



<https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/>

The complete book of the dog,

London, Cassell and company, Ltd., 1922.

<https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/bibliography/44977>

Item: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/97704>

Article/Chapter Title: New Book of the Dog

Author(s): Robert Leighton

Page(s): Page 234, Page 235, Page 236, Text, Text, Page 237, Page 238, Page 239

Holding Institution: University of British Columbia Library (archive.org)

Sponsored by: University of British Columbia Library

Generated 14 November 2017 11:57 AM

<https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/pdf4/071615700097704>

This page intentionally left blank.

CHAPTER XVI

The Terriers of Ireland and of Wales

THE IRISH TERRIER—THE KERRY BLUE—THE WELSH TERRIER—THE SEALYHAM

The Irish Terrier.—Than the dare-devil Irish Terrier there is no breed of dog more genuinely loved by those who have sufficient experience and knowledge to make the comparison. Other dogs have a larger share of innate wisdom, others are most æsthetically beautiful, others more peaceable; but our rufous friend has a way of winning into his owner's heart and making there an abiding place which is all the more secure because it is gained by sincere and undemonstrative devotion. He may be but an indifferent specimen of his kind, taken in as a stranger at the gates; but when at length the inevitable time arrives, as it does all too soon in canine nature, one then discovers how surely one has been harbouring an angel unawares.

Statistics are not necessary to show that in numbers the Fox-terrier justifies the reputation of being a more popular breed, and the Scottish Terrier has always been a formidable competitor for public esteem. It is safe, however, to say that the Irish Terrier is one of the most popular terriers in the British Isles. This fact taken into consideration, it is interesting to reflect that fifty years ago the "Dare-Devil" was virtually unknown in England. Idstone, in his book on dogs, published in 1872, did not give a word of mention to the breed, and dog shows had been instituted sixteen years before a class was opened for the Irish Terrier. The dog existed, of course, in its native land. It may indeed be almost truthfully said to have existed "as long as that country has been an island."

About the year 1875, experts were in dispute over the Irish Terrier, and many averred that his rough coat and length of hair on forehead and muzzle were indubitable proof of Scottish

blood. His very expression, they said, was Scottish. But the argument was quelled by more knowing disputants on the other side, who claimed that Ireland had never been without her terrier, and that she owed no manner of indebtedness to Scotland for a dog whose every hair was essentially Irish.

In the same year at a show held in Belfast a goodly number of the breed were brought together, notable among them being Mr. D. O'Connell's Slasher, a very good-looking wire-coated working terrier, who is said to have excelled as a field and water dog. Slasher was lint white in colour, and reputed to be descended from a pure white strain. Two other terriers of the time were Mr. Morton's Fly (the first Irish Terrier to gain a championship) and Mr. George Jamison's Sport.

The prominent Irish Terriers of the 'seventies varied considerably in type. Stinger, who won the first prize at Lisburn in 1875, was long-backed and short-legged, with a "dark blue grizzle coloured back, tan legs, and white turned-out feet." The dam of Mr. Burke's Killeney Boy was a rough black-and-tan, a combination of colours which was believed to accompany the best class of coats. Brindles were not uncommon. Some were tall on the leg, some short; some were lanky and others cobby; many were very small. There were classes given at a Dublin Show in 1874 for Irish Terriers under 9 lb. weight.

Jamison's Sport is an important dog historically, for various reasons. He was undoubtedly more akin to our present type than any other Irish Terrier of his time of which there is record. His dark ears were uncropped at a period when cropping was general; his weight approximated to our modern average. He was an all-coloured red, and his legs were of a length that would not now be seriously objected to. But in his day he was not accepted as typical, and he was not particularly successful in the show ring. The distinguished terrier of his era was Burke's Killeney Boy, to whom, and to Mr. W. Graham's bitch Erin, with whom he was mated, nearly all the pedigrees of the best Irish Terriers of to-day date back. Erin was said to be superior in all respects to any of her breed previous to 1880. In her first litter by Killeney Boy were Play Boy, Pretty Lass, Poppy, Gerald, Pagan II, and Peggy, every one of whom became famous. More than one of these showed the black markings of their granddam, and

their progeny for several generations were apt to throw back to the black-and-tan, grey, or brindle colouring. Play Boy and Poppy were the best of Erin's first litter. The dog's beautiful ears, which were left as Nature made them, were transmitted to his son Bogie Rattler, who was sire of Bachelor and Benedict, the latter the most successful stud dog of his time. Poppy had a rich red coat, and this colour recurred with fair regularity in her descendants. Red, which had not at first been greatly appreciated, came gradually to be the accepted colour of an Irish Terrier's jacket. Occasionally it tended towards flaxen ; occasionally to a deep rich auburn ; but the black and brindle were so rigidly bred out that by the year 1890, or thereabout, they very seldom recurred. Nowadays it is not often that any other colour than red is seen in a litter of Irish Terriers, although a white patch on the breast is frequent, as it is in all self-coloured breeds.

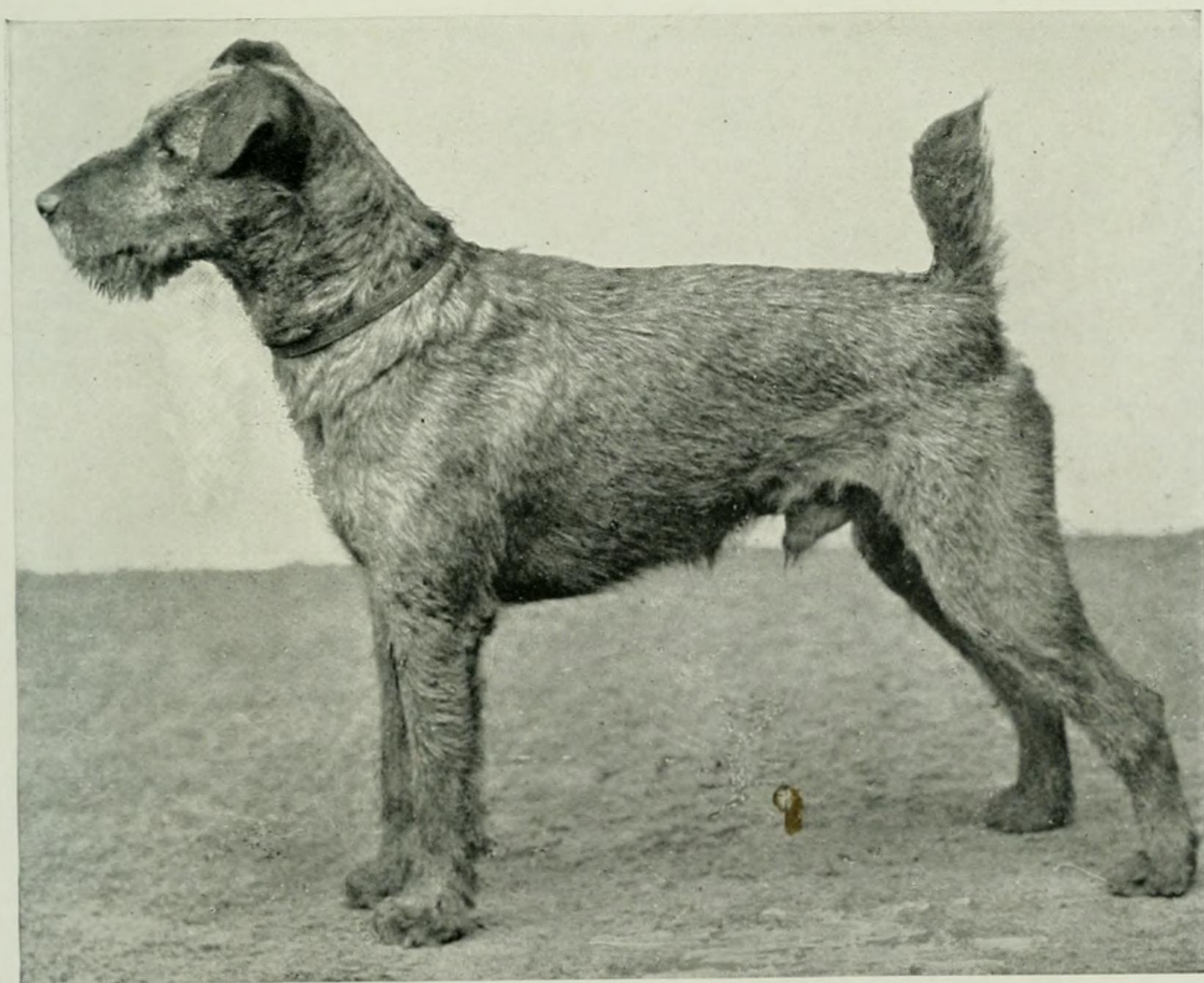
In addition to the early celebrities already named, Extreme Carelessness, Michael, Brickbat, Poppy II, Moya Doolan, Straight Tip, and Gaelic have taken their places in the records of the breed, while yet more recent Irish Terriers who have achieved fame have been Mrs. Butcher's Bawn Boy and Bawn Beauty, Mr. Wallace's Treasurer, Mr. S. Wilson's Bolton Woods Mixer, Dr. Smyth's Sarah Kidd, and Mr. C. J. Barnett's Breda Muddler.

Naturally in the case of a breed which has departed from its original type, discussions were frequent before a standard of perfection for the Irish Terrier was fixed. His size and weight, the length or shortness of his limbs, the carriage of his tail, the form of his skull and muzzle, the colour and texture of his coat were the subjects of controversy. Red was acknowledged to be the one and only colour for an Irish Terrier. But some held that the correct red should be deep auburn, and others that wheaten colour was the tone to be aimed at. A medium shade between the two extremes is now generally preferred. As to size, it should be about midway between that of the Airedale and the Fox-terrier, represented by a weight of from 22 to 27 lb.

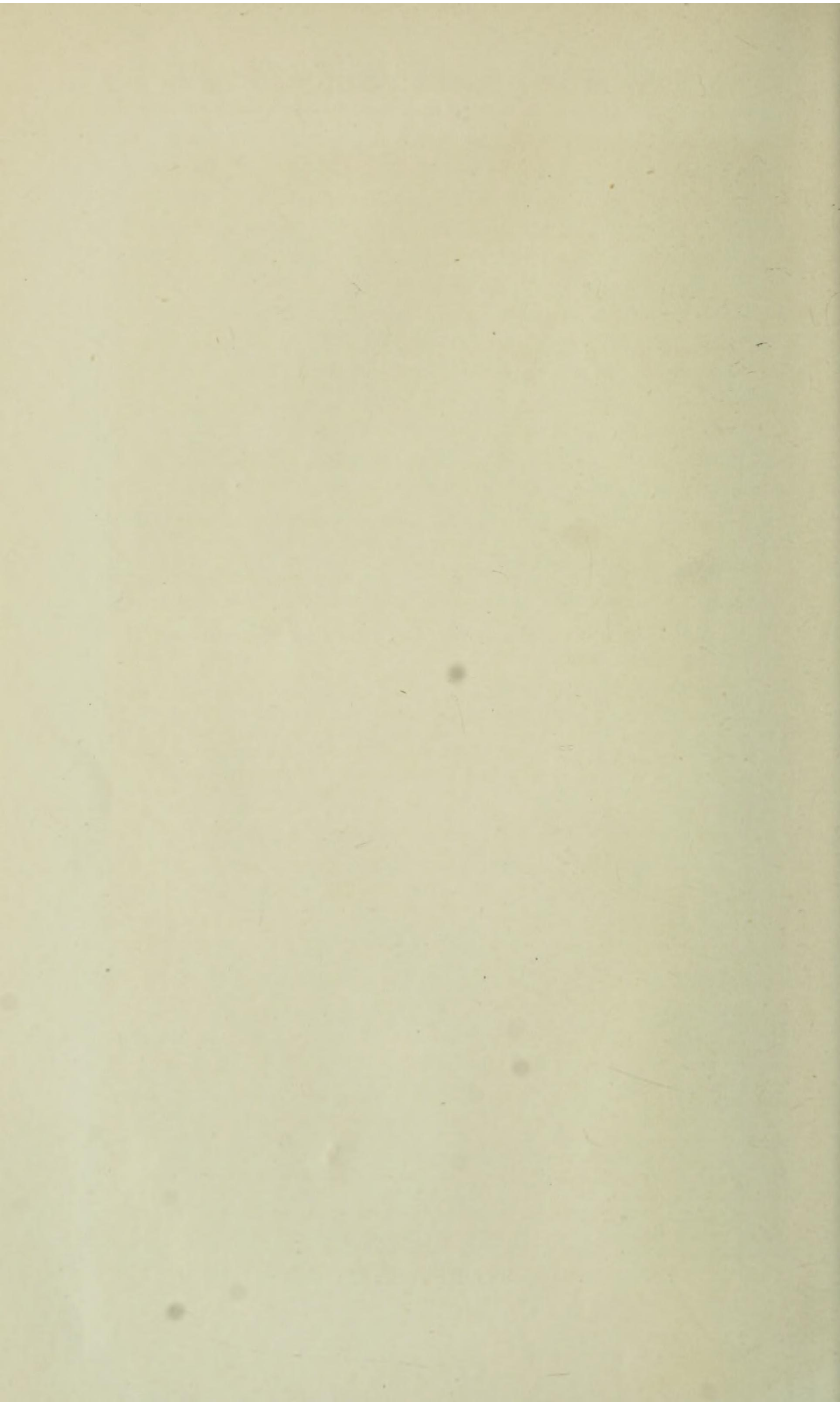
The two breeds just mentioned are, as a rule, superior to the Irish Terrier in front legs, and feet, but in the direction of these points great improvements have recently been ob-



Miss Lilian Paull's Irish Terriers **Ch. Paymaster** and **Erasmic**.



Mr. Fred W. Breakell's Irish Terrier **Ch. Killarney Sport**.



servable. The heads of our Irish Terriers have also been brought nearer to a level of perfection, chiselled to the desired degree of leanness, with the determined expression so characteristic of the breed, and with the length, squareness, and strength of muzzle which formerly were so difficult to find. This squareness of head and jaw is an important point to be considered when choosing an Irish Terrier.

Opinions differ in regard to slight details of this terrier's conformation, but the official description, issued by the Irish Terrier Club, supplies a guide upon which the uncertain novice may implicitly depend :

Head : Long ; skull, flat, and rather narrow between ears, getting slightly narrower towards the eye ; free from wrinkles ; stop hardly visible except in profile. The jaw must be strong and muscular, but not too full in the cheek, and of a good punishing length. There should be a slight falling away below the eye, so as not to have a Greyhound appearance. Hair on face of same description as on body, but short (about a quarter of an inch long), in appearance almost smooth and straight ; a slight beard is the only longish hair (and it is only long in comparison with the rest) that is permissible, and this is characteristic. *Teeth* : Should be strong and level. *Lips* : Not so tight as a Bull-terrier's, but well-fitting, showing through the hair their black lining. *Nose* : Must be black. *Eyes* : A dark hazel colour, small, not prominent, and full of life, fire, and intelligence. *Ears* : Small and V-shaped, of moderate thickness, set well on the head, and dropping forward closely to the cheek. The ear must be free of fringe, and the hair thereon shorter and darker in colour than the body. *Neck* : Should be of a fair length, and gradually widening towards the shoulders, well carried, and free of throatiness. There is generally a slight sort of frill visible at each side of the neck, running nearly to the corner of the ear. *Shoulders and Chest* : Shoulders must be fine, long, and sloping well into the back ; the chest deep and muscular, but neither full nor wide. *Back and Loin* : Body moderately long ; back should be strong and straight, with no appearance of slackness behind the shoulders ; the loin broad and powerful, and slightly arched ; ribs fairly sprung, rather deep than round, and well ribbed back. *Hind-quarters* : Should be strong and muscular, thighs powerful, hocks near ground, stifles moderately bent. *Stern* : Generally docked ; should be free of fringe or feather, but well covered with rough hair, set on pretty high, carried gaily, but not over the back or curled. *Feet and Legs* : Feet should be strong, tolerably round, and moderately small ; toes arched, and neither turned out nor in ; black toe-nails most desirable. Legs moderately long, well set from the shoulders, perfectly straight, with plenty of bone and muscle ; the elbows working freely clear of the sides ; pasterns short and straight, hardly noticeable. Both fore and hind legs should be moved straight forward when travelling, the stifles not turned outwards, the legs free of feather, and covered, like the head, with as hard a texture of coat as body, but not so long. *Coat* : Hard and wiry, free of softness or silkiness, not so long as to hide the outlines of the body, particularly in the hind-quarters, straight and flat, no shagginess, and free of lock or curl. *Colour* : Should be " whole-coloured," the most preferable being bright red, red, wheaten, or yellow red. White sometimes appears on chest and feet ; it is more objectionable on the latter than on the chest, as a speck of white on chest is frequently to be seen in all self-coloured breeds. *Size and Symmetry* : The most desirable weight in show condition is, for a dog 24 lb., and for a bitch 22 lb. The dog must present an active, lively, lithe, and wiry appearance ; lots of sub-

stance, at the same time free of clumsiness, as speed and endurance, as well as power, are very essential. They must be neither cloddy nor cobby, but should be framed on the lines of speed, showing a graceful racing outline. *Temperament*: Dogs that are very game are usually surly or snappish. The Irish Terrier as a breed is an exception, being remarkably good-tempered, notably so with mankind, it being admitted, however, that he is perhaps a little too ready to resent interference on the part of other dogs. There is a heedless, reckless pluck about the Irish Terrier which is characteristic, and, coupled with the headlong dash, blind to all consequences, with which he rushes at his adversary, has earned for the breed the proud epithet of "The Dare-Devils." When "off-duty" they are characterized by a quiet, caress-inviting appearance, and when one sees them endearingly, timidly pushing their heads into their masters' hands, it is difficult to realize that on occasions, at the "set on," they can prove they have the courage of a lion, and will fight unto the last breath in their bodies. They develop an extraordinary devotion to and have been known to track their masters almost incredible distances.

VALUE OF POINTS

Head, ears, and expression	. . . . .	20
Legs and feet	. . . . .	15
Neck	. . . . .	5
Shoulders and chest	. . . . .	10
Back and loin	. . . . .	5
Hind-quarters and stern	. . . . .	10
Coat	. . . . .	15
Colour	. . . . .	10
Size and symmetry	. . . . .	10
		100
	Total	100

Objectionable points :—White nails, toes and feet; much white on chest; dark shadings on face; mouth undershot or cankered; coat shaggy, curly, or soft; uneven in colour.

It is difficult to refer to particular Irish Terriers of the past dozen years without making invidious distinctions. There have been and still are so many excellent examples of the breed that a list even of those who have gained championship honours would be formidable. But one would hardly hesitate to head the list with the name of Paymaster, a dog of rare and almost superlative quality and true Irish Terrier character. Paymaster was the property of Miss Lilian Paull, of Weston-super-Mare, who bred him from her beautiful bitch Erasmic from Breda Muddler, the sire of many of the best. Side by side with Paymaster, Mr. F. Clifton's Mile End Barrister might be placed. Very high in the list, also, would come Mr. Henry Ridley's Redeemer and Mr. Breakell's Killarney Sport. And among bitches one would name certainly Mr. Gregg's Belfast Erin, Mr. Clifton's Charwoman, Mr. Everill's Erminie, and Mr. J. S. McComb's Beeston Betty.

These are but half a dozen, but they represent the highest level of excellence that has yet been achieved in Irish Terrier type. We have none quite so good to-day. It is to be deplored that in number and in quality the breed has deteriorated since 1914. Even Brentmoor Blinker, Kelvin Bachelor, Celtic Bachelor and Turf Commander fall short of the perfections of Paymaster, although the offspring of all of them are giving high promise for the future. I should judge Celtic Bachelor to be the best of those just mentioned. He is himself the son of Ch. War Bonus out of Celtic Eileen, and was bred by Mr. A. B. Montgomery.

Breeding up to the standard of excellence necessary in competition in dog shows has doubtless been the agent which has brought the Irish Terrier to perfection, and it is the means by which the general dog-owning public is most surely educated to a practical knowledge of what is a desirable and what an undesirable dog to possess. But, after all, success in the show ring is not the one and only thing to be aimed at, and the Irish Terrier is not to be regarded merely as the possible winner of prizes. He is above all things a dog for a man's and woman's companionship, and in this capacity he takes a favoured place. He has the great advantage of being equally suitable for town and country life. In the home he requires no pampering; he has a good, hardy constitution. If he is taught to be obedient and of gentlemanly habit, there is no better house dog. He is naturally intelligent and easily trained. Although he is always ready to take his own part, he is not quarrelsome, but remarkably good-tempered and a safe associate of children. Very justly is he classed among the sporting dogs. He is a born sportsman, and of his pluck it were superfluous to speak. Fear is unknown to him. In this characteristic as in all others, he is truly a son of Erin.

The Kerry Blue Terrier.—Until quite recently it was commonly supposed that the red Irish Terrier was the sole representative of the native terriers of Ireland. But there is also the breed lately recognized by the Kennel Club as the Kerry Blue Terrier. We see very few of this variety on the English side of St. George's Channel; but it may be that at some future time it will be allured from its comparative obscurity and exploited as a definite breed. At present its