The following letter from Carolyn Langdon to Alicia Keegan was written when Alicia was preparing the article on tracking Shelties for the 2001 ASSA Handbook

May 17, 2002

Dear Alicia,

Although I am annoyed by people who use age as an excuse, I must remind you that I will be 90 in August; the little boy (8) in the picture has just retired from Park [?] G; I haven't thought tracking in forty-some years. Tracking was great fun! Problems or successes, I scarcely remember. Odd things, I do.

Why track—because at Hartford Obedience (then 10 years old) only big dogs were considered really worth the training. No trainer had a tracking degree.

How—Jim Sharkey's most valuable bit of advice—"You can't train your dog to track. He already knows how. Just don't get in his way." The most important thing that we weren't taught—to lay cross tracks so that the dog would not be distracted when he encountered them. (a problem, by the way.)

There were four in our one session course near Boston after a retriever failed to show up. Trainer, "Sharkey"—tough ex-marine, recently handler of WWII dogs. Class—gentle female tricolor collie, saucy Pomeranian, stubborn Scotch terrier, Tinker. Sworn to secrecy (it was then his livelihood), I nevertheless later worked with Peg Harvey and her Sheltie, Sandy, and Nelson Sterling, with his Sheltie Danny. The Scottie and Tinker qualified at their first trial. So did Sandy and Danny.

Women wore skirts when we started. Once, when Tinker was in Novice, Chief Schendell (Prussian Officer type Chief of Police in Manchester, Ct.), standing beside me on the sidelines muttered that women would never heel dogs as well as men with those skirts flapping in the dogs' faces. That week I bought my first slacks, then hard to find. Often the only woman in pants, even at shows, I never trained in a skirt again. "Cap" never commented. For the dogs slacks signalled pure joy.

I can't better the photo you have. We didn't take snaps. One day the photographer, a quiet little man devoted to his work with children (these were his first trained dogs) called me. All bubbly, he said he had been at a photographers' convention in Chicago where the speaker showed the photo from a newspaper as an excellent example of child photography. He was so excited he jumped up and announced it was his picture—a real moment of glory when he was asked about taking it.

Use anything you like—all mentioned but Nelson Sterling have long gone. You've been reading obedience history.

I envy you!

Sincerely—Carolyn Langdon

P.S. I put my typewriter away when I finished doing genealogy. Better a composition pad than stationery for readability.



Ch. Sea Isle Wee Bairn, UDT, Howard Langdon, Jr., Sea Isle Little Tinker, UDT

Carolyn Langdon 2002-1: 2

May 17, 200 Dear alic although I am annoyed ily Juple who since age ac le 90 in august; n that I in execute, the fisture has just retired & lan by H little log (8) thought tracking in forty-come year Ichaunt was great Jun! Proble or God Ido th became at Hartynd Obedience (then 10 year old Dr.hy track with the Guly done were - degree no trai Trachin How - Jim Sharking most valuable lit . advice your day to track + Train aller you ca don't get in this way rion + tangent - to law cross Tradu that the that i a distracted encountered to u doz (a proven, the may. were your in our one Dession Course Boaton 02 a retrieven Zailer To after aler of WWII · Tong ex-marine anacy Tomeronen Clangentle. male Tri - 00 studion Scotch Ter since . To elihord) I remthelin later then wor her Sheette, Sardy and Nelson istaling, with Peg Harven The Scottie and Tinhur , Danny. Carl Martin and the transformer was

Carolyn Langdon 2002-1: 3

at these quint trial. So did storegast Danny Women wore selecte when we started. Once, when Tenton use in Norice, Chief Schondell (Prunin Office Type Chief of Police in morchester, Cr.) standing besile me on the side le muttered that worren would never her doys as well as men with those skints glapping in the days face, that week I longht my first clacke, then hard to find . Of the the only wonan in parte, even at shows, I new trained in a skirt again . " Cap" new committed . For the days slocke signaled fure you I can't better the photo you have. We didn't take engos. On day the photographur, a quiet little mon denoted to his work with children (there were his - gust trained dogs) called me. All brubbly, he said the had been at a photographine convertion in Chicago when the speaker shared that photo from a newspaper as an sexcellent example of chied photography. He was so excited he jumped up and announced that it unentre pecture a real moment of glory when he was asked to tell about taking it. The anything you like - all mentioned but heleon Sturling have long gone . gaine been reading obedience his tony Sincentry - Carolyn Jangdon P.S. I gut my typusite any when I give down genelogy. Setter composition god than stationen for readability

Carolyn Langdon 2002-1: 4