

## **AN ACQUIRED TASTE** (Reprinted from the 1983 Bull Terrier Club Bulletin)

“They are an acquired taste”, exclaimed my Grandmother, in one of her moments of profound thought.

“What? Chocolate biscuits? Surely, very few people dislike them”, I mumbled endeavouring to stop the crumbs falling into the mouth of a beguiling, eager soft pink and white velvet face, who nonetheless, was being rather successful at catching crumbs and drooling at the same time. I must add that being a greedy child, I was mean enough to be holding the biscuit in one hand and trying to push the dog away with the other.

“No, Bull Terriers of course. Do give that appealing wrinkled face a share of the bikki. There is no reason to be so greedy.”

Well, of course, Grannie was right. Grandmothers and Nannies are indisputably wise and know the answers to life’s conundrums. This piece of wisdom filled a gap in my jigsaw of learning. It explained why some of my school friends and their parents, of the non-B.T. variety, would regard our canines as anathema. The comments ranged from “Why do you have these strange, ugly creatures?” to “What a pity you don’t own a docile little dog.”

Admirers of Bull Terriers know too well that they can only put their case for their friends in the face of such opposition. The essence of a Bull Terrier is that of loyalty and courage. You do not own a Bull Terrier; he, or she, owns you. Bull Terriers are a great comfort, a “very present help in trouble”, a hot-water bottle and an excellent nurse when one is ill. Above all, they are faithful to the end and would give their life for you if necessary. Without anthropomorphizing them, one can safely say that they possess a sense of humor and are able to laugh at themselves. They have a unique capacity to bestow on other household dogs a part of their character, so a Jack Russell for instance becomes a mini Bull Terrier. If a smaller member of the family wants reinforcements, Bull Terriers transform themselves into United States cavalry to come to the rescue.

Once, I must confess, having stamped my foot in anger at having to wait to be fed after the dogs, I blurted out, “this house is run for Bull Terriers”. Now, I can fully appreciate the privilege of growing up with them.

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