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Age Determination in Dogs

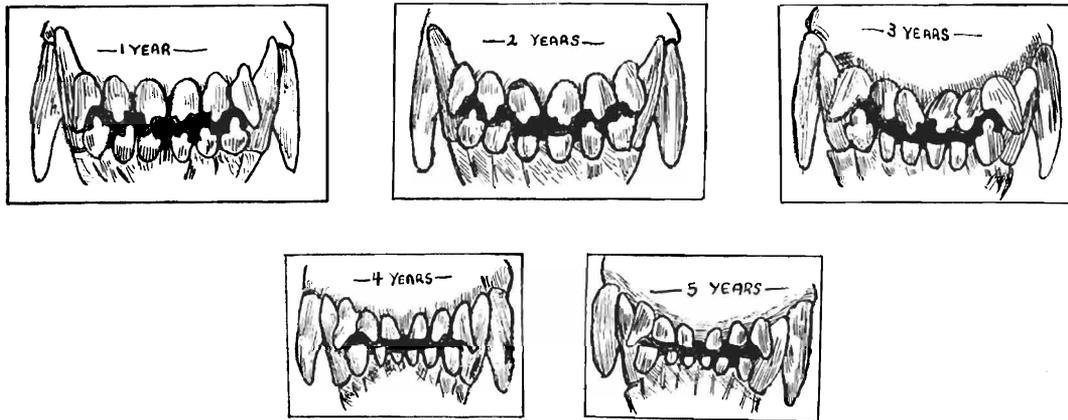
ABE BARTON

Translated From Cadiot, P. J. and Breton, F., "Médecine et Chirurgie Canines"

IN THE same manner as in other domestic animals, the age of dogs can be ascertained mainly on the basis of an examination of the teeth. Ordinarily, the adult dog has forty-two teeth: twenty in the upper jaw and twenty in the lower, which are designated as incisors, canines, premolars and molars. The incisors number

The incisors and canines erupt in both jaws during the third week. Up to two months of age the teeth touch each other. Gradually they lose contact and progressively space themselves till their demise. Generally they get pretty well worn down in the course of three months.

The deciduous incisors are replaced



six in each jaw, and on each side of the median line are respectively termed: pincers, intermediate and corners. In the upper jaw the corner incisor is shaped somewhat like a canine tooth. The deciduous incisors are small, tricuspid at their free extremity and very white. The newly erupted permanent incisors are white and glistening, and their crowns are distinctly divided into three cusps which resemble a clover leaf or a fleur de lis. The canines or fangs are conical, elongated and slightly curved. Age determination is based principally on the characteristics of the incisors and the canines.

At birth the dog is blind and deaf. His eyes and auditory canals are closed. Save in very rare exceptions, the jaws are devoid of teeth.

About the tenth or twelfth day the eyes open and the ears also become functional.

during the fourth or fifth month. This occurs a little sooner in large dogs and a little later in the smaller breeds. They are almost always completely erupted at six months of age.

At one year the teeth are fresh, white and whole.

At fifteen months the lower pincers start to show some wear.

Between eighteen months and two years the cusps on the lower pincers finally disappear.

Between two and a half and three years the cusps on the lower intermediates disappear, and the cusps on the upper pincers show some wear.

At four years the cusps on the upper pincers disappear and the intermediates start to flatten out. The teeth begin to get yellow, and tartar deposits are often observed at the base of the canines.

At five years all the incisors are markedly worn. In addition, the wearing of the teeth might have been advanced or retarded in proportion to the care and nourishment that has attended the dog. For this reason it is a wise thing to let the dog gnaw a bone every once in a while.

Henceforth, the age can still be determined by the degree of wear of the teeth, the accentuation of their darker color, their gradual loss or removal and several other signs furnished by the hair and the skin. In young animals, the fangs are white, shining and pointed. With age they gradually become yellow and worn. Towards the sixth year the canines get greenish and mossy.

In most dark haired dogs, grey hairs ap-

pear under the lips and around the nose. Also the muzzle becomes enlarged. In old age the hoariness extends from the periorbital region to the forehead; the ends of the digits become enlarged and rounded; the claws become elongated and very curved; and in animals that have a chronic eczema, the skin of the back and loins shows partial alopecia, thickness due to fibrous induration and wartiness.

Old age begins from the eighth to the tenth year depending on the individual. Longevity varies notably from one breed to another. Certain "de luxe" dogs (small spaniels, English terriers) live from sixteen to eighteen years. Some privileged few reach, or even live beyond, their twentieth year.

Margaret W. Sloss, Veterinarian

Dr. Margaret W. Sloss, graduate assistant in Veterinary Pathology, has the unique distinction of being the first woman ever graduated from the Veterinary Division at Iowa State College. Also she is the only member of her sex to hold a license to practice veterinary medicine in the State of Iowa.

Dr. Sloss is known to her many friends simply as Margaret as she has a particular aversion for the nickname "Maggy", and because "Dr. Sloss" seems just a trifle high-brow after knowing her awhile. And speaking of friends, very few people can count more than Margaret. Since she has spent practically her whole life in Ames (and for the greater part of that time she lived on the campus) Margaret knows everyone connected with the college, from cooks in the women's dormitories to the Deans and the President.

She is an especial friend of every upper-class veterinary student. In the Clinical Laboratory where she is found every week day from nine until eleven-thirty o'clock, she is always ready to help the poor in spirit work out their individual problems. She never has to dislodge herself from behind a desk when help is needed because

she is in there pitching every minute.

Her outside interests are many and varied. She is an ardent baseball fan and attends all the home games as well as listening to the big league games over the radio. It seems a little superfluous to say that she usually takes the side of the underdog. She also enjoys good music. Often she has been known to listen to a favorite symphony while busy cutting sections of tumors or lymph nodes by the slide-boxful. She annually attends the dinner for Iowa artists and knows many of them personally.

Besides her degree in Veterinary Medicine, Margaret also has a B.S. in Zoology and an M.S. in Microscopic Anatomy, both from Iowa State College. During her college career she has become a member of numerous honorary fraternities. She also is a member of the Cellar Rats Club which was established for the prevention of cruelty to laboratory workers at the quadrangle at the hands of the "Big Blows" upstairs.

So, if you are looking for an A-No. 1 guy, friend of the people, and expert in her field, look to Margaret. Boy, can she take it!