

Pups in Pubs & English Etiquette

BY LORRAINE CHITTOCK

If the people who lead our lands are a true representation of the population they help govern, then the Royal Family is proof that Great Britain has always been a land of dog lovers. Such was the strong bond between Mary Queen of Scots and her dog, that in 1587 when the clothing from her body was removed after two cuts of an executioner's axe removed her head, a small dog came out from hiding beneath her petticoats. Mary Queen of Scots' loyal companion refused to be removed. Instead, the devoted dog lay down between her shoulders where her head once rested.

More recent royalty news revealed that one of Queen Elizabeth's favorite Corgi's was mauled by Dotty, her daughter's bull terrier. When the Corgi had to be euthanized, the British press disclosed that the queen was devastated—an emotion sharply in contrast to how she was often portrayed upon learning of Princess Diana's death. This was not Dotty's first faux pas. Dotty once bit two children, causing Princess Anne to go to court and receive an \$880 fine—the first time in the modern age a senior British royal family member has been convicted of a criminal offense.

However, it's not all dire news coming from Buckingham Palace. Newspaper reports have noted the queen hangs Christmas stockings packed with doggie treats for her hounds, and a recently published picture showed a Tupperware container filled with dog biscuits on the queen's breakfast table.

Though feeding dogs while dining is apparently standard practice in the queen's household, it has become a minor source of conflict between some of her British subjects. During the past 30 years, many pubs have begun serving food to accompany the requisite pint of Guinness. Suddenly, the tradition of bringing pups into pubs is against health regulations. Fortunately it is generally left to the proprietor to decide whether or not dogs are welcome. And with signs such as 'The Dog and Fox' and

'The Dog and Partridge' hanging outside, how could an animal so entrenched in the culture be banned from these establishments?

Instead of fighting about food, the English are far more concerned about cleaning up "dog poo." In 2002, a hugely successful poster campaign featured hard-hitting images of dog doo-doo with slogans such as, *No s**t—don't leave it for someone else to take home*. Despite these efforts, last year there were almost 53,000 com-



Above: Merlin, a Jack Russell and George a leggy Lurcher, hang out in Ilfacombe, Devon with Christopher Searle, who's just bought a painting from Nicholas Sims. Below: Molly, a Briard, is an old French breed reported to be owned by Napoleon and brought to America by Thomas Jefferson. Here she's drying off from a dip in a nearby stream at Watersmeet House at Lynmouth, Devon while Jim and Helen Barlow drink afternoon tea.



Collie Sandy and her mate Guinness eating a meal with Dave and Chloe at the Sandpiper Inn on Contisbury Hill in Devon.

plaints about dog fouling. As a result, taxpayers forked out almost four million dollars to clean up the 1,000 ton of feces that the U.K.'s 7.4 million dogs produce everyday. That's a lot of dog poo.

The situation has become so serious in Hertfordshire, that this past summer dog wardens began spray painting dog mess a pretty pink.

"If you walk through the park with your dog and let it mess, and then walk back and see it highlighted pink, it highlights to the owners that maybe they should not have left it here," says Councilor Jean Haywood. A special machine is used to remove the mess after it is sprayed with the biodegradable paint.

Dogs will poop, just as mad dogs and Englishman must walk out in the midday sun. And rambling, as hiking through the countryside is called, is about as English as

Burberry designer duds, and cups of tea and scones. You and your traveling dog will find an extensive network of trails that meander through farm and public lands, and with careful planning, straight to one of England's many dog-friendly Bed and Breakfasts. Though you may be shot for ambling through ranch land in America, many farmers in England don't mind—unless your dog chases their livestock. To avoid becoming an "ugly American," keep your dog leashed while sharing a field with the sheep.

While you learn the subtle ropes of English doggy-etiquette, keep Fido restrained until you are certain more freedom is allowed. And by all means, be sure to pick up your dog's poo to avoid a fate similar to Mary Queen of Scots! 🐾