

CHAPTER IX

THE IRISH SETTER



SECOND in popularity of the three varieties of the setter comes the handsome Irish setter or, as it is called in England, the Irish red setter. At one time he was much more popular in this country than of recent years. The run upon the English variety has had its effect on both the Irish and the Gordons. In the land of his name and also in England he is still held in high esteem and valued as a field dog. This may be seen by the large number mentioned in advertisements in those English papers which are used as mediums for the sale of broken shooting dogs.

The success of the Irish setter Plunket in English field trials had naturally very much to do with Irish setters being popular here at that time, added as it doubtless was, to what was accomplished in America by the half bred Irish setter Joe Jr., by Elcho out of a native setter. That is nearly thirty years ago now, and for a few years, or up to about 1882, entries of Irish setters were not infrequent at field trials having some claim to prominence. The preponderance of English setters, however, even if the Irish had been every bit as good in the average, led to far greater success on the part of English setters, and the Irish were dropped. It is quite true that votaries of this breed can make up a long list of winning Irish setters at American field trials, but of what class were the trials? Without going into an accurate investigation to determine the positive numbers, we may say that not far from 90 per cent. of any such tabulation would be found to consist of wins confined to members of the club giving the trials, or to such minor trials as those at Fishers Island, Robins Island, or the Philadelphia Kennel Club, when the members of the last were more particularly interested in Irish setters.

We are not seeking to disparage the Irish setter in making the above statement, but as total figures could be given by way of contradiction to a general statement that Irish setters have not met with much success at field trials in this country, it is better to say that they have won at a num-

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT
RARE BOOKS - ALDERMAN LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903-2498

This material may be protected by
Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code)

ber of trials, but the very great majority of these successes were attained at minor trials or in stakes of a restricted character, which precluded the wins taking rank with those obtained by English setters and pointers at important trials in competition open to all.

In England the Irish setters run in competition with other breeds and meet with a very fair share of success, and if they were taken hold of here in the same way that the at-one-time discarded pointer was, by men having influence as well as the means to carry out their determination, the Irish setter would stand a chance of regaining favour outside of the sportsmen who still believe in the value of the reds as a useful shooting dog.

The history of the Irish setter prior to the nineteenth century is little more than a tradition. The first reference we have come across is that quoted in the article on the spaniel family prefacing the chapter on the English setter. This is from "A Treatise on Field Diversions," published originally in 1776, and written by the Reverend Mr. Simons, whose name is not given on the title page, in its place being "By a Gentleman of Suffolk, a Staunch Sportsman." In speaking of the setter, then only the setting spaniel for use with the net, he says: "None can have any just claim, however, to the appellation [of setter] but what is emphatically called by way of eminence the English spaniel. The Irish insist—theirs are the true English spaniel; the Welsh contend—theirs are the aborigines."

Some readers might think this a mere figure of speech, but a little farther on there is this remark: "A gentleman who resided some time in Wales tells me this is a true description of their finest setters." It is perfectly proper to assume therefore that at that period there was a variety known as Irish, or at least a variety in Ireland which differed in some respect from the dog in vogue in England and in Wales. We have substantial evidence that the Welsh variety was white, or white and black, and Mr. Simons goes on to say, "Be that as it may, whatever mixtures may have been since made, there were, fifty years ago [that would be about 1725], two distinct tribes—the black-tanned, and the orange or lemon and white." There has never been any suggestion that the setter of Ireland was anything but red or red and white, and we may conclude that the variety specified by Mr. Simons was of that colour.

Dalziel in "British Dogs" quotes, from a work we have never seen, entitled, "A Correct Delineation of the Canine Race," published in 1803 by "A Veteran Sportsman," a remark to the effect that setters were more

MENT
RARY
RY
903-2498

This material may be protected by
Copyright law (Title 17, U.S. Code)

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT
RARE BOOKS - ALDERMAN LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903-2498

popular in Ireland than pointers, but quotes no description of colour or appearance. Here, however, is proof of the existence of the "blood red setter" in the Emerald Isle at that period. Colonel J. P. Hamilton published in 1860 his "Reminiscences of an Old Sportsman," and in it we find that he was for two years Inspecting Field Officer of Yeomanry in the South of Ireland, and "in 1805" had some excellent woodcock shooting in the County of Carlow. That sets us right as to the date. Then in a chapter on spaniels and setters we find this statement: "In Ireland the setter is called the English spaniel, having been originally brought from England. I had one of these dogs, which I purchased at Waterford, it was a blood red setter and certainly was beautiful in appearance . . . but I shall hereafter mention his extraordinary instinct in finding his way over the Welsh mountains back to Milford Haven, where I landed." Without this last, seemingly irrelevant statement, we should have had no positive evidence that the purchase was made in 1805. The promised anecdote is given in a chapter on "The Instinct of Dogs," and begins as follows: "Many years ago, when on the staff in Ireland I purchased at Waterford a very handsome blood-red setter. In a few days I embarked in the packet which sailed from Waterford to Milford Haven with my dog." Here we have the connecting link as to 1805 being the date. The story is, that the dog was taken inside of a coach for a distance of fifteen miles over a rough mountainous country, and that, making his escape from the house to which he had been taken, he found his way back on the same night to the wharf at Milford Haven. That is to us an immaterial point. What is worthy of notice is that the dogs in question were acknowledged as of English origin by the common name of English spaniels, and that the blood red colour must have been not uncommon, for it is merely specified that this particular setter was "one of them"—the ordinary English spaniel, as they were called.

Corroborative evidence as to the name of English spaniel for the setter in Ireland and also as to colour is to be found in a foot note in Daniel's "Rural Sports" (London, 1807). The note is as follows: "Mr. Thornhill describes the Irish setter, termed English spaniels, as bringing very high prices when of peculiar breeds. The colours of these choice sorts are deep chestnut and white, or all red, with the nose and roof of the mouth black. He mentions a gentleman in the North of Ireland who once gave to his tenant for a dog and bitch of this kind the renewal of a lease of a

Some material may be protected by
Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code)

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT
RARE BOOKS - ALDERMAN LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903-2498

MENT
ARY
RY
903-2498

farm, which, had the lease expired, would have cleared to the landlord above two hundred and fifty pounds per annum."

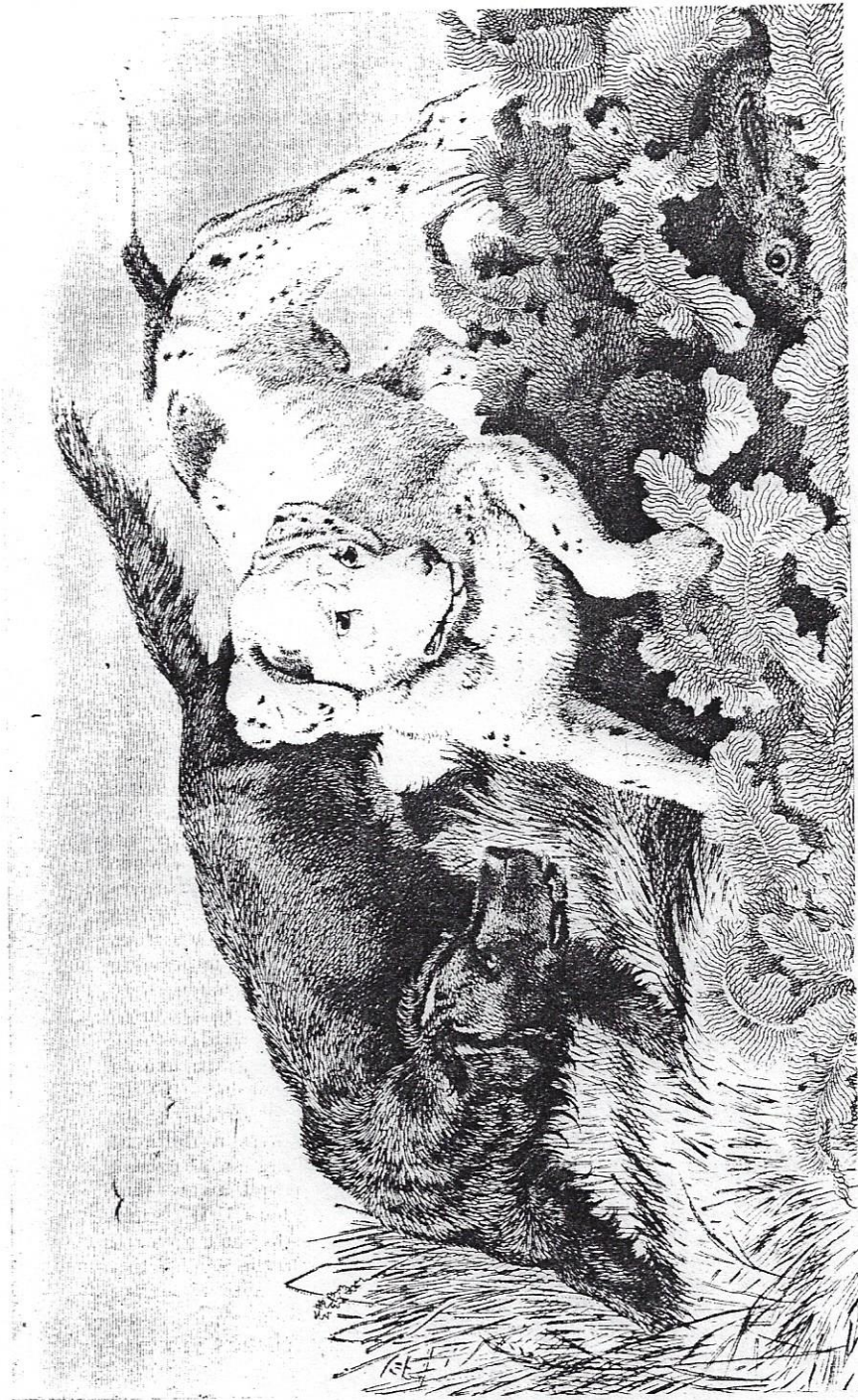
It is worth noticing that the parti-coloured setter is not in this case described as red and white, but as chestnut. The colour of the Irish setter of the present day is frequently likened to that of horse chestnut at the time the burr opens and the nuts first show in their nest. But chestnut is a rather variable description, for the chestnut horse is of quite a light colour compared with a large part of the nut, which is more "bay" in the main.

Quite recently we had the good fortune to pick up a little paper-bound book published by a resident of Montgomery, Ala., prior to the Civil War, in which appear two of the late Frank Forester's sketches. They were written some time before for a paper, which ceased publication before they could be used, and they were given to Mr. Johnson J. Hooper to make what use he liked of them and at last saw daylight. The period set for the sketch entitled "The Yorkshire Moors" must have been about 1825, for it begins thus: "It is now well nigh thirty years since my first day on the Yorkshire moorlands." The date of entry of the book in the clerk's office of the United States Court is 1856, and as the sketch had been written some time prior, the "thirty years" take us very readily to 1825. Forester's recollection is further reinforced by his saying that he was then about eighteen years of age and was in the sixth form at Eton, and as Forester was born in 1807 that checks the date. His real name was William Henry Herbert and his father was the Dean of Manchester. He was also a grandson of the Earl of Carnarvon.

The old gamekeeper had started for the moors two days before, leading a pony laden with panniers and four brace of dogs. The description of these dogs begins with: "Cynthia and Phoebe, a pair of orange and white silky Irish setters, with large soft eyes and coal black muzzles, feathered six inches deep on the legs and stern." Orange and bright chestnut are not so very dissimilar and, being shades of red, would be called red by many people. This question of colour was a burning one sixty years later when classes were given for both the self-coloured and the red and whites at Irish shows, and this distinction was also made at the early American shows. Literature regarding the early Irish setter is most difficult to procure, and although we have read innumerable books that gave some light promise of even a passing mention, the result has been most unsatisfactory. The

This material may be protected by
Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code)

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT
RARE BOOKS - ALDERMAN LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903-2498



POINTING A HARE

This is one of the earliest illustrations of an Irish Setter, the date of publication being October, 1824. It is an engraving by T. Landseer from a drawing by his brother Edwin

This material may be protected by
Copyright law (Title 17, U.S. Code)

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT
RARE BOOKS - ALDERMAN LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY

next note we came across was in "Sporting," edited by that well known writer "Nimrod," who was about as good an all-round sportsman as England produced during the first half of the last century. "Sporting" was issued in 1837, and in it we found one brief paragraph to the effect that the Irish setter was red and white.

MR. LAVERACK'S STATEMENT

As a contemporary of "Nimrod" we have Mr. Laverack who, as in the case of the English setter, was the first writer to give us any definite information regarding this variety. Mr. Laverack had good knowledge of all setters from a very early period of the nineteenth century and condensed much information into small compass:

"Perhaps there has been no greater controversy than on the merits of the Irish setter. When pure and thoroughly broken, they are an admirable and excellent breed of dogs, being possessed of great powers of endurance and speed. So highly do I value the true blood belonging to the Irish that I have visited Ireland four times for the express purpose of ascertaining where the pure blood was to be found, with a view of crossing them with my Beltons.

"I very much regret to say that after all my trouble and efforts, I found that this fine and magnificent old breed had degenerated, owing to the carelessness and negligence of the Irish in not keeping it pure.

"I believe it is admitted by some of the leading sportsmen in Ireland, among whom I may name John King of Firbane, Colonel White of Newton Manor, near Sligo, and others, that there is scarcely any breed now to be relied upon for purity. 'Sixty-one,' an Irishman, and who probably knows Ireland and the breed of setters as well as any one, does not, I am told, hold them in the highest estimation. As far as my own researches and observation go, the late John La Touche, of Harristown, possessed this breed in its greatest purity.

"One of the best specimens of the Irish setter I ever saw was in the possession of Rowland Hunt, of Leicestershire, who has the Braemore shooting, Caithness. This dog, he informed me, he purchased at the late Marquis of Waterford's sale. Another magnificent specimen I saw at Cockermouth Castle, Cumberland, belonged to the late General Wyndham. Both these dogs were blood red with a dark shade on the tips of their coats.

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT
RARE BOOKS - ALDERMAN LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22904

This material may be protected by
Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code)

The one I saw at Cockermouth Castle I consider, without any exception, to have been the most magnificent specimen of an Irish setter I ever saw. The General informed me that when he commanded the troops in Ireland he saw and shot over the best specimens of this breed and stated some were excellent, others worthless. The dog alluded to, he told me, was made a present to him by an Irish nobleman, whose name I have forgotten. This dog was very long in head, particularly low, very oblique in shoulders, wheeled or roach backed, very deep and broad in the chest, remarkably wide behind the shoulders, and very short in the back and legs, more so than any Irish setter I ever saw. He had an immense profusion of coat, with a tinge of black on the tips of his ears.

"I should have bred from this dog but for the following reasons, and I think I was right: no one was ever able to break him, and his stock were frequently black. Rowland Hunt's dog also got black puppies occasionally, evidently denoting that there must have been a black strain in the breed.

"Captain Cooper's Stella, a sister to his Ranger, who obtained the first prize at Birmingham and Dublin, also occasionally throws black puppies. Notwithstanding this strain of black in the breed, the best and most perfectly formed Irish setters I have ever seen had this stain or tint of black, which I should never object to, although I am well aware many of the most eminent Irish breeders state that they ought to be without any tint of black whatever in their coats.

"As far as I have seen and been informed, for general goodness and working properties, those possessing this tint of black have been quite as good, if not better, than those without it.

"Mr. Shorthose's Irish setter Ben, blood red with a tinge of black, who has obtained upwards of forty prizes at exhibitions, gets a proportion of black puppies.

"My firm belief is that no Irish setter exists without throwing back occasionally to black. I can understand breeders preferring the blood red, without this tinge of black, and retaining the blood red in preference, but my idea is that those having a tinge of black are the better dogs, although the colour may be objected to.

"There is another colour of Irish setters, blood red and white, quite as pure, indeed some people maintain of greater antiquity and purity of blood than the blood red. Both the blood red and the blood red and white will throw each colour, evidently denoting they are of the same strain.

This material may be protected by
 Copyright law (Title 17, U.S. Code)

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT
 RARE BOOKS - ALDERMAN LIBRARY
 UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY
 CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903-2498

"I think the handsomest blood red and white Irish setters I ever saw were in the possession of the two Misses Ledwidge, of Beggarsbush, near Dublin. Stella, the dam, and two sons, named Old York and Young York. Stella, although blood red and white, was the dam of Mr. Dycer's blood red setter Dan, well known in his day for his goodness. This dog was sire of Captain Hutchinson's Bob. Miss Ledwidge informed me that she possessed this breed for half a century or more, and Mr. La Touche's keeper at Harristown, when I visited his kennels there, pointed out a blood red and white setter as the best he had. I believe the Misses Ledwidge's kennel was as pure as any in Ireland. I was told they originally came from the Butler family. [A reference to the Butler dogs will be found in the article on the Gordon setter.—ED.]

"Another, and one of the best breeds, which have probably been kept as pure as any in Ireland, are those of the Hon. David Plunket and Lord Freyne of Coolavin, County Sligo.

"Of the two colours, blood red and blood red and white, I admire the latter the most, they being in my opinion the handsomer of the two. Mr. Barton, County Wicklow, had a large kennel of the blood red and whites, and there are doubtless other breeds in Ireland considered as pure as those named.

"As far as my experience goes of those I have seen worked, there are few, if any, setters more valuable for general utility than the Irish, provided you can get a sufficiency of point, but I am sorry to write it, the major part are deficient in this requisite, and not to be relied on, but when they have it they are admirable dogs.

"Those I have seen were rather light, if anything too light in head, wanting a little squareness about the nose and lip; their ears are too high set on the head, being often on a line with the skull, which gives them a prick-ear appearance. A thin, spare, lathy body in general, and, in my opinion, too long on the legs. Their shoulders are generally well placed, low and oblique, with a drooping stern, coat rather harsh, more harsh and wiry than that of the English setter, neither is it so bright and silky; temper obstinate, fiery and impetuous, which detracts from the major part of the breed, but still there are exceptions, and notwithstanding some people say they never saw a good Irish setter, I have, although rarely; but when they are really good they are a first class dog, none better.

"I should probably have crossed with some of the above named dogs, but on consideration I was afraid of their acknowledged insufficiency of point."

Stonehenge very fortunately inserted in his first edition of "The Dogs of the British Islands" (1867), and also in the second edition (1872), a number of letters which had appeared in the *Field*, regarding Irish setters. The main controversy seems to have been as to the colour of the Simon pure article, but interspersed throughout the letters there is a fund of information as to what was known to the correspondents, whose knowledge extended back for upwards of fifty years in some cases. We will however first of all give Stonehenge's description of an Irish setter, a description we have never seen equalled in faithfulness to the correct type, and it should be studied by those who persist in placing English setter bodied and shaped dogs in the prize list at our present day shows.

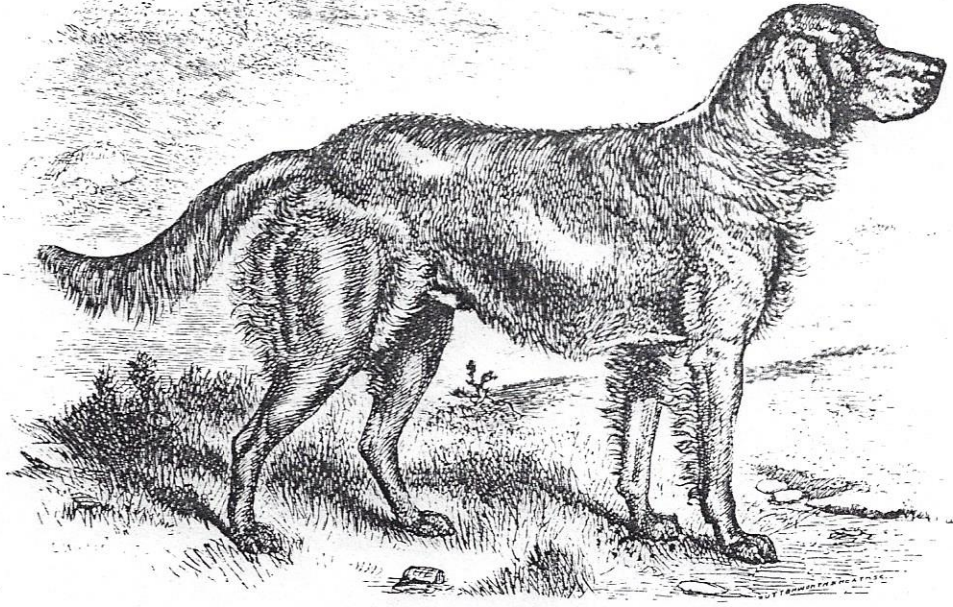
"We suggested, when describing the Gordon setter, that the black-tan came from Ireland. That opinion has been corroborated [With this we do not agree.—ED.]; but the blood-red or rich chestnut, or mahogany colour, the deep rich red—not golden, nor fallow, nor yellow, nor fawn, but deep, pure blood red—is the colour of the Irish setter of high mark. This colour must be unmixed with black, and tested in a strong light, there must not be black shadows or waves, much less black fringe to the ears or to the profile of the frame. There are good Irish setters nearly white, red and white, black-tan, or intimately crossed with black-tan, and in the last case showing the distinctive markings of the cross in the black tipping of the coat, which Irish judges consider a *very great fault* in colour.

"The head should be long and light, the cranium large, the brow well developed and *projecting*, and the sparkling hazel eye, full of fire and animation, will carry off the appearance of sullenness or bad temper. The ears should be long, set low, moderately wide, tapering toward the base, and the edges should be very moderately fringed.

"The Irish setter is rather more 'on the leg' than the English dog. His ribs are a little more hooped. His brisket is very deep. In his back ribs he is a little deficient, and he might be improved in that respect. His loin is very strong, though his quarters are drooping; but his thighs and hocks, which are powerful, make up for this defect.

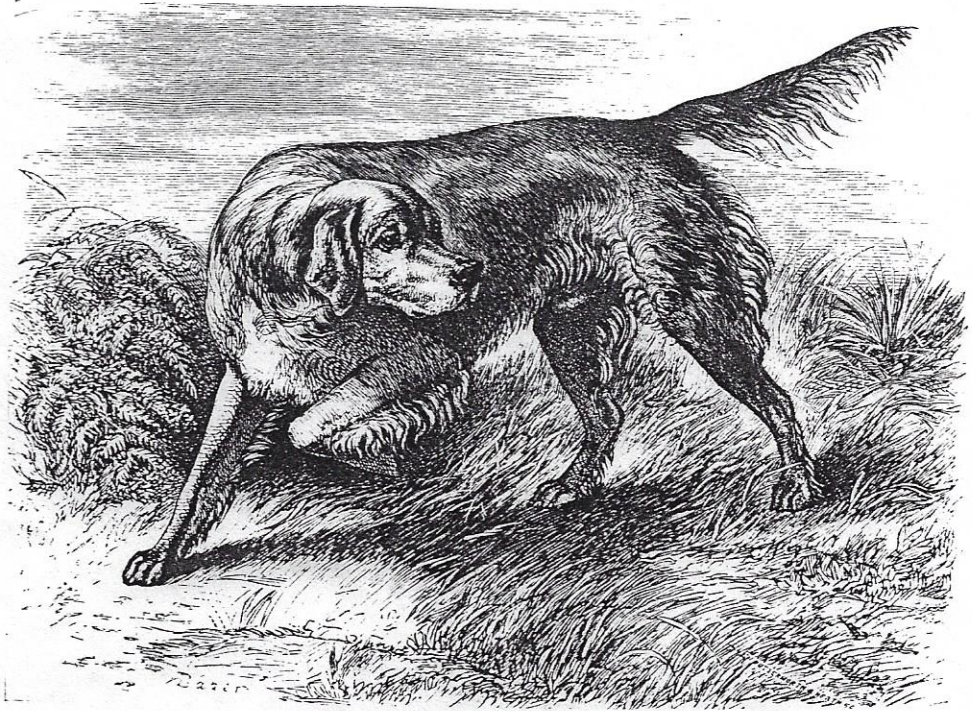
"His feet are round, hard and well protected by the sole and feather. His stern is rather straighter than that of the Gordon or English breeds, and the feather longer, but yet comb-like and flat, and of good quality.

All material may be protected by
Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code)



HUTCHINSON'S BOB

The first prominent dog-show winner in England and Ireland



MACDONNA'S ROVER

Litter brother to Plunket, and as prominent on the bench as Plunket was in the field

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT
RARE BOOKS - ALDERMAN LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903-2498

"The whole aspect of the Irish setter denotes gameness, courage, speed, endurance, intelligence and talent."

Stonehenge specifies the following as the best known strains: La Touche, O'Connor, Coats, Lord De Freyne, Sidwell, Eyers, Lord Waterford, and Captain Hutchinson.

THE COLOUR OF VARIOUS STRAINS

Turning now to the letters referred to we will extract such information as is historical. Mr. John Walker started the discussion with a letter written in January, 1866, in which he questioned the correctness of the claim that the Irish setter should be blood red, although he had hitherto been of that opinion. He quotes from an unnamed old friend with forty or fifty years experience with the breed, to the effect that the oldest and purest strains had a touch of black and that it did not come from the Gordons. Captain Hutchinson and Colonel Whyte responded, having been named by Mr. Walker as two whom he would like to hear from. The former affirmed that the true colour was a "very deep, rich blood-red" and said he felt certain that Mr. La Touche would agree with him, "he being once a breeder of the finest coloured red setters in this country, and one of whose red dogs sold for the very large sum of £73 10s. by public auction in Dublin."

Colonel Whyte supplied the following: "The French Park breed was, in former times, celebrated for its purity. After the death of the first Lord De Freyne, I attended a sale there, and, of course, did not neglect the kennel, but was much disappointed, finding them a worn-out, and apparently a degenerated lot. I asked particularly to be shown one that could be warranted of the pure old race, and they pointed out a bitch that, if I recollect right, was not to be sold. She was a low but strong animal, with very little feather, extremely dark red, almost mahogany colour; dark mark down her back; dark tip to her ears and dark muzzle; no white about her anywhere.

"In contradistinction to this I remember some twenty-five years ago two kennels, then much celebrated for their breed—Lord Forbes's and Mr. Owen Wynne's of Hazlewood. These animals in no way resembled the French Park bitch; they were higher on the leg and rather lighter in the rib, but powerful, wiry, active dogs, by no means very dark in colour, and showing a good deal of white about the face, chest and fore legs. I never saw

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT
RARE BOOKS - ALDERMAN LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA

This material may be protected by
Copyright law (Title 17, U.S. Code)

Lord Forbes's but once, and that was in the kennel. Mr. Wynne's I shot over several times—they were tremendous goers, but unsteady and headstrong."

Colonel Whyte expressed his preference for a light built, muscular dog "lighter in the ribs than most people would approve of, but great loins and the hind legs of a hare. A longer, lighter, but a more lengthy and supple animal than prize awarders approve of, but one that has the prime qualification of going as lightly over the heather as a cat, and winding through the tussocks as quietly as a weasel."

Mr. Walker responded with some information received from Captain Willis, who had procured from an Irish officer named McClintock a setter with black-tipped ears presented to McClintock by the late Marquis of Waterford.

At this stage of the discussion a very well known personage who used the pseudonym of "Sixty-one" threw a bombshell into the camp by declaring that, having known Irish setters for fifty years, he was in a position to state that both blood red and blood red and white were correct; that black lines or tips were stories for the marines; that Irish setters were worthless, except a black and white breed of Captain Butler's and a black and white, with a little tan, owned by the Marquis of Ormonde; that he had found Irish setters had neither pace, nose, courage nor endurance, and for that reason had given them up.

This onslaught evoked an excellent letter from Mr. Harry Blake Knox, who stated that he had known and bred Irish red setters for many years. He seems to have been the first to give this name of Irish red setters to the breed, a name still in use in Ireland and England. He very sensibly said that every mongrel setter was known as an Irish setter and that the addition of "red" was necessary to specify this particular variety, which he then described at length, being particular to decry black in every way, whether in the coat or on the nose, admitting white only in the centre of the forehead or centre of breast. In particular reply to the charge of incapacity made by "Sixty-one," he asked, "Why on earth do we keep red dogs if they are worthless?" and claimed that for the arduous work connected with shooting in Ireland this breed was "the only dog for Ireland."

THE LA TOUCHE SETTERS

Captain Hutchinson followed with a letter giving the following extract from a communication from a member of the La Touche family: "I have

This material may be protected by
Copyright Law Title 17, U.S. Code

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT
RARE BOOKS - ALDERMAN LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903-2498

known the points of the Irish setter all my life. The original red Irish setters were a breed of dogs belonging to Mrs. La Touche's grandfather, Maurice O'Connor, Esq., of Mount Pleasant, King's County, and which family took great pride in them. Such a thing as a black hair would be scouted among them, nor were black tips to the ears or to the feathering ever thought of; it plainly shows a cross with another breed. The O'Connor setter is of blood-red colour—certainly of a purer and deeper red than is seen in the coat or fur of any other animal; a little white is not objected to, and of late years there were more red and white dogs bred. It was considered more convenient, as they were more easily seen out shooting, but Mr. O'Connor always preferred a pure red dog. He gave some to Mr. Robert La Touche of Harristown, County Kildare, and thus it was he became possessed of the breed. I remember the dogs and the traditions and rules about them from my earliest childhood, and I can certify that a black hair, or a black-tipped hair, was never seen among them; but I do remember that about twenty years ago a female of the O'Connor setter breed was given away, and afterwards crossed with a black and tan setter. I recollect that of the puppies some were pure red, others pure black and tan, but the red with black tips may have afterwards resulted from this cross. I never saw a red setter with a dark stripe down the back, or any darker colour about him than a rich blood-red, and my recollection extends over thirty-five years."

Colonel Whyte again joined in the controversy and gave some good information as to old owners. "It appears to be pretty generally conceded," he writes "that the earliest recorded and most celebrated kennel of these dogs was that of Lord Dillon, great grandfather, I believe, to the present lord. There were, however, several others of great repute, but supposed, whether true or not, to have descended from Lord Dillon's. Of these, perhaps, Lord Clancarty's ranked highest, but Lord Lismore's and the French Park were much thought of. The purity of the Maurice O'Connor dogs is a moot point, some looking back to them with much respect, others, and good authorities too, denying that they were ever the real thing.

"The dogs of the Dillon breed are said to have been powerful, wiry, active dogs—some red, some red and white; but that the latter colour showed only on face and chest, not much of it; the coat with a slight wave, but no curl whatever. They were headstrong in temper, without much

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT
RARE BOOKS - ALDERMAN LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903-2408

This material may be protected by
Copyright law (Title 17, U.S. Code)

innate point, and rather deficient in nose, as they are to this day, and never to be broken in the first season, and very often not till the third; but that then, their temper taming down, and their sagacity improving by experience, they often become most admirable dogs. Their constitutions were so vigorous that they lived to a great age, and were serviceable even up to the thirteenth or fourteenth years. None of the authorities which I have consulted will admit of a pure descendant of the old race having a black stain; they consider it as undeniable proof of a cross.

“There were also two other well established breeds in Ireland—one smaller and lighter in all ways than the red. These had better noses and were more tractable, and it is supposed that it is from a cross with them that the black and tan arises. I have seen some of these dogs myself; they were good but not handsome animals. The last I saw was with Lord Howth, and he was very fond of them. The other breed—the white and red [This is different from the red and white and was a setter mainly white, with red splashes.—ED.] claims equal antiquity with the red, and many consider them to have been as good as the red in all respects and superior in point of nose. I have seen these dogs, magnificent in appearance and excellent in the field, but have not met them lately, though no doubt they are to be found. I know they were highly thought of eighty or ninety years ago, because a certain General White—a grand uncle of mine, who died about 1802, and was, perhaps, one of the first Englishmen who ever took a moor in Scotland—used to bring his setters from Ireland, and I have heard my father say that the General’s favourite breed was the white and red; in fact, I distinctly remember seeing some of the descendants. These dogs were, and are still more or less curly.” Here might be ground for Stonehenge’s claim of Irish in the Gordons if we could connect General Whyte and the Duke of Gordon in any exchange, for a red and white dog was included in the Castle sale of 1836.

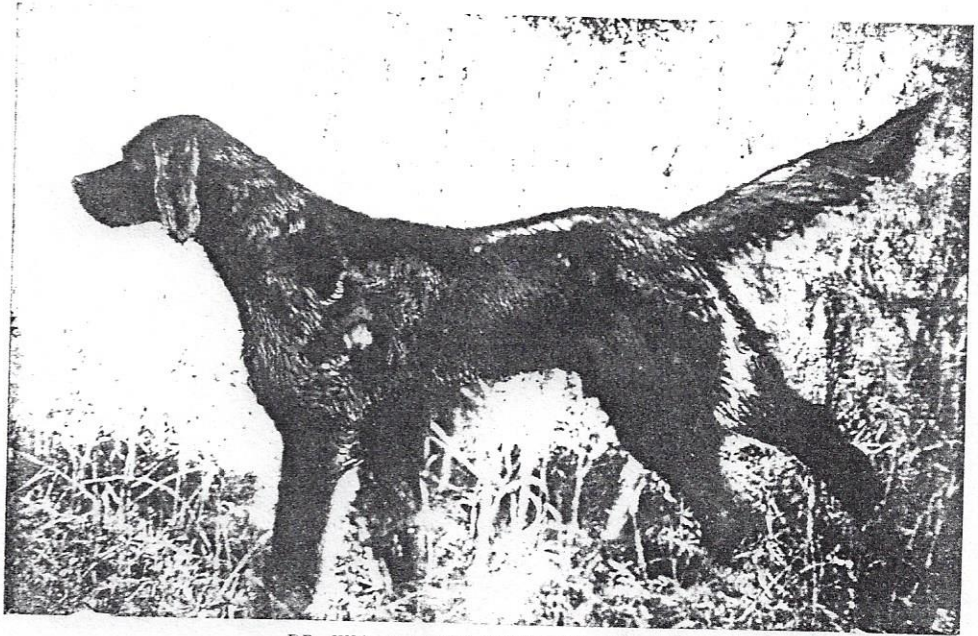
It will not be out of place here to recall the extract made from “Nimrod’s” “Sporting,” which was quoted in Part II, wherein he described having seen the old Flintshire Squire netting partridges with a leash of red and white setters.

Also to point out, before leaving this discussion as to colour, that Mr. Laverack drew particular attention to a blood red and white setter having been shown him by the keeper at the La Touche kennels as the best he had. Also that the grand-dam on the sire’s side of Captain

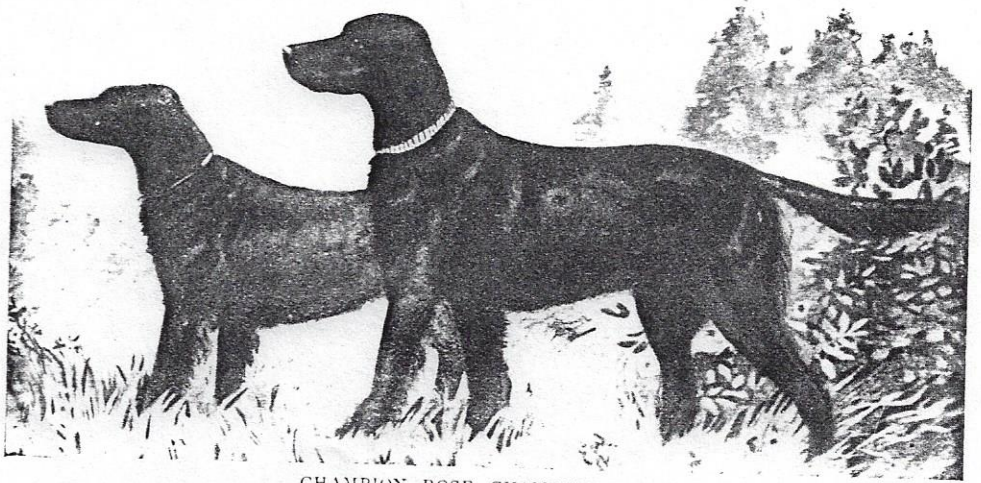
This material may be protected by
Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code)

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT
RARE BOOKS - ALDERMAN LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903-2498

This material may be protected by
Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code)



DR. WM. JARVIS'S IMPORTED SIGNAL
Photograph taken on game in South Carolina



CHAMPION ROSE—CHAMPION ELCHO

No photograph of these celebrities is in existence, this being a reproduction of Pope's illustration of typical Irish Setters

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT
RARE BOOKS - ALDERMAN LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY
CHADWICKS VILLIET VINDICATED

Hutchinson's Bob was a red and white bitch in the Misses Ledwidge's kennels, a fact not mentioned by Captain Hutchinson or by Mr. Knox, who owned a brother to Bob.

What seems to be very clearly demonstrated is that the setter in Ireland at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and for fifty years after that, was much in the same condition as the setter in England, where owners bred along lines of their own fancy and created strains. Finally, with the advent of dog shows and the opportunities for comparison, came the process of concentration on the best looking and most attractive dog, with the dropping out of the others.

In Lee's "Modern Dogs" (London, 1893), there is a long communication from Mr. W. C. Bennett, of Dublin, "who has made this variety a hobby." Mr. Bennett in turn obtained his information of old times from Mr. Mahon, of Galway, then eighty years of age; from Mr. John Bennett, of King's County, and from Mr. John G. King, also of King's County. There is nothing very new in the information given. All agree that at an early date the parti-coloured red and white dog, or more properly speaking the white and red dog, was not only more numerous, but a better field dog. The evidence given regarding the O'Connor strain is that it was red. Mr. King states that a gamekeeper once brought him a self-coloured dog as a rarity. Mr. King also states that the ladies Mr. Laverack mentions as the Misses Ledwidge were the Misses Ledwell, though it was sometimes erroneously pronounced Ledwich. He further states that he saw Miss Ledwell shortly after the visit of Mr. Laverack, who, she said, wanted to take her dog to England to cross with his strain, but she refused to lend or sell the dog.

THE EARLY SHOW SETTERS

Of the early Irish setters we know by name in connection with shows the most prominent was Captain Hutchinson's Bob, a wide fronted, thick shouldered dog, and described on one page by "Idstone" as a Suffolk cart-horse and cumbrous, and a little farther on as "good all over, formed in exact proportion, and with substance as well as symmetry." The reader can make his choice as to which description may be correct. His colour was perfect and he was free from white. Soon after that Mr. Macdona brought out Plunket at the field trials and did great things with him.

The best description of this famous dog is from the pen of "Idstone,"

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT
RARE BOOKS - ALDERMAN LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA

This material may be protected by
Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code)

who wrote as follows: "This setter is not of the deep red I have described, but—and this is of more importance—he is of the correct formation, consequently he is a high ranger, quick in his turns, light in his gallop, with a thorough command in action, enabling him to pull up and finish in style. He is narrow in front, with a capital forehead, a fine lean head, a full hazel eye, a large liver nose and nostrils, which expand when they catch the wind. He has the long taper neck, the broad back, the ragged hips, the strong hind-quarters, the firm small foot, the long muscular thighs of the genuine Irish setter, suitable for the rough sporting of his native island, or the Scotch mountains and granite boulders, and though not of that rich red which you see on the thoroughbred chestnut, as, in the highest condition, he takes his canter before the stand at Epsom on a May morning, in the sun, or the stain of the red beech leaves in early autumn, or the burnt sienna-like tint of an old Scotch fir, or of that deep red ochre sand which you come upon fresh turned up in some Berkshire lane (and not one of these illustrations gives a thorough notion of the Irish setter red, as I could desire to give it), you have in him and his class the quality, the pace, endurance and style which, to my mind, are to be obtained in few others of what I consider the best dogs for the moor and the gun."

DR. JARVIS ON HIS SPECIALTY

The name of Dr. William Jarvis of Claremont, N. H., is so associated with the Irish setter in this country that to omit securing from him some information or comments on the breed would have been an oversight akin to the proverbial omission of the prince in "Hamlet." In response to a request for a contribution from his pen we received much more than we had any reason to hope for, and with infinite satisfaction we find space for his communication, full as it is of information and opinions based upon intimate knowledge of his subject.

"Perhaps no other breed of shooting dog has caused such a war of words as to colour, form and quality. Some have asserted that the frame of the Irish dog is modelled much like the best English specimens, and that his coat is of the same texture, the only difference in the breeds being in colour, while others say he has a coarser coat and is more bony and muscular than his English cousin. There is no breed known that produces a thoroughly typical specimen every time—I was about to write a perfect

ENT

RY

32498

This material may be protected by
Copyright law (Title 17, U.S. Code)

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT
RARE BOOKS - ALDERMAN LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903-2498

specimen, but anything of that nature is so exceptional that to use the word would obscure my meaning. That Irish setters have been, are and always will be framed after the English model is perfectly true, but that by no means proves that the type of the two varieties is similar, any more than the variations of the English setter towards the Irish type would prove that that is correct for the English.

"The typical Irish setter stands a little higher than either the English or Gordon setter and is very blood-like or thoroughbred in appearance. His head is long, lean, narrow, high over the forehead and prominent at the occiput, the muzzle of good length, the lips deep but not too pendulous. There should be a well defined and cleanly chiselled stop; the ears should be set low and lightly feathered, hanging closely to the head, and reaching, when extended, nearly to the end of the nose, which should be dark in colour; a light flesh-coloured nose, though possessed by some dogs of good breeding, is by no means desirable. The eyes should be hazel or rich brown, not a gooseberry colour; soft and gentle when at rest, but full of fire and animation when aroused. The neck long, lean, clearly defined where it joins the head and set well into a pair of sloping shoulders. Elbows well let down, forelegs straight and feet well supplied with hair between the toes and with thick sound pads. Chest deep, rather narrow in front, but with plenty of lung room; ribs well sprung; loin arched and strong; stifles well bent and thighs broad and muscular. The hips are somewhat ragged but indicative of great power. A tail of moderate length tapering to a point and carried with no twist or curl. The coat should be short and flat, but soft to the touch and like spun silk where it extends into what is technically called feathering.

"The colour of the Irish setter is like the red of polished mahogany, with no yellowish cast, but 'In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the shell divides three-fold to show the fruit within.' This red, which may vary from a bright shade to a deep rich hue, belongs exclusively and by right of inheritance to the Irish setter, and excepting a little white that appears occasionally on the head, chest or feet of many good specimens, is the only legitimate colour.

"The statement that as a breed they are more difficult to control than other setters that have made their variety famous at field trials, or that they train later in life, is contrary to my experience, and I have owned, bred and shot over Irish setters on all varieties of feathered game North and South since 1868. Besides which, here are potent facts of record to the

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT
RARE BOOKS - ALDERMAN LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903-2498

This material may be protected by
Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code)

86498

L.I.

contrary: Coleraine was only twelve months old when she won the English Kennel Club Setter Derby; Aveline, the beautiful, was but fourteen months when she was second in her Derby, and Signal but sixteen months when he made his great record of first puppy, second St. Leger, fourth Irish All-Ages Stakes, and ran the great setter Fred (winner of Third Grand All-Ages Stakes), at the Irish Grouse Trials, such a heat that Fred's handler said at its conclusion: 'I shall always have a great regard for Signal, and both fit and well, should like to see them drawn together again. He is the best dog Fred has ever met. His son, Young Signal, was but sixteen months when he was second in the St. Leger Stakes, second All-Ages Stakes (for all breeds) and third in the Irish All-Ages Stakes at the Irish Grouse Trials of 1893.

"Dr. J. H. Salter, who judged the Irish Grouse Trials in 1889, was certainly surprised at what he saw at the trials, where some of the best English setters and pointers competed, for he wrote as follows: 'It has certainly done one thing, and that is to establish the Irish setter, when properly broken and handled, as equal, if not superior to the best English setters and pointers. For pace, endurance, cleverness and game finding sense give me an Irish setter such as Henmore, Sure Death and Mac's Little Nell.' Corroborative of that is this extract from the *London Field*: 'To Sure Death would undoubtedly have gone the Champion cup, had she not been so hard run. How she went over the ground even in the earlier part of her last course, after running during the last three days no fewer than ten trials, some of which were prolonged ones, must have been seen to be believed. We fancy she is even faster than Mac's Little Nell; her style is smart and clean; she knows where to look for birds and possesses a fine nose. We do not expect to find such a prodigy as a dog that can gallop around her or take the outside beat.'

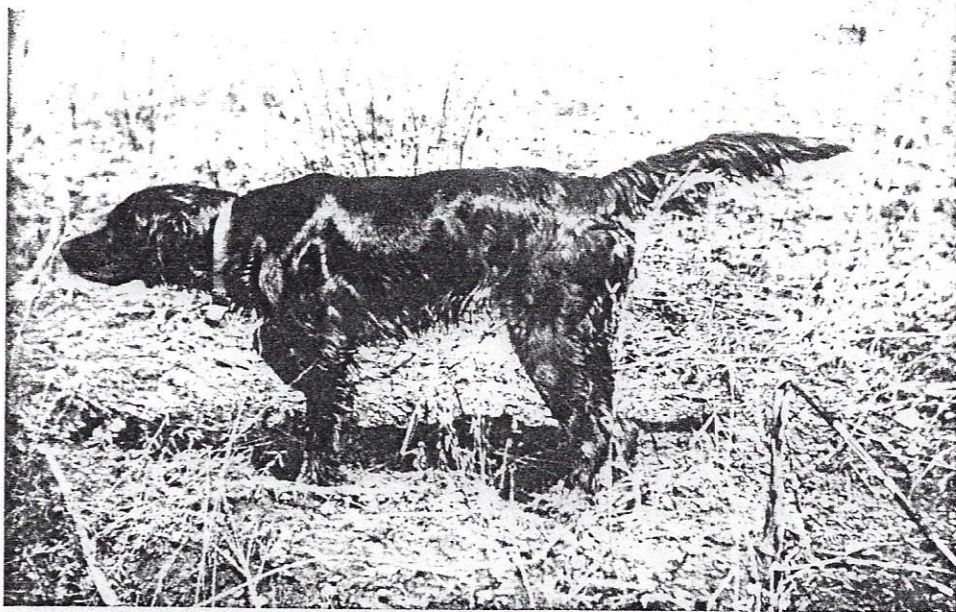
"Mr. Rawdon B. Lee in 'Modern Dogs' (and Mr. Lee has been the *London Field* kennel reporter for years now), writes: 'When properly and perfectly trained, the red setter has shown us that no variety can beat him. I should not conscientiously say that from what I have observed in his work of late years, and I have seen all the best dogs run, that the Irish setter is as dashing, as energetic, as stylish as the best English dog I ever saw. I believe he will, as a rule, do a long and hard day's work better than any other breed of setter. His stamina is extraordinary, and the shooting man who has a wide expanse of moor upon which birds are scarce

ENT
R
/

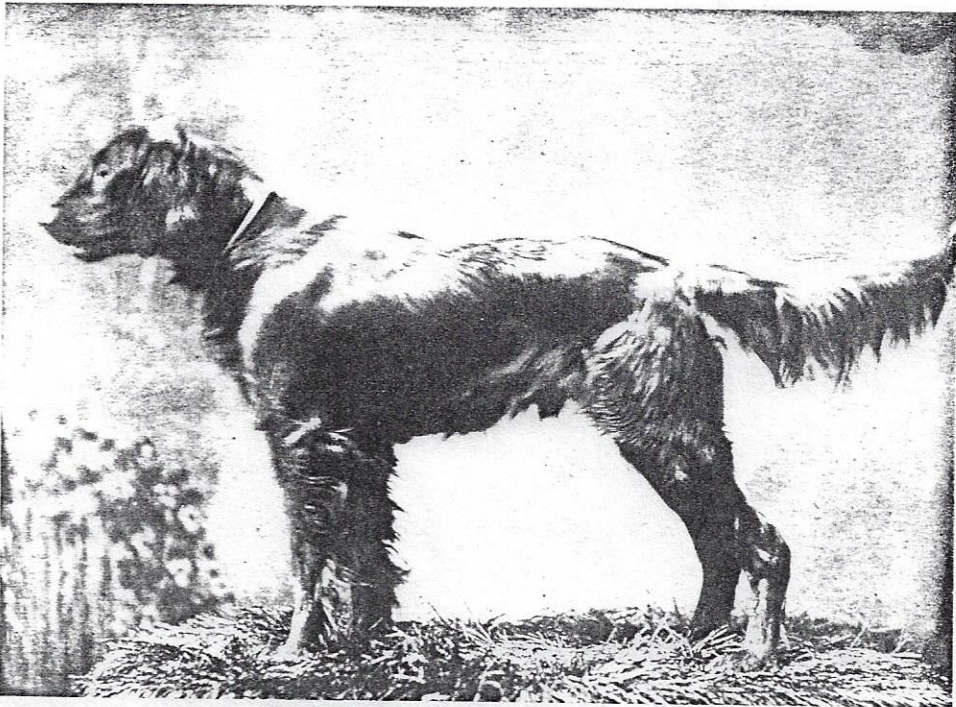
2498

This material may be protected by
Copyright law (Title 17, U.S.C. 101)

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT
RARE BOOKS - ALDERMAN LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903-2498



DR. WM. JARVIS'S ROMAYNE
Photograph taken on game in North Carolina



IMPORTED HENMORE SHAMROCK
A dog of an excellent field-trials strain

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT
RARE BOOKS - ALDERMAN LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY

This material may be protected by
Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code)

and require a great deal of finding, and the walking is arduous, can find no better dog for the purpose than a properly trained and staunch red setter. Such a dog will work hard all day and not give up in disgust about noon because he has failed to locate more than an old bird or two. I shall never forget that big strong dog Wrestler that ran in the Irish Trials of 1891. Each morning he followed, or rather preceded the cars during the long ten miles drive to the moors, on his way racing over the fields and enclosures, and indeed doing an ordinary day's work before the trials commenced, and when he did run his first heat he was even then too wild. No Laverack or Gordon setter would have been allowed to do this, and it must have proved too much even for those untiring liver and white little dogs to which allusion has previously been made in the article on English setters.' Wrestler, although defeated in the Grand All-Ages Stakes by the famous English setter Fred at the English Trials of 1891, won the prize for second best of any breed, and later on had his revenge by defeating Fred, among others, and winning outright the International All-Ages Stakes at the Irish Grouse Trials.

"To come nearer home, we have that well known artist-sportsman, the late J. M. Tracy, in his article on setters and pointers in 'Shooting on Upland, Marsh and Stream': 'The very best field dog I ever saw was an Irish setter. For those who shoot a great deal, and work the same dog on a great variety of game, there is no dog like a good Irish setter.'

"Is it not strange in view of what has been done abroad and the good opinions so many hold in this country that the Irish setter has not been more conspicuous in our field trials, and stranger still that he has absolutely disappeared from public competition. But before condemning the breed in its entirety on that account it is well to remember that there are probably one hundred English setters and pointers bred in this country to one Irish setter, and that the proportion of dollars spent is still greater. Given anything like an even chance, such as there is to be obtained abroad and has been at some trials in this country in former years, the Irish setter has generally rendered an account of himself that lovers of the breed have felt proud of.

EARLY IMPORTATIONS

"That we have imported some of the very best blood cannot be denied, but something beyond that is necessary to bring them to the front in this country. The records prove that they can win if properly selected, trained

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT
RARE BOOKS - ALDERMAN LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY

This material may be protected by
Copyright law (Title 17, U.S. Code)