

CHATTER



*An Occasional Magazine for
devotees of the Irish Red and White Setter*

Issue No. 9

Ireland

This year we went again on the Munster circuit. Everything went wrong from Day 1. We got caught in a nightmare traffic jam on the M6, and missed the boat for starters. The car played up all the week, and eventually broke down. We needed a new clutch. It rained every day, particularly on show days. For all that we thoroughly enjoyed it. We had the pleasure of staying with the Gormleys, excellent hosts, and had a lovely time. Yvonne Davis and family, and Mary Knox were there as well and we had a lot of fun teasing each other about the result. Honours were equalled shared, and we all came home with something. Mary and also Mr Davis, came home with streaming colds!!

I was able to visit several friends, and also had a lovely dinner one evening with Canon Pat Doherty and Maureen Daly. I was collecting material for my book, which is now getting on well. Incidentally, will those people who would like pictures of their dogs included let me have the photos by Mid. November This is your absolute last chance.

Junior Warrant.

I understand that Sandy Williamson's young dog, ERiska Wood Mellick has won his 25 points and should now get the Junior Warrant. Well done, Sandy, especially as the dog has won his points while still in puppy.

Looking at the puppy class at Gundog Club of Wales I was most impressed with the standard, and I'm looking forward to the next couple of Championship shows to watch these puppies.

Future Chatters

In future Chatter will be published three times a year. This will be Spring (Crufts), Summer and Autumn. It is difficult to obtain enough material for more frequent issues, and there are production and cost problems as well. If you would like to receive copies next year, please fill in the slip below, and sent it to me.

Pat Brigden

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Please send me Chatter in 1986.

Name.....

Address.....

.....

I enclose £1.00.

SPOTLIGHT

"MEIKLERED HI-WAYMAN" (Rory) Born 17.9.80. ("WINNOWING GANNET" Ex "BRISKET OF ARDNAGASHEL").

Rory was the second Irish Red and White Setter to join our family, the first being Emma ("MEUDON GAY PRINCESS"). We picked him at National Gundog, December 1980, when he was 13 weeks old, after arranging with his breeder, Ruth Fletcher, to take a look at the litter. He settled into our routine at home and got on well with our two Irish (Red) Setters and the cat.

He is an adorable dog and a mischief. At meal times he usually finishes with food $1\frac{1}{4}$ " thick on the top of his nose, which he tries to wipe on Rod's trouser legs. If he decides it is time to play, you really have no option, it is certainly easier to humour than to ignore him as he is very persistent. Rory loves to hold your hand, wrist or finger in his mouth and walk up and down, just as though he were in the show ring, but him showing you! If you happen to get in front he just tightens his grip slightly and turns his head. You have no choice but to come to heel. He grins an awful lot which seems to be a trait of the Red and Whites.

Rory is a patient, playful dog and it was wonderful to see him with the puppies. He is very good with children and plays with our nephew regularly.

Rory is five years old now and has not changed at all. he is still as playful as a puppy.

Rod + Stephanie Baron



Meiklered Hi-Wayman

Ch. KNOCKANE SHERRY

As you all know the Breed Standard in Ireland states quite specifically that Red & Whites ought to be bred and judged primarily as working Setters. Ever since he acquired his first Red & White Terry O'Leary has taken this instruction quite seriously and along the way has achieved many '1sts'.

Terry's first dog, Hickory of Knockalla, a brother to Mr. & Mrs. Gormley's famous show dog, Harlequin of Knockalla, gained a number of Show awards in spite of being a pure white dog all over and his Show awards included BOB and Green Stars. However, much more important than his Show awards, were Blanco's Field Trial runs, he qualified for Open Stakes by winning a Novice Stake and I'm told by an impartial viewer that 'he won it in grand style too!' Blanco was, I think, the first Red & White to be run in Irish Trials for a good number of years.

In 1981 Terry obtained from Fr. Griffin of Brosna a bitch puppy, two of whose siblings have since become very successful show dogs here in England and another sister is well on her way to becoming a Champion in Ireland. Skippy was campaigned in the Irish Shows and Trials, and in 1983 qualified for entry to Irish Open Stakes. In 1984 she gained her final points in the Show ring and having already won awards at Field Trials had no need to run for the Irish equivalent of our Show Gundog Working Certificate and thus Knockane Sherry became one of the first two Champion Irish Red & White Setters. At about the same time Canon Doherty's Meudon Blaze had gained his final Show points and run his qualifier, so they were the first, and to date, only, Champion Irish Red & Whites.

Since gaining her Title on the Bench Skippy has been run extensively at Trials. This year she became the first Setter registered as a Red & White to run in and gain an award in the All Aged Stake at Shap (ISAE Trial) for something like sixty years. Last weekend - Monday 20th September - at the Cork Field Trial Association's Open Stake run near Charleville, Co. Limerick, Skippy gained first place - the first such award to go to a Red & White we believe in Irish Field Trial history, and Ch. Knockane Sherry has therefore notched up her first four points towards her Field Title.

The 1985 Irish Field Trial season has another month to go and Skippy is still a young bitch so, if there's any fairness at all in this world, it is to be hoped that before too long Skippy will achieve for her dedicated owner the great distinction of Dual Champion - a rare distinction for any Setter breed but for such a numerically tiny breed as the Red & White must surely go down as an outstanding achievement and example to us all.

IOS - September, 1985

NB.

Ch. Knockane Sherry was sired by Mr. Mooney's Winnowing Grouse out of Fr. Griffin's bitch, Judy. Her sister, Brosna Judy of Autumnwood has had success on the Bench both here and in Ireland. Her brother, Brosna Grouse of Autumnwood (now owned by Mesdames Perriam & Roberts) has been trained but not yet run in Trials and is of course a well known Show dog. Canon Doherty has yet another sister, Mounteagle Belle, which I understand has only to run her qualifier before becoming the Canon's second Champion Red & White and the third Ch. R & W in all.

mayes resident JOHN RULER continues the story of training his dog, James, to show standard:—

IT'S been some time since I brought you news about James our red and white setter. And it's both good and bad . . .

Good that what a fellow setter owner described as "a gangling teenager" has turned at the age of 14 months into a

Every time stuck in third place

more mature dog and won his way into the big boys' class at his dog training sessions.

Bad, though I'm sure James cares not a jot, is that his last two show appearances were, if not disastrous, doomed in the

Hackles rise at the show

sense that he is doggedly stuck at gaining third place.

And this is despite the efforts of a new found friend, Luis Gomez a setter fanatic of some many years' standing who has both judged and bred the breed.

It was Luis who at James' first ever show took me aside, as ring steward, to instill some tips on presenting ourselves.

I took note . . . but I'm not sure James did though Luis who took him into a show late March, only to be pipped into third place due to James sensing an interesting scent in the show-ring, remains confident.

James, he assures me despite my doubting looks has a good temperament and, even better, is an extrovert with the staying power needed to win through to best of breed.

Oh yes, that's if we ever get beyond third. I took James myself in April and after a long wait we were all keyed up for judging.

That's until James spotted a black, plastic bag used for rub-

bish. Up went his hackles, I was dragged along by one terrified pooch and what with our name coming up for our class, neither of us was really at our best for the judge.

But he did get a THIRD . . . and there was around six or so in the class. First, incidentally, was his sister, so at least it was a family affair. But, blast it,

Mention of friends brings me to his West Wickham obedience classes where he now shares his knowledge, gained from Bob Syrett and his helpers, with a more sober-minded group of adult dogs.

With him, however, is Thomas the Clumber spaniel who has gone up with him from previous classes, leaving the

Just like a pair of giggling schoolboys urging each other on . . .

she's beaten him every time so far!

Some say showing is too competitive, that it becomes boring and bitchy; suffice to say that I have not found this among us red and white setter crowd, nor for that matter among the red setter folk who are generally close by us in the benches.

I should add that James has some good chums among the competitors — including Tucker who is every bit as exuberant and has the same casual sort of attitude to the whole affair.

As for Luis, James must enjoy his company . . . so far, he's chewed his hair and split his lip!

two of them — like giggling schoolboys — to urge each other on to puppy style excesses.

Nor has James really learned to retrieve his dumb-bell properly, while Thomas has both chased other people's or given it back to Bob instead of his owner.

James now has a soft object instead, but heaven help us if he ever had to carry a bird. He would shake it to bits!

We may cure that too. He is off to a gun-dog training weekend at the Salston Hotel, Ottery St Mary, Devon. But more of that in my next feature.

Keyed up for judging



ME and my friend . . . James with Luis, who lives in Chelsfield, and is pictured at one of the spring shows.

IMMEDIATE PUBLIC AUCTION

PERSIAN AND ORIENTAL RUGS AND CARPETS

BY DEMAND OF MAJOR CREDITORS

to offset debts incurred due to faulty business management and over extended credit. Notice has been given to sell by public auction to the highest bidder the following goods now held in

CUSTOM BONDED WAREHOUSE

IRWFSS

A novice Stake for Pointers & Setters was run by the Irish Red & White Setter Field & Show Society at Wilkinstown on Sunday 15th September.

Unfortunately the Secretary of our Club whipped my Catalogue but I can tell you that a lovely Irish Red Setter Dog, whose name I don't know, owned by

Mr. N. McCarthy of Fermoy and sired by FT Ch. Moanruad Jerry out of Killenule Burnett won the Stake. The only other award went to a black and white Pointer dog! Both dogs qualified for Open Stakes.

Also at the same Trial was run a Qualifier by Mr. Vincent Brennan's dog, Pride of Erne (Harlequin of Knockalla ex Rushfield Whin). I understand the dog is not wanting many more points on the Bench before he will be made up.

On the previous day, Saturday, 14th September, was held the Club Championship Show. This Show was judged by Mrs. Laura Dunne.

BOB & Gn. Star Dog	Ch. Meudon Blaze	Canon P. Doherty
Res. Gn. Star Dog	Pride of Erne	Vincent Brennan
Gn. Star bitch	Mounteagle Belle	Canon P. Doherty
Res. Gn Star Bitch	Aoibh of Sugarloaf	T. O'Leary
Best FT D/B	Aoibh of Sugarloaf	T. O'Leary

Most of you will know the breeding of all except the Reserve Green Star Bitch - she is by Mrs. Cuddy's dog, George out of Quail of Ludford.

Other awards went to Mr. & Mrs. Gormley's aptly named Knockdownmey Lovely Lass, she gained a 1st in her class. Also 1st was Glenkeen Maisie in her class and I was proud to see her third in the final line up of bitches competing for Green Star and I'm told by those who were watching that line up that as a whole it was an impressive line of some lovely bitches.

Mr. Macdiarmada gained a first with a dog out of Quail of Ludford by a Red Setter and a 2nd. in the same class with its half brother out of the same bitch by a different Red Setter dog. I think a brother to one of these is Ben of Sugarloaf owned by Sean Walsh and currently running in Field Trials.

My apologies to those whose awards I haven't mentioned - as at the Field Trial my marked up catalogue was whipped - by the same person??

After the Show there was a little 'get together' with food beautifully prepared, presented and organised by 'Terry's Mum' - Mrs. O'leary. There was also a drop or two of wine! At this little gathering the Trophies were presented to the lucky owners by The Chairman, Vincent Brennan, in the absence of our President, the Canon. The Secretary was rather embarrassed to have to point out that the Trophies for BOB and Green Star Dog and Best Open Dog all of which were won by the Canon's dog, Ch. Meudon Blaze (and at least one of which was actually presented by the Canon in the first place!) for the second year running are still missing, not having been returned by the English owner who had won them initially. The Trophy for Best Junior D/B won by Vincent Brennan's Kinawley Surprise was also similarly missing. The Bilbro Trophy, donated by Mr. & Mrs. Conway, was won by the Canon's bitch, Mounteagle Belle, as was the Shield for Green Star bitch given by Sean Walsh. Mr. & Mrs. Gormley gained the Trophy for Best Limit with their lovely Lovely Lass, and best Graduate awarded by Mr. & Mrs. Gormley went to Glenkeen Maisie. Best Puppy Dog, given by Mrs. Hughes, went to Brian MacDiarmada's Cluain Cathar. Many thanks to all who donated Trophies and congratulations to those who won! ICS - September, 1985.

Designing a Kennel Run.

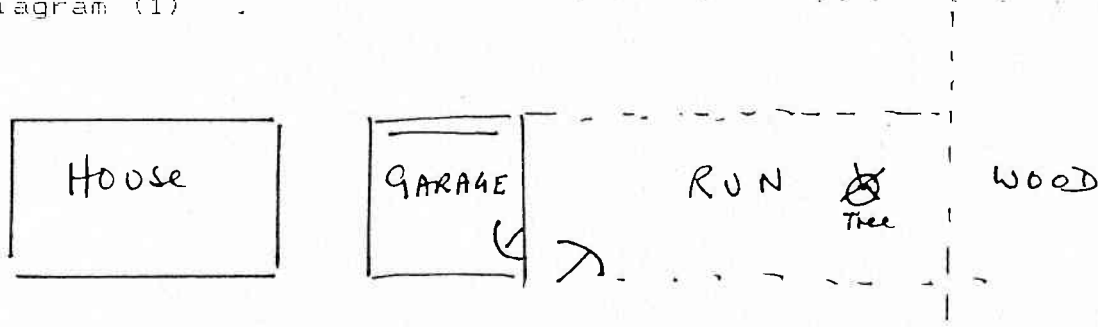
Readers may be interested in our efforts to design our own runs when we moved house about two years ago, and perhaps may be able to learn from some of the mistakes we made, and had subsequently to correct.

Moving with a number of dogs is quite a business, and considerably adds to the problems which moving entails anyway. We took the easy way out, and put the five dogs we had then into kennels for a couple of days.

The first problem was that on our near one acre site, there was no fence on one side, so this had to be rectified immediately.

After this we had to decide what to do with the dogs. We had the space, but not much experience with keeping dogs in kennels. In our previous house, they all lived indoors with us, and we were fortunate in having an extension room where they could be housed at night, and when left alone. The quick and immediate solution was to use one of the cars as a temporary kennel, and this they enjoyed, watching all the comings and goings with great interest.

We decided on a quick conversion of the garage, making a new door in one side, and using one long wall of the garage as one side of the run, the perimeter fence as another, and filling the two remaining sides with wire mesh fencing. The surface was grass, and for the time this had to remain. I had read somewhere that earth runs would not smell, due to the bacteria level in the soil. This did not prove to be true. In the middle of the run, was a large tree, and I thought this would provide shade on sunny days. As three sides of the run were grass, I also thought that the dogs would be happier as they could see out. All of this turned out to be impractical for various reasons. The garage floor was concrete, and it proved difficult to keep clean. The run itself was much too big, and this also meant a large area to clean. So we decided to think again. The total area of the run was about 15 feet by about 35ft. See diagram (1)



Another problem was that our perimeter fence was wire, and on the other side was woodland (The reason we liked the property) and people would sometimes walk their dogs along this part of the wood. This sometimes caused the dogs to bark, although more often they would run up to the wire, and there would be some mutual sniffing through the fence, and a great deal of tail wagging. I realised that if I had any young puppies in this run they might thus be

exposed to infection.

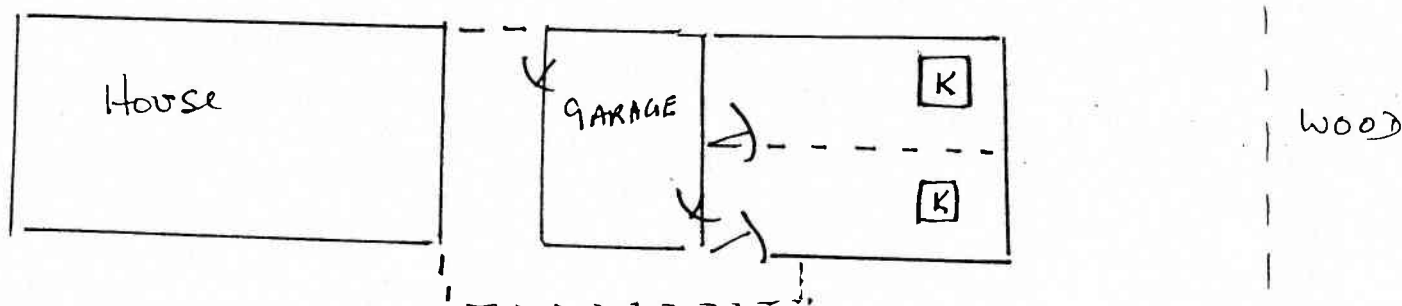
So we started again, and realised that we would have to spend a good deal of money on a new set up if this was ever going to be satisfactory.

We decided to put two kennels into the run, and to discontinue using the garage as sleeping quarters. We chose not to have wooden kennels as we wanted if possible to have something free from maintenance costs. We chose Banbury sheds.

These are similar to the Banbury garages, being constructed of concrete panels, which are bolted together. There is a choice of finishes for the outside walls. We chose a stone face which looks good, and does not detract from the property generally. This is an important point, because there will come a day when your property is up for sale, and not every one will want kennels. Therefore if the buildings are suitable for a number of purposes and do not look scruffy, the place is more likely to sell.

We are delighted with the Banbury buildings, and can well recommend them for being sound, weather-tight and good looking.

The run was reduced to half the former size, and was divided into two halves, with a kennel in each. See diagram 2



Of course, before the kennels were erected, the run had to be properly concreted. I had quite gone off the idea of earth runs. To do the work we used the "Mixamate" service. This is very easy. You prepare the site with plenty of hardcore (and anything you want to get rid of) and enclose it with wooden shuttering. The concrete is delivered by appointment and you lay it yourself straight onto the prepared site. It is amazingly quick. All the family helped including myself, and the grandchildren and we all had a lot of fun. I had asked that the concrete be as smooth as possible thinking of future cleaning problems, and this was achieved. The site had quite a good natural slope, so we made use of this for natural drainage, and a concrete gully was constructed at the lowest end which has been led into a drain.

Then the kennels were erected. They have no floor provided, so a fine concrete scree was laid on top of the run concrete, and this was designed to slope towards the door of each kennel. This has been very successful, so water naturally runs out of the door, and there are no puddles. Cleaning is very simple.

A bucket of suds and disinfectant, and a quick go with the deck scrubber leaves the floor clean, and it dries in no time.

Inside the kennels, we fixed wooden benches, which could be tilted on their sides when cleaning, and on the benches we use the plastic oval beds which again are easy to clean. WE keep the dogs on blankets at night, but remove the blankets during the day as they are inclined to play tug-of-war. Each kennel has a stable door, and we

close the top half on inclement days, leaving the bottom open so they can go in and out.

We still had the problem of the dogs seeing through the wire passers-by, so regretfully we have now fenced the runs so they can only see into our own garden. This has reduced barking substantially, and we now have a set up which is practical, maintenance free, and very easy to keep clean.

We still have access from the run to the garage, which is useful to provide a dry place for feeding when the weather is bad, and we also use it for mating, and for housing a litter when we have one.

Altogether we are very pleased with the final result.

I just wonder why all my dogs seem to spend such a lot of time indoors with us!

Pat Brigden.

THE IRISH RED & WHITE SETTER CLUB OF GREAT BRITAIN

POINTS COMPETITION @ 30.9.85.

1.	SHANNONLEE MAJESTIC FLAME	49
2.	COOLFIN COMMANCHIE	38
3.	SHANNONLEE AMBER SHEEN OF HAWKLAWN	29
4.	MEUDON GAY PRINCESS	14
5.	SHANNONLEE AMBER LIGHT	13
6.	ERISKA WOOD MELICK	11
7=.	CHARNBOROUGH CONTENDER	9
7=.	SHANNONLEE AMBER FLAME	9
9=.	AUTUMNWOOD FINE FELLA	8
9=.	COLLEEN OF CHARNBOROUGH	8
9=.	SHANNONLEE NIGHTINGALE OF GLEN O SHEA	8
9=.	SHANNONLEE REED WARBLER OF GLEN O SHEA	8

CRUFTS QUALIFIED

A total of 39 dogs are now qualified. The split between dogs and bitches is almost even being 19 dogs to 20 bitches.

JUNIOR PAGE

COMPETITION TIME

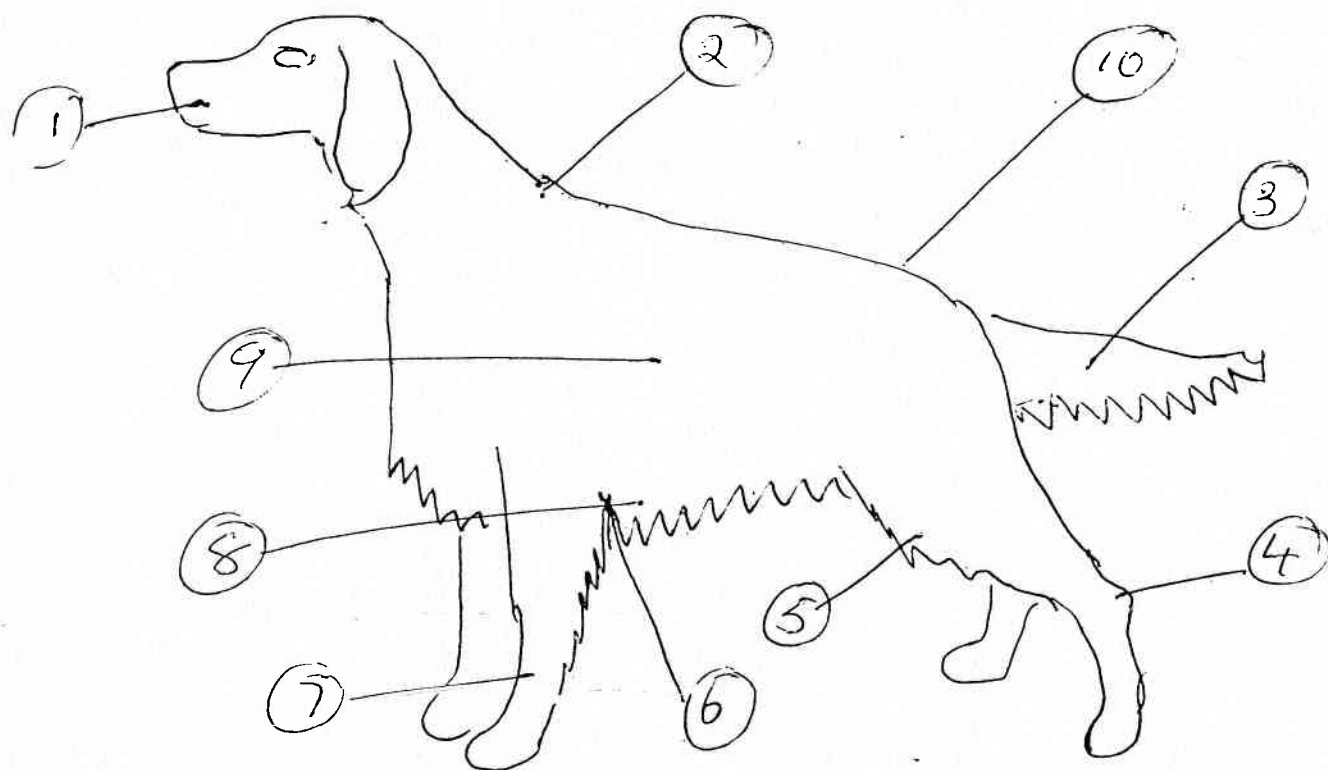
Label the points on this Irish Red and White Setter and colour it with what you think are ideal markings.

Send the page, together with your name age and address to:

Mrs A Millington

Moor End, Stanley Rd. Stockton Brook
STOKE-ON-TRENT ST9 9LL

!! YOU COULD WIN A PRIZE !!



One step at a time!

About this time last year I agreed to see if I could get a small bitch 'going' on the clear understanding that I was not prepared to keep her here long-term..... one thing led to another and she is still here, in spite of my having been made a serious offer of several hundred £s. for her some three or four weeks' ago. I thought you might all be interested in how the 'runt' of the litter developed into a much prized Field Trial hope, so, if you are, read on!

Initially my ten week old pest lived in. She was far from attractive, only sort of healthy and food was not on her list of priorities. On the 'plus' side she was not destructive, was extremely clean, bold and clever, even if she was a bit of a live wire. We should have called her 'William' after 'Just William', she certainly had enough freckles on her little face and could have taught him a thing or two about mischief but eventually, and for no good reason, she was called Tula after one of the most beautifully elegant Red & Whites I've ever had here - a mis-nomer if ever there was. However she was soon banned from the house and garden, nobody was free from her affectionate nature, this, much to the benefit of the local Dry Cleaners, and no surface, be it ever so high was free from her mucky little feet. Her nose was forever leading her into trouble - a typical Tooley job was to use the drawers beside the sink as a ladder in order to balance on the edge of the sink "Just checking!" she'd artfully smile when caught in the act.

"Look out- Tooley's about!" became a shout of real meaning in the cattle yard and woe betide those who failed to heed the warning. She could be in a feed-bunker, in a manger or trough, atop a stack, or simply flying through the air en route to more trouble. She was once found curled up with a bone and the Bull, on another foray to the Bull pen she was nearly trodden on because the bit of manure she wanted was underneath his left hindleg - 'No problem,' she said, 'I'll just dig it out'.

Along with her 'never say die' attitude to life came a certain self assuredness and hard headedness which I guessed was going to make her a job to train, but which, paradoxically, led me to think she was very much worth the whirl. Events were to prove that it was certainly fun and amply rewarding. Unlike all the other Red & Whites I've had here (with the notable exception of her father and his mother) she never gives the impression that she is being obedient to avoid a reprimand. Everything is done with a smile and scrupulous, almost disarming, honesty.

Setters are bred to run and hunt, the ability to do one without the other is no use at all and so my initial efforts, apart from keeping the wretch out of death's door as a result of her many exploits, and well fed and rested, were spent in watching her run and hunt in her puppy like way. The garden, quite obviously unsuitable for this sort of activity. The garden is fun place. The garden is for chasing butterflies, leaves and cats, irritating the boss-dogs, chewing bones, plants and ill-gotten gains from the house, as well as sundry other idle past-times which vary quite considerably in their degrees of harmlessness. The garden, like the kitchen, kennel and car, are places where one is not always watching the puppy, and the puppy knows this. And so, (by the time she was about four months' old I think) she and I would take a few minutes off in the field. At first she used to go with the other dogs - she was far too young to think of chasing them - and there, at not more than a few months' of age, she learned the fundamental difference between fields and gardens. Fields are for serious running and hunting - vital, even at a young age, for good physical and mental development; fields are certainly not play-time no time even for sitting down and chewing bits of manure, sticks etc. In short order she learned to keep up, get out and get ahead, she learned to gallop a steady even pace, with head held high and with a good style - those were the things that would be evident to any watcher, but there were also the other things that experience teaches one to observe - put simply, they are wind management, and legs/ nose/ brain, co-ordination. These intangible talents cannot be taught, without them the Setter is useless - for both work and

breeding purposes.

After a short period of time Too decided that chasing the big dogs was more important than running and hunting. The instant I saw her start on that lark I called in all the dogs, put them on leads, and went home. From that time until some months' later by which time she was physically mature enough to be able to chase without harming herself and no longer daft enough to want to do so she was never allowed to go up the field or on a walk with the other dogs. By chance the winter here was rather long and hard and all my energies were expended in keeping the cattle fed and watered (you can have no idea how much a bull will drink when he knows the taps are frozen and you have to lug every precious drop a minimum of sixty yards from the nearest unfrozen tap) and so apart from taking Tula's father out for a few fun-runs no serious work was undertaken with any of the Setters - Tula included. In March I took Tula out once or twice in order to confirm my opinion that she would be worth the effort and was lucky enough to have several far more experienced people agree that she appeared to have something special about her. At about the same time she was promoted to proper fun-time with the big dogs every morning. To Tooley it may have been fun-time, but to me it is an essential part of early training. On these early morning walks the dogs learn to ignore totally strange dogs and their people; the recall/wherever the Hell you are/get back here whistle; going on the lead for the first time; Car trips = fun; when you get out of the car WAIT till the lead has been picked up; brambles and hedges not permitted, nor ~~at~~ rabbits and ignore the little birdies; how to play pointing games and 'back' the others; don't copy the others unless they're doing something good; don't fiddle around ; and much else besides.

Around April the day finally arrived. We two went out, by ourselves, she on a lead, and me with my whistle. We went to a meadow - must be the only such for miles around - bounded by good thick hedges, and there she learned to drop, to stay dropped even if I tempted her by throwing objects about her, not to creep forward and the rudiments of formal quartering to the whistle. Later on we graduated to larger fields - always cleared of game and other temptations - and slowly polished up our craft till finally she was reliably obedient and in all probably ready for game. May and June are closed months for training on game so we didn't kill ourselves training in a rush, in any case she was less than a year old so there was hardly any panic. By the time Tula's first birthday arrived I conferred with a Professional Trainer who'd seen her some months' before and we came to the conclusion that provided she got a couple of weeks' on the Moors before hand she should be ready to run in Puppy Stakes in July.

As luck would have it I was unable to get up to Yorkshire for training before the Trials started but finally on 16th July I packed off all the other dogs to boarding kennels, power-washed my own kennels and so we set sail - Pippy (my next victim), Tooley and I. Dog leads, Wellies, Barbour and whistles all carefully counted and packed we finally commenced the long drive up to Yorkshire and for me and my two little Setters a totally new experience - hunting on the moors for Grouse!

One Step at a Time!

After all the work I had done with Tula in Norfolk and the long drive to Yorkshire, arriving in sunshine, I was anxious to get on the moors at the earliest opportunity. I at least realised that if we were to get ready for the Puppy Stakes we would need every available minute training on birds. On my arrival in Yorkshire it seemed that a leisurely cup of tea was demanded by my host and plenty of chat 'bout this and that but, as ever, mainly Setters Field Trial gossip, finally Mr. Stewart suggested that we'd better take the dogs off for a spin on the moors. It's so hard to sound fairly restrained and polite in acceptance when you're full of confidence and desperate to show off your little Setter puppy! "Well, it might be an idea to give her a bit of a run" I hear myself say casually; and so we load up the van with two young puppies (mine and a red one of Mr. Stewart's) and a lovely School-teacher Red Setter bitch, Chippy, the necessary footgear, coats to suit the rapidly declining weather and whistles.

Once on the moors it's decided to take the two Red Setters first, leaving Tooley in the car. It's the young fella's first time on the moor too, and he goes like a bomb, but, I smugly think, Tooley's more obedient than that! He winds a bird, and off he goes. My confidence evaporates. "Oh! Crumbs, what'll happen when Tooley hits birds?" Next time he hits them he at least stops before he chases. Mr. Stewart is happy. The young fella returns and we sit for a quiet five minutes before trekking off to the van to swap over puppies. "Now let's see what your young lady does for you," says my boss, whilst I'm rather hoping that the heavens will open and we can cancel the idea. Actually the feeling is rather like your first Driving lesson. You're bowling along and all of a sudden you're overcome with the awful realisation that you've no idea how to stop the car without stalling. Not a happy feeling.

We arrive back on the hill, "Right, when you're ready!" said Mr. Stewart. So, with my little bitch dropped and facing the right direction, firmly grasped by the scruff of the neck, I make a final check of the whistle and gently ease off the lead, tucking it carefully into my pocket with the spare hand. At least Tooley remembered she was not to move till instructed, even though the lead was off. I gently relinquished hold of her, softly stroking her head, and with a quiet word and a gesture to the right indicate "Chock's away". And off she shot!

Good Lord! When will she stop, Will she ever? Wind's up her tail, and she's gone!

Toot-Toot, Oh Crumbs! (it isn't working, what'll I do? I'm panicking, a hundred voices inside me panic too.

Do this.....

Do that, THINK of something! Shall I run....where? Shall I shout?

Oh Hell! this is worse than a Dog Show, what got me into this (a hundred curses on you Flynn) Wouldn't Pekinese have been easier?

"Bring her round now, Iz," Peter's slow measured tones crash in on my nightmare. Toot-Toot. Ye Gods she turns! As she turns she catches my eye, I signal to the left, and so on she bashes through heather and bog.

"Turn her, keep her in closer" says that measured voice behind me.

Silly man! Doesn't he know she answers only to turn and drop whistles.

Oh well! I'll ape his antics with Chippy and look hopeful - perhaps Tooley will oblige.

Toot-Toot. Try again. Toot-ToooooooooT. She turns, taking too large a bite.

"Keep her close now Iz, that's no good."

Oh dear! I sigh, perhaps it'll work.

Pip pip pip pip and I tap my knee. Great Scott (What I actually said was worth 50p. in the Charity box). She's coming in. She's looking at me. What shall I tell her? I pat my knee and with a bold gesture indicate to cut out to the right.

Good God! (another 50p.) She's done it! Classy stuff this, Trainer/handler of the year, me, well, perhaps next year!

Time to turn her again. Toot-toot. All's well. I wonder if I can pick up now? Surely he's seen enough. Oh no. And on we go. I wonder if he'll ever let us stop? When we reach the sea? Or have we got to go forever on and on and on. Doesn't she look fantastic?

"pull her round now,

Push her out,

Bring her in....that's grand...that's no good.... make her do what you want.... keep it even, mind the Sheep, don't let her chase them, she's boring into the wind, don't let her fiddle on that, Ignore that, get her on, be consistent, don't nag...."

And so Mr. Stewart's instructions calmly confident went on. He would be calm, wouldn't he? It's not his apprentice Field Trial Champion so nearly running amok out there!

OOPS A DAISY! £13.50 in the Box. It must be overflowing by now.

"Birds away" came the wry comment from behind me.

"Tooley's away" I moan. My legs, my voice, and whistle all leap into action with precious little effect. Except I tripped over some heather. I was saved the ignominy of asking what to do. I was TOLD what to do - tho' I much doubted I'd succeed.

"Get her back - don't keep on tooting that whistle."

Blessed Mercy. She's gone into some tall bracken. At least shewon't stay in that. As soon as she appears I signal and whistle her in. The little creep comes straight to me and sits down. I was about to give vent to my embarrassment when firm instructions come.

"Praise her, she obeyed the last command."

"Good girlie, Good girlie," emits through clenched teeth, I replace the lead, resisting the temptation to screw into her beastly little neck, I tumble her ears and thank God for that bracken.

"Well," he says "How's about that!!"

I mutter that she's never done that before. Always been so obedient, and inwardly I wonder what on earth I'll do with yet another passenger in the Kennel.

"You ought to be pleased with the little bitch, Iz"

"Oh?"

"She hunted well, knew what she was about, acknowledged her birds...."

"And how!" I moan.

"...and came back....you ought to be pleased with that."

I am pleased, and proud as punch, now I understand what he's getting at - but inwardly wonder how on earth I'm going to tame her.

"She just needs firm handling - you're going to have to get her in hand without wrecking her."

And so we sat down amongst the heather and what birds were left after our enthusiastic puppies had been abroad and our two Setters. I gaze at the view (it is lovely) and all the while we chat about Setters, and birds, and their joint ways and wiles.

After our five minute break we trundle further up the hill, giving Chippy another spin. She finds birds which Tooley acknowledges, whilst firmly on the lead! Finally we have to force Tooley on to take the scent of the birds. Hey Presto! even though I'm hanging like grim death on to the check cord she's not pulling she's absolutely locked on point, nose whiffing, body a quiver. She has her first birds! The birds fly. I whistle automatically, and she drops, to a sitting position.

"That won't do, she much drop FLAT, push her down".

We, ie. Chippy, found some more birds for Tula, and repeat the performance. We're finally certain that she knows what's what, and then, with 30 ft. of check cord trailing set off again.

She quartered well, and suddenly pulled off to the right and came firmly on to birds.

You can have no idea how fantastic a little puppy can look the first time she finds and points her own birds. And the sun was shining! I slowly walk the yards that separate us, she didn't budge. Just as I bent to grasp the end of the cord my presence disturbs the birds. They flew. And so would Tooley if I hadn't had firm grasp of the rope just at that moment. I kept her down till she ceased struggling, by which time the 'Boss man' had reached us.

"O.K.?" he asked.

"I think so, but she would have chased," I reply.

"Well, she'll have to learn not to!" came the smart reply.

And so we made our way back to the van. One tired, but very happy and dirty white puppy, two Red Setters, one much older and wiser than the other, and their human counter-parts.

Events and the weather were to conspire against my having her ready for the Trials but I was able to run her in the September Trials. She ran just twice, and tho' we didn't get anywhere, I hadn't expected any miracles, I was not disappointed in her. In fact the second Trial she ran beautifully - pity about that hare, though!

Since the Trials she has been rested up. She's back on normal fun-time with the other Setters. The whistle put aside and the lead hung - up. In retrospect the mad, concentrated training just before the Autumn Trials was probably too much for a puppy not yet fourteen months' of age, especially since she had so little reward in terms of game found. Toward the end she was more or less mentally exhausted. My plan is to rest and feed her up, hopefully having her right for a few birds before the end of the season. However, one step at a time, with any degree of luck we will have many years and many birds ahead of us.

ICS

September, 1985.

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Puppies born September 14th, by Autumnwood Fine Fella
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Northallerton and District Open Show

July 28th, 1985

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\* BEST IN SHOW \*

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Shannonlee Amber Light (Jake) won Best A.V.N.S.C.  
and then beat twenty unbeaten dogs to gain  
this great award.

Our most grateful thanks to Mr Michael Quinney (Judge)  
for an unforgettable day.

Proudly Owned by Allan and Kath Rankin.

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