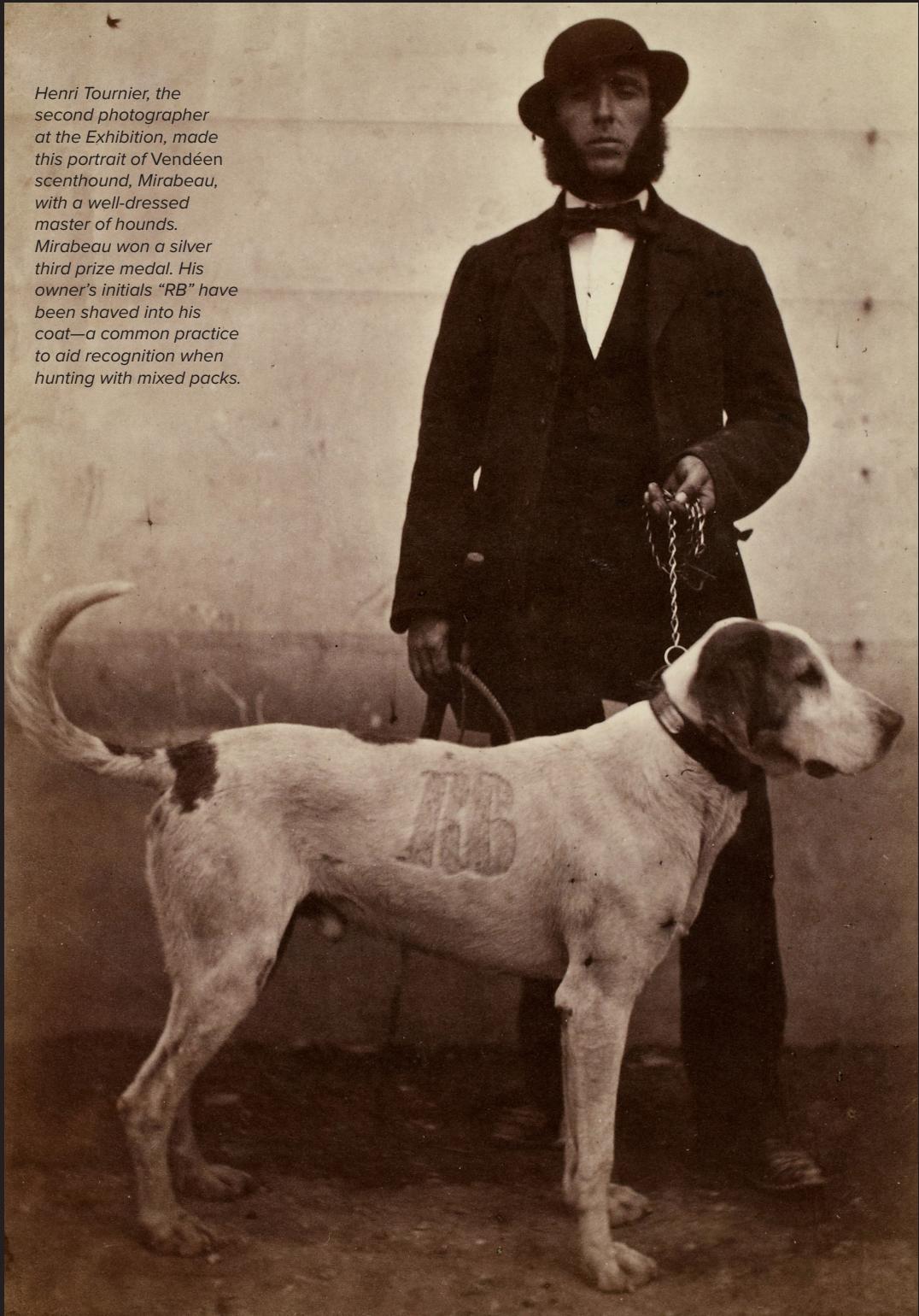


*Henri Tournier, the second photographer at the Exhibition, made this portrait of Vendéen scenthound, Mirabeau, with a well-dressed master of hounds. Mirabeau won a silver third prize medal. His owner's initials "RB" have been shaved into his coat—a common practice to aid recognition when hunting with mixed packs.*



# BIRTH OF THE WIN SHOT

By Brian Patrick Duggan

The 1863 Exposition Universelle des Races Canines stands out in dog show history as the first to have photographs of the top dogs.

**W**hat we would recognize as an “all-breed dog show” debuted in England in 1860, and in 1862, American showman P. T. Barnum held the first American National Dog Show.

Engravings of winners or crowd favorites sometimes appeared in newspapers and sporting magazines, but there was no organized photography. Reported success of England’s Great International Dog

Show in May 1862 inspired a group of Parisian dog fanciers. The *Exposition Universelle des Races Canines* was the brainchild of the Societies for Imperial Zoological Acclimatization and Zoological Garden of Acclimatization (both studying how foreign animals adapt to French climate).

#### LA GRANDE EXPOSITION DES CHIENES

Encompassing both the Victorian mania for classifying animals and edifying

the public, the catalog listed 180 breeds present (and absent) and concluded with a dog auction. On display were five categories: *Chiens d'Utilité* (Utility or Working Dogs—Danes, Bull-Dogs, shepherd types); *Chiens de Chasse a Courre* (Hunting Dogs—Beagles, foxhounds, Vendéens, staghounds); *Chiens d'Arrêt* (Pointing Dogs—pointers, setters, spaniels); *Lévrier* (sighthounds); and *Chiens De Luxe* (Luxury or Toy Dogs). Out of 1,000 invitations to enter, the Acclimatization Societies finally accepted 850 dogs.



Gold medal first and a 150-franc prize in the “Long-Haired Greyhound Class” was the slightly disheveled Kurdish Greyhound, Lavocat-Pasha (the hand holding his muzzle has been painted out). Second, third, and fourth class winners were, respectively, Tarki, “Russian Greyhound” (Borzoi), Tcherkesse, “Circassian Greyhound” (Borzoi), and Abreckt, Syrian Greyhound (Saluki).

JARDIN ZOOLOGIQUE D'ACCLIMATATION, (BOIS DE BOULOGNE).

EXPOSITION DE CHIENS. (Mai 1863).



L. CREMIÈRE, PHOT. de la Maison de l'Empereur, 28, rue de Laval, PARIS.

1<sup>er</sup> PRIX Médaille d'or

V Catégorie  
Classe  
Race Bichon Malteis

1<sup>er</sup> Nom Fido  
Propriétaire M. Manderville

Each category had a president judge and 10 to 14 jurors to award gold, silver, and bronze medals, as well as sponsored prizes. Hefty cash prizes were donated by the two Societies, Parisian nobility and glitterati, the 7-year-old Prince Impérial (entering his own foxhound pack), Ministry of Agriculture, Hunters Journal, Great Imperial Hunting organization, and Jockey Club. *Objets d'art* were also offered and at least three famous painters offered portraits for certain winners.

BIENVENUE MESDAMES ET  
MESSIEURS!

For eight days in May, the normally tranquil woods of the Zoological Garden of Acclimatization became a visual riot of hounds and gawkers; gents with shiny toppers and walking sticks; accompanied ladies in feathered hats, managing wide-hooped skirts, fans, and

fringed parasols—all in the latest spring colors; loud boys in short pants; laughing girls in shorter versions of their mothers' dresses waving souvenir whirligigs;

Left: Gold medal winner of the "Luxury Dog Category: Small Luxury Poodle Class." Fido (pronounced Fee-doh), a "Bichon Maltese," was brought from England where he'd won many prizes. This image is the progenitor of modern show win photographs.

kennel men sporting side whiskers in sturdy coats with low-crowned bowlers; and in their somber Sunday best, the working-class and country-folk.

Amidst "oohs" and ahhs," men lectured to their families as if they'd always been dog experts. Everywhere was the cacophony of crowd chatter, shouted megaphone announcements, beckoning from food stalls, and deep barks, screeching yaps, and melodious howls.

Benched on straw in newly constructed, long wooden sheds, the dogs were left overnight—until one unfortunate death caused many owners to retrieve "delicate" dogs every evening. As per social norms, men were the official owners and handlers. However, women often sat with their precious lapdogs (seated on velvet cushions) and prevented the admiring throng from giving them "improper food."

PHOTOGRAPHIE DE CHIEN

Predating these dog shows by 20 years, practical photography was invented simultaneously in both France and



Ranger, a gold medal English Pointer, holds still for the camera as he stares at a leashed pet rabbit. Several gun dogs were cleverly baited this way for their portraits.



Retriever Bess (curly-coated) owned by Mr. Riley of Halifax, Yorkshire. Her name can be clearly read on one of her two tags (hands holding her head and tail have been painted over). Riley had presented Emperor Napoleon III with a brace of puppies from Bess and her mate, Royal. They would take fourth silver and first gold medals in the "Retriever" class (curiously, no second or third prizes were awarded but a fifth bronze was).

England in 1839. Even though enormous developments had been made by 1863, it still took considerable daylight and a non-fidgeting subject for a good portrait of person or dog.

To capture a likeness, a large glass plate coated with light-sensitized, wet collodion syrup would be focused, exposed, and developed, all on-site in a portable darkroom. This was a complex technical and artistic process taking 15 minutes or more; and there might be image defects only revealed in the developing—possibly necessitating a second exposure.

Celebrity and animal photographer Léon Crémière (1831–1913) produced a single boxed folio of 60 photographs of selected winners. Each was carefully labeled in elegant penmanship with the class, breed, prize, and the dogs' and owners' names. Intriguingly, he didn't photograph every winner but rather an eclectic range from *Grande médaille d'honneur* to 7th placements, merit awards, and a few with no prizes noted. Crémière would later sell copies of these

photos (or engravings) to the public.

The dogs were photographed as seen by humans—from above canine eye level. Chained to a wall or tree, they stood,

sat, lay, or were posed on a pedestal and often baited from not quite off-camera. Based on the amount of labor it takes to make one wet plate exposure, Crémière



Owned by Mr. MacDonald from England and entered in "Utility Dogs; Short-Haired Terrier (Ratters) Class," Duke and Daisy took fifth and second and silver medals. Crémière posed them with her silver cup embossed with dog designs. Duke, leashed to the stool, wears an expensive metal collar.



*One of Crémière's challenges when making necessarily slow exposures was getting the pack entries to hold still. These eight Vendéens-Nivernais (slightly blurred from movement), belonging to Count Le Conteulx de Canteleu, won a gold medal and an objet d'art.*

probably took three to five days to make all 60 images (not counting flubs). While he was easy about posing the dogs, he took care to paint out hands holding

muzzles, tails, treats, and sometimes re-delineated a jaw line or muzzle. Curiously, human shadows were left untouched and, in some images, a knee

or hand sneaks in.

A second French photographer, Henry Tournier (1835–1885), captured only the best hunting hounds of the nobility—but didn't retouch his more creatively posed images. While Crémière did photograph the Duke of Beaufort's Fox Hounds, Tournier missed out on them because the Duke left early for a hunt in England. And a third photographer was reported to be doing a good business making portraits of England's winners with their trophy cups.

#### AU REVOIR

When the awards to the hunting packs were presented, each Master of the Hounds blew fanfares on brass

### THE GREAT INTERNATIONAL DOG SHOW, LONDON, MAY 25–30, 1863

Many of the Parisian exhibits were shown a month later in Islington's mammoth glass and iron Agricultural Hall. Advertisements trumpeted Tartar, Russian, Pyrenean, and Algerian "WATCHDOGS;" New Forest Bloodhounds and a famous Staghound pack; wolfdogs, boarhounds; Mastiffs, "Mount St. Bernards," "Monster Dogs of many countries, etc.;" Chinese, Japanese, and Maltese lap-dogs, and "400 Toys and FANCY DOGS of the choicest and smallest breeds." Many of these could be purchased at the conclusion. Curiously, there were also demonstrations of lawn mowers and "fish hatching apparatus."



Winner of the second Grande Medaille d'Honneur and 500-franc prize for "Most Beautiful Hound Exhibited Alone," Monthabor (a famous Foxhound stud), sits comfortably for his portrait outside a zoo enclosure. The initial "D" is for his owner's surname—Desvignes.

horns and their packs answered with loud music.

As the last function, any willing exhibitors auctioned their dogs to a ready market over two more days. The Empress Eugénie purchased a cup-winning "Havannah lap-dog" named Coquette. Mr. Riley, who, along with his kennelmen, had traveled 500-miles from Yorkshire—including a steamer crossing of the English Channel—sold 19 of his entered dogs, keeping only his two best prize winners, Curly Coated Retrievers Royal and Bess.

Officials reckoned over 100,000 people had attended and enjoyed fair weather during the exposition's 10-day run. Some estimated as many as 20,000 in

one day. Crémère gave his one-off folio to the twin Zoological Societies, but Tournier and his engraver artist produced 14 copies of their own hunt pack book with both photos and lithographs—probably for the viscounts, counts, barons, and

young Prince Impérial. England and America closely watched the newspaper accounts of the show. A great success, the Acclimatization Societies' officials would hold the next one in 1865. Léon Crémère would also record those winners. Dog show photography was off and running. **FD**

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