

THE AUSTRALIAN TERRIER

ROOTS AND ROUTES OF EARLY DOGS

by
Carol Saxama

Two previous Special Issues on the Australian Terrier (Jan-Feb 1978 and Jan-Feb 2001) in "Terrier Type" under Dan Kiedrowski's editorship dealt primarily with the breed as show dog in America from 1960 to 2000.

In 2008 we celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the Australian Terrier Club of America, Inc. (1958 – 2008) with publication by the ATCA of a 50th Anniversary Commemorative that dealt with every facet of the Australian Terrier and the National Parent Breed Club including articles on the Early Dogs, Here and Abroad and The Foundation Pedigrees, as well as How the ATCA as We Know it Came To Be.

Here we trace roots of the breed in Australia as well as selected routes of early dogs whose progeny were eventually exported to America in the 1950s. They are a small part of the breed's history in America, but some lesser known connections emerge in the information from this early period.

ROOTS OF A NEW BREED IN AUSTRALIA

A remarkable amount of information exists about the "Rough-coated Terriers" in Australia, bred from British Terriers brought from England, Ireland and Scotland.

For a long time there was no master plan with the clear view of hindsight at work. Instead, new breeds resulted almost in spite of human intervention, which might have made the modern task of breeding the Australian Terrier even more difficult. The genetics of dog breeding operates today the same as it did then, with much still determined by chance in spite of increased understanding of that science.

In the earliest days of colonial settlement of Australia, the island-State of Tasmania was the site of a British convict jail. By 1844, the number of free settlers equaled the convicts' numbers, and families of convict guards and free settlers in Tasmania, who brought their dogs with them, are where we find the origins of the Australian Terrier.

Many of us know the story of Ensign Allan MacDonald, stationed at Port Arthur and Hobart between the late 1840s and early 1850s, who had brought with him a small pack of Terriers bred by his father, Major Allan MacDonald, the Laird of Waternish. His Waternish Terriers were Short-Haired Skyes and were kept for work only. They were mostly dark-colored with tiny ears and dark eyes. When Captain Macdonald returned to Ireland in 1856, he left all but one of his dogs, his favorite bitch, in Tasmania. It is understandable that the progeny from very early terriers of this sort would have been invaluable in town and rural areas to keep vermin in check and to give early warning against strangers.

In November 1862 the very first dog show in the Australian colonies was held in Hobart, Tasmania. Eighteen "Rough Terriers" were exhibited by sixteen different exhibitors. At about the same time The Society for Improvement in the Breed of Dogs was formed, subsequently named the Canine Society from 1863-1868. Stated aims of the Society were, "to encourage improvement in the breeds of dogs, especially the useful varieties, and by inducing people to keep a good dog to lessen, as far as possible, the number of useless curs with which the city is at present infested."

From the 1860-70s these early working dogs, the Rough Coated Terriers, spread throughout Tasmania, Victoria, South Australia, to New South Wales and Queensland. Registration of dogs actually began in 1880 in the State of Victoria by the Victorian Poultry and Dog Society. However, it is not surprising that the practice was apparently conducted somewhat haphazardly for a while.

A NATIONAL TERRIER

Unofficial use of the term "Australian Terrier" is found quite early in the dog show catalogs. In 1880 there is a record of "Australian Rough Coated Terriers" shown in South Australia. In 1886 "Australian Terriers" were shown in Queensland. In 1899 at the Sydney Intercolonial Exhibition, the Aussies were classified for the first time in New South Wales as "Australian Terrier Rough-Coated". The Sydney Kennel Club Show in 1899 included entries of 4 dogs and 7 bitches. Among these were six Sandies and five Blue and Tans.

In 1899 a Rough-Coated Australian Terrier Club was formed in Melbourne. Its bid to the Victorian Poultry and Kennel Club for acceptance of the first Breed Standard and for permission to use the



Rough Coated Terrier in Australia, late 1800s

word "Australian" in regard to Rough-Coated Terriers was emphatically refused. Such was the opposition to attaching the national name to the Rough-Coated Terriers of the time. For the next decade, opposition raged in the press, both pro and con, as interest in the breed waned and the Club lapsed in the next three years.

Cropping of dogs' ears was prohibited in 1895, leaving many dogs with soft ears, and dropped or button ears that fell forward. In addition, some influential breeders of the late 1880s transferred interest and support to the Australian Silky & Yorkshire Terrier Club by 1908, as these breeds were gaining in popularity and interest. But interest in the

Australian Terrier was in fact maintained during this period by a few dedicated breeders.

In 1901 Australia became a Commonwealth. National fervor grew steadily in every facet of society. Finally, in 1909, the Victorian Poultry and Kennel Club granted the first championship title specifically to an "Australian Terrier", previously the Rough Coated Terrier, in the face of overwhelming popular support and against the V.P. and K.C.'s own opposition to the change. From then on the Aussie was given a rightful name,

effectively, throughout the five states of Australia. Even in Tasmania, where formation of its own Kennel Council of Tasmania occurred as late as 1916, dog shows in Tasmania had previously been held under the rules of the Victorian Poultry and Kennel Club. Therefore

the 1909 action affected also breeders and exhibitors in Tasmania, which meant a national breakthrough for the Terrier of Australia.

TURN OF THE CENTURY IN AUSTRALIA DOCUMENTED CROSS-BREEDING

In her book, *The Australian Terrier – History and Origins*, 1997, p. 19, Pamela Douglas summarizes the situation of the breed at the end of the 19th century. The Rough-coated Terrier, soon to be known as the Australian Terrier, was being bred in most States in Australia, with a more-or-less stabilized type. The author states, "There were a lot of problems to correct: Disparity in size, show

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dogs varying from 7 pounds to 14 pounds; soft ears, either pricked or drop ears allowed in the show ring; fronts were often crooked; and color was not stable, particularly on the Blue and Tans”.

We also know quite a bit through secondary sources about the cross-breeding practiced in these still early days. Roy Burnell describes the breeding of Australian Terriers starting about the 1890s as practiced by his paternal grandfather. (Unpublished essay, 1962, The Australian Terrier) Burnell alludes to an “open season” as to what breeders did to develop a breed that would be recognizable. “There was no prepotent dog to leave his mark. There were no kennel names or prefixes found in most pedigrees. There was no complete record kept of pedigrees to indicate the various admixtures used to secure the type of dog they desired or required.”

Burnell’s family came to Tasmania from Norwich in England. His grandfather interbred with his dogs a Norwich of the pricked-eared variety. Norwich Terriers, originally known as Jones Terriers, were not registered in England until 1932. They are thought to be evolved from the cross-breeding of small Irish Terriers and the Scotch Terrier – possibly the Short-haired Skye. His grandfather preferred the use of this type of terrier resembling the dog he was trying to produce. Like many breeders of his day, he determined that he had only to watch softness of coat, lightness of eye, and smuttiness in coat color.

Not that the use of cross-breeding in developing a new breed is unusual. Other terrier breeds were employed by some to strengthen certain desired characteristics, but even the use of “related” breeds might produce in the same litter specimens of two and even three different “breeds” (e.g., Silky Terrier, Yorkshire Terrier and Australian Terrier), depending on the phenotype. If artists’ renderings and early photos of the early terrier progenitors in England and Australia tell us anything, it is that the passing on to offspring so much genetic material so late in the breed’s

development was not conducive to maintaining type.

Early show catalogs document other cross-breeding practices. The 1887 Show catalog of the Victorian Poultry and Kennel Society contains evidence of cross-breeding between the Skye, the old Scotch Terrier (not to be confused with the modern Scottish Terrier) and Australian Terrier. The 1893 advertisements of Mr. John Robertson, a breeder of Australian Terriers and a leading importer of Dandie Dinmonts, Skyes and Scotch Terriers, state that two Scotch Terriers he imported looked so much like Australian Rough-coated Terriers that he had their tails docked and they competed in classes as Australians. In 1880, Lonsdale Laddie, a drop-eared Skye Terrier, was imported, the sire of winners in Skye, Dandie Dinmont and Australian Terrier classes. Lonsdale Laddie was advertised as the cornerstone for future Australian Terriers by Mr. Robertson, whose large breeding establishment in Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, was regularly represented at dog shows.

Mrs. Bertha Burt (Kingswood Aussies) in New South Wales in the 1940s told about her grandmother’s Yorkshire Terrier, Bidy, who was brought on a sailing ship to Australia, was bred to “Tom”, a Scotch Terrier type of dog, and produced offspring Jo and Josie. Jo was later mated to Minnie, the daughter of a cross mating of a Dandie Dinmont sire and a Black and Tan English Terrier dam. One dog and two bitches resulted. The bitches were bred back to “Tom” and four puppies resulted for experiments in line-bred cross-breeds that were mated back to Jo and Josie, producing a strain with identical percentages of bloodlines and establishing a type, developed from the same proportion of breeds, but out-bred. Unfortunately Mrs. Burt herself died before compilation was completed of this only breeding chart of the days when dogs were brought to Australia in sailing ships.

Mrs. Julia Vignes (Merryvale prefix) of New South Wales also told a story in the 1940s

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about a man named Mathews who owned a produce store in Sussex Street, Sydney around the turn of the century. Mathews had such a problem with rats and mice in his store that he set about experimentally breeding for broken-coated terriers by cross-breeding a Short-haired Skye that resembled a Cairn with a Dandie Dinmont and a Scotch Terrier type of dog. While Mrs. Vignes’ tale remains unverified, she was apparently always most emphatic that it was true.

New registration requirements initiated in Victoria about 1940 were the first to call a halt to cross-breeding in show stock. In New South Wales, the new rules came in 1947; and in South Australia the practice was finally ended as late as 1952.

ROUTES OF THE EARLY DOGS TO INDIA AND ENGLAND

Australian Terriers are documented in England as early as 1896, almost as early as in its native land, although not in such numbers. These were mainly Blue and Tans.

The Woodstock Kennels of Mrs. J. R. Wood of Sussex, England, first exhibited this breed in 1907. In 1908 Mrs. Wood made application to The Kennel Club of England to have the Australian Terrier placed on their register of breeds but the request was not granted due to insufficient numbers of registered Aussies in England at the time.

Well-known collectible photos on souvenir cards feature Woodstock Doongarah around



Mrs Woods' Dogs England 1910
Woodstock Doongarah & Woodstock Wirree

1910 and Woodstock Wirri both with drop ears. Only in 1951 were drop ears no longer allowed in the Standard in England.

The route through England also took a turn through South Australia and India in the early 20th century. Mr. H. J. Haussen of Glenside Kennels in South Australia exported many quality dogs to India and Europe. Among these were Blue-and-Tan Aussies and also Silky Terriers, a common occurrence among early Australian Terrier breeders. Between 1916 and 1920 Mr. William McPharlin developed an all-Sandy line of Australian Terriers at his Cheerio Kennels also in South Australia.

From 1920 to 1930, The Cheerio and Glenside Kennels exported extensively to India. Port Adelaide was the main port of call for the Indian horse traders who bought Australian horses for wealthy Maharajahs. The Australian Terriers were also favored by these horsemen. Several champions were exported for show and as companions for the horses during the long sea voyage.

The Kennel Club of India accepted the Australian Terrier as early as 1913, maintaining a registry for them twenty years before England. India had an Australian Terrier Club as early as 1927, made up of members of the



Terriers at Pewsey Vale, South Australia
hunting possums

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Indian Army and Civil Service. Ex-patriots in India would eventually return to England with their Australian Terriers and become part of the fabric of the breed there and exported to America.

From 1900-1930 in England, only 41 Aussies were registered with The Kennel Club in England. In most cases dogs were being imported from India and Australia. There was still no Breed Club or any major kennels in the UK.

In 1926 the Earl and Countess of Stradbroke brought a number of the dogs back to England when they returned from Australia, where the Earl had been serving as Governor General of Victoria. Their initial imports were from kennels in Victoria (Sturt) and South Australia (Carrington), and included the Blue and Tan Jetty of Melbourne, who became one of the Stradbroke's foundation stud dogs in their Henham Kennel.

Miss Jenny Rodocanachi had visited the Stradbroke's in Australia and brought 2 Aussies back to England, Sheila of Toorak and Lassie of Toorak, Blue and Tans, who were bred by Colonel Apps in Australia in 1925. In England, Lassie of Toorak was bred to the Countess's Blue and Tan Jetty of Melbourne, and in 1927 a litter resulted that included the very successful stud dog, **Simon of Toorak**, used extensively by Aussie fanciers. Bred together, Sheila and Simon of Toorak produced Sally of Toorak, Micky of Toorak, and especially **Sam of Toorak**, who in 1934 became the first



Sally of Toorak



Sam of Toorak

British-bred and owned Champion. Sam of Toorak was Blue and Tan and had drop ears.

The Australian Terrier Club of Great Britain was founded in 1933 by the Earl and Countess of Stradbroke, who worked diligently to assemble those who were importing new dogs. In 1930 we are told 33 Aussies were registered in the UK and by 1934 there were sufficient registered Aussies (66) to qualify for "Championship status", and **The Kennel Club of England** officially recognized the breed in 1934.

Importation from Australia to England continued in this period. The Duke of Gloucester, posted to Australia on two occasions, brought Aussies back with him and his family on returning to England in 1934 and again in 1945. In 1935, they imported a pair of Aussies, Sturt Billy and Sturt Betty, from Mr. W. Wiltshire who had taken over Mr. Nippard's Sturt Kennel and continued the Sturt bloodlines under the Kursaal prefix.

A reference to the Aussie as worker was written by the Duchess on their arrival in



Sally of Toorak with her sire, Simon of Toorak

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Australia. In a letter she tells how they solved the problem of poisonous snakes on the grounds at their residence by getting an Australian Terrier. As a result of a dog nosing about everywhere, the snakes made off in addition to dispensing with the need for the children to collect balls from under bushes and other places where the snakes liked to lurk.

Many kennels in Australia continued to breed dogs of both colors from early on. Mr. Moss in Australia, breeder of Ch. Torres Blue Jacket, also later produced a successful Torres dog of the **Sandy color**, Grand Champion Torres Terry, whelped in 1936.

The Westmead prefix, owned by a Mrs. Hopkins and a Mr. Partridge, appeared around 1934 in New South Wales, Australia. They produced some well-known Sandy Aussies that continued their bloodlines in several states in Australia and overseas.

Ch. Westmead Lorna was a red bitch purchased by Mr. Reg Mitchell (Grendon) of Victoria about 1937. Bred to the dog **Ch. Cheerio Pataudi**, she produced a famous



Ch. Cheerio Pataudi

outstanding red litter of this time. One pup, **Ch. Grendon Red Shadow**, was exported to India to Mrs. De C. Chesney, who subsequently moved back to England in 1938. Another pup, **Ch. Grendon Red Flash** was exported to England. A third pup, a male remained in Victoria, **Ch. Grendon Red Flare**. Bred to Mr. A. Laidlaw's Bitch, Parkville Nettie, from the

Parkville Kennel of Mr. McGowan of Launceston, Tasmania, whose kennel was purchased by Mr. Laidlaw in Victoria when Mr. McGowan passed away, **Ch. Grendon Red Flare** produced **Ch. Ripon Reggie** in 1946, a



Ch. Ripon Reggie

Red male who was a prepotent sire of Sandies in Victoria and campaigned by Mrs. Marjorie Bywater (Seven Oaks) to a distinguished show career.

In India, both Sandy/Reds and Blue/Tans were seen at an early date, but in Great Britain the first Aussies were Blue and Tan. The introduction of the Red Aussie to Great Britain has particular importance to some of the early Aussies imported to America.

It is reported that in 1938 the first Sandy Aussies were imported to England. Mr. Neville Dawson, a Smooth Fox Terrier breeder and judge, imported a Sandy bitch, **Cheerio Cuddle**, in whelp to **Cheerio Eric** from Mr. McPharlin's kennel in Adelaide. The puppies were born in quarantine on July 4th, 1938.

Also in 1938 Mrs. De C Chesney and her Australian Terriers previously imported from Australia returned to England from India. Among these were Grand Champion **Grendon Red Shadow** (mentioned above) and **Arran Sally**, two Sandies; a Red bitch, **Westmead Winnie**; and a Red daughter of **Red Shadow** and **Winnie**, **Pretty Polly Perkins**, bred by Mrs. De C Chesney in India.

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WORLD WAR II IN ENGLAND – THE BREED IN A HOLDING PATTERN

The outbreak of WWII in England resulted in extraordinary measures taken by breeders to preserve their Australian Terriers and as a result the numbers of the breed were maintained during the war.

Shortly before the war broke out in 1939, the Stradbrokes sent three of the four dogs they had recently imported from Australia to other breeders in rural areas away from the targeted cities in England.

A Blue and Tan bitch, Lady of Boronia, was given to Mrs. Morgan (Llasdrib) in Yorkshire. She already owned Henham Joepop and from Neville Dawson she had acquired Cheerio Cuddle. This kennel continued to be active in breeding throughout the war years. Lady of Boronia bred to Jimmy Crow of the Wells produced a litter that proved significant to modern British pedigrees - three great winner-producing bitches, Llasdrib Bittern, Llasdrib Boronia and Llasdrib Bell.

The other bitch, a Red, Melba of Boronia, was given to Mrs. Hazell (Zellah) in Dartmoor. The significance to American imports is the mating of this imported Sandy bitch, Melba of Boronia, to Henham Tod, a Blue and Tan dog, that produced Dandy of Zellah, a Red dog born in 1940 at the start of the war, which meant his remarkable show career was delayed until he was 6 years old.



Ch. Dandy of Zellah

POSTWAR ENGLAND AND THE US IN THE 50'S

There were no dog shows during the war years. The first Club Championship Show after the war was held on May 25, 1946, the only show offering CCs that year, with an entry of 23 exhibitors and 42 dogs! Dandy of Zellah won the only Dog CC that year at this 1946 Championship Show in May.

After the war, new enthusiasts helped reestablish the breed. One key example is Miss Evelyn Swyer's Elvyne Kennel. The first Aussie shown by Miss Swyer, previously a Fox Terrier enthusiast, was Ch. Majiga Barbara, a Blue and Tan, bred by the Hon Mrs. Bassett (Majiga) in England. As a 6-mo old puppy, Majiga Barbara was Best Puppy at the first dog show after the war, in 1946. Despite a coat that was said to be too black, she had a deep mahogany tan and is said to have been quite a character as a showdog.

In 1947 Miss Swyer bought the Red dog, Dandy of Zellah, and together with her Blue and Tan bitch, Ch. Majiga Barbara, these two dogs contributed greatly to the success of her Elvyne Kennels in the 1940s, 50s and 60s. Mrs. Nell Fox (Pleasantpastures Kennels) in the US imported the Red dog, Elvyne Regal Salute, and the Blue and Tan bitch, Elvyne Blue Taffeta in the 1950s.



Elvyne Regal Salute

Considered a top quality British-bred dog, Dandy of Zellah made quite an impact on the breed. What was even more remarkable was Dandy of Zellah's storied work of a terrier. At the age of 10 years, he went to ground and tackled a badger. At nearly 12 years Miss

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Swyer's garden was invaded by dozens of adders due to a serious fire; Dandy of Zellah demonstrated he was as skillful at snake killing as his ancestors before him!

He was a heralded guest at the 1950 Crufts Show at the age of 12 years. He is said to have retained full capacity for sight and hearing until nearly 13 years of age and only some gaps in his teeth marked his age. He sired his last litter at 15 years of age, celebrated his 16th birthday by going to ground after a badger, and died at 16 ½ years of age.

The Red dogs of Mrs. V. Nesbit's Billabong Kennels in County Leitrim, Ireland, also figured prominently in some of the early exports to America. One of the best known Billabong Aussies was Ch. Tawny Boy of Billabong, the first Australian Terrier Champion in Ireland, who later was stolen from his home and apparently never found. Two other Irish stud dogs that appear in the early pedigrees of dogs imported to America at this time through Mrs. Nesbit were Cognac of



Mrs. V. Nesbitt, Billabong Kennels, Ireland, Tawny Boy of Billabong & Cheerly of Zellah, granddaughter of Cheerio Cuddle



Tawny Boy of Billabong & Cheerly of Zellah



Billabong Aussies Ireland 1950s

Billabong and Thorneley Chanter, a son of Ch. Grendon Red Shadow (of Bendigo), the same red puppy exported from Victoria to Mrs. De C Chesney in India, who brought him to England in 1938.

Tawny Boy of Billabong is behind the several dogs imported to America by John F. Harjes (Blu-Crest Kennels) in the 1950s. In 1952 he



D'Israeli of Billabong, imported by John Harjes, 1953

imported Sarah of Billabong, from her breeder/owner, Mrs. V. E. Nesbit. Sarah was a Sandy Red bred from mostly Zella dogs. In 1953 he imported the male, Disraeli of Billabong, listed as a “deep red” from Mrs. Nesbit. This dog’s Irish Kennel Club export Pedigree states, in Mrs. Nesbit’s handwriting, some of which is illegible, “D’Israeli is the result of careful selected breeding; from his dam carries the direct line of Imported Cheerio Cuddle, dam of Ch. Dandy of Zella, (next few words illegible on the Original)...the Henham Jete imported by the Countess of Stradbroke.”

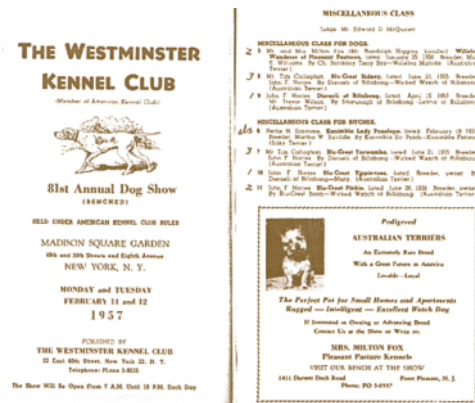


Ron Bunda and Blu-Crest Aussies in Central Park

Henham Jete is presumably the Stradbrokes’ Australian import, Jetty of Melbourne, who, bred to Australian import, Lassie of Toorak, produced Simon of Toorak, who in turn, bred to Australian import Sheila of Toorak, produced Sally of Toorak and Sam of Toorak,



New York Times 1957. Historic first time entry of Australian Terriers at Westminster KC Miscellaneous Class. Disraeli of Billabong pictured 2nd from right, sitting upright.



Westminster catalog, Australian Terrier entry, 1957

who became the first British-bred and owned Champion in 1934.

Harjes and his two brothers were third-generation heirs of an expatriot family who pioneered international banking with another Philadelphia banker by the name of Drexel in the form of the Drexel-Harjes Bank. Later J P Morgan bought out Drexel and the Morgan Harjes Bank was firmly established in Paris by 1898.

By 1957 the full-court-press was initiated by John Harjes and Nell Fox for AKC recognition of the new breed in America. The first entry of Australian Terriers at the Westminster Kennel Club dog shows was noted in The New York Times in February 1957.

Their numbers increased each year after that until in 1960 a record for the Miscellaneous

Class at Westminster was set with an entry of 59 Australian Terriers. In May 1960 the Aussie Terrier was recognized by AKC. During the first year of recognition, July 1960 through June 1961, a total of 114 first-time Aussies were entered into the AKC Stud Book. Of these 76 were bitches with 35 different kennel names, including the first appearance of Mr. and Mrs. Milton Fox’s kennel name, Pleasantpastures.

The 1950s imports, Sarah of Billabong and Disraeli of Billabong, from Ireland by John Harjes, and the first import by Mrs. Milton (Nell) Fox in the 1950s, Willelva Wanderer from Australia, bred by the Williams sisters, together with 3 bitches of the Elvyne line from England, including Elvyne Blue Taffeta, and the Red dog, Elvyne Regal Salute shortly thereafter, contributed in a major way to the earliest stock recorded in the Foundation Pedigrees of Australian Terriers in the US.



Westminster 1960 Misc. Best Dog, Elvyne Regal Salute, Clifford Hallmark, handling, Mrs Milton (Nell) Fox and Judge Louis Murr.

COLOR AND THE AUSTRALIAN TERRIER

The colors of the modern Australian Terrier are Blue and Tan, Sandy or Red. The present American Standard states the Blue may be dark blue, steel blue, dark grey-blue, or silver blue. The topknot should be silver or a lighter shade than the head color. For the Sandies or Reds, any shade of solid sandy or solid red is permitted, the clearer the better. The topknot in the Sandy/Red color family must be silver or

a lighter shade of the body coat.

Under Faults, the Standard states, “All black coat in the adult dog. Tan smut in the blue portion of the coat, or dark smut in sandy/red coated dogs. In any color white markings on chest or feet are to be penalized.” There are no disqualifications in the Standard.

While the earliest show catalogs in Australia record Rough-Coated Terriers as Grey and Tan, Blue and Tan, or Black and Tan, by 1873 they were exhibiting also the Sandy color in Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia. The first mention of a Red color came in 1896. In 1899 at the Sydney Kennel Club Show included an entry of 11, six Sandies and five Blue and Tans. In 1909, 83 Australian Terriers were registered in Victoria; of these 64 were Blue and Tan and 19 were Sandy.

By 1915, all States except Tasmania had eliminated the color Black from the Standard, with the exception of puppies up to twelve months of age. Previously in Tasmania the Black and Tan color had been accepted as a correct jacket color. Action was finally taken to enforce the color disqualification, and by 1918 the Tasmanian Standard also eliminated Black, like the rest of the mainland.

In 1933 Mrs. Anna Stilwell (Clewer, then Clewervillage) imported to England Ch. Torres Blue Jacket of Clewer, whelped in 1930 from Mr. I. I. Moss’s Torres Kennel in New South Wales. He held the record of 21 challenges in Australia and England. In the run up to WWII in the UK, Ch. Torres Blue Jacket of Clewer is said to have been an outstanding showman, having a “lovely, real Blue/Black and brilliant Tan color.”

In 1939 the Stradbrokes’ new import, Glenside Scorcher, a Blue and Tan, was described as being very sound, of good bone, and “as tough as Nails”. His coat texture was considered excellent, harsh, plenty of furnishings, but not good in color: it was noted that he carried red brindling in his blue coat. It appears the problem of “tan smut” in the coats of Blue and Tan Aussies has “dogged” the breed from its earliest days in Australia and continues

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in America and other countries up to the present day.

The occasional all-too-black color in an adult dog and tan smut in the Blue and Tan coats persist to this day. Identifying a true “blue” coat color remains a mystery for some.

There are still some who maintain that Blue and Tan is the preeminent color in the Australian Terrier. While there have been/continue to be breeders who diligently show only Blue/Tan dogs, still others, including some who are known for their Blue/Tans, have always also produced and shown Sandies/Reds, as we have seen. It is most important for the breed for both color families to be maintained; they are equally a part of the long tradition of color in the Australian Terrier.

The unhappy fact that the first Standard approved in America by AKC in 1960

contained a statement that the Blue and Tan color was to be preferred over the Sandy and Red is part of the Parent Club’s history, and not its finest hour. In 1970 the statement of preference was deleted, making all allowed colors equal in stature in the Standard.

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