

A Blast From The Past

The Origins of the Australian Terrier
 Written approx. 50 years ago by
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 He was a distinguished
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I have been requested to submit some notes relating to the origin of the Australian Terrier. For some years I have read articles which have claimed that various breeds have contributed to the synthesis of the Aussie and they have provided most interesting reading.

The Australian Terrier was originally known as the Broken Coated Terrier. The name was changed to the Australian Rough Coated Terrier in 1889 and a specialist club was formed to draw up a Standard and to foster that breed. He was exhibited first as the former at the main Australian shows and enjoyed quite a varied classification. The classes provided included color and weight divisions. Under seven pounds and seven pounds and over were allotted to each of the three color groups.

The colors catered for were:

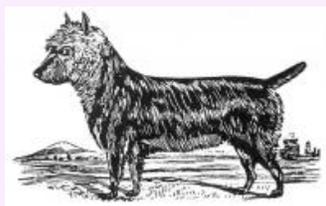
1. Rough Coated Terrier BLUE
2. Rough Coated Terrier SANDY
3. Rough Coated Terrier ANY OTHER COLOR EXCEPT BLUE OR SANDY

The last mentioned class, no doubt, catered for the Blue and the Tans, and as appeared at that time, black and Tans.

Most interesting were some of the pedigrees which claimed an IMPORTED parent. Take for example *Pelham Napper* - this dog was exhibited in the seven pounds and over in the Blue Class and won V.H.C. This dog claimed as his sire *Pelham Scottie* IMPORTED. *Bir Twig*, another exhibit at the same show, had for his dam *Jolly* IMPORTED. At this time the Victorian Poultry and Dog Society held their annual exhibition - the chief winner was a kennel mate to *Bir Twig*, just mentioned. *Bir Pincher* repeated his win of Special for best Rough Coated Terrier at the show of the previous year in 1886, he was then two years old. His color was described as DEEP BLUE GREY and he was advertised as a Rough Coated SCOTCH Terrier. *Bir Twig* was entered in the class for Sandies and was described by his owner as a rich fawn.

There is no doubt whatever, that the breed originated from:

The Manchester Terrier
 The Skye Terrier
 The Rough Coated Terrier
 The Dandie Dinmont



The Rough Coated Terrier



The Dandie Dinmont - 1897



The Irish Terrier - 1878



The Manchester Terrier - 1878

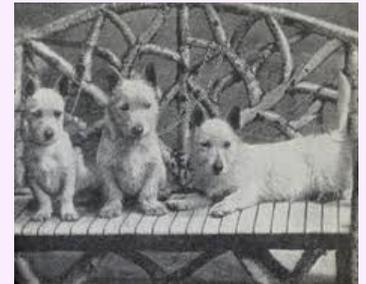


The Skye Terrier - 1897

At different times the Yorkshire Terrier was introduced, some years later the Irish Terrier and of recent years the Cairn Terrier. But these were used well after the breed was established and were more in the nature of experiments to secure either color or to reduce or control size. It is claimed that the popular color in the Scotch Terrier in the early days was a red and from this variety emanated the Irish Terrier, perhaps indirectly. The Yorkshire Terrier is descended from the Skye, so that these breeds were only a slight variation of the progenitors which were originally used. I must mention that the breed was already recognized before the Irish Terriers came to this country and this applies also to Yorkshire Terriers and, of course, it was many years later when the Cairn Terriers were imported. I have reliable knowledge that some of the best specimens were bred from 'black and tan' bitches. Do not confuse *Scotch* with the later variety *Scottish*.



The Scotch Terrier - 1800's



The Scottish Terrier - 1899

It has been suggested that the Bedlington Terrier was utilized at one stage, but I seriously doubt whether it had any lasting effect. Its use certainly was not general and, no doubt, just another experiment to which the breed was subjected. The Irish Terrier first appeared in Australia in 1883, while the earliest records of any importation of Yorkshire Terriers were of *Prince of Leeds* and *Queen of Leeds*, which were first prize winners at the Crystal Palace in 1891. The Bedlington and the Dandie are, no doubt, connected in their early family trees and, I submit that what has suggested the Bedlington influence is really from the Dandie. The influence credited to the Irish Terrier is from his progenitor the Red Scotch Terrier, that of the Yorkshire Terrier, more correctly, from his ancestor the Skye Terrier.

The characteristic top knot has, no doubt, come through this influence of the Dandie Dinmont, which also remembered to pass on the legacy of the bad Australian Terrier front, which, fortunately, is now fast disappearing.