



## The Rottweiler



Havok v Schwarzen Hammer

Rottweiler enthusiasts tend to fancy their breed as going back directly to the noble war, cattle herding and carting dogs of the Romans. In one sense this is an exaggeration, for the breed is a modern concept, and focus on commonality of appearance and the closed breeding pool goes back only to the latter 1800s; there are no records of descent much before 1900. Just as in other breeds, the founding stock, according to descriptions and existing photos, had extensive variation in size, type and coat texture.

But while in a broader sense the idea of the Rottweiler as a breed coming directly from antiquity is an exaggeration, it is true that this is an ancient and persistent type. Even before the Romans, indeed going back to much earlier eras, men have had the need for massive, powerful dogs of the general Molosser type. In the 1500 years between the fall of Rome and the emergence of the modern Rottweiler innumerable regional types no doubt emerged,

served and sometimes faded back into the morass of canine stock.

In central Europe in the centuries before there was a Germany there would have been a natural diversity of type, for the draft dog would have tended to be large, powerful, relatively square in stature and straight in angulation, and placid in nature. The cattle or drovers dog would have needed to be quick and agile as well as powerful and thus perhaps less massive, slightly more pronounced in angulation and more intense in nature to dominate the cattle. Functional specialization naturally leads to distinctive physical type and character; this is after all the underlying evolutionary principle of life.

By 1900 the emergence of the railroad, paved roads and slightly later motor cars and trucks were rapidly rendering the traditional cattle driving and draft or carting functions obsolete, and it is said that the breed had virtually disappeared in the far southern region of Germany, in the vicinity of the city of Rottweil from which the name was taken. Just as in the other breeds, there were men unwilling to let this heritage pass into history and the remnants of these working lines were gathered together and preserved, and the process of breed creation with the written standard, studbooks and specialty clubs commenced.

As a formal breed the emergence of the Rottweiler was later than the Doberman and German Shepherd, where the breed clubs were unified, well established and flourishing by 1905. Although there were several Rottweiler clubs in the early period, it was about 1920 before a unified German club, the *Allgemeiner Deutscher Rottweiler Klub* (ADRK), came into existence as a consolidation of previous clubs. ADRK registry records begin in 1924.

Although there were a few individual Rottweilers in America prior to WWII, serious American presence came only after that war, and the breed was very sparse through the 1960s. Over time breed popularity tends to wax and wane according to fickle public whim, driven by such things as appealing movie roles or celebrity pets, but nothing can compare to the surge in Rottweiler popularity, as shown in the table of AKC annual registrations to the left.

There is no mystery as to what drove this surge, for American fascination with the German police breeds goes back to the beginning of the century; this was the next big thing following the ebbing of the Doberman bubble. Indeed, over much of a 25 year time span the two breeds tracked almost one for one, every step up in

**AKC Rottweiler Reg**

Year	
1969	439
1983	13,265
1987	36,162
1990	60,471
1994	102,596
1996	89,867
2006	14,709
2007	14,211

Rottweiler corresponding to an equivalent step down for the Doberman. Both breeds for a brief time eclipsed the perennial favorite police dog, the German Shepherd, which has been relatively consistent in popularity since the end of WWI. By 2006 the Rottweiler registration count was down to 14,709.

At his best the Rottweiler is a magnificent and functional beast, powerful, relatively square and short-coupled, an admirable combination of agility and relative massiveness. But of course the Rottweiler of the American show ring is not at his best but rather a bloated caricature; the lineup of males contending for best of breed looks like

a parade of pigs ready for the slaughter. It was not uncommon for the dogs being Schutzhund trained to need twenty or more pounds of fattening up for the show ring.

When I first went to Europe in the 1980s, my familiarity was of course with the American Rottweilers. The Rottweilers I saw in the Dutch IPO trials of that era were a revelation, looked like another and much superior breed, more like moderately bulked up Beaucerons than what I was used to seeing.

It is instructive to compare the Rottweiler to the Bouvier des Flandres, another cattle dog, one in which I have had some personal interest. In the French language, the Rottweiler is just another bouvier with the small b, that is a dog of the cattle herder. Now of course these dogs at first glance would seem to be radically different, but much of this is due the coat of the Bouvier and the elaborate, artificial grooming for the show ring. Think about a Bouvier closer to the original herding lines, with a much sparser coat, perhaps clipped down, and the kind of Rottweiler that could really herd cattle rather than looking like one of the cows. In both instances you have a dog square with a relatively level top line and moderate angulation compared to the shepherd's dogs. Both breeds require a relatively massive head and moderately deep chest, but should not be overly wide in the front. (In spite of show ring propensity.) Yes, the Rottweiler is a little more massive and powerful, and the Bouvier perhaps slightly more quick and agile, but the similarities, dictated by the needs of the cattle dog and the drover's dog, are as important as the differences.

## **The Giant Schnauzer**

The Giant Schnauzer, or Riesenschnauzer, is the largest of three contemporary German Schnauzer breeds. The name is a reference to the bearded face or nose, as the word Schnauzer translates from the German roughly as muzzle or snout.

The Riesenschnauzer is a rough coated, dark colored, medium sized dog which stands relatively square when viewed from the side, historically with cropped ears and the docked tail, often compared to the Bouvier des Flandres. Many of the old Schnauzer photos to my eye look remarkably like the early Bouviers, while others have little resemblance to any of the Bouvier progenitors I am familiar with. One sometimes sees speculation of Bouviers behind the Schnauzer, but I am not aware of solid, specific references. The cattle driving or drover's dog function is also a common link with the Bouvier.

This breed was to an extent man created, that is, the result of the mixing together of existing breeds to produce the type and character desired. In addition to the Bouvier, there is mention of breeding the existing and older Standard Schnauzers with the Great Dane. There could easily be common ancestors with the German Shepherd, for dogs with long and rough coats existed but were selected against. (Note that although the Malinois has a coat similar to the German Shepherd, the

other Belgian Shepherd varieties have rough coats and long coats with a wide variety of coloration, some of which was eliminated through selective breeding.)

Although the Riesenschнауzer has never been especially common in America, there were several, perhaps six or seven, in service with the Delaware State Police in the early 1990s and there was thus a small wave of popularity on Schutzhund fields. The rest of this story is a little interesting, for these dogs were from East German border patrol lines that the fall of the Berlin wall had made superfluous and thus available. I am told by men who worked them that several of these dogs were truly dangerous, even by police standards. And of course those who thought that the Giant was the new wonder dog and purchased indiscriminately from West German lines were most often disappointed, and the mini wave of popularity quickly dissipated.

## The Boxer



Ken Johnson's Tyson

The Boxer is a German breed of the general Molosser type, that is, short haired, stocky, with broad, short skulls and square muzzles. The Boxer is bred with a severe under bite on purpose as a matter of style, which is regarded as a severe fault in the other police breeds because of the negative effect on the ability to take and hold a strong full grip. The pushed in face and very short nose are also deleterious in the olfactory or scent work; in general the creators of this breed have

historically preferred a fashion statement to a serious working dog.

Of the German breeds with an historical police service association, the Boxer is second only to the German Shepherd in general American popularity, with 33,548 new dog registrations in 2002, sixth overall in AKC popularity. In actual police or protection service the Boxer is perhaps the least common with very little pretense of serious purpose among the breeding community in America or the homeland.

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