

A journey to Ireland, it's history, culture, and dogs. Discover the characteristics this breed possesses that make it an ideal companion in the challenging terrain and climate of Ireland, and especially, how this breed was the ambassador and pride of Ireland in the nascent dog world in the British Isles. This is a story of suffering, overcoming, and finally of collaboration and partnership between Ireland, England and the USA. Still today this rare breed rises to the podium in these countries more than other Terriers in proportion to their registrations. Come see why!



The author is from St. Louis, Missouri in the United States, but lives in Italy. She is a qualified trainer, and registered breeder as well as an FCI judge. She has worked as a journalist with Best in Show, Showsight and InTerra magazines, and published three other books.



Anne M. Tureen

DISCOVERING THE IRISH TERRIER



Anne M. Tureen



DISCOVERING THE IRISH TERRIER

kyōn
press



Above: Map of Ireland from 1467 published by Ptolemy in his *Cosmographica*.

Below: Pink areas are Ulster in Northern Ireland and part of the UK. Green areas are Ulster but politically part of The Republic of Ireland. Yellow is the Republic of Ireland.



TOPOGRAPHY

The Irish Terrier originated in the province of Ulster, specifically in County Antrim. Today, the region is politically divided, with six counties forming Northern Ireland and three belonging to the Republic of Ireland. The capital of Northern Ireland is Belfast, a city located at sea level along Belfast Lough, a large inlet of the North Channel. County Antrim has a predominantly Protestant population, and while English is the official language, pockets of Gaeltacht—Irish-speaking communities—exist throughout Northern Ireland, particularly in Donegal.

All of Ireland has experienced at least two glacial periods. As the ice advanced and retreated, it shaped the landscape, carving mountain lakes and glacial valleys. The soil is composed of a mixture of clay, sand deposits, and gravel, bearing evidence of the glacier's passage (Levy, 2000).

While the southern part of the island features east-west red sandstone hills interspersed with limestone valley basins, the west and northwest rest on a geological foundation of granite. Most of Ulster lies on basalt plates. Northern Ireland's major mountain ranges include the Mourne, Sperrin, Croaghgorms, and Deriveagh Mountains.

Nearly at the center of Northern Ireland is Lough Neagh, the largest lake in the British Isles (385 sq km), which connects to the North Atlantic Ocean and the Irish Sea via the Bann River. Other significant freshwater bodies include Lower Lough Erne and Upper Lough Erne in the southwest. Strangford Lough, an inlet of the Irish Sea, cuts deeply into County Down, separating a large stretch of land known as the Ards Peninsula.

CLIMATE

In winter, average temperatures range from 0 to 8°C, with precipitation between 200 and 400 mm and relative humidity between 84% and 86%, though it is lower along the coast. In summer, temperatures range from 7° to 19°C, precipitation decreases only slightly to 200–300 mm, and relative humidity remains between 80% and 84%.

Wind speeds vary from 6 to 10 knots in lower altitudes (such as lake areas) and can reach up to 20 knots in mountainous and some coastal regions (Archive, s.d.). On June 21, 2019, the sun rose at 4:50 a.m. and set at 10:05 p.m., providing 17 hours and 15 minutes of daylight. Conversely, on December 22, 2018, the sun rose at 8:46 a.m. and set at 4:02 p.m., resulting in just 7 hours and 16 minutes of daylight (date, s.d.).

HABITATS

The North of Ireland is rich in diverse habitats¹, the coast² offers the greatest variety in plant biodiversity. Caves are common, especially in the basalt and chalk cliffs, especially in Red Bay, where the composition of the rock is conglomerate or sandstone.

Bare rock faces are unique habitats, especially for some ferns, which can only grow in these conditions. The acidity and composition of the rock, along with altitude, aspect, humidity, and exposure, determine which plant species can thrive in a given area

North Ireland also has many types of open-water habitats. Fast-flowing rivers and streams dominate higher elevations, while lowland waterways, including lakes and their tributaries, merge almost imperceptibly. These interconnected systems create biologically rich environments, including slow-moving canals³ that support diverse ecosystems.

¹ (CEDaR & Ireland, 2009)

² Some different habitats along the coast are: rocky shores, sandy shores, shingle beaches, muddy shores, salt marsh, Maritime flushes and streams, brackish water bodies and sand dunes.

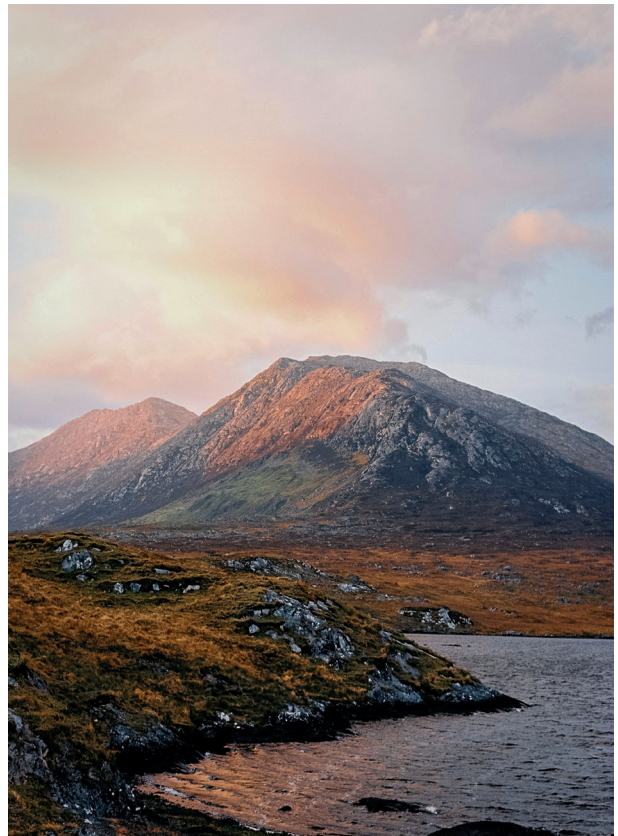
³ Before the invention of the railway, canals were the most rapid and efficient means of transporting lumber, coal or other materials and goods. Additional canals were cut to connect major centers of supply with areas of production. These projects were both private and public undertakings and represented remarkable engineering achievements, particularly in the design of locks.

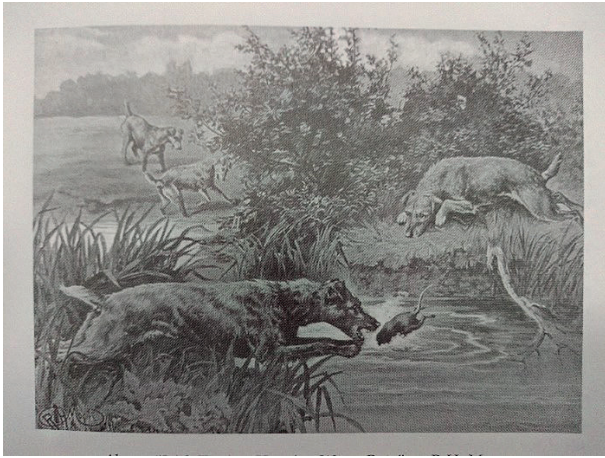
Towpaths lined either side of the entire length of the canal, and bridges had to be constructed to connect the banks. One of the most significant waterways was the Ulster Canal, completed in 1841. It stretches 24 miles (39 km) through Northern Ireland and 20 miles (32 km) through the Republic of Ireland.



Lisburn castle, County Antrim

Irish countryside





Irish Terriers catching rats along the banks of a stream



The Black Rat



The Brown Rat

THE FAUNA

While a broad variety of insects, birds, amphibians and reptiles inhabit these areas, mammals are of the most pertinent interest to this text. These can be divided into two groups from the farmer's point of view, undesirable (vermin) and highly desirable (those good for the pot or spit). Prominent members of the first group are rats. There are six types of rodents native to Ireland, two types of squirrels, two varieties of mice, and two of rats.

The **black rat**, also known as the ship rat, comes in black or gray and measures 24 cm from head to tail. He weighs about 250g. These rodents start breeding at 15 weeks of life and can carry on all year round, though the high season is between March and November. Each female produces three to five litters of three to ten offspring annually.

The **brown rat**, or common rat, measures 28 cm in length and can also be found with a black coat. The variety can be easily distinguished from the black by the shorter, thicker tail that has a scaly ringed appearance and the construction of the body, which has a hump-back shape. This rat reproduces all year long and lives anywhere near man under any conditions. Unfortunately, man's attempts to control rats with poisons has had devastating effects on the population of the rare and magnificent barn owl (Hickey, 2017).

While the rabbit is an introduced species that the Normans brought over in the twelfth century to supply meat and pelts, they are considered destructive annoyances, and considerable efforts have been made to eradicate them, including the introduction of viruses. There are two native hares: the Irish hare and the brown hare. The **Irish hare** (Bailie, 2017) is found only in Ireland and is a subspecies of the European mountain hare¹⁴. The coat is a reddish brown with a white top on the tail, and some may grow fully white winter coats. This nocturnal animal is generally 60 cm in length, with rear feet that are 15 cm long. They weigh up to 3.5 kg and reproduce from January to October. The

¹⁴ Lepus Tiimidus

female produces two to three litters of one to four leverets, which are suckled only at dusk and are weaned by three weeks of age.

The **brown hare** weighs the same as the Irish hare but is about 5 cm shorter. The coloring is similar to that of the Irish hare, though more yellow than red, and the top of the tail is dark rather than white. The breeding season starts in February, and this species has the unusual characteristic that the female can become pregnant with a second litter before delivering the first one.

Ireland has six carnivores remaining¹⁵; the red fox, otter, pine martin, badger, stoat and American mink. **Foxes** are about 65 cm long and weigh just over 5 kg. This is another nocturnal animal, though they have been sighted in daylight hours. Foxes tend to establish their earth on the edge of a woodland to access the woods and grassland. Their breeding season is in winter, and foxes form a monogamous relationship. After 52 days of pregnancy, the vixen gives birth, usually between February and April, and the male will bring home food to the family until the cubs are near seven months old. The fox is considered a pest¹⁶ by the public, and bounties have been placed on fox pelts as an incentive to control their numbers. Though their natural lifespan is up to 14 years, mortality averages much earlier due to shooting, disease, and most of all, traffic accidents.

More piscivorous than carnivorous (Lundy, 2019), **Eurasian otters** inhabit all water habitats in Ireland, including coastal areas. They mark their territory, which may range over several kilometers, with



The Irish hare

¹⁵ Carnivores that are now extinct in Ireland are: Arctic lemming (*Dicrostonyx torquatus*), Norway lemming (*Lemmus lemmus*), the brown bear (*Ursus arctos*), spotted hyena (*Crocuta crocuta*), wolf (*Canis lupus*), Arctic fox (*Alopex lagopus*), lynx (*Felis lynx*), wild boar (*Sus scrofa*), as well as the herbivores, musk ox (*Ovibos moschatus*) and the Reindeer (*Rangifer tarandus* and many other species

¹⁶ A wildlife foundation in Ireland proved that lamb mortality is the same in areas with a fox population as in those without any foxes at all. This comparison provides a good basis upon which they affirm that foxes are more scavengers than predators and may not be as threatening to man's activities as previously thought. (Jones, 2011)

The Fox



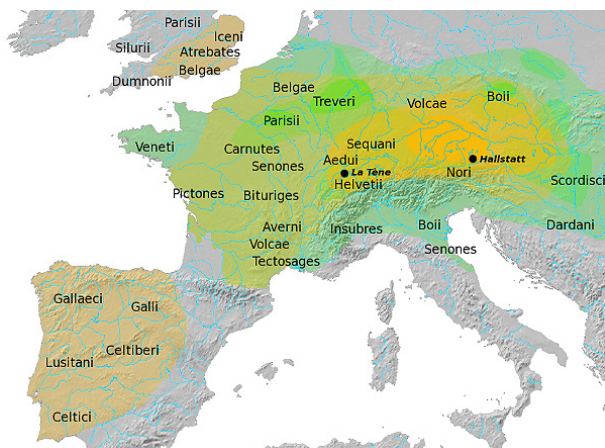


Dolmen



La Tène artifact

La Tène culture sites



ANTIQUITY

THE CELTIC WORLD

Historians had a much clearer picture of Celtic culture fifty years ago than today. This is because much has come to light from continuing research in archeology, historical linguistics, and DNA research, thus, a new theory has evolved that disassociates the various elements of 'Celticness'. Art style, customs, religion, military tactics, and language varied among different cultures from the Iron¹ Age to the Medieval period across Central Europe and the British Isles.

Groups that adopted one or more of the 'Celtic' ways may not necessarily be related genetically to another group of people who shared various aspects of 'Celtic' culture - also termed Hallstatt culture or La Tène culture. Historians now refer to 'The Celtic World', (Paxton, 2018) which includes various cultures, in a broad geographic area where one or more aspects of Celtic culture have been part of the lifestyle of the residents.

One major characteristic that can identify a culture as Celtic is its distinctive artistic style. Artifacts such as jewelry and weapons decorated with what we now recognize as Celtic motifs are classified as La Tène-style art. This name originates from an archaeological site where significant examples of this style were discovered. Another key factor in identifying a group as Celtic is language. Celtic languages developed differently across various geographical regions over time. Evidence of these languages has survived in written inscriptions on stone and in their evolved spoken forms, which are still used in some Celtic regions today.

THE CLASSICAL WORLD AND THE CELTS

Historians gain valuable insight into the past through texts written by the Greeks and Romans, who were contemporaries of the Celtic tribes to the north. These ancient writers referred to these groups by various names, including barbarians, Gauls, and Kel-

¹ During the Stone Age, which preceded the Iron Age, Ireland was inhabited by tribal societies whose stone megaliths and earthworks still stand today.

toi—a term that later evolved into the word Celts². While the content of classical texts cannot be considered entirely reliable, we can learn much.

An interesting point is that classical writers never used the word Celts to refer to the inhabitants of the British Isles, though similar cultures in Europe and northern Italy were identified by that name. The Romans, in their conquest of Cisalpine and Transalpine Gaul (Alan), consistently depicted the Celts as fierce adversaries. The various Celtic tribes were often engaged in conflicts among themselves. While they occasionally formed alliances, they never unified to establish an empire or mount coordinated resistance against the Romans, who ultimately conquered them, one group at a time

Some of the northern mediteranean areas aspired to come under Roman control and protection. The area of modern Marseilles was under fierce attack by the Slavs, so they invited the Romans to sail up and annex their lands in return for defense against the invaders. The Romans agreed, gaining into the bargain a strategic waterway into the heart of Gaul up the Rhone. This delta region later became known as The Provence, a name that endures today, albeit with a French accent: Provence.

Other Celtic groups hated the Romans even long after being integrated into the empire, the Boii, for example, who had lived in the northern part of the Italian peninsula were among the first tribes to be taken under the Roman umbrella, and they never settled down to enjoy citizenship. Hannibal took advantage of this dynamic and secretly plotted with them as allies within 'Rome' while he marched all the way up the Mediterranean coast of Spain and crossed the Alps³ with his elephants. There is reason to believe that Celts were his guides through the mountains and as they were arriving, the Boii moved out to engage the Roman army, which had begun marching north to stay the threat.

When Hannibal was finally subdued, the Romans re-



The borders of Gaul with Northern Italy



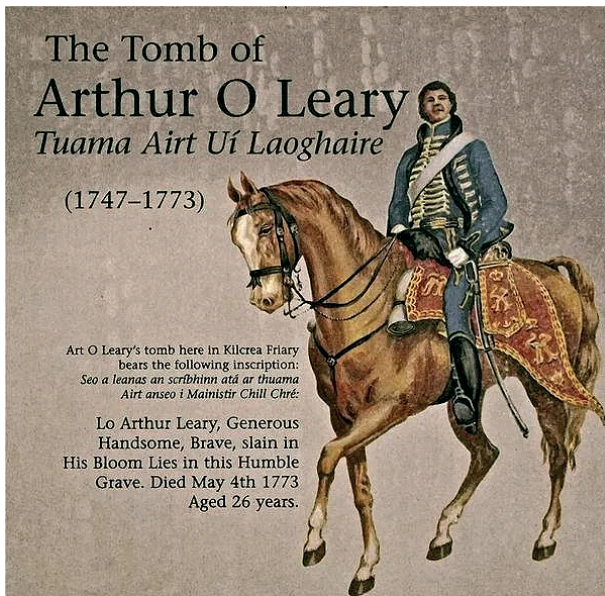
Reinactment of the march of Hannibal with elephants

Celt prisoner wearing a torque



2 Romans used the term Keltoi and later Celtae also Galli or Gauls

3 For recent research into this journey please see (Holloway, 2016)

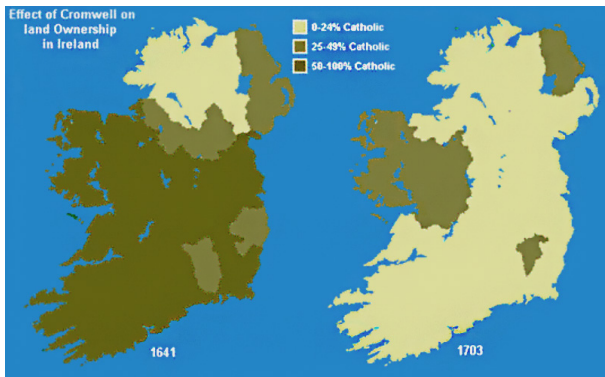


The tale of O'Leary is still sung today

O'Leary was born in a Catholic family in Cork but was educated on the continent. There he served in the Hungarian Hussar regiment and became a military success. Having gained the favor of the Empress Teresa of Austria, she gifted him a magnificent horse. O'Leary came home to his native Ireland and married an O'Connell. The High Sheriff of Cork had a feud to settle with the dashing man and according to law, demanded that O'Leary sell him the fabulous horse for 5 pounds. O'Leary refused and was found dead shortly thereafter. His wife narrates the poem, or cry of lament in the classic Irish tradition of the (keen) Caoineadh²⁹.

*I leaped upon your mare
I clapped my hands in frenzy
I followed every sign
With all the skill I knew
Until I found you lying
Dead near a furze bush
Without pope or bishop
Or cleric or priest
To say a prayer for you
....
I will never be healed
Till Art O'Leary
Comes back to me
I am a locked trunk
The key is lost
I must wait till rust
Devours the screw*

How Cromwell changed land ownership in Ireland



The appropriation of Catholic lands distributed to Protestant families, begun under Elizabeth and pursued by Cromwell, William and Mary, and successive monarchs had created a powerful landed protestant governing body known as the Protestant Ascendancy. Dublin, as the seat of the Irish Parliament, became the stage upon which the powerful defined themselves with grand homes, framed by elegant avenues and squares. The glittering social season followed the rhythms of Parliament with balls, parties, dinners and theatre

²⁹ To hear the dirge in Irish please see: (Michael, 2011)

when the house was sitting, followed by a retreat to their estates and large house parties during the vacation. The outskirts of Dublin, however, consisted of the tenements of the poor and evicted. With nowhere to go, they had drifted to Dublin. As many as eleven people were crowded into a single room, and occasionally one of the dilapidated buildings would collapse. These conditions came to the notice of Johnathan Swift.

Born into an Anglo-Irish family, he had attended a prominent boarding school and Trinity College, and in 1688 left for England. There, in 1704, he was ordained. Through family connections, he obtained the post of secretary to an English diplomat where he was occupied with social and political issues. After a brief stint in Ireland, Swift returned to his post in England ambitious for preferment to a prestigious position in England. Try as he might, the best that came his way was a deanship at St. Patrick's in Dublin, which in his eyes amounted to exile from the inner circle of government to which he had become accustomed. Once in Dublin, however, the conditions of the poor deeply touched him. From the body of writing³⁰ he produced in his lifetime we have the powerful *A Modest Proposal* (1729)³¹ in which he satirized English derision of the Irish people by suggesting that the two pressing crises, food shortage and overpopulation, be simultaneously resolved by butchering Irish children.

"A young healthy child well nursed, is, at a year old, a most delicious nourishing and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled; and I make no doubt that it will equally serve in a fricassee or a ragout."

The people of Ireland, both dissenters and Catholics, had very few professional options. The Catholic gentry had been disenfranchised, the clergy executed or exiled, and the soldiers had left the country. The law barred them from most professions and even education. Though the Protestant North had developed some in-

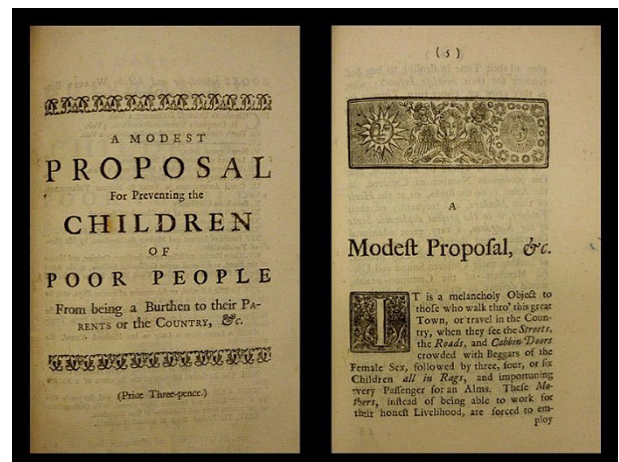
³⁰ Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* was another bitter social satire that concluded that horses were more civil than humans

³¹ For a good overview of facts about this work please see: (British Library, n.d.)



Johnathan Swift by Charles Jervas 1718

Swift's influential *A Modest Proposal*





The Irish today maintains the instinct to hunt vermin to a good degree and can be trained for his original function

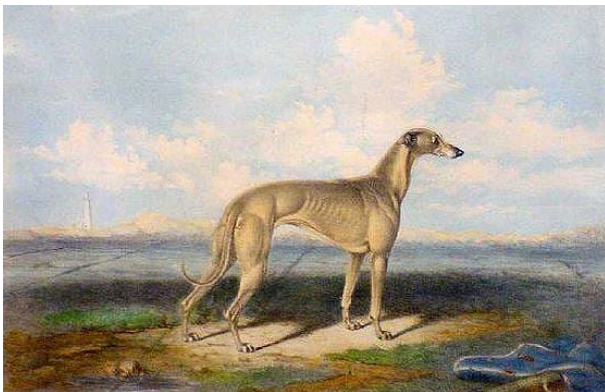
EMERGENCE OF THE BREED

SETTING THE SCENE

Let us set the scene for the entrance of the Irish Terrier by considering the world from which the breed emerged with other Terriers and dog breeds in a general way. Terriers in Ireland were a native variety of dog, kept by humans to clear rats in the farmyard and exterminate any other vermin¹. Nature was by far the leading breeder. If a dog was good at a job, it was kept on, if a bitch came into whelp, the pups that no one wanted were usually dropped in a bucket of water, especially during the famine years, when there was no food to give to children, so keeping a dog was beyond a family's resources. A farmer who managed to scratch out a subsistence might keep one dog for night time poaching on the Lord's estate - a small quiet² animal, racy enough to run down a hare, sturdy enough to tackle a small deer and rugged enough to resist the climate.

"Few people in those early days gave much attention to the appearance of their Terriers, and if they were game and good at destroying rats and other vermin, they would be kept and bred from, and as these Terriers were principally owned by farmers and cottiers, who kept one or two roaming about their houses and farms, they were hardly likely to be very select in the matter of breeding" (Lee, 1893, p 214)

Bed of Stone, whelped in 1868 -- she became the first Greyhound ever to win all three Waterloo divisions: the Waterloo Purse (1870), the Waterloo Plate (1871) and the Waterloo Cup (1872)



Wealthier families in Britain would keep sighthounds, and, in Ireland, the Kerry Beagle perhaps a Setter. When fox hunting came into vogue toward the end

-
- 1 Note: Vermin is a relative term in that a creature is considered a pest because it presents an annoyance to the population. The universally annoying 'vermin' are rats and mice, which raided larders, cultivations, and were believed to spread sickness. Other members of the category are thieving hares, rabbits, weasels and badgers, as well as any animal invading farmyards or fields. For example, otters were also commonly included in this group in lake areas where they abounded.
 - 2 Irish terriers are not noisy enough, fighting and taking their punishment in silence, nor do they 'bay' their game like other terriers. ...as a rule run mute (Lee, 1893, p208-9)

of the 17th century, a Terrier might be kept among the hounds to go to ground after the fox, or he was called for from a nearby cottage. He would be a small sort, (39 cm or less) to fit easily inside a fox den.

These were not the breeds we find in the rings today, simply dogs who could do their job well. A Setter³ was a dog who could set, a hound was good for the chase. There was no kennel club, and the word pedigree was not common, except to say that it was 'Lord Sefton's hound'. There were records of bloodlines for Greyhounds, but even these were not very informative compared to the document we call a pedigree today.

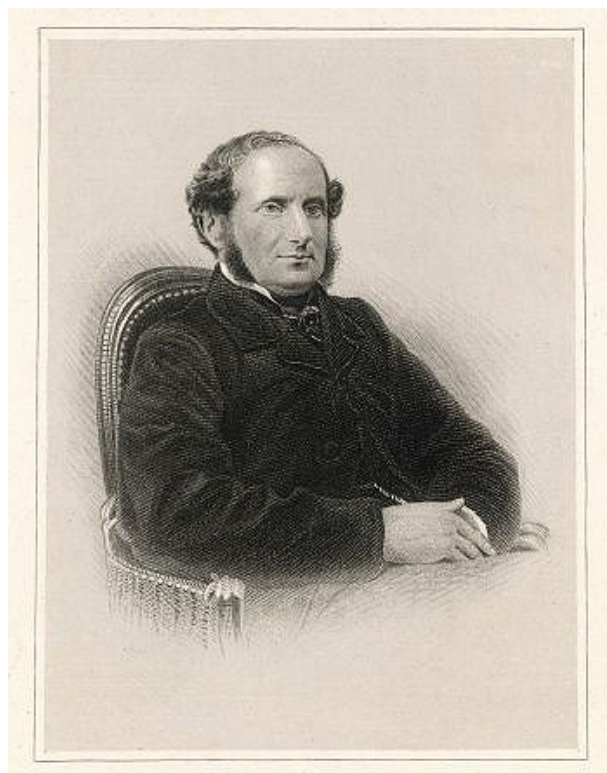
There were a few other varieties of dogs⁴ that had developed sufficiently to have a specific type, The King Charles was a small Spaniel identified according to the bloodline of the owner (Duke x's bitch), and more common dogs such as the Pug were mixed without any records or attention to type or morphology. A mastiff was a type of large fearsome dog kept for guarding, but hardly the breed now carefully bred to the standard recognized as a Mastiff. Phenotype of many different dogs was often recognizable due to geographic limitations. Dogs such as the Collie, and the Saint Bernard were types of dogs that were popular coming into the Victorian era, but they came in all sizes and colors breeding was very much a question of geography, with more emphasis on dogs that worked well rather than any considerations of esthetics.

"The difference between pre-and post-breed dogs can be compared to how colors appear in a rainbow versus on a modern paint sample card. The former has distinct colors, but these vary in hue and shade, bleeding into one another where they meet. The latter consists of distinct, separate and uniform blocks of color. If the small number of dog varieties in the early nineteenth century can be seen as akin to the seven colors of the rainbow, then the 204 breeds now recognized by the British Kennel Club (or



Painting of a King Charles Spaniel by Henry Bernard circa 1800

John Henry Walsh (1818-1888) the inventor of the standard



3 Writing before the turn of the century rarely capitalized terms identifying dogs such as a setter or pointer.

4 40 types were entered into the first volume of the kennel club studbook, the majority of these only recently developed or invented.

CLASS XXX.—WIRE-HAIRED TERRIERS AND
IRISH TERRIERS.

DOGS AND BITCHES.

3522. CHAPLIN.—Mr. J. Denton's, Reindeer Tap, Doncaster; breeder,
Mr. H. Chaplin, M.P.
Chief Performance: Manchester, Free Trade Hall, 2nd prize, 1873.

582

KENNEL CLUB STUD BOOK.

3523. DAISY.—Mr. J. Connor's, 44, Ranelagh, Dublin; breeder, owner;
born 1872 (Irish terrier).
Pedigree: By P. Flaming's *Young Stinger* out of *Granne*, by *Toby*
out of *Daisy*, by *Old Squeezer*, by *Bryan's Nat*.
Chief Performance: Dublin, 1st prize, 1873.

3524. FLY.—Mr. N. Morton's, Brookville, Ballymena; breeder, Mr.
Mickey Dooly (Irish terrier).
Pedigree: By *Sailor* out of *Gilmore's bitch*.
Chief Performance: Dublin, 2nd prize, 1873.

3525. TIP.—Mr. T. Wootton's, Mapperley, Notts; breeder. Mr. G.
Sanderson, of Cottenham; born 1872.
Pedigree: By *Kendall's Old Tip* of the *Sinnington Hounds*.
Chief Performances: Crystal Palace, 1st prize, 1873; Birmingham,
2nd prize, 1873; Nottingham, 4th prize, 1873.

3526. TURPIN.—Mr. T. Wootton's, Mapperley, Notts; breeder, Mr. G.
Sanderson.
Chief Performances: Manchester, Free Trade Hall, 3rd prize,
1873; Nottingham, 3rd prize, 1873.

3527. VENTURE.—Mr. T. Wootton's; breeder. Mr. G. Sanderson; born
1871.
Pedigree: By *Kendall's Old Tip*.
Chief Performances: Birmingham, 2nd prize, 1872; 1st prize,
1873; Crystal Palace, 2nd prize, 1873; Manchester, Free Trade
Hall, 1st prize, 1873; Nottingham, 2nd prize, 1873.

3528. WASP.—Mr. T. Wootton's, Mapperley, Notts.
Chief Performance: Nottingham, 1st prize, 1873.

Very early entry of the Irish Terrier in the Kennel Club
stud book pp 581 and 582

Bank of Ireland, Waterford, built by Sandham Symes
(1807-1894)



FIRST TRACES

The unionist North of Ireland enjoyed slightly more stability than the South due to the general desire of the people to maintain the status quo and the presence of a few major industries which brought some life into the economy. Gentlemen of those parts looked to London as their capital, and, to a certain degree, lived the life of the English country gentry. When they read of the newly styled 'dog shows', they were anxious to try this out for themselves. Ireland had native Setters, Pointers, Hounds and Terriers and they were certainly not to be found behindhand to their English counterparts. The first news of the existence of an 'Irish Terrier' was a rumor circulating in 1870, '*claims ...made that a most ancient breed of Terrier was rediscovered...*' (Montgomery, 1948, p. 9).

In the first KC stud book of 1874, Mr. Wootton's Venture (whelped 1871 by Sanderson) won second place⁹ at the Birminham show of 1872 which is the earliest show record under the heading 'Wire haired and Irish Terrier'. 1873 saw Mr. Wootton's Tip, Turpin, and Wasp all bred by Mr. Sanderson, Mr. Connor's 'Daisy' bred by himself, and Mr. Morton's 'Fly' bred by Mr. Doolley. These first records are retrospective registrations of dog shows at the opening of the English Kennel Club¹⁰ stud book. (The activities of showing began before the emergence of the regulating body which came to preside over them, so it was decided that 15 year's worth of results prior to the foundation of the KC were to be part of their records.) Since Montgomery¹¹ only mentions Fly and Daisy, we can suppose that the earlier Venture was not recognized by later generations as an Irish Terrier but only a generic wire haired Terrier.

Mr. R. J. Ridgway of Waterford¹² published the first

9 Second to whom we know not - no other entry is listed for 1872.

10 Note that the Irish Kennel Club was not yet founded, and that even today they do not keep a stud book

11 Dr. E. S. Montgomery, author of *The Complete Irish Terrier*

12 The Waterford Geneology group on social media mentions a Mr. Henry Ridgway. In 1864, his daughter Eliza married a banker. There may be some connection between this family and this Richard J. Ridgway.

account of an Irish Terrier called Antrim Jess. Repair work was being done inside a bank and the team bored through one of the walls.

‘...at one place a rat bolted. Jess had him almost before he cleared the hole. Then came another and another, so fast that the work was getting too hot for the Terrier, when a happy thought seemed to strike her. While in the act of killing a very big one, she leaned down her shoulders to block the hole, then let them out one by one, until she had killed 18 rats.’ (Montgomery, 1948, p. 11)

Mr. Ridgway was a founding member of the club and the person to draft the first scale of points for the breed. The first shows with a class open exclusively to the Irish Terrier mentioned by Montgomery were:

1873 Dublin show, won by the bitch called Daisy owned by Mr. J O’Connor.

1874 Newtownards October show won by Mr. Morton’s Fly¹³.

Fly is described as having a golden-toned coat of hard hair, compactly built, weighing in at 18 pounds (8 kg) and her expression spoke of ‘*kindliness, wisdom and pluck*’ (Montgomery, 1948, p. 14). This dog also became the first champion of the breed. However, while the label ‘Irish Terrier’ existed for that class, the ring did not present a group of dogs that was homogenous. The Irishmen brought their Terriers to the show and, quite understandably, entered their dogs as an ‘Irish Terrier’. The winners of two of the 1875 shows were of entirely different appearances: At the Lisburn show it was Stinger: ‘*Long-backed and short-legged with a dark blue, grizzled colored body, tan legs, and turned-out feet*’ (Montgomery, 1948, p. 15) -Possibly a precursor of the Glen of Imaal.

While at Belfast in July we find Mr. O’Connell’s Slasher: ‘*Very good looking wire coated working Terrier excelling as a field and water dog ... lint white in color and reputedly de-*

¹³ The author suspects that these were Mickey Dooley’s dogs that had changed hands but is not aware of any records confirming this.

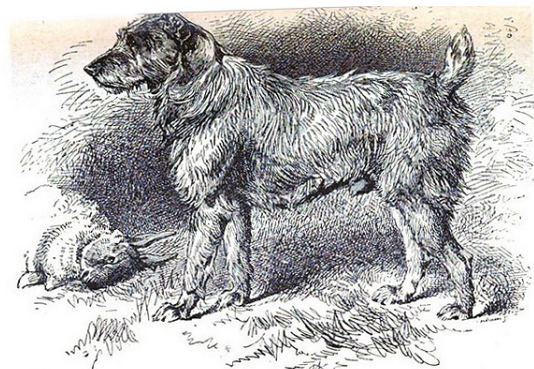


FIG. 29. — Cliford (K.C.S.B. 16,058) Irish Terrier à M. J. D. Lunsden (figure empruntée au Stock Keeper).

From *Le Chien et ses Races* by Pierre Megnin, 1897 - p97
Note that this image was sourced by P. Megnin from the UK journal *The Stock Keeper*, and set poorly in the original edition of the text since the ears were cut off

This version of the image used by Vero Shaw is reprinted by Jowett and Henry on p 25, The illustration is based on the dog Sporter owned by Mr. W. Graham and later by Mr. G. Krehl



The Irish Terrier
from Stonehenge's *The Dog*, Fourth Edition, 1887



INTRODUCTION

The standard of Perfection for the Irish Terrier, while it describes the breed in general, is of necessity, somewhat limited as to detail, for it is intended to serve as a concise guide to fanciers and judges having a basic knowledge of breed characteristics.

(Montgomery, 1948, p. 53)

The importance of the standard in guiding judges and breeders can hardly be overestimated, yet, as Montgomery points out, it is an abbreviated document and some prior knowledge on the part of the reader is presumed by the writers. The Irish Terrier standard emerged from much thought and discussion when first drafted and has been occasionally modified over the years both in format and content.

WHERE IS TYPE ADDRESSED?

If you are looking for an Irish Terrier, you want a dog that looks, acts, and can work like an Irish Terrier, not an Airedale, Fox Terrier, Vizsla, or any other dog. Type, therefore, is the first consideration of breeders, judges and pet owners. Breed specific elements of construction are the physical ingredients of type, and there are two sets of ingredients, adaptive and distinctive¹

To illustrate this idea, let's briefly view FCI Terrier section two, small Terriers. A Jack Russell Terrier, that must go to ground, would not be a good JRT unless it could fit in the den therefore a specific height, and chest shape are specified in their standard. However, there are a few other breeds that must go to ground after the fox or hare (Fox Terrier, Parson Russell and Border to name the closest cousins) who have similar height and chest requirements, yet there is completely different type in each of these breeds. When contemplating the relative qualities² in these breeds we must say that the basic requirements of a



¹ Please see the chart on page 198.

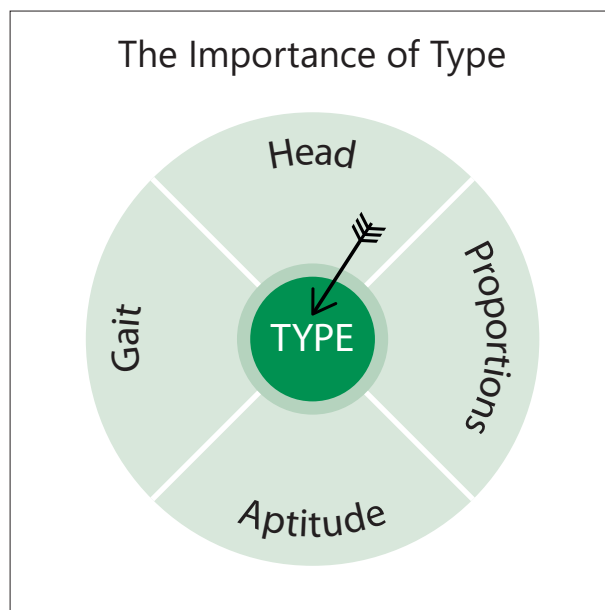
² Relative qualities are the breed specific qualities described in the standard. "Breed type is all aspects of relative quality." - Walter Gorrieri.

burrowing dog are the first half of the shopping list (adaptive), and the second half is those qualities that distinguish the breed from similar types (distinctive).

WHO DECIDES WHAT IS WRITTEN?

Breed specialists (primarily officers of the breed club) from the country of origin (Ireland) are responsible for the custodianship of the standard. This document is approved at the national level, and adopted at the international level. (Except the AKC, which writes their own standards for all breeds.)

All standards have been updated over time for purposes of clarification, to make changes in some aspect of the breed either due to fashion, to improve the health of the breed, or to comply with modifications in wording required by an organization such as the FCI. However, most standards have failed to pick up the glove tossed by the 1934 Standards Committee presentation in Monaco and have yet to include measurements, specific points of reference and other points essential to a well-curated archive of the breed³. In the 1934 World Cynological Conference, the mission of the standard was discussed⁴.



Type is our central concern - it draws from each of the major aspects of the dog

3 Mother clubs not only curate the standard, including clarification of the content to countries transalting the standard, and compliance with aspects of format, but usually also adopt at least one comment on the standard/extended standard that proposes definitions, ranges of correct values, tables of ideal measurements, analysis of faults, and images of the points of the standard applied to various cases.

4 «En 1934, au Congrès Cynologique Mondial de Monaco, s'élevant contre l'imprécision des standards, le professeur Solaro (Italie), monsieur Hüge (Belgique) et le docteur vétérinaire Herout (France) faisaient admettre, concernant le standard type, le vœu suivant:

- "À l'effet de permettre aux organismes réunis à Monaco, dans le but:
- de donner des directives aux éleveurs, et fixer les limites entre lesquelles la conformation d'un chien peut varier,
- de réduire au minimum l'amplitude des oscillations d'une race, nous demandons que des mensurations d'ordre essentiel (d'un point osseux à un autre point osseux)
- du prototype de chaque race, soient indiquées dans le standard. stimant que les mensurations sont le complément indispensable d'un standard, nous émettons le vœu que tous les champions soient mesurés.»



Graceful racy outline

As a terrier he is bred too large for going to earth after the smaller vermin, but for all above ground work he is unexcelled, although not as injudicious admirers will have it, unequalled; added to his undeniable “varmint” look, his racing build shows speed and nimbleness, most useful qualities in rabbiting, ratting, and kindred sports. They are excellent, too, as water dogs, and the coat short and hard, with a close soft inner jacket, is a first rate wet resister. (Dalziel 1897)

Speed as well as endurance



of clumsiness, as speed and endurance as well as power is very essential. The Irish Terrier must be neither “cloddy nor cobby” but should be framed on the “lines of speed” showing a graceful racy outline.

This paragraph helps put the most immediate element of correct type into focus. An excellent Irish will strike a balance between power and grace.

Active and lively are descriptions of the temperament, which indicate that the dog shows interest in his environment, people and other dogs with a noticeable level of energy and moderate reactivity. In fulfilling his role as guardian of the farm and family, he ought to be keeping an eye on everything going on around him, but in a sanguine and calculating manner. He is constantly evaluating the need for action, and a useful dog will not act unless the circumstances require, showing a good level of self-control and understanding.

Therefore, dogs that are nervous or aggressive show a lack of valuable temperament as much as a lax or disinterested one or, worst of all, a dog showing fearful behavior. These words also ought to describe the general condition of the dog, a healthy animal and sound all through.

Lithe and wiry describe points of the physical appearance, specifically the lean quality of muscle, bone and substance the dog should present. This is directly connected to his racy build, but also to the social background of the dog. Since there was a scarce diet available at the time this breed was developed, it needed to have power and endurance without physical mass. The muscles must be hard and flat along the body.

Looking at the body from above there is a very subtle difference of width moving from the shoulder to the ribcage to the hips. There is a powerful ‘bridge’ of muscle along the lumbar region of the spine above the loin. Under this ‘bridge’, the area of the loin should feel well developed but there is a slight inward curve about as long as the width of a medium female hand. The whole body of the dog should look and feel ‘of a piece’.

Synonyms of wiry are ‘lean’ and ‘sinewy’. This leads us to the next phrase, which draws a balance.

Lots of substance, at the same time free of clumsiness, as speed and endurance as well as power is very essential.

This is the beauty and the challenge to all breeders

and judges of the Irish Terrier. A great dog must exemplify both power and elegance (we find the counterpoint to 'power' in the next phrase of the standard with the word 'graceful'). In one moment, the observer thinks that the dog might be a bit too lean, and then he appears perhaps a bit too stocky, then again, the other way. The mind keeps pulling between the two the longer you look, and the eye keeps returning to that dog for a fresh evaluation. Optimal grooming will highlight the straight column of the thoracic limb, supporting the solid framework of the dog, and the strong straight topline and powerful rear muscles maintain that effect. The crested neck, wave of underline and freedom of movement introduce a contrasting grace and lightness.

The Irish Terrier must be neither "cloddy nor cobby" but should be framed on the "lines of speed" showing a graceful racy outline

Cloddy is a term used to describe mass consisting of heavy bone and visible muscle.

Cobby refers to proportions of shapes and their relation to one another, a term derived from the characteristics of the Cobb horse. The neck leads immediately into the back and almost skips the loin to get to the croup. The form is deep and full compared to the length.

The opposite is a streamlined form - racy, where there is no hurry to move from neck to back etc. Depth and width do not prevail over the length.

Of the many differences in the images of horses, (above right) note the two different croups. The cobby horse has a full apple-shaped hindquarter while the racy thoroughbred has an almond-shaped croup in which much of the anatomy is evident. Cobby animals tend to be square in proportion; dogs such as the Fox Terrier and the Airedale Terrier are described as cobby.

The Irish should be rectangular, which is a body longer than height at withers. The concept, 'racy outline' is the most defining characteristic of the Irish Terrier though it is tempered by the prior description of power and substance.

A stringy, leggy dog may be racy but entirely lacks correct type. A dog with heavy bones and a broad body may be powerful, but also lacks correct type.

Racy



Example of an Irish Thoroughbred stallion a 'racy' breed

Cobby



Example of a Cobb horse bred for power, from which the term cobby is derived



Viewed from above



First Glance-Limits

Length/ Height-All square



Chest/Limb-All unequal



Mass-All excessive



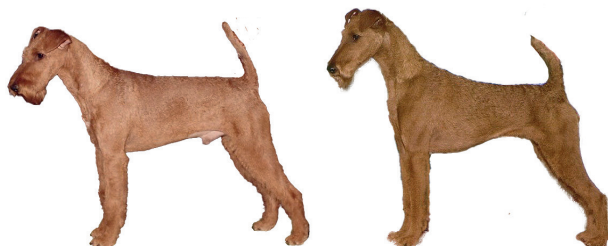


Ideal: Racy, versatile, moderate

Finer points



The underline is a key ingredient for racy, these otherwise quality dogs have limited breed type due to the underline



On the left the chest depth and loin tuck up are both limited. On the right, the racy quality is beyond moderate - a bit Sighthoundy

Too overdone to be racy, the muscular development of the first is excessive - the second has heavy bone



COMPARISON OF STANDARDS

General Appearance

FCI-Ireland: The dog must present an active, lively, lithe and wiry appearance; lots of substance, at the same time free of clumsiness, as speed and endurance as well as power is very essential. The Irish Terrier must be neither “cloddy nor cobby” but should be framed on the “lines of speed” showing a graceful racy outline.

RKC: An active, lively and wiry appearance; plenty of substance but free of clumsiness. Neither cloddy nor cobby but showing a graceful racy outline.

AKC: The over-all appearance of the Irish Terrier is important. In conformation he must be more than a sum of his parts. He must be all-of-a piece, a balanced vital picture of symmetry, proportion and harmony. Furthermore, he must convey character. This terrier must be active, lithe and wiry in movement, with great animation; sturdy and strong in substance and bone structure, but at the same time free from clumsiness, for speed, power and endurance are most essential. The Irish Terrier must be neither “cobby” nor “cloddy,” but should be built on lines of speed with a graceful, racing outline.

Modest tuck up, is typical of a Dachshund.
Defined tuck up is the hallmark of Sighthounds

