

# HOUNDS IN OLD DAYS



BY

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1913



HUNTING SCENE By Frederick Tayler

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## P R E F A C E

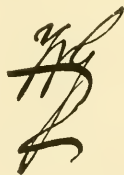
*In the following pages I have endeavoured to trace the process of development of our various breeds of hound, in connection with the changes, which, in the course of ages, have come over our methods of hunting in England*

*As will be seen we possessed in former times numerous local breeds of hound, each of which was more or less distinct from others, having been evolved for the purpose of hunting different kinds of country. There were hounds for flat country, for hill country, for the open and the woodland; and these, for a long period, were maintained as distinct breeds*

*These several varieties of hound have been gradually crossed and recrossed until the mass of hounds in the Kingdom are now of more uniform type; the only survivals of those old days when there were different breeds of hound in many different parts of the country are a few packs of Harriers which have been carefully preserved by owners, who take pride in their high antiquity, and seek to retain their ancient character in its purity*

*Elsenham Hall*

*November, 1912*

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of stylized, overlapping letters that appear to be 'J. H. S.' or similar, written in a cursive hand.



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# HOUNDS IN OLD DAYS

## EARLY HUNTING

The fact that hounds, like horses and falcons, were frequently presented by one king to another, shows us the value that attached to them in ancient days, and indicates the importance of the place hunting occupied in the esteem of our ancestors

The earliest particulars of hounds in our records occur in the Ancient Laws of Wales, which were codified by Howel Dda (the Good), a prince who reigned from A.D. 942 to 948. Among these laws, which contain a mine of information concerning the state and social order of those remote times, are statutes laying down the values set upon various animals

From these we learn how highly hounds were prized. The most valuable of all domestic animals was the King's buckhound: when

trained it was valued at one pound ; untrained, 120 pence ; at a year old, 60 pence ; “ when a young whelp in the kennel,” 30 pence ; and from birth until its eyes opened, 15 pence. The buckhound belonging to any person other than the King was valued at half these sums

The value of the palfrey or the sumpter (pack) horse under these laws was only 120 pence ; so the King’s buckhound was held twice as valuable. We might find parallel cases in the hunter and hound sales of the present day

The stag, during the hunting season, which extended from the first day of winter, *i.e.*, 22nd December, to the feast of St. John, 24th June, was of higher value than any beast domestic or wild. The stag consisted of “ twelve legal pieces ” — haunches, antlers, tongue, breast, etc., each of which was valued at 60 pence, making a total value of three pounds.

These facts give us a very clear idea of the importance attached to hounds and hunting nearly a thousand years ago

The Old Forest Laws were framed in the interests of hunting by the kings of England

at this period. King Canute (1017-1035), ordained that every man should be entitled to hunt in wood and field in his own possession ; but those who lived within ten miles of a royal forest could take little advantage of the liberty so conferred. They were restrained by the long series of enactments concerning dogs and their mutilation

Canute's law required that the greyhound owned by anyone dwelling within ten miles of a royal forest should have its knees cut to prevent the dog from chasing deer. Only dogs so small that they were harmless to game might remain un mutilated

At a later period, during the time of Henry I (1100-1135), all dogs kept near the forests were disabled by the amputation of a claw. A subsequent law required that the ball of one foot be cut out ; and another law, of Henry II (1154-1189), directed that three claws be cut at one stroke from the right forefoot. This barbarous method of securing game from pursuit by dogs is, no doubt correctly, attributed to the Danes ; there is no similar enactment in the ancient French forest laws ; but the Norman kings of England showed themselves very ready to adopt the system when they found it

on our statute books, and make the methods more drastic\*

The practice of "lawing" dogs, to use the old term, gave rise to the necessity for granting licences to privileged persons to keep hounds un mutilated ; hence the numerous royal charters which confer the right to hunt and keep hounds

One of the best known of these charters is that ascribed to Henry I (1100–1135) under which he confirmed to the citizens of London their right to hunt "in Chiltern, Middlesex and Surrey" as their predecessors had done. When the "Common Hunt of London" was first established, it is impossible to say; the institution was very ancient. The Mayor of London was the Master; the kennels, in 1512, were in Moorfields, and the pack then consisted of "deep-mouthed," *i.e.*, southern, hounds

Some of the earliest charters to keep hounds "unlawed" were granted to the Abbots of the great Monasteries which then existed all over

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\* Many methods of disabling dogs were practised at different times ; some of these involved the division of a sinew—"hock-sinewing" for example. The object was always the same—to prevent the dog from chasing while leaving it sound enough to be serviceable as watch or herd. "Lawing" was still practised in Henry VIII's reign, but applied then only to mastiffs and "great dogs" used for herding swine. Sporting dogs were not allowed to enter the forests at all

England. In 1168, Henry II granted such a charter to the Abbot and Canons of St. Osyth's Priory to keep hounds for hunting in Chiche and several adjoining parishes of Essex

A curious condition was attached to the charter granted the head of a religious house ; at his death the hounds became the property of the king

Another early Essex charter was that granted by Richard I (1189-1199) to Henry de Guy of Codnor, manor of Turroe, to hunt hare and fox on any Crown lands other than demesne parks

Turning for an example to Scotland, William of Brus (Bruce) confirmed to Adam of Carlisle and his heirs the right of hunting stag, hind, hog, and roedeer, about the period 1194-1214. The Penistone Hunt in Yorkshire traces its origin back as far as 1260, when Elias de Midhope was Master ; the date indicates that a royal charter must have been granted for hunting

The records of this period show that different hounds were used for different game. When, in the year 1306, Edward I's huntsmen, John King and Thome de Wedone, were sent to hunt in the " Forest of Essex," they had with them buckhounds, harriers and " bertelettos,"

which last are thought to have been small beagles

We need not suppose that the buckhounds and harriers were distinct breeds; on the contrary, later records and writings show that they were hounds of one and the same breed, but entered at and trained to hunt the game whose name distinguished them

*The Master of Game*\* describes at length the best sort of "running hounds" which were used for the stag and buck; and proceeds to tell us that there are many kinds, some small and some large. The small were called kenets, which would run all kinds of game: those, which "serve for all game, men call harriers"

Any hound that had courage would make a harrier with little training; but the making of a hound that would stick to the line and avoid riot was a different thing; it was necessary that it be well bred, and entered young; and pains were taken with its education

Running hounds, therefore, were roughly divided into two classes: the most promising,

\* This famous work is a translation made by Edward second Duke of York of Gaston de Foix' *Livre de Chase*, with five chapters, by the translator, on English hunting. The *Livre de Chase* was written between 1387 and 1390; the translation and additional chapters between 1406 and 1413

which were entered to deer ; and those which were entered to all kinds of game. The term "kenet" is seldom used for the latter ; they are called harriers to distinguish them from the better class hounds which are called hart-, stag-, or buck-hounds. When we read of "foxhounds" in early records the term means simply hounds that were used to hunt the fox after the fashion of the time

Some of these harriers were good hounds, and they had a reputation beyond our own shores : on 11th April, 1279, Edward I wrote to Charles of Salerno promising to send that prince the "harriers" for which he has asked

Little information concerning hounds is given in William Twici's treatise *The Art of Hunting*, which was written in the reign of Edward II (1307-1327). Twici, who was the king's huntsman, says that the hart, hare, boar and wolf were "moved with a lymer" and run by braches,\* and that is all. Lymer and brache were not different breeds ; the light thrown on the subject by later authorities indicates that the term "lymer" was simply derived from the work the hound so called was required to do

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\* "Rache" and "brache" are terms very frequently used to describe the running hound ; the names also occur as "rchet" and "brachet." The rache was the dog-hound and the brache the bitch-hound



The stag in old days was harboured by a man who "ring-walked" the coverts where the quarry might be expected to lie up, with a hound held in a *lyam* or leash—whence the name applied to the hound. This work required a hound with a good nose, as he might often have to puzzle out a cold or foiled scent. At a later period the St. Hubert enjoyed preference as a lymer, his nose being particularly tender

The stag, hare, wolf and boar, as already said, were harboured in this way by a hound held in leash during Twici's day. Other game, the buck, doe and fox, were "hunted up" by the pack

The Norman conquerors of England brought their hounds with them when they took possession of this country, and there is evidence to show that the breed known as St. Huberts or Talbots were the foundation stock of the breed afterwards known as southern hounds. The Count de Couteulx de Canteleu says that the St. Huberts were celebrated as far back as the eighth century, when they were known as Flemish hounds—St. Hubert's Monastery, the home of the breed, being in the Ardennes. They were subdivided into two strains, the black and the white

This breed was famous in France for a very long period. The abbots of St. Hubert's



A SOUTHERN HOUND By Edmund Willis



Monastery used to present hounds to the kings of France in token of their allegiance. Their great excellence lay in their noses ; in appearance they were large and majestic ; they had fine coats, the colour being usually black and tan ; their heads were broad, their ears large, long and pendulous, their sterns feathered. They were, in fact, very much like the modern bloodhound, which is descended from them. They were slow hunters

⚡ The *Master of Game* says that the best hue of running hounds and the commonest good colour is "brown tan" ; but the merit of all hounds lies in true courage and the good breeding of their parents. The description of the running hound may be quoted :—

“ A running hound should be well born and well grown of body, and should have great nostrils and open, and a long muzzle but not small, and great lips well hanging down, and great eyes red or black, and a great forehead and great head and large ears very long and hanging well down, broad and close to the head ”

So much for the head of the hound ; the word "great" figures as conspicuously in the description of the body and limbs :—

“ a great neck, a great breast and great shoulders ; and great legs and strong, not

too long ; and great feet ; round and great toes and the foot a little low ; small flanks and long sides—a good chine bone and great back, good thighs and great hind legs, the hocks straight and not bowed ; the tail great and high and not crompting [bending] up on the back, but straight and a little crompting upward ”

“ Nevertheless,” says the Duke of York, with reference to this last point, “ I have seen some running hounds with great hairy tails, which were very good ”

After the appearance of the *Master of Game* more than a hundred and fifty years elapsed before other works relating to hunting and hounds were published in England. Then, in 1575, when Queen Elizabeth reigned, two noteworthy books appeared. These were George Turbervile's *Art of Venerie* and John Caius' *Englishe Dogges*, the latter the first book ever written on our breeds of dogs

Turbervile dealt largely with French hounds ; but inasmuch as our English hounds were partially, at least, the descendants of hounds imported at the time of the Norman Conquest, and frequent interchanges of blood took place for many generations afterwards, his work is of value, apart from the light he sheds upon foxhunting in his time

This author describes four distinct breeds of French hounds: the White, the Fallow, the Dun and the Black or St. Huberts

The White\* was essentially *the* staghound; the Fallow was used at all game, but principally for the stag; the Dun was the commonest breed and would hunt any game. The Black or St. Huberts is the breed of which Turberville gives the most detailed account; this is fortunate as it is the hound in which Englishmen were, and are, most interested

He describes these hounds as "mighty of body, legs low and short, not swift, very good of scent, hunting chases which are far straggled† and do most covet the chases [quarries] that smell, as foxes, boars and such like." The St. Huberts "have not the speed for other chases." They occurred in all colours; which points to much crossing with other breeds

By "other chases" we may understand Turberville to mean stag and buck. Hare hunting was not much followed in France in his time, if we may draw an inference from the

\* See Appendix A

† "Far straggled." I think by this is meant that these hounds hunted well on a cold or foiled line. "Straggled" is still used in the sense of "trodden down"; and "far straggled" might well be read as meaning "long foiled"

silence of the old French writers concerning this sport; and in England—the south of England at all events—the chase of the hare was extraordinarily slow, as will be seen when dealing with that part of the subject

Turbervile says of the Black, St. Hubert or Talbot, that “bloodhounds of this breed prove good, especially the black ones” (as said above these hounds were of all colours). It is clear that he uses the term “bloodhound” in the same sense as “lymer” is used by Twici, *i.e.*, to describe the hound with the particularly good nose which was used to work out the line of the deer it was desired to harbour

That the *black* ones made the best hounds for this purpose is what might be expected: the colour proved their greater purity of blood, their more direct descent from the ancient breed of black St. Huberts which had been famous for their noses eight or nine hundred years earlier\*

From these hounds are descended our modern bloodhounds. Individual animals selected to perform a certain service would have been mated among themselves with the aim of perpetuating their special quality, and in course

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\*The same author says that Fallow hounds make good “bloodhounds”

of time a distinct breed would be established. The White Hound, famous when at its zenith as the "Great White Hound," is described in Appendix A. It seems highly probable that these remarkable animals were crossed upon our English breeds to make staghounds. The Count de Canteleu believes that the Kerry, or black and tan, Beagle is the descendant of the old Vendée hound, which had in its veins the blood of the Great White Hound

The Scarteen harriers and the Seskinore harriers, in Ireland, consist, the former wholly, the latter partly, of these old Kerry Beagles. Mr. H. A. Bryden, writing in the *Field* of 21st January, 1905, records Mr. Ryan's statement that the original stock, whence the Scarteen pack are descended, came from the south of France. The Count believes the Welsh foxhound to be descended from the same French stock

Caius, whose *Englishe Dogges* appeared in the same year (1575) as Turbervile's *Art of Venerie*, says harriers were to be known by their long, large and bagging lip, by their hanging ears, which reached down both sides of their chaps and by "the indifferent and measurable proportion of their making," in other words, by their various and distinct shapes. "They



cannot all be reduced and brought under one sort considering the sundry uses of them ”

They were entered at all sorts of game : hare, wolf, fox, hart, buck, badger, otter, pole-cat, lobster (stoat), weasel, and sometimes at rabbit ; but the rabbit was not often hunted ; “ we . . . . take it with nets and ferrets ”

Caius did not write as a hunting man, and for that reason his remarks shed light where it is required. He gives a few facts which would be omitted by the writer on hunting as too elementary for notice

He describes an animal called the “ gaze-hound,” of which he says, it :—

// “ hunts little or nothing by nose depending on sight ; by the virtue whereof being singular and notable it hunteth the fox and the hare. These dogs are much and usually occupied [used] in the Northern part of England more than in the Southern parts, and in fealdy [open] lands rather than in bushy and woody places ; horsemen use these more than footmen to the intent that they might provoke their horses to a swift gallop (wherewith they are more delighted than with the prey itself) and that they may accustom their horses to leap over hedges and ditches ”

This was not the greyhound—which is concisely summed up as a “spare and bare kind of dog”—and the statement that the “gazehound” hunted by sight, depending little or not at all upon its nose, forbids the assumption that Caius refers to the Northern Hound or Northern Beagle; which, as Gervaise Markham shows, had a very good nose

In Queen Elizabeth’s time the hound used for hunting the hare was sometimes entered also to fox. Caius says of the harrier:—

“Among these sundry sorts there be some which are apt to hunt two different beasts, as the fox otherwhiles and otherwhiles the Hare; but they hunt not with such towardness [success] and good luck after them as they do that whereunto Nature has formed and framed them, for they swerve sometimes and do otherwise than they should”

We may read this to mean that some of the “sundry sorts of Harrier” were staunch on the scent of deer or hare but not on the scent of the fox. Caius regarded deer and hare as the beasts for which Nature had “formed and framed” the hound, and the fox as an artificial quarry; and thus explains why the hounds “swerve and do otherwise than they should”; ran riot, in a word

The time was not yet come when men bred hounds for any one particular quarry. The conditions under which hunting was carried on forbade exactness of method. Vast areas of the country still lay waste, and the hunting man might enjoy sport with deer, red, fallow and roe as well as hare, otter, fox and badger

Roedeer, it is well to remember, were then plentiful in many parts of England whence they have long disappeared with the destruction of their woodland haunts

Roedeer did not take a high place among game; they were hunted with harriers, but it was not desired that they should give a run; the covert was surrounded, and if the quarry tried to break it was driven back to be pulled down by the hounds, after the manner of fox-hunting as it was followed at that time

Sir Thomas Cockaine, in 1591, wrote a little work which is less well known than it deserves to be. This book, *A Short Treatise of Hunting*, contains much that bears upon the subject, as indeed might be expected of the author, who was James I's "Keeper of the Hares" at Royston, including a circuit of twelve miles round, and Keeper of the Game at Thetford



THE CHASE By Samuel Howitt



Sir Thomas Cockaine gives the following practical advice in the matter of breeding hounds. It will be noticed that the hounds were to hunt all game, as the term was then understood : fox, otter and badger ranking as vermin which afforded sport :—

“ It were very necessary before you breed your whelps that you should see your breeding hounds recover a chase [quarry] very far fled afore, and drive and stick at the mark and not fling about. And then you may be bold to breed fourteen or sixteen couple of whelps that will serve you to hunt several chases ; that is the fine and cunning hare, the sweet scented roe, the hot scented stag and the doubling buck when he groweth weary ” \*

These, to use the old term, were beasts of “sweet flight,” and the pack might be entered to any one of them. Foxes and badgers were “beasts of stinking flight,” and for them—grouped together with lesser animals, as the polecat and marten, as “ravenous vermin”—different hounds were prescribed. These latter will be noticed on a future page

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\* The wiles and stratagems of the wearied fallow buck are hardly less cunning than those of the fox, and are well calculated to puzzle hounds

Cockaine gives no description of the hounds used in his day. The probability is he knew little about the breeds used in the different parts of England: he was, he says, a "professed hunter and not a scholar"; and he confined himself to matters of which his office as royal game warden gave him intimate practical knowledge

For information concerning the different breeds of hounds in England about this period, Gervaise Markham's work *Countrey Contentments*, first published in 1611, is most useful. This writer makes clear the interesting point that hounds were then crossed to combine the merits of different breeds for hare hunting; various races of hound, more or less distinct one from another, having been developed to hunt different kinds of country, mountainous, woodland, open and mixed. These breeds, more or less distinct, were to be found in different parts of England

The local breeds described by Markham were some of the many varieties of harrier to which Caius referred. The stag, buck and hare were the animals principally hunted; the best hounds of the individual race being entered at the larger game, though they would be used for small game if the owner's convenience required

Of the local breeds of hound, Markham says :—

“There are divers kinds—as the slow hound which is a large great dog, heavy and tall, and are bred for the most part in the West counties of this land, as also in Cheshire and Lancashire, and most woodland and mountainous countries ; then the middle sized dog which is more fit for the chase, being of a more nimble composure [frame] and are bred in Worcestershire, Bedfordshire and many other well mixed soils where the champaign [pasture or open country] and covert are of equal largeness ”

From Markham is obtained the first definite information about the Northern Hound. He writes of :—

“the light, nimble, swift, slender dog, which is bred in the North parts of this land as Yorkshire, Cumberland, Northumberland and many other plain Champion [open] countries. . . . if you will choose a swift light hound, then must his head be more slender and his nose more long, his ears and flews more shallow, his back broad, his belly gaunt, his tail small, his joints long, his foot round, and his general composure much more slender and greyhound-like ; and



thus in general, for the most part are all your Yorkshire hounds, whose virtues I can praise no farther than for scent and swiftness ; for to speak of their mouths they have only a little sharp sweetness like Gig,\* but no depth or ground like more solemn music ”

The hounds Markham mentions were, he says, of various colours : the white hound or the white with black spots were recommended as “the most principal,” for they would hunt any quarry exceedingly well, especially the hare, stag, buck, roe or otter ; the last because they would “well endure both woods and waters ”

The best and most beautiful of all colours for the general kennel were the white with black ears and a black spot at the setting on of the tail ; these always had good noses and were “of good condition ”

The black hound, the “black tanned” (black and tan), the hound that was “all liver hued” or the milk white “which is the true Talbots” were the best “for the string or line,” *i.e.*, to hunt in leash : thus we have Markham confirming the early writers as to the merits of the

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\* The context shows that the voices of these hounds were light and high. G. R. Jesse, in his work *The Dog*, suggests that “like Gig” may mean “like Jig,” *i.e.*, a light or lively tune

Southern Hound, St. Hubert or Talbot, as regards nose. Of these last the largest were always the best

The "shag-haired" Talbot, preferably "grizzled" \* were the best verminers, and were therefore chosen to hunt the fox, badger and other hot scents. They were exceedingly good and cunning finders; and "therefore have Huntsmen thought it not amiss to have one, or a couple, in every kennel"

Mention of these "shag-haired" hounds recalls the Count de Canteleu's statement that the Bresse hound of the eastern provinces of France was brought to this country and formed the basis of the breed of Welsh hounds. The Bresse breed were shaggy of coat and yellowish or sandy red in colour

From Markham's account it is safe to assume that when the "Northern Hound" or "Northern Beagle" is referred to by later writers, the Yorkshire breed is meant; it was the fastest and had the best nose; the only point made against it is its light voice, //

Great importance attached to voice in former days; so great that *The Spectator* (1711) makes fun of the typical country gentleman, personified

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\* "Grizzled" may mean either grey, sandy, red or roan.

in "Sir Roger de Coverley," for his preciseness in this respect. Sir Roger is represented as gratefully returning a fine hound that had been sent him as a gift, on the ground that the dog "was indeed a most excellent bass but that at present he only wanted a counter-tenor"

Markham's observations on the subject of hound music show that a gentleman who took pride in his pack might well have declined a hound with a voice that did not happen to suit his needs at the moment, however good it might be otherwise. Packs were often put together with special attention to their music

"If you would have your kennel for sweetness of cry then you must compound it of some large dogs that have deep solemn mouths and are swift in spending [throwing their tongues] which must be as it were the base in the consort [concert]; then a double number of roaring and loud-ringing mouths, which must bear the counter-tenor; then some hollow plain sweet mouths which must bear the mean or middle part; and so with these three parts of music you shall ever make your cry perfect"

It was held that hounds whose voices were thus attuned to produce a musical cry would

run well together—a pack that carried a good head was appreciated—as Markham says:—

“ You shall observe that these hounds thus mixed, do run just and even together and not hang loose off from one another, which is the vilest sight that may be ”

In reading the following passage it must be remembered that the “ deep-mouthed ” hound was very slow, and the “ slender dog ” very fast

“ You shall understand that this composition [of hounds to form a musical pack] is best to be made of the swiftest and largest deep-mouthed dog, the slowest and middle-sized dog, and the shortest legged slender dog ”

The fastest of the slow hounds and the slowest of the fast hounds might well run together and carry a good head ; but this admixture of three breeds was not enough to make a really perfect “ cry ” :—

“ Amongst these you may cast in a couple or two small single beagles which as small trebles may warble amongst them ; the cry will be a great deal more sweet ”

When the hounds to form a pack were thus chosen for their voices from different breeds there must have been a good deal of crossing, and some of the old varieties may have been “ swamped ” in this way

It would seem that at one period the fast Yorkshire hound had become scarce: Thomas, Viscount Wentworth, wrote on 30th November, 1632, to James, Earl of Carlisle, expressing the hope that he may be able to furnish some couples of "fleet hounds" as desired, but he says, such hounds have become "a very rare commodity in these parts all men, as they tell me, having given over breeding that kind of cattle." Nevertheless, he hopes to be able to send the hounds before Christmas

The "sharp-nosed" or fleet hound was well known when Beckford wrote in 1781, and there is nothing in that author's work to suggest that it was at all difficult to obtain. The breed had evidently been revived in the interval; and the suggestion may be hazarded that recovery of favour was due to the introduction of fox-hunting as we understand it, a form of the chase for which this hound was particularly well suited

Seventy-five years after Markham wrote, Richard Blome produced, under royal patronage, his *Gentleman's Recreation*. From this work, which was published in 1686, it appears that men had then begun to *cross* two breeds of hound in order to arrive at an animal more suitable than any existing pure breed for hunt-

ing the fox in the open. This marks an epoch in the history of hound breeding ; a new sport had come into vogue and a new hound was required for it. Further remarks on this head will be more in place when the foxhound comes under notice

English hounds, and sporting dogs of all kinds, were much in demand on the Continent during Stuart times. This is made clear by the fact that licences were granted to Masters of the Royal Buckhounds which conferred upon them the monopoly of the export trade in hounds and sporting dogs. They, and no others, might " transport and carry beyond the seas all manner of dogs, hounds, beagles and greyhounds of several kinds and names "

The reason assigned was that it had been the custom to send hounds and other sporting dogs out of the country " to the hindrance of our own store, the decay and prejudice of our game and hunting," and it was therefore desirable to check the practice: the true reason was the King's desire to make the office of Master of the Buckhounds more profitable to the holder

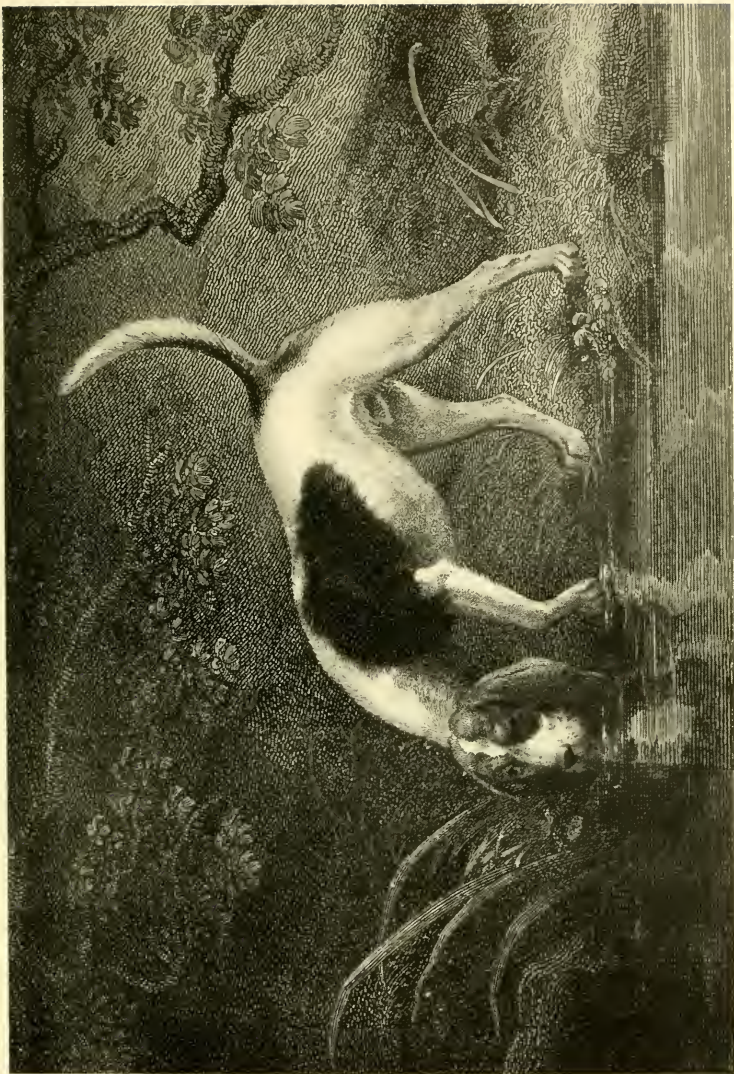
No British sovereign was more devoted to the chase than King James I ; it was said that

during his reign a man might kill his fellow-man with less serious results than he might kill even a rascal deer ; but this king took one step which indicates the feeling of his subjects towards royal sport

James I's predecessors had made a practice of issuing commissions to various officers empowering them to "take up" any hounds they might find in possession of private persons for royal use. James, in 1605, cancelled all these commissions, stating that he could depend upon the goodwill of his subjects to provide him with all the hounds he required

Facing page 8 and this page (26) are portraits described as of Southern Hounds. Though that facing page 8, by Edmund Willis was published about 1831, some years later than that by Philip Reinagle, which was painted during the period, 1787-1812, when he was an Associate of the Royal Academy, I am strongly inclined to think that the animal portrayed by Willis represents a much older type of hound than does Reinagle's model

Willis's hound corresponds more nearly to the descriptions of the Southern Hound ; it is low, sturdy and heavy ; we can well imagine that such a hound would be slow and would



A SOUTHERN HOUND By Philip Reinagle, A. F. A.





require a man's help to get over any but the smallest fence

Reinagle's hound, on the other hand, shows far more "hound character," as we understand the term ; higher on the leg, light yet muscular of build, this is undoubtedly the portrait of a hound which has been vastly improved, though no doubt upon a basis of Southern blood : it retains one conspicuous feature of the old Southern breed in the wide head and muzzle, which are well displayed by the attitude selected by the artist

## THE HARRIER

It is impossible to dissociate the harrier from the stag- or buck-hound, for the sufficient reason that they were the same breed. For hundreds of years, down to the present time, the same hounds have hunted stag, buck and hare : the Anglesey harriers and the Scardeen black and tan beagles in Ireland, for example, hunt both hare and deer at the present day

Harriers, or hounds to hunt hares, are mentioned in very early documents—licences to keep hounds with their feet unmutilated. They are usually referred to as dogs with which hare and fox may be pursued, but sometimes the terms of the licence indicate different kinds of hound

This we should expect, as fast hounds were needed for the chase of the hare, while hounds of another sort would answer for fox-hunting of the kind known until 1675-1700 or thereabout

The earliest mention of harriers which conveys anything approaching a description occurs in the letters written by the first Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward II, in 1304-5, during

his banishment from court. He wrote on 26th May, from Langley in Hertfordshire, to Louis of France

“We send you some of our bow-legged hare-hounds of Wales which can well discover a hare if they find it sleeping ; and some of our running hounds which can swiftly pursue it ; because we know that you love much hunting with the best hounds ”

The bow-legged hounds of Wales were evidently used to track the hare to her form ; and when she was put off it the running hounds took up the chase. This is borne out by the statement made by William Twici, who was grand huntsman to the Prince when he became Edward II. Twici says that at that period the hare was moved with a lymer—tracked to her form by a hound held in leash, and hunted with running hounds

This method had been given up a hundred years later, as we learn from the *Master of Game*

The hare was now hunted up by the whole pack ; when the master came to the field he gave the order “Out of couples! Forward there, Forward!” The quarry started, the horsemen rode well to one side and some

distance to the front, their duty being to help the hounds and prevent any hound from following sheep or other beast

“The hare,” says the Duke of York, “is the king of all venery, for all blowing [all the numerous signals with the horn] and the fair terms of hunting come from the seeking and the finding of the hare”

According to the Duke the hare was “a good little beast and gave very good sport.” It was a fair thing to run her “with strength of hounds” for she runs far and cunningly; and she might stand before the pack for four miles, more or less. That hare which remained in her form till she was put off it usually proved to be a stout one and a good runner; if she carried her ears erect it was a sign that she was not afraid and was strong

The horsemen carried long rods with which when the hare squatted they checked the hounds until the hare was put off her form. Here may be the earliest form of hunting “under the pole,” which was still practised three hundred years later

Greyhounds were sometimes used with the harriers, but only as a precaution, if an opinion may be based on the following passage

“ If they be hart-hunters that seek a covert for the hare and their hounds find a fox, whoso meeteth him should blow upon him to warn the fewterer [the man who held greyhounds in leash outside the wood] that there is a thief in the wood. And if they run at the hare and the hare happen to come out to the greyhounds in front of the raches [running hounds] and be killed, the fewterer that let run [his greyhounds] should blow the death and keep it [the hare] as whole as he may till the hunters be come and then reward them [the running hounds or raches]

The meaning seems to be that when drawing the woods for a hare the greyhounds were held in readiness outside in case a “ thief ” (fox) should be unkennelled ; the greyhounds would be slipped when the fox broke covert, but the hare might steal away at the same time, when the greyhounds were far more likely to run her than the fox. If they did so the fewterer was to take away the dead hare from the greyhounds to “ reward ” the hounds

The old laws of venery prescribed the sides, shoulders, neck and head (together called “ the halou ”) as the portions to be given the pack, the loin only being reserved for the kitchen

Sir Thomas Cockaine, as becomes the King’s “ Keeper of Hares,” gave very precise

instructions for the entering of young hounds when he wrote, in 1591. The whelps were to be entered "when full twenty months old and a quarter" at Michaelmas, under the guidance of experienced harriers

"Borrow a couple of fine harriers, such as will hunt a hare cunningly to the seat [form] and when your hounds have found the out-gate of a hare from the pasture, and it be a perfect single gate then you must have four men with four whelps in lines [leashes] which have been a little entered at conies and chastised from sheep"

Tendency to run at sheep was clearly a prevalent fault of all young hounds in those days; the first lesson taught them was to ignore sheep. But to return to the education of the young harrier

As soon as the line of the hare had been made good by the old hounds, those who led the young ones brought up their charges and allowed them to feel the scent, as the old hounds followed it up; but they were not cast loose on the line of a hare until they had had a week of this training and threw their tongues freely on scenting a hare. As soon as they "spent their mouths fast" on the line they might be uncoupled when the hare went away

Though Cockaine, as mentioned on page 17, expected his pack of fourteen or sixteen couple to hunt "several chases," the following passage makes it clear that the hare was the principal quarry :—

"When you have hunted the hare all winter and made your hounds perfect, you may at the beginning of March give over the hunting thereof, and then begin to hunt the roe "

But the trained harehounds required teaching to stoop to the new quarry, and this was provided in the shape of a hound which had already been entered to roe. This hound found the game, and when he owned the scent nine or ten couple of the harriers were cast off. These bustled him about the covert for three or four hours, and then four or five couples of the slower harriers were cast off to relieve them

The roebuck, as already said, was hunted in the same fashion as the fox, namely, prevented from breaking and killed in covert if possible

Our ancestors held what they called "cunning hunting" the true method of pursuing any game. In this, speed was no object; the hounds were required to scent out every step taken by the quarry, patiently and without haste. The principle was admirably sound ;



the sportsman should kill his game if he could, but by what were then regarded as the only fair means. The chase was the thing, not the kill \*

This refers more especially to the style of hunting in the south of England, where slow hounds which hunted "cunningly"—cleverly—were most used; sportsmen in the north of the country, as Caius shows (page 14), had already discovered the delights of fast hunting and raced after their hounds on the open downs and commons. Northern hunting men, possessing hounds active enough to jump walls and ditches, had their own method; the slow, heavy hounds of the south required the aid of men to help them over hedge or other obstacle. Gervaise Markham (1611) described the hounds required for "cunning hunting" in the following passage:—

"You shall breed your dogs from the slowest and largest of the Northern Hounds and the swiftest and slenderest of the West-country Hounds, being, both male and female, approved to be staunch, fair and even

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\* This view still was upheld by some hare hunters in the time of Beckford; hence his frequent insistence on the necessity for blood in making foxhounds; he admired foxhounds that hunted in style, but he insisted upon it that the first object was "the killing of the fox," as the cardinal distinction between fox and hare hunting

running, of perfect fine scent, and not given to lie off or look for advantages ”

By this last expression he means hounds that can be relied upon to follow every double and wind of the hare without attempting to raise the head and quest for the scent ahead. The hound of the west country was slow, large and heavy ; the northern hound “ light, nimble, swift and slender.” The cross between the two were hounds

“ neither so slow that you will waste many days without fruit of your labour, nor so unnimble that you shall need men to help them over every hedge, as I have many times seen to my much wonder ”

Markham was a Nottinghamshire man, and was best acquainted with the Northern Hounds, which, unlike the large and heavy west country breed, could jump hedges. The fact that these large hounds required the help of men to get over fences would of itself explain why they were allowed to die out when the great tracts of open waste and common were taken into cultivation and enclosed. It must not be forgotten that Cockaine and Markham wrote at a time when there were comparatively few hedges and fences

These cross-bred hounds, then, being both strong and active:—

“Will hold you in continual delight and exercise; for these middle sized dogs are neither so swift that they will far outrun the scent and let it grow cold by their own laziness, but being over and anon upon it, bring the chase to such a narrow exigent [press the quarry so closely] that the poor beast shall be forced to try all the skill, nature or strength hath leat it to preserve life; and the hounds, on the other hand, all their pains and the Huntsman's cunning to undo [unravel] intricate doubles, skips, squats and windings with which they shall be perplexed”

The great pleasure of the “cunning” sportsman was to see his hounds working out the line:—

“In this mediocrity of hunting shall your eye, if the cover be not too extreme thick, take a perfect view of all the art and cunning in every passage; so that I conclude the middle-sized hound of good strength, sound mouth and reasonable speed, which will make a horse gallop fast and not run, is the best for the true art and use of hunting”

Faster hounds were more liable to overrun the scent; but at the same time they were



THE HARRIER By Philip Reinagle, A.R.A.



quick to discover their mistakes, and would cast themselves and recover it before the huntsman could come to their aid

In spite of this excellent quality, Markham urges everyone who has a pack of these hounds to have among them

“some staunch old dogs, which running more soberly, yet close up with them, may sit upon the scent, when they overshoot it, and so call them back, and give them their loss without more trouble”

The expression “sit upon the scent” is to be read literally; a pack of Southern Hounds would sit down on the line and throw their tongues in harmony as if in sheer enjoyment of the music

Markham then describes the pack most suitable for the man who wished to follow on foot:—

“I would wish you to compose your kennel of the biggest and slowest Dogs you can get, respecting only cunning hunting and depth of mouth; and this kennel that you make so staunch and obedient to your command that when they are upon the hottest scent or in the earnestness of the chase, you step before and cast your hunting

pole but before their eyes, they shall suddenly stop, and hunt after you in full cry, with no more speed than it shall please you to lead them ; and that when you please, to let them go before you again, to pass away with the scent roundly, and without stay "

The pleasure of hunting in this fashion was derived from the music of the hounds, from watching their work, and the perfect control the huntsman exercised over his pack

An excellent account of hunting " under the pole," as the old term had it, is that in *The Spectator* of 1711, the typical country gentleman " Sir Roger de Coverley " being the central figure. The writer describes how, the hare having been started, he took up his position on rising ground whence he could watch the chase :

" Instead of running straight forwards, or in hunter's language ' flying the country,' as I was afraid she might have done, she wheeled about and described a sort of circle round the hill whereon I had taken my station in such a manner as gave me a very distinct view of the sport. I could see her first pass by, and the dogs some time afterwards, unravelling the whole track she had made, and following her through all her doubles "

After describing the doublings and squattings of the quarry, the writer says :—

“ If I was under any concern, it was on account of the poor hare that was now quite spent and almost within the reach of her enemies; when the huntsman getting forward, threw down his pole before the dogs. They were now within eight yards of that game which they had been pursuing for almost as many hours; yet on the signal before mentioned they all made a sudden stand, and though they continued opening [throwing their tongues] as much as before, durst not attempt to pass beyond the pole ”

This perfect discipline could be exacted of the southern hounds—“ these grave sort of dogs,” as another writer calls them. So slow were they that it seems to have been the exception rather than the rule for them to kill their hare

The death of the hare was not considered essential, by all harrier men of this period; some thought it desirable to kill in order to “ complete the sport ”; but the main thing was that the hounds should work out faithfully every double and wind, throwing their tongues in harmony the while



Several kinds of hound were used for hare hunting, but the older school of sportsmen strongly condemned the employment of fast packs for the purpose. Somervile was one of the old school, hence the familiar lines in *The Chace*:—

“A different hound for every different chace  
 Select with judgment; nor the timid hare  
 O’ermatched destroy; but leave that vile offence  
 To the mean, murderous, coursing crew intent  
 On blood and spoil”

In spite of Somervile’s protest the fast pack was steadily coming into use among the younger school of hunting men. In 1781 was published a small volume of *Essays on Hunting*. The contents, as the introduction states, had been written many years before they were printed; and the editor, William Blane, says that at the time of publication all other kinds of hound for hare hunting had been “entirely laid aside by those who affect to hunt in style” in favour of the Northern Beagle, which

“does his business as furiously as Jehu himself. He pursues Puss with the most impetuous eagerness, gives her no time to breathe, and if the scent lies high, will easily demolish a leash or two brace before dinner”

Such methods were considered by the older school "too short and violent."\* When scent lay well the hare was killed too quickly, and when scent was poor the fast hounds could do nothing with it ; but this was of little importance to "our younger gentry who take outrunning and outriding their neighbours to be the best part of the sport "

In a word, it was the slow hound for the old sportsman and the fast hound for the young one. The following passage clearly conveys the shortcomings of the Northern Beagle as a harrier :—

" Their high mettle makes them impatient to drive the nail as it will go rather than stay to creep or stoop ; they push forward at every fume they catch, they cross it, over-run it, hunt backward [run heel] or hunt anything to force a trade ; in short . . . it is impossible to make a good pack of them without the constant discipline of the whip, without perpetually hunting them . . . to tame their fury and quench their fire "

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\*A certain indulgence was shown the hare by all classes of sportsmen in former days. When firearms came into use for shooting it was for a long period considered unsportsmanlike to shoot a hare, because she provided sport for both hounds and greyhounds

Several different kinds of hound were used for hare hunting at this period : slow, medium-paced, and fast ; the Southern Hound, used by those who followed on foot ; the “ fleet, sharp-nosed Dog with ears narrow and pointed, deep-chested with thin shoulders, portending a quarter of the fox strain ” ; the middle-sized dog, cross between the Southern Hound and the Northern Beagle ; the “ rough wired haired hound, thick quartered, well hung, not too fleshy shouldered ” ; and besides these the rough and smooth beagles. These last were the small hounds we call beagles

The rough wire-haired hound was a northern breed ; it may have been that elsewhere described as the “ Lancashire otter hound,” as the description of it given in the *Essays on Hunting* reads as follows :—

“ I never saw an entire kennel of these, being in some parts not much encouraged. They are of northern breed and in great esteem being bold dogs and by many huntsmen preferred for the otter and marten. In some places they are encouraged for fox-hounds, but are bad to breed from being too subject to degenerate and produce thick, low, heavy-shouldered dogs unfit for the chase ”

Although so many different breeds of hound were used for hare, hunting men at this period—broadly, Queen Anne's time—were beginning to specialise their hounds; agreeably with Somervile's advice quoted on page 40, "a different hound for every chase." Masters were growing more exact in their methods, both educative and hunting

It was recognised by the more advanced sportsman that the best and staunchest harrier was the one which had been entered to the hare and knew no other game; and that it was advisable to discourage change from the hunted hare to a fresh one as long as hounds could possibly acknowledge the old line

The unwisdom of allowing harriers to hunt foxes was also recognised by some in the early days of fox-hunting.\* The Earl of March, in the *Records of the Old Charlton Hunt*, quotes a letter from Mr. Peachey to the Duke of Richmond, written in 1737, in which he says that when he kept (walked?) hounds he never suffered them to hunt a fox, well knowing that it spoiled harriers to do so

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\*But not by all: Beckford, in 1779, sets forth at length the arguments against allowing harriers to run fox, in terms which indicate that it was still done (see page 45)

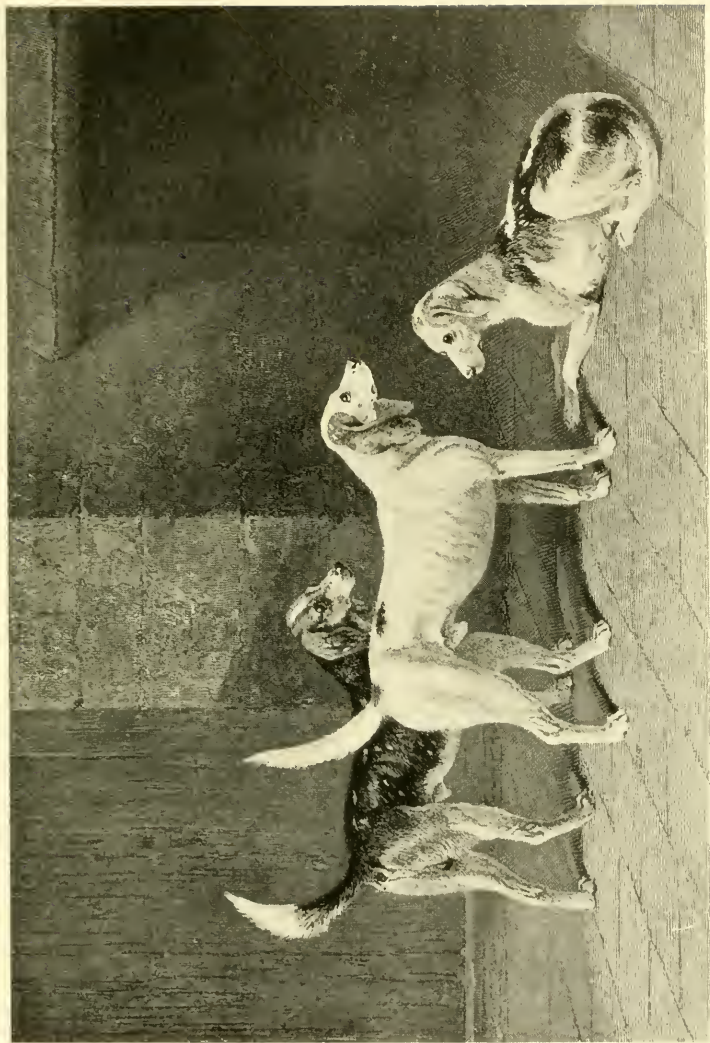
This was the teaching of the pioneers of exact methods. A writer in *Essays on Hunting* says :—

“ A dog generally prefers the game he was first entered at and blooded with. This, few sportsmen attend to, but on the contrary, if they can bring their hounds to stoop and challenge a cat, coney or red herring, think themselves well off ”

This kind of “general education” was passing out of use with the old idea that one pack of hounds might be used to hunt several different kinds of game. The new school of masters entered their hounds at the particular quarry they were intended to hunt, and strove to make them staunch to it despite difficulties :—

“ The Buck- or Bloodhound has little to do with the hare ; the otter and foxhound (the staunch finder excepted) will often join in the hunt it being very difficult to have a complete kennel of either sort so firmly staunch but many will freely hunt each other’s quarry, notwithstanding Gentlemen breed ever so true ”

The fact that hounds of various kinds would thus hunt each other’s game was attributed to the accidents of education, when harriers might break away on the line of a fox, or foxhounds



NEASDEN HARRIERS By William Barraud



on the line of a hare ; and also to the frequency with which a young hound “ at keeping ” (at walk) might enter himself

The process of specialising had been carried far when Beckford wrote his *Thoughts on Hunting* in 1779 :—

“ Harriers to be good, like all other hounds, must be kept to their own game ; if you run fox with them you spoil them. Heunds cannot be perfect unless used to one scent and one style of hunting. Harriers run fox in so different a style from hare, that it is of great disservice to them when they return to hare again ; it makes them wild and teaches them to skirt. The high scent which a fox leaves, the straightness of his running, the eagerness of the pursuit, and the noise that generally accompanies it, all contribute to spoil a harrier ”

Beckford's views on hare hunting were those of the old school ; he held that when a hare doubled, the hounds should hunt through those doubles, “ nor is a hare hunted fairly when hunted otherwise.” His own harriers, before he renounced hare for fox hunting, were a cross between the large, slow-hunting harrier and the little fox beagle—the fox beagle was “ little ” by comparison with the heavy and slow Southern



Hound ; but he bred for many years and produced “ an infinity of hounds ” before he arrived at the kind of animal he wanted, namely, a hound with bone and strength in the smallest possible compass :—

“ I at last had the pleasure to see them very handsome ; small yet bony ; they ran remarkably well together ; ran fast enough ; had all the alacrity you could desire ; and would hunt the coldest scent ”

The old plan, advocated by Cockaine in 1591, of breeding a pack that should hunt any and every quarry, had so completely gone out of use in Beckford’s time that the practice of a friend of that authority who possessed a pack of large fleet hounds, which at times had hunted all game—red and fallow deer, fox and hare—was regarded as “ very extraordinary ”

For many years the harriers remained distinct from the foxhound. The local breeds were numerous, and their admirers kept them jealously apart from the foxhound

“ Gelert,” who produced in 1849 his *Guide to the Hounds of England*, mentions the breeding of the hounds in some of the kennels of the country. This writer’s remarks are the more interesting, as the foxhound, in his day,

had already supplanted the harrier in the esteem of many hare hunters

Mr. Fuller, in Anglesea, had "old-fashioned harriers with pendulous ears and deep musical tongues like tenor bells"; these approached the Southern Hound. The Slapton, in South Devon, were "thoroughbred harriers, chiefly blue mottled"; they could carry a cold scent well, and "go the pace when it is good."

Mr. Lewis, whose country was in the neighbourhood of Cardiff, possessed a pack of black and tan hounds which had been in his family for generations

"Gelert's" remark in connection with the hounds of Mr. J. Fane, which hunted in the south part of Oxfordshire, indicates that the Southern Hound had ceased to be regarded as a harrier. These hounds are described as "true bred harriers, with no admixture of fox or Southern blood"

Some packs are described as consisting of "small, sharp" hounds; but a more recent writer throws further light on the principal breeds of harrier of fifty and sixty years ago

Mr. K. W. H. Horlock ("Scrutator"), who wrote his *Recollections of Fox Hunting* in 1861, had seen many of the kennels of the kingdom, and, endowed with a keen eye for the make

and shape of a hound, shows that the descent of some harriers could then be clearly detected

After pointing out that foxhound and harrier were quite distinct breeds until within a few years of the time (1861) when he wrote, he says :—

“ In some parts of England but particularly in Wales original packs of harriers are to be found without any mixture of foxhound blood ; and these in my opinion are the best hounds for the purpose ”

Mr. Horlock describes two kinds of harrier :—

“ The distinguishing colours of the primitive race are blue mottled, fawn, or black and tan. These are of the larger kind—large in the head, with heavy ears, long backs and short legs, and, though not very speedy, sticking like leeches to the line ”

It is easy to recognise in this description a harrier in which the blood of the old Southern Hound predominated

“ There is another variety of lighter colours and lighter action, merry musical little fellows, more active in their habits and paces, and quite equal to push a hare off her foil ; far superior to the slower sort ”

It is equally easy to recognise in this hound—the “ small sharp ” harrier mentioned by

“Gelert”—a breed in which the blood of the Northern Beagle predominated

The tendency for many years past has been to replace the old breeds of harrier with foxhound packs, and now it is the exception to find the former in hare-hunting kennels. There remain, however, a few packs of true harriers in different parts of the country ; and it is an interesting fact that such packs are found in the extreme southern parts, Devon, Somerset and Cornwall ; Sussex and Kent ; in the north, Yorkshire and Lancashire ; or in Wales ; each of which localities possessed in former days their own breed or breeds of hound

Reinagle’s picture “The Harrier,” opposite page 36, is referable to the period 1787–1812 ; it was painted during the years when he was an Associate of the Royal Academy. William Barraud’s portrait group of the hounds belonging to the Neasdon, or Neasden, pack of Harriers, page 44, appeared in the *Sporting Magazine* of 1849, and was no doubt painted about that date

It will be observed that Reinagle’s work shows the ears rounded, or perhaps “peaked” better expresses their shape. The Neasdon Harriers have their long ear lappets untouched

Remarks upon the Welsh hound will come more appropriately under the heading of Foxhounds

## THE STAGHOUND

The stag has been hunted in England from the earliest times. Now and again we obtain a glimpse of our sovereigns in the hunting field, enjoying the sport to which, as the old Forest Laws show, they attached the highest importance. Occasionally historians mention a wonderful run, such as that of King Richard I in the year 1194, when he hunted a stag from the then Royal Forest of Sherwood to Barnsdale in Yorkshire, and there lost him

All red deer were jealously protected as "King's great Game," but the stag which had given royalty such sport as this was peculiarly sacred; he was called a "Hart Royal Proclaimed," and none dare interfere with him as he made his way back to the forest whence he had been hunted

It appears that distinct packs were kept by Henry III (1216-1272) to hunt stag and buck respectively. In the eleventh year of his reign, 1226-7, he sent three men with staghounds and deerhounds to take thirty stags and thirty bucks in the New Forest. In the previous year,

“Guy and John the Fool,” his huntsmen, were sent with the staghounds to take ten boars in the Forest of Dean

The wording of these royal orders indicates different packs, but it does not follow that they consisted of different breeds of hound. The fact that the staghounds were used for boar hunting will be remarked

Hounds at this time were carefully “trained to blood”; in other words, entered at the stag and educated

The *Master of Game* sheds sidelight on the different kinds of hound used for hunting the deer. Some running hounds followed the quarry fast at the beginning of the run, “for they go lightly and fast”; but after a while they grew tired and breathless when “they stop still and leave the hart when they should chase him”

Such hounds were not esteemed for hunting the deer. They were considered very suitable for hunting the wild boar, which ran fast for a short distance, like themselves, and then turned to bay; but, as appears from Turberville, hounds which were accustomed to run the boar were spoiled for game of scent less strong; they would not readily stoop to the scent of deer or hare; moreover, chase of the boar was thought

to make them "lyther"—lazy or indolent—and disinclined to run a swift quarry

Slower but more enduring hounds were preferred for the chase of the deer :—

"Other manner of hounds there are which hunt a good deal more slowly and heavily, but as they begin so they hold on all the day : these hounds force not so soon a hart as the others, but they bring him best by mastery and strength to his end, for they retrieve and scent the line better and farther because they are somewhat slow"

Greyhounds and other very fast hounds were not liked because the sport was too soon over ; the good greyhound or "alaunte"\* either killed his quarry or lost it, thus making an end of the chase ; running hounds, on the other hand, "must hunt all day questing and making melody"

The *Master of Game* makes mention of the hounds which we are able to identify as the White Hounds of France, otherwise known as *baux* or *greffiers*, "which hunt no other beast but the hart." This breed, subsequently, became famous in France, and examples, no doubt, were sent to England as gifts from French to English kings ; there is reason to think

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\* See Appendix B



BREAKING COVERT By Philip Reinagle, A.R.A.





that they played a part in building up our English breed of staghounds

The system of hunting the stag is described with exactness in the *Master of Game*. The meet, then called the "gathering," was some "fair mead, well green, where fair trees grow about," near a well or brook; stag hunting, being a summer sport, shade and water were desirable. Here, what would now be called a hunt breakfast was provided; and while the field refreshed themselves the lymers with their hounds were expected to make their reports

Several lymers would have been at work since early morning harbouring stags, and to enable the Master to judge of the size of the beasts marked down, each lymers brought with him, in leaves, some "fewmets" or droppings. These were examined by the Master and more experienced members of the field, who decided which stag should be hunted

The meal over, business began. A yeoman berner, or huntsman on foot, was selected to take a number of the best hounds with the lymers. These hounds were the "finders" and answered in some measure to the tufters of the present day; their duty was to give chase as soon as the stag had been moved by the lymers' hound (the lymers)

The "finders" told off, the next thing was to place the "relays." This was a very important feature of the sport, and one that demanded expert knowledge both of the country and the probable line of the deer's flight

Two or three couples of hounds formed each relay; these were sent off to various points on the lines the stag might be expected to take, to the end that they might be in readiness to replace the "finders" (otherwise called the "vanchasers") at a distance of four miles or thereabout from the covert. Where there was danger of losing the stag, by his crossing stream or marsh, or passing through riot, hounds with good noses formed the relay

Time having been allowed for the men with relays to reach their appointed stations, the lymerer, holding his lymer in leash, led the Master to the spot where he had marked the stag into covert, and removed the boughs he had placed over the line when he found it a few hours before. He put his hound on the line, the yeoman berner, holding his hounds in leash, following

If the stag were alone, the yeoman berner uncoupled all his hounds; if the stag were not alone, two hounds were let go to separate him from the rest. Once fairly "moved" all the

finders or vanchasers were uncoupled ; and the lymerer took up his lymer, "and follows after and foots it in the best wise he can "

The lymerer followed the hunt for two reasons : he wanted the "reward" for the lymer if the running hounds killed, and apart from this consideration, if the running hounds were at fault the lymer with his exceptional nose was wanted to recover the line

The stag being got away, then "the berners also and every horseman go, that can go," taking care not to get in front of hounds or cross the line ; injunctions which recall the remark that slow hounds were preferred for their "questing and melody "

The man in charge of a relay had two important points to bear in mind when he heard or saw the hunt approaching ; he had to let the "vanchasers" pass before he put his relay on the line, and he had to be sure that his hounds owned the scent before he uncoupled them lest they ran heel

If there were danger of losing the stag, the lymerer who had been "footing it" after the hunt with his hound was called by a "mote" on the horn ; and the lymer put down his nose and quested for the line till he found it. If the lymer's work was in vain, the running

hounds were got together and cast off where they were "last in the rights," *i.e.*, where they had last been able to own the scent

The breaking up or "undoing" of the deer was attended with much ceremony; the head was cut off and the master bayed the pack with it to rouse them to the utmost while their "reward" was being prepared. Certain portions of the stag were cut up small, mixed with blood, and folded in the freshly flayed hide, to be uncovered when the master gave the word for the pack to be rewarded. The lymer had his own reward, which was given him before the running hounds received theirs

Another method of hunting the stag was employed when it was desired to show sport to ladies, or to those who were not sufficiently active to follow hounds

In this, "lodges" or stands were erected, and the game was surrounded by a wide ring of men with hounds, whose duty it was to head back deer which might attempt to break. The people in the "lodges," which were covered over with boughs to protect them from the sun, were armed with long bows or crossbows, and greyhounds were held in leash to give chase to the deer that might be driven past them

Only warrantable stags were driven past the lodges, and it required some management to ensure that no "rascal," *i.e.*, small deer and hinds with calves, did not offer themselves as marks to the occupants of the lodges

If there were much "rascal" within the "set" or area surrounded, the sergeant of the mute of harthounds, otherwise the huntsman of the pack of staghounds, tied all his couples of hounds together, and called upon the "harrier"\* to drive it out

We are not told what kind of hounds were used for this purpose, but it is evident that they were smaller than the harthounds, as they could drive out the unwarrantable deer, but not the bigger stags, which are more difficult to move out of covert

The "set" cleared of undesired game, the staghounds were uncoupled to manœuvre the stags past the lodges to be shot, or pulled down by the greyhounds held ready for the purpose. The speed of the greyhound would enable it to catch the game within sight of the lodge, which the slower harthounds could not

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\* "Harrier." The word used in this connection applies to the man whose duty it was to "harry" or worry away the undesired game: no doubt he used harriers for the purpose

do. Thus three kinds of hound were wanted : staghounds, harriers, and greyhounds

This form of sport must have been attended with peril to the keepers and hounds when the members of the shooting party were not careful in using their weapons

The historic accident of this kind is that which occurred in Theobald's Park, north of London, in 1613, when James I and his queen, Anne of Denmark, were hunting there. The queen fired at a deer, but missed her mark and killed the king's "most principal and special hound," Jewel by name

The king "stormed exceedingly a while, but after he knew who did it he was some pacified and with much kindness wished her not to be troubled with it for he should love her none the worse." Next day he sent Anne a diamond worth £2,000, "a legacie from his dead dogge," in token of forgiveness

Some time after this the Archbishop of Canterbury had the misfortune to kill Lord Zouch's keeper in the same way. When James heard of the matter he sent word to the archbishop that he must "not discomfort himself," as such a mishap might befall any man. He added that the queen "in like sort killed the best brache I ever had"

It is clear that both these forms of deer hunting were offered by Sir Henry Savill, of Thornhill, Tankersley, in Yorkshire, to his "cousin Plumpton," of Plumpton, in the same county. These letters from the curious collection known as the *Plumpton Correspondence* give an idea of the sport enjoyed by country gentlemen during the last years of Henry VIII's reign. The following letter is dated 8th November, 1544 :—

"Ye say that ye will come over and hunt with me ; and if it please you to do so, ye shall be as heartily welcome as any man that came here of a good space. Ye shall see your arrow fly and your greyhound run and all those that come with you winter or summer when it please you to come "

Sir Henry proceeds to warn his cousin that, unless he gives notice of his visit, he may happen to find neither himself nor his son at home ; in which case :—

" My wife ye shall be sure to find, and she shall send some [one] with you that shall let you see both red and fallow, if ye will take the pains. I have killed a hind or two of late, and they are very fat this year, both in the woods at Tankersley and in my garden at Thornhill "



The promise that Plumpton shall see his arrow fly and his greyhound run points to driving deer past a "lodge"; but another letter, written two years later, shows that Sir Henry Savill ran his game with hounds in the hunting season. He writes on 5th May, 1546, asking Plumpton to visit him, when:—

"Ye shall see a pollard [stag "in velvet"] or two, both red and fallow . . . and whensoever ye come . . . take time to hunt with me for one week; bring bows and greyhound and, at the time of the year, hounds. A pollard is sweet now and I love it best at this season; by Whitsunday I shall have fat bucks. And or [before] any red deer be fat it will be July as my experience serves. Come when ye will and such as I have ye shall see; and bring good stuff for I warn you they are wild about Tankersley and ill to catch; and if all fail I have [deer] that are tame enough . . . you shall come no time wrong, fence time than other. I have plenty tame lyeth out [which are lying outside the park]. I will make you game [show you sport] at red and fallow and stir no rascal"

The last sentences of this letter require a little explanation. If Plumpton fails to obtain

sport with the deer in Tankersley woods he shall have it with the park deer; he cannot come at a wrong time, because if his visit is paid in the close season ("fence time") he could then hunt the "tame" or park deer, which did not come under the law.\* The promise to "stir no rascal" means that there will be no trouble with unwarrantable deer

A point that impresses the reader of old works on venery is the care that was taken in training hounds for the chase, more especially for the chase of the stag or buck. Authorities differed in their views as to the best method of training, but this is only what might be expected when the same breed of hound was used for all game

Turbervile, in his *Art of Venerie* (1575), recommends hare hunting as the best preliminary when a pack of staghounds is in the making, and gives sound reason for the advice. The hare hunter always has the chase in sight, and thus he can see what each member of the pack is doing, and can measure the merits of each hound

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\* Park deer in those days were part of the household food supply; the animals were killed from the middle of May till the end of September. Mons. Cæsar de Saussure, who wrote an account of a visit he paid to this country in 1725-1730, says the meat was excellent and delicate

He says that a hound which is "a perfect good harrier" may be entered safely at any quarry, "for the hare is the very proper beast to enter hounds well and make them tender nosed." Once entered to deer they would not again run hare, because they much prefer venison to the meat of the hare, and "because the Hart is also of greater scent." Turbervile would have done better to put the latter reason first

Sir Thomas Cockaine, in his *Short Treatise of Hunting* (1591), gives very practical directions for selecting the stock from which to breed hounds for the stag and other game; these were quoted on page 17, and need not be repeated

In Cockaine's time young hounds which it was intended to enter at the buck were fed for a week beforehand on "chippings of bread" placed upon the head of an old buck; to the end that they should learn to associate the scent of the deer with food. They were given plenty of exercise in couples, and "breathed" morning and evening at hare

Bread and milk is recommended as the "best feeding" for buckhounds

Until Bartholomew-tide (24th August) they were kept not too high in flesh; after that

date, when at work, they were to be kept in the highest possible condition

The actual process of entering is described very fully :—

“ To enter, come into the park with 10 or 12 couples loose at the stirrup having with you half a dozen well horsed friends with long rods. Shew the hounds to the herd, and if any offer to run thereat, rate and beat them in to stirrup. Then go beat the brakes to find some greater deer and if any hound hunt from his fellows or run at rascal [unwarrantable deer, *c.g.*, a hind with calf] take him up in a line [leash] and, beating him, rate; call in to stirrup among his fellows, cherish and feed. This done, you may begin to tuft for a buck ”

The use of the word “tuft” is to be remarked; Cockaine is the first writer to employ the term

Cockaine was an advocate for entering hounds at buck in small parks, with the object of ensuring a kill to encourage them. The pack was to hunt morning and evening, and by the time they had killed half a score, some of the hounds at least would begin to “understand a weary deer.” The wiles of a fallow buck when beaten are, as already said, almost as cunning

as those of a fox, and might well puzzle the young entry

When they had learned their lesson in a small park they might be hunted in larger parks; and towards the latter end of the year the master might venture to hunt in the open. "Keep this pack of hounds and the next year they will prove singularly cunning [clever]"

Riotous hounds were to be drafted and replaced by others selected from the hare pack: "the best harriers prove always the best buck hounds if they be fleet enough"

Richard Blome, in his *Gentleman's Recreation* (1686), disapproved the practice of entering young hounds at deer in parks or enclosures. When this is done the hounds have the quarry always in view, which is likely, he maintains, to teach them to run by sight, rather than by scent; also the buck in a small park could never "run on end." He recommended as an alternative plan entry in the open when the stag or buck was "in pride of grease"\*—at its fattest—when he could not run far or fast, and the hounds had a good chance of catching him. Or a stag might be taken in nets and released with one foot cut off

\* The "time of grease" was from Midsummer's Day to Holy Rood Day, 14 September

This latter recommendation need cause no surprise to the more humane modern generation. As I have endeavoured to show elsewhere,\* ideas of humanity were practically non-existent in these times. Men who, as a matter of course, blooded young hounds with a living fox whose lower jaw had been sawn off, or a badger whose teeth had been broken, could not be expected to show any tenderness towards other animals when a purpose was to be served by mutilation

It is certain that about Blome's time English staghounds had a great reputation on the Continent. Interesting proof of this appears in the fact that when Louis XIV of France wished to improve the royal pack about the beginning of his reign (1715) under the circumstances described in Appendix A, he sought fresh blood in England, and was presented by the Count of Thoulouse with some English hounds, which were "fleeter and more vigorous and better hunters" than the pack in the royal kennels of France

It has already been shown that English sporting dogs and hounds were in demand on the Continent (page 25). Sport in England

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\* *Sport in the Olden Time.* (A short history of Cock-fighting in England.) By Sir Walter Gilbey, Bart. Vinton & Co. 1912

never required the countenance of royalty to make it popular ; but it is worth noticing that many of our sovereigns during the last three hundred years have been devoted to hunting. James I, Charles II, James II, William III and Queen Anne were all exceedingly fond of the chase, and it is only reasonable to suppose that they took an interest in the breeding of the royal hounds, though there are no accessible records to shed light on this particular point

There can be no doubt but that our breeds were crossed and intermingled with the French breeds. The Southern Hound was developed upon a foundation of St. Hubert or Talbot blood, and this formed the staghound and harrier used for many hundreds of years by those who loved the "questing and melody" of the pack ; as distinguished from those in the north of England who, as Caius practically says, "hunted to ride"

The hounds of Normandy, Artois and Picardy—the northern provinces of France—had much in common with our Southern Hound ; and the frequency with which the kings and nobles of England and France exchanged presents of hounds makes it certain that the breeds of the two countries were much intermixed

I am, however, inclined to think that our old breed of staghounds owed something to the famous "Great White Hounds" of France, of which some account will be found in Appendix A. The superior size of the old staghound, its longer head, its exceptional scenting power, and, not least, its colour—yellow, lemon and badger pied—all suggest a cross at some period with the principal breed of French hound

When we remember that gifts of hounds from the French kings to our own sovereigns could only have consisted of the finest animals they possessed, there is every reason to believe that White Hounds were received by our monarchs, and used in their kennels during the period when stag hunting was the sport of royalty

Mr. K. W. H. Horlock ("Scrutator"), when writing of the Belvoir pack as he saw it in 1830 or thereabout, refers to the statement made by "some old writers that there has been a cross some 200 years ago between greyhound and foxhound," as receiving support from the peculiarly fine coats and clean necks and shoulders of the Belvoir pack

The White Hound closely resembled a large greyhound or Scottish deerhound; the Belvoir were turned from stag to fox only in 1762;



and the tradition referred to by Mr. Horlock *may* have its origin in a cross made between the old Belvoir hounds and the greyhound-like "White Hound" of France

Stag hunting gradually went out of fashion from Queen Anne's time onward; symptoms of decay appear in the introduction of carted deer hunting which came into use early in the reign of George II (1727-1760). The earliest definite mention of this kind of hunting discovered by Mr. J. P. Hore (*History of the Royal Buckhounds*) refers to the year 1728, when an "elk," presumably a wapiti, was enlarged before the royal pack

It was inevitable that the chase of the stag should decline as the old forests were destroyed, as cultivation increased and the haunts of deer were brought under the plough. Hare hunting held its own, to be gradually supplanted by fox hunting, as men lost interest in "cunning hunting," and realised that it was possible to combine with hound work the joys of fast riding over country

The last of our old breed of staghounds were the pack owned by the North Devon Hunt, predecessor of the Devon and Somerset, which hunted the red deer in the royal forest of Exmoor. These hounds were described by

“ Nimrod ” (Mr. C. J. Apperley) as being from 24 to 26 inches high, strong in the shoulders, short in the neck, slack in the loins, and rather deep flewed ; their heads were long, their ears fine and pendulous, noses somewhat flat and wide, very good legs and feet, tongues deep and sonorous ; they were yellow badger and hare pied

Daniel, in his *Rural Sports*, says that the staghound is large “ and gallops with none of the neatness of a foxhound ” ; but they had courage, strength and speed, and extraordinary sagacity in hunting water when the quarry soiled. “ Every pebble, every overhanging bush or twig which the deer might have touched was quested . . . and the crash with which the scent, if detected, was acknowledged and announced made the whole country echo again ”

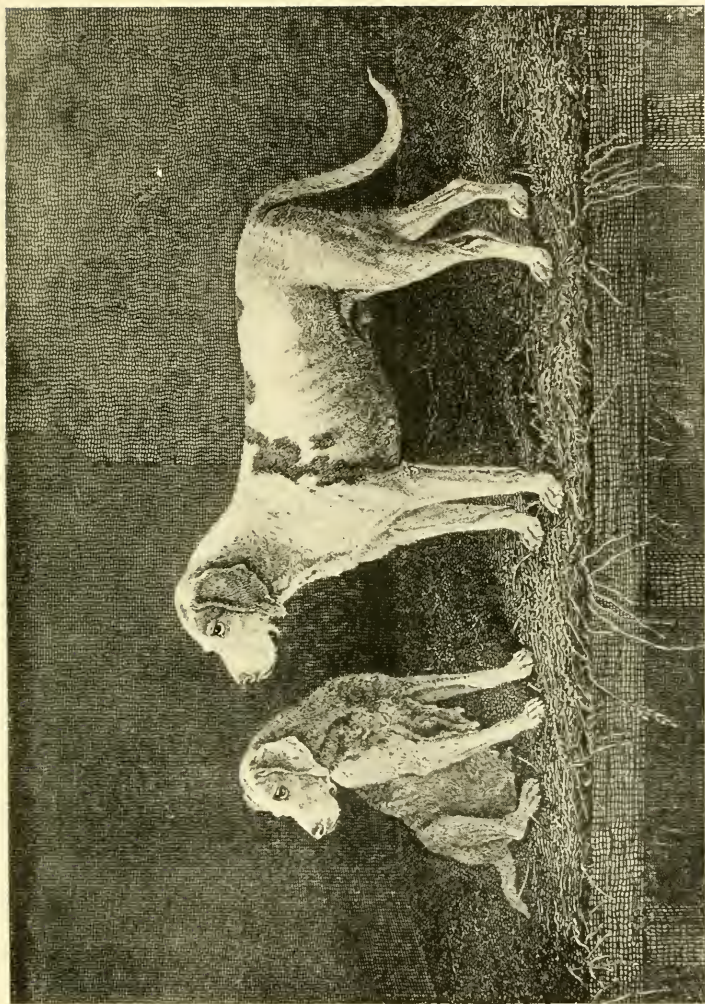
In an article contributed by me to *Baily's Magazine* (July, 1912), reference was made to the fact that the old North Devon staghounds went to Germany, a statement that requires some amplification. The pack in the first place was sold (1825) to Mr. Charles Shard, of Somborne House, in Hampshire and by him hunted for a season

It was, however, found that these large hounds could not do themselves justice on the flinty soil of that country; their feet would not stand the wear and tear; and at the end of 1826 Mr. Shard sold the pack, some going to Germany and some, says "Æsop" in his *Sporting Reminiscences of Hampshire*, to sportsmen near Epping. Nothing can be discovered concerning the ultimate fate of these latter

The blood of some of these old staghounds remained for some years in Devonshire; when "Gelert" compiled his *Guide to the Hounds of England* in 1849, he wrote thus of Mr. Froude's harriers which then hunted the Knowstone country in North Devon:—

"A fine pack, derived chiefly from the old fashioned staghound of the country—all yellow pied, large, high couraged and very persevering"

The portrait group of "Governor and Famous," two of the North Devon staghounds, facing this page, was published in the *Sporting Magazine* of 1826, about the time when the sale of the pack was attracting notice among



NORTH DEVON STAGHOUNDS Governor and Famous



sportsmen. The standing dog-hound shows well the difference between these old stag-hounds and the foxhound; it is much heavier in the forehand, and conveys the impression of great strength, rather than speed, though the animal has both length and bone. The bitch, as far as can be judged, is of somewhat lighter build

## THE FOXHOUND

There can be little doubt but that the fox was originally hunted rather as vermin than as game, in spite of the fact that the animal had place among those protected under the old Forest Laws

Royal charters were granted to privileged persons to hunt the fox—often the hare and wild cat also—by the Plantagenet kings of England, but these charters were less licences to enjoy sport than to commit trespass in the royal forests with unmutilated hounds; they seldom omit to provide that the receiver of the licence shall not disturb the king's "Great Game," *i.e.*, deer

The licence granted in 1168 by Henry II to the Abbot and canons of St. Osyth's Priory in Essex, already mentioned, allowed the clergy of the priory to hunt in the parish of "Chich" and others adjoining, with four "foxhounds" and two harriers

Edward I (1272-1307), as we learn from his wardrobe account, kept a pack of so-called

foxhounds. His huntsman, William de Foxhunte, received £9 3s. per year for the keep of twelve foxhounds at a halfpenny each per day. William de Foxhunte also drew wages for two boys, the kennel hands, and money for the keep of a horse during the hunting season, 1st September to 30th April

The use of the horse thus provided during the hunting season gives us the key to the system of hunting : the animal was required to carry to the covert-side the nets with which the wood was surrounded before the hounds were thrown in. The nets being spread, the pack was put in, and bustled the fox about until they killed him

Nets were not commonly used for this purpose ; for the sound reason that when hounds disturbed the covert they would put up the deer, which might well break their legs or kill themselves therein

It is the exception to find a charter or licence which confers leave to use nets : in 1314, Edward II granted to Robert, son of Payn, a life charter to hunt fox and hare in the Royal forests of Dorset, Somerset and Wilts, "and to stretch nets for the capture of foxes without hindrance"

The fact that Edward I maintained hounds to kill foxes does not necessarily imply that the



operation ranked as sport; no doubt those engaged in it enjoyed the excitement, but the main object, in those early times, was to destroy the fox as mischievous vermin

There is no means of discovering when the practice of netting the covert round to prevent the fox from breaking was given up. Nets are not mentioned in *The Master of Game*, written about 1406-1413; the chase is described in terms which show that it was then a regular form of sport:—

“ The hunting for fox is fair for the good cry of the hounds that follow him so nigh and with so good a will. Always they scent of him as he flies through the thick wood and also he stinketh evermore. And he will scarcely leave a covert . . . he taketh not to the plain country for he trusteth not in his running, neither in his [powers of] defence, for he is feeble and if he does it is because he is forced to it by the strength of men and hounds ”

At this time, as for long afterwards, the method was to place outside the covert a man with one or two greyhounds in slips to give chase should the fox break away. Not every

greyhound could be depended on to tackle the fox. We read (*The Master of Game*):—

“ A little greyhound is very hardy when [if] he takes a fox by himself, for men have seen great greyhounds which might well take a hart and a wild boar and a wolf and would let the fox go ”

The remark that the chase of the fox owes its attraction to the music of hounds, “ that follow him so nigh and with so good a will,” seems to indicate that the hounds used for this kind of foxhunting were specially entered to the fox ; but there is nothing to show that they were of any special breed

Turbervile, when he wrote his *Art of Venerie* in 1575, took his description “ out of another author ” ; it is the description in *The Master of Game* with a little verbal alteration ; but certain additional remarks by Turbervile call for notice. Having given directions for the posting of the greyhounds outside the covert (they were to be placed down wind, and stand close), he proceeds to tell how the hounds were to be used :—

“ Cast off first but one third part of the pack to find, and have the rest led up and down in the paths of the covert ”

This one third of the pack was to consist of "old and staunch and sure hounds" because the covert would be full of other game, and the more recently entered hounds could not be trusted to run the line of a fox until the "old, staunch and sure" hounds owned the scent and gave tongue

Clearly fox hunting of this kind had then reached a stage of popularity that led men to enter hounds at fox

There is evidence in this sense from another reliable source. Holinshead, the Elizabethan chronicler, says of foxes:—

"We have some, but no great store. Certes, if I may freely say what I think, I suppose that foxes and badgers are rather preserved by gentlemen to hunt and have pastime withal at their own pleasure, than otherwise suffered to live as not able to be destroyed because of their great plenty. For such is the scarcity of them here in England in comparison of the plenty that is seen in other countries, and so earnestly are the inhabitants bent to root them out, that except it had been to bear thus with the recreations of their superiors in their behalf it could not otherwise have been chosen but that they

should have been utterly destroyed by many years ago ”

Eagerly though these old foxhounds hunted the fox, their avidity fell short of eating their quarry when they killed. Turberville advises the huntsman to carry bread with which to reward the pack after a kill ; fox flesh, he says, is no reward for hounds because they will not eat it

During Queen Elizabeth's time, the method of fox hunting in the south of England differed widely from that of the north. Caius, quoted on page 14, tells us that the “gazehound” was used in the northern part of England to hunt fox and hare *in the open country*, and that the chase was held most enjoyable because the speed of these hounds enabled their followers to gallop across country “wherewith they are more delighted than with the prey itself”

Sir Thomas Cockaine gives directions for making a pack to hunt “Foxes and other ravenous vermin” :—

“You must breed fourteen or fifteen couples of small ribble hounds, low and swift, and two couples of terriers. Out of the fourteen couples choose two couples to be trailers of an old fox and finders of him ;

the rest must be kept in couples and uncoupled when the fox is found, all save two couple of the slowest, which must be kept at heel with one couple of terriers. The other couple of terriers to go with the pack. The old fox being well breathed is so forcible a chase [so swift a quarry] that every huntsman's part is to hew him or back him into covert again when he offereth to break the same "

" Ribble hounds " were no doubt of the Lancashire breed,\* this name being derived from the district of Lancashire watered by its principal river

Sir Thomas Cockaine knew the delights of a gallop across country ; he mentions by way of illustrating " the flying of this quarry " that he had killed a fox above ground *with hounds* fourteen miles from the covert whence he had been pushed by the pack in spite of endeavours to " hew and back " him in again

I have italicised the words " with hounds," because much significance attaches thereto.

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\* The Duke of Newcastle, in his work *A New Method to Dress Horses*, published 1667, makes reference to "The Lancashire Hound" in terms which indicate that it was a well known breed in his time

Cockaine, clearly, wishes the reader to understand that the fox was killed by the hounds which drew the covert—the “foxhounds”—not the greyhounds which waited outside to be slipped. Had these latter done the killing, they would certainly have run into the fox before he could travel half a mile, therefore when Cockaine says “with hounds” it is clear that he refers to his “small ribble hounds”

A fox-hunting strain of hounds had now been fairly established. Cockaine says:—

“ You must borrow one couple of old Foxhounds of some gentleman who useth to hunt the fox, and when your hounds be full twelve months old and chastised surely from sheep visit a covert where there is a litter, stop the earths and cast off the old hounds to find ; and, being found, cast off the young hounds. By that time you have killed half a score cubs in this sort [manner] in several woods and coverts and have two or three alive to make [train] your terriers you will find your hounds well and perfect ”

Here then we have in a few sentences the system of fox-hunting as then practised in the south of England, and the system of entering hounds to the quarry. The live cubs were

taken in purse-nets set at the earths. We can form our own ideas as to the way the cubs were used to "make" the terriers from the fact that young hounds were blooded at a fox whose lower jaw had been sawn off

This brings us to the point in hunting history when hounds were bred for, and systematically entered to, fox-hunting. And though the covert hunting described by Cockaine was not the sport known to the fox hunters of the north of England, this stage of its development is important; because the hounds, Northern Beagles, Fleet, Lancashire, Ribble, or, as they came to be called later, Sharp-nosed hounds, are here identified with fox-hunting. This is a fact to be borne in mind

There is evidence to show that the northern method of fox-hunting, getting the fox away and following hounds across country, had gained some vogue in the south of England during the time of Charles II (1649-1685). The exact date of the letter\* quoted below is not given, but it was written during the reign of that king by Sir William Thomas, of Folkingham, Member of Parliament for Sussex, to his

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\* Victoria County History : *Sussex*.

friend, Sir William Wilson, of Bourne Place (now Compton Place, Eastbourne) :—

“ Sir,

“ I design to hunt the fox at Bourne to-morrow ; but if there be not people to watch the cliffs, and to be there about three o'clock in the morning to prevent their going down, I can do no good with them. I desire therefore that you would be pleased to order some persons to watch the cliffs and to stop the earths that are near you. I will be there, God willing, by six o'clock in the morning when I should be glad to have the happiness of your good company. This comes, Sir, from your faithful friend and humble servant,  
WILLIAM THOMAS ”

In 1686, Richard Blome produced his *Gentleman's Recreation*. This handsome work seems to have been a long time in preparation, as some of the plates bear date 1682. The description of fox-hunting given in this book shows the northern system fairly established. The method of *finding* the fox still remained as it had been in Cockaine's day, ninety years before : a few sure finders were thrown into covert to trail the fox to his kennel, and when he was found the body of the pack, which till then had been held in couples outside, were



thrown in. But there was no "hewing and backing" to keep the quarry in covert; on the contrary, the object now was to get him away :—

"When forced away the fox will lead from wood to wood, a ring of four, six, or ten miles; and sometimes endways about twenty miles trying all the earths he knows"

Blome approves Northern Hounds for fox-hunting, on the ground that "the fox will exercise them better and longer" than the hare, but it will be well to give his remarks on hounds :—

"For hunting the fox the Hounds or Beagles generally made use of are such that have good mettle, are stout and well quartered. But they should differ according to the country where they are hunted (as indeed in all other chases) for those proper to the open countries are the Northern Hounds which are fleet of foot and being thin skinned are not so proper for thick coverts and bushy enclosures as the Southern Hounds, which are thick skinned and slow footed, and are not fitted for the long chases that open countries afford"

Blome concludes his remarks with a statement that marks a further stage in the development of the foxhound:—

“The Northern Beagle and Southern hound make a good strain for this sport”

This is the first indication we have of endeavour to produce a hound for fox-hunting by crossing two breeds \*

This author gives some description of the two breeds. The Northern Beagle was “framed after the mould of a greyhound.” The Southern, also called the “deep-mouthed,” Hound, was tall and big, heavy and slow, higher behind than in the forehead

Count de Couteulx de Canteleu’s description of the “Normandy hound” suggests that our Southern Hound owed something to this French breed

The Normandy hound is not noticed by Turbervile; it does not seem to have been held of much account by the old French hound

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\* It is not quite germane to the subject, but the fact that telegony, or influence of a previous sire, was recognised in Blome’s day is worth noticing; this author says of the brood bitch: “Some have observed that in all her litters she shall afterwards have, she is said to have one of her whelps to resemble the dog that first lined her”

authorities, and is first mentioned as the breed which was crossed with Louis XIV's white hounds to make them slower, towards the end of that king's reign (1643-1715), as stated in Appendix A

The cross between the Northern Beagle and Southern Hound, says Blome, produced

“a middle sort of dog which partakes of both their qualities as to strength and swiftness in a reasonable proportion; they are excellent in mixed country; they will [go] through thick and thin, neither [do they] need your help over Hedges as you are forced to do by others”

Though the author does not definitely say so, we may fairly assume that he had the cross-breed in mind when he wrote, with regard to digging a fox, that “it should be thrown to the pack to blood and encourage them.” This marks a step forward. Hounds, in Blome's day, had learned to break up and eat their fox

There can be little doubt but that this “middle sort of dog” was common at this period. The Earl of March, in his interesting work *Records of the Old Charlton Hunt* (1910), gives the pedigree of a hound named Luther which was sent in the year 1733 by Mr. John Bright, master of the Badsworth, in Yorkshire,

to the Duke of Richmond, who hunted the Charlton country in Sussex

The pedigree, which shows Luther's descent on both sides for some generations, is very suggestive: on one side or the other occur names of hounds belonging to the following masters—Lord Byron, Lord Cardigan, Sir William Wyndham, Mr. Vernon "of Staffordshire," Sir John Tyrwhitt and Mr. Chaworth

Now it is hardly necessary to observe that at the period of which I write, masters hunted their own hounds over their own estates and those of their neighbours. It is reasonable to suppose that a north country master would use northern hounds and the south country master southern hounds

Lord Byron and Mr. Chaworth were Nottinghamshire masters; Lord Cardigan's property was in Wiltshire, as also was Sir William Wyndham's. Sir John Tyrwhitt was joint master with Mr. Charles Pelham and Mr. Vyner in Lincolnshire\*

Here, then, is sufficient proof that Luther was of mixed breeding; and the pedigree has this

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\*The existing kennel lists of the Brocklesby date back to 1746

additional interest : it shows that masters were at work endeavouring to produce a true fox-hound

If the famous Charlton run of 26th January, 1739, may be taken as evidence of the speed of the Duke of Richmond's pack, it is surely justifiable to assume that it consisted of Southern Hounds. They found their fox at quarter to eight in the morning and killed at ten minutes to six in the evening after a run estimated at about 24 miles 6 furlongs ; therefore the pace averaged about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles an hour

This is quite characteristic of the Southern Hound, as was shown when the breed was considered in connection with hare-hunting

Luther, with the greater speed that distinguished the Northern Beagle, or a hound with northern blood in his veins, was perhaps wanted in the Charlton kennels to give more pace

The sketch opposite was made by James Seymour for a Foxhunting work. I reproduce it here as the artist shows so clearly not only the small size of the hound then used for Foxhunting, but also the character of the animal ; small sized, light bodied, slender limbed and sharp of muzzle, we may take it as tolerably certain that the hound from which this sketch was drawn was a specimen of the



SKETCH FOR FOXHUNTING PICTURE By James Seymour



Northern Beagle, uncrossed with any other breed. Seymour was born in the year 1702 and died in 1752; the sketch may therefore be referred to the later years of George I's reign or the earlier years of George II. The shape of the whip, like a short carriage whip, carried by the horseman will be remarked

We have now arrived at a point when packs of foxhounds, or of hounds bred for the purpose of hunting the fox, were in existence. "Nimrod" (Mr. C. J. Apperley) was informed that Lord Arundel kept "foxhounds" between 1690 and 1700, hunting in Wilts and Hampshire. The descendants of these hounds passed about the year 1745 into the hands of Mr. Hugo Meynell, of Quorndon Hall

Another pack was that belonging to Mr. Thomas Boothby, who hunted, 1698 to 1753, part of what is now the Quorn country. The inscription on Mr. Boothby's horn claims that this was the "first pack of foxhounds in England"; perhaps "first" is used in the sense of "principal." If first in the sense of date, the person who designed the inscription was unaware of the pack owned by Lord Arundel, which was in existence eight years earlier



The Rev. William Chaffin, in his *Anecdotes of Cranbourn Chase*, published 1818, says he believes "the first real steady pack of foxhounds established in the western part of England was by Thomas Fownes Esq. of Stepleton, about the year 1730. They were as handsome and fully as complete [level] as any of the most celebrated packs of the present day. They were sold to Mr. Bowes in Yorkshire at an immense price for those days"

Mr. Fownes' pack was the one to which Beckford refers as "a most famous pack of foxhounds belonging to the gentleman to whom my house formerly belonged." It has not been possible to trace their subsequent history

The masters named in the foregoing pages were among the pioneer breeders of hounds specially intended to hunt the fox; but it must be remembered that the foxhounds they bred differed widely from the modern foxhound in several important respects. Their deficiencies, as present-day hunting men would regard them, were such that the style of hunting was ordered to suit their moderate capacities

From the early days of fox-hunting until the Regency, the foxhound had not the speed to catch a fox in fair running condition. It was the "middle sort of dog" described by Blome,

combining some of the speed and activity of the Northern Hound with some of the scenting power of the Southern ; but having the full merits of neither

Hence the plan adopted by our forefathers of being at the covert-side by dawn to push out the fox before he had had time to digest his night's meal and to sleep after his night's foray ; to hunt him, in fact, while he was in no state to travel as he could have done, given time to recover fair running trim .

There is good reason to think that the fox of those days was a stouter and stronger animal than his modern descendant. Had the foxes not been stout they could have shown little sport under the conditions of hunting in vogue. There are also grounds for thinking that foxes were then less numerous than they have become under generations of jealous preservation

The process of building up the foxhound, as we understand the term, was necessarily slow. The majority of masters were conservative ; he who obtained sport with his Northern Hounds held to that breed ; and he who obtained sport with his Southern Hounds was content with them ; those who sought progress set themselves to improve either of the two breeds by crossing

This was the situation in Beckford's day ; a remark in his *Thoughts on Hunting* (1779) on the conservative spirit just referred to is illuminating :—

“ Men are too apt to be prejudiced by the sort of hound they have been accustomed to. Those who have been used to the sharp-nosed [northern] foxhound will hardly allow a large headed [southern] hound to be a foxhound ; yet they both equally are ”

Beckford was one of the open-minded masters, like the Duke of Richmond, Mr. John Bright and others of a previous generation, who recognised that there were merits in both breeds. He was a convert from hare-hunting, and he was trying to improve his foxhounds, by “ the judicious cross ”

From what has been said it will be recognised that Beckford's saying “ it is the judicious cross that makes the pack complete [level], ” possessed a meaning to his contemporaries which it does not convey to ourselves. We should understand by “ judicious cross ” the introduction of, let us say, Milton blood by way of change from some other famous strain. In Beckford's time the saying meant a far more radical change

The master seeking to improve his pack had a wide field of choice among our breeds of

hounds: there was the old staghound, the Northern and Southern Hounds, numerous breeds of harrier and what is described as a "small sort of beagle," most probably the hound called by the Duke of Newcastle the "Little Beagle"\*

Some masters made strange experiments in their endeavour to arrive at the true foxhound. Beckford says he had seen "foxhounds" got from a Newfoundland dam by a foxhound sire! They were "monstrously ugly, are said to give their tongues sparingly, and to tire soon." That Beckford should have thought it worth while to mention the defects of a mating which to us appears ridiculous shows that the experiment was made in a serious spirit

Much progress had been made towards arriving at the true foxhound in Beckford's time, but it was still in the making

The leading masters of the kingdom were pushing on with the work of improvement. We do not know what blood, whether Northern or Southern, predominated in the Belvoir kennels when, in 1785, Mr. Thomas Thoroton wrote to

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\* The Little Beagle is incidentally mentioned by the Duke in his famous work *A New Method to Dress Horses* published in 1667

the Duke of Rutland that a "prodigious crowd" of visitors from neighbouring countries came to hunt in the Belvoir country, "had very fine sport" and were "in raptures with the hounds" (Hist. MSS. Comn.)

We may safely assume that cross-breeding had been going on since the year 1762 when the Belvoir became a fox-hound pack; but old pictures show a stamp of hound which, as Mr. T. F. Dale observes in his *History of Belvoir*, indicated rather speed than strength; the blood of the Northern Beagle seems to have predominated

Beckford saw that the merits of the several breeds might be combined:—

"the faults and imperfections in one breed may be rectified from another; and if this be properly attended to I see no reason why the breeding of hounds may not improve till improvement can go no further"

One imperfection of the foxhound of that day was its nose. The well-bred staghound could discriminate between the scent of the hunted deer and the scent of a fresh one: the foxhound Beckford knew could not discriminate between the scent of a hunted fox and a fresh one. If it could do so, he says, "fox-hunting would then be perfect"



THE DEATH By John Boulbee



Beckford does not tell us what breeds went to the making of his own pack: it no doubt consisted of the crossbred between the Northern and Southern Hounds, then bred so far in that direction that they were "foxhounds." When he says that a "handsome, bony, tender-nosed beagle would occasionally be no improper cross for a high-bred pack of foxhounds," he had the Northern Hound or Beagle in mind; it may be that Southern blood predominated in his kennel. The fact that he was a hare hunter, and took much trouble to breed a good pack of harriers (see page 46), before he discovered the superiority of fox-hunting, makes this exceedingly probable.

It is certain that the young entry in Beckford's day received an education more careful than modern foxhounds receive. Recently derived, as they were, from a long line of hare- or deer-hunting ancestors, such preparation would be essential. The methods adopted seem to have been based on the principle that the young hound might be taught to run anything except hare.

Some masters taught their young hounds on a trail or drag. Beckford mentions one old sportsman who first entered his young hounds at "a cat which he drags along the ground for



a mile or two, at the end of which he turns out a badger" with broken teeth. About two couples of old hounds were run with the entry to "hold them on"

Scarcity of foxes, in some cases at least, furnished reason for such devices. Beckford preferred to enter his young hounds at cubs, "if there were plenty of litters and some foxes could be spared." Were the young ones entered thus in a covert where there was a little riot, and a few old hounds were there to steady them, small difficulty was to be expected afterwards

Beckford's teaching that foxhounds should carry a good head, conveyed in the picturesque phrase, they should run "like the horses of the sun, all abreast," would have been new to many fox-hunters of his time. In one of the *Essays on Hunting*, edited by William Blane, in 1781, the necessity for harriers to carry a good head is urged; they cannot cover the doublings and windings of a hare "if they run yelping in a long string like deer- or fox-hounds"

The foxhound of Beckford's time was still slow; the system of meeting at such time that hounds could be thrown into covert when it "was light enough to tell a stile from a gate"

remained in vogue ; and it was as much as the hounds of that day could do to kill their fox when they got him away, full fed and unrested after his night's foray

. Slow the hounds were, to our ideas, but they suited well the leisurely methods of the time.\* Men took their fences slowly, and if a

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\* The foxhound of George III's time was fast enough to be considered capable of improving the speed of other dogs. It was about the time Beckford wrote that experiments were made by shooting men with foxhound blood to increase the speed and courage of pointers. The celebrated Colonel Thomas Thornton is said to have been the first to try this cross, and the excellence of his dog Dash got by a foxhound from a well bred but rather small pointer bitch appears to have set a fashion which endured for some years. Dash "was remarkable for his style of ranging on the moors as well as for his superior method of finding game" (*The Sportsman*, Vol. 4, 1836) Colonel Thornton sold the dog to Sir Richard Symons for £160 worth of champagne and brandy, a hogshead of claret, a gun and a pointer ; with the stipulation that if the dog were ever disabled from field work he was to be returned for 50 guineas. Dash met with an accident, breaking his leg, and was accordingly returned to Colonel Thornton who used him as a stud dog. As a sire he was a total failure, begetting not a single whelp worth keeping. The idea that the pointer could be improved by a cross of foxhound blood became discredited after a time ; the writer in *The Sportsman* already quoted says "the stock of these cross-bred dogs is uniformly good for nothing" ; and the Foxhound cross is condemned in Oakleigh's *Shooter's Handbook* (1846) on the ground that the dog so bred has a tendency to run hares if not to give tongue. That the Foxhound, while yet in the making, should have been thought capable of improving the pointer of the time is proof of the progress that has been made

place looked big they dismounted and led their horses over, as Beckford advises, rather than lose time looking for an easier place. But the time was coming when these deliberate methods of crossing a country were to undergo change

It was soon after *Thoughts on Hunting* appeared (1781) that Mr. Childe, of Kinlet, set the fashion of racing at fences. "Flying leapers," as those were called who took their fences at the gallop, were the exception until about 1800; hence the field could not have lived with faster hounds than those they possessed

The evidence of pictures of fox-hunting painted at different times from the reign of Queen Anne to the Regency proves that the foxhound of that period was much smaller than the foxhound of our own day. The merit and methods of artists varied; but the old sporting painters usually portray hounds smaller, lighter and sharper of muzzle than the modern foxhound. Their pictures make clear the fact that the blood of the Northern Hound predominated in the early foxhound

Samuel Howitt's work "The Chase," reproduced on page 16, gives a good idea of the foxhound in Beckford's time. Howitt was born in 1760 and died in 1824

Philip Reinagle's "Fox Breaking Covert," facing page 52, refers to about the same period; it will be noticed that the hounds in this work are of somewhat stouter build than the hounds in Howitt's picture. It may be that they had more Southern blood in their veins

John Boulton's work "The Death" facing page 92, is one of a series of four pictures painted in the year 1802. Here again we see how much smaller was the foxhound of that day than its descendant of the present time. This picture, it will be observed, shows the ears of the hounds in their natural state, proving that the practice of "rounding" was not then universal. The hounds' "sterns" are more shortened than was the usage at a later date \*

The great circular horn adopted from the French and used by English huntsmen until Beckford's time will be noticed in Boulton's picture. Straight horns were used at an

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\*Particulars of the lives and works of these painters, Samuel Howitt, Philip Reinagle, R.A., and John Boulton, with some account of their work will be found in Volumes 1 and 2 of *Animal Painters of England*, published by me in 1900. The life and works of Frederick Tayler, whose "Hunting Scene" forms the frontispiece to this work, are dealt with, among those of many other artists in the 2nd Series of *Animal Painters of England*, published by me in 1911. (Vinton & Co., 8 Bream's Buildings, E.C.)

earlier date, but they were much larger than the modern instrument. The horn with which Mr. Thomas Boothby hunted the "first pack of Foxhounds then in England" until 1752 was straight and 18 inches long

Much progress must have been made with the foxhound during the forty years 1781 and 1820; and at the same period other changes were taking place to usher in the modern system of fox hunting. The meet before sunrise had been generally abandoned in 1829, when Colonel Cook, Master of the Essex from 1808 to 1813, wrote his *Observations on Fox-hunting*. The majority of foxes then were found and killed after twelve o'clock

A factor that contributed to faster hunting was the improvement in agricultural methods. Drainage had become more general and was more efficiently carried out; and scent lying better on drained than on water-logged fields, the fast hound with a good nose had the chance of showing what he could do

The characters of an ancient breed are extremely persistent, asserting themselves many generations after the original race has been lost. The difference between the old Northern Beagle and the Southern Hound, the two races from which our foxhounds are in

the main descended, was very marked ; and it is not, therefore, surprising that so keen an observer as "Scrutator" (W. K. H. Horlock) should have marked the difference between the hounds of long-established kennels when he made a tour round some of the principal hunting countries in the year 1830

He says he was much struck by the difference between the Belvoir and the Cottesmore hounds

The former, under Goosey, were, respecting framework, as nearly perfect as possible, looking as neat and bright in their coats as a new pin, averaging in height about 23 inches. A very striking contrast was presented in the latter, particularly in the dog hounds. Some of these stood 26 inches in height, with rather wide, long heads and a good share of neck-cloth ; they were also put loosely together, though possessing straight legs and good feet, with plenty of bone and muscle

The character of the two packs also differed when seen at work. The Belvoir were "quick, active, and mettlesome, forcing the fight, and running into their fox in the open." The Cottesmore were just the reverse, "hunting

the fox being their forte," and this they certainly accomplished to perfection. Their style of going was like that of a large thoroughbred horse, striding over the ground at a long lurching pace; but their noses were always in the right place, and they could get forward with a bad scent, hold to the line, and round up their fox at last with unerring pertinacity

Mr. Horlock's description of the Belvoir again indicates the character of the Northern Beagle, rather than that of the Southern Hound. His account of the Cottesmore suggests, on the other hand, that Southern Hound blood predominated in that famous pack

Having visited various great kennels again about the year 1860, he still recognised differences between the hounds of certain hunts. He placed the Badminton and Earl Fitzwilliam's in the class of "larger hounds," and those of the Belvoir and Brocklesby in the class of "smaller hounds," and he adds:—

"This distinctive difference has however been gradually wearing away; but even at this date [1860] it is not unusual to find specimens in several kennels which clearly show their original descent by width of head, coarseness of neck, and bulkiness of form"

In other words, their descent from the old Southern Hound

The difference between the foxhound in the very early days of its development, and its modern descendant may best be realised by comparing pictures. "Tapster" was in the Duke of Richmond's kennel in 1733. The Meynell Waverley, by the Belvoir Warlock, dam Promise, was the first prize stallion hound at the Peterborough Show of 1912. These two portraits are given on the same page, for convenience of comparison

Tapster shows rather the character of the Northern Beagle than the Southern Hound, particularly in his head

It would be impossible to say when the practice of using foxhounds for the chase of the hare came into vogue; it was, no doubt, a result of the preference for fast work which was growing two hundred years ago; but it had become well established sixty years back

Of sixty-three packs of harriers enumerated or described by "Gelert" in 1849, no fewer than ten are noticed as consisting of foxhounds, either "small," "dwarf," or "thoroughbred"; but, says the compiler of this work, "we hold that the foxhound for the fox and the harrier



for the hare is the right thing all the world over "

There are many sportsmen of the same way of thinking at the present day

I have searched in vain for particulars of the prices paid for hounds and packs of hounds during the earlier days of Fox-hunting. There is no doubt that packs of established reputation fetched large sums when offered for sale; Beckford makes a remark which suggests that hounds cost high prices when sold at Tattersall's, but neither during his time nor for many years later are figures given

One of the earliest sales of which particulars have been recorded was that of Mr. Lambton's pack, 66 couples, in 1836; the hounds were sold for three thousand guineas. I myself purchased the pack in the kennels of the Puckeridge Hunt, formerly the property of Mr. Nicholas Parry, for two thousand pounds in the year 1890, in order to solve a difficulty which had arisen in connection with the hunting of the country; but packs of hounds have changed hands both before and since for very much larger sums

## THE BEAGLE

It is necessary to be careful in dealing with early references to the beagle, since hounds were known as "beagles" which bear no resemblance to the small hound used for hunting hare and rabbit. When mentioned by old writers, they are sometimes distinguished as "little beagles"

These little hounds were not much used in old days in England. They appear to be of foreign origin. Mr. Rawdon Lee mentions a sixteenth century print by Johannes Stradanus, of Bruges, which shows small hounds killing rabbits, and this is one of the earliest evidences of the use of these hounds for sport

Queen Elizabeth is said to have had beagles so small that one could be put into a lady's glove; and Gervaise Markham says:—

"and lastly [there is] the little Beagle which may be carried in a man's glove, and are bred in many countries for delight only, being of curious scents and passing cunning in their hunting; for the most part tiring, but seldom killing the prey, except at some strange advantage"

William III (1689-1702) kept beagles ; it is said that on one occasion, in 1695, when he hunted them at Welbeck there was a field of four hundred horsemen out

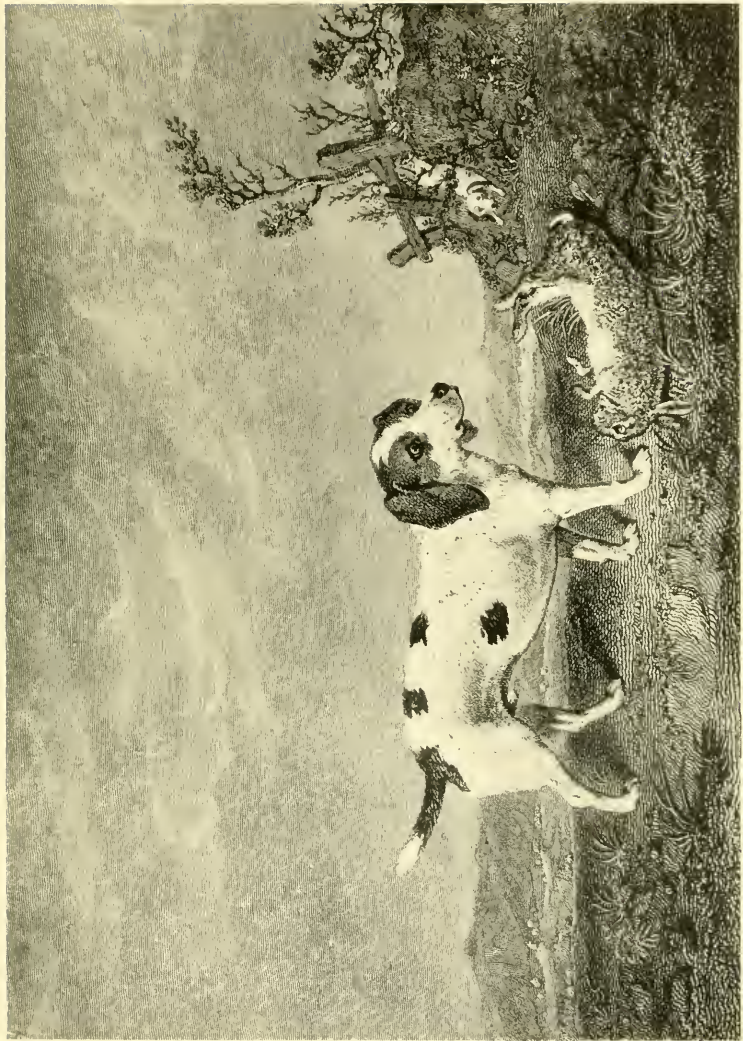
Blome dismisses the breed very lightly as :--

“a very small sort of dog not exceeding the bigness of a lady’s lapdog, which make pretty diversion for the coney, and also for the hare, if the weather be dry ; but the smallness of them makes them not serviceable ”

In wet weather the small beagles would find it difficult to get through heavy ground

Small beagles are clearly referred to in the following passages in *Essays on Hunting* (1781) :—

“There is yet another sort in great favour with small gentry, because they eat but little. These, as their noses are very tender and not far from the ground, I have often seen to make tolerable sport, but without great care they are flirting and maggoty [capricious] and very apt to chaunt and chatter on any or no occasion. A rabbit, mouse or weasel will please them instead of lawful game ; and in truth it is seldom they understand their



BEAGLE AND RABBIT By William Smith



business or perform their office with judgment or discretion ”

There were beagles both rough and smooth, and each kind had their admirers. The rough were held the better of the two, as the smooth, though usually “ deep hung, thick lipped and large nostrilled,” were often so “ soft, solid and bad quartered as to be shoulder-shook and crippled ” after the first season of work. Also the smooth beagle had the unpardonable fault of “ crooked legs like the terrier or right [true] Bath turnspit ”

This last remark seems to point to the basset hound, but there is no evidence to show that this continental breed was known in England at this period

George IV was very fond of hunting with beagles, and his pack were frequently to be seen on Brighton Downs. Colonel Thornton, who hunted with them, found that their pace tried the speed of a horse, from which it is to be concluded they were large hounds of their kind

Daniel, in his *Rural Sports* (1801), mentions the pack kept by a Colonel Hardy ; “ the Cry, consisting of ten or eleven couple, were always carried to and from the field in a large pair of

panniers, slung across a horse ; small, as they were, they would keep a hare at all her shifts to escape them, and often worry her to death." Their hunting could not, however, be regarded very seriously ; it might, says Daniel, be endured as a novelty, but no one would ever wish to behold it a second time. Colonel Hardy's pack came to a curious end : they were kennelled in a small barn, and one night the door was broken open and every hound, together with the panniers, was stolen ; nor could the most diligent search discover any trace of either the thieves or their booty

William Taplin, in his *Sporting Dictionary* (1803), says a brace or two of small pied or tan hounds, called beagles, were in former days used by coursers to "pick and chop" the trail of a hare to her form, whence they moved her for the greyhounds

Packs of such hounds were, he says, kept by country gentlemen, who were at pains to have them perfectly even. They were generally well matched, not over 11 inches high, and ran so well together that they might be covered by a sheet. They were "slow but sure" ; like the large Southern Hound, which would hunt a hare for six hours or more, they wore down their quarry by steady persistence

A famous pack of small beagles was that owned by Mr. Crane in the 1850's. These hounds were all about 9 inches high, and, it is said, showed excellent sport over, it is to be supposed, open, unfenced country

The modern taste is for much larger hounds. No pack of under 14 inches will show good sport and account for their hares. In strongly fenced or in fen country the hounds should be 15 or 16 inches high ; the latter being the maximum height recognised by the *Harrier and Beagle Stud Book*

From the sweetness of their voices the very small examples of the breed were called "singing beagles" — Markham's suggestion, page 23, to run with the pack one or two small single beagles as "trebles" to make the cry more sweet, will be remembered

William Smith's picture of "Beagle and Rabbit," which faces page 104, appeared in Vol. 59 of the *Sporting Magazine*; it is no doubt a representative example of the beagles used at that period, the eighteen twenties



## THE WELSH HOUND

This breed stands alone among our existing hounds as being the one which has longest preserved its original character. The earliest mention by which the rough Welsh hound can be identified occurs in the letter written by Edward, Prince of Wales, in the year 1304-5, page 29, in which he refers to "our bow-legged hare hounds of Wales"

The old rough Welsh hound of the present day is somewhat heavy in build, and has the long narrow head and peak of the old Southern Hound, with ears long set low down; the neck is short the loin slack, and the side rather flat; the legs are more or less crooked, a peculiarity which enables us to identify the animal referred to in the letter written six hundred years ago

The coat is hard and wiry, and the colour varies. Mr. Cambridge Phillips believes the commonest hues, black and tan or grizzle and tan, to be the colour of the original breed

This is the hound of which the Count de Canteleu believes the Bresse hound to be the

ancestor, and the points of resemblance between the two are numerous. Each is rough coated; the colours of the Bresse hound is yellowish or sandy red, with grey or black patches; the build of the two is very similar; each has a grand bell like voice and an excellent nose. The savagery of the Bresse hound is sometimes found in the Welsh, but this is not a point on which any stress should be laid, since savage hounds of all breeds are known. Speed is not the strong point of either

The Count de Canteleu states that the Bresse hound was much used in England and especially in Wales for hare-hunting. The Welsh hound was originally used as a harrier, but is equally good as an otter-hound or fox-hound

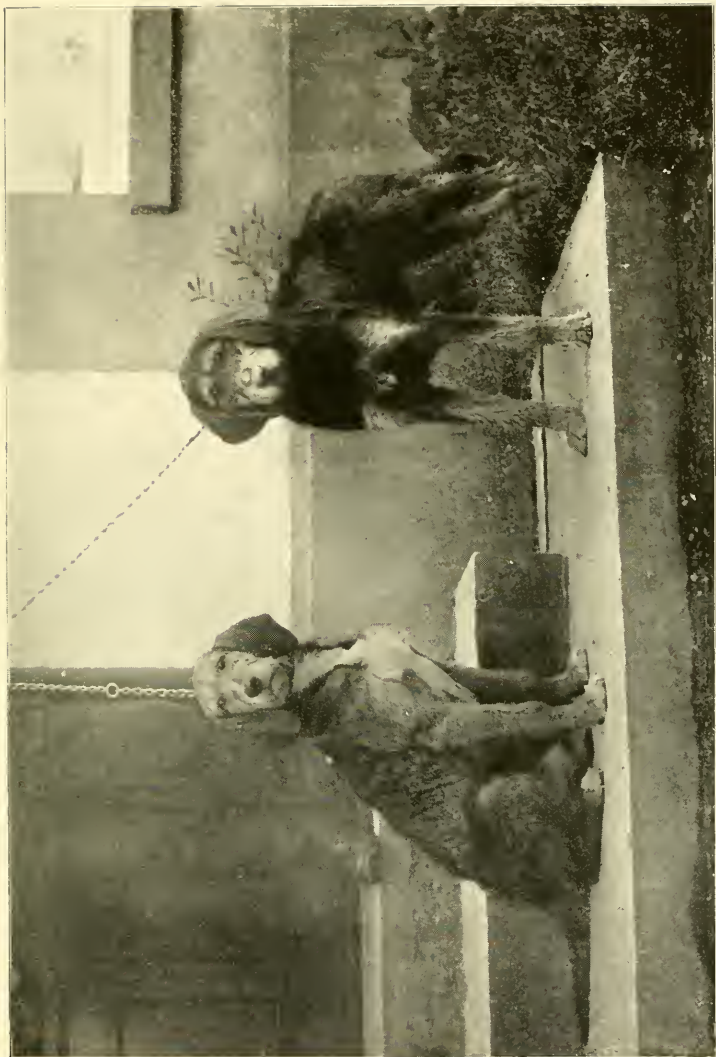
My friend, the late Sir Richard Green Price, a warm admirer of the rough Welsh hound, held that for music, nose and determination this breed stands unrivalled; and he was fond of saying that the time would come when Welsh blood would become the fashion for crossing with the English hound, so marked were these most desirable qualities

The great difficulty he foresaw was in the rarity of pure-bred Welsh hounds; like other breeds of high antiquity, it has been so crossed

and recrossed with others in the endeavour to improve the original that few specimens of the truly pure-bred Welsh hound are now to be found

Sir Richard bore a prominent part in re-establishing the foxhound pack of his native district, the Radnorshire and West Herefordshire ; and in doing so he made much use of Welsh blood, putting the pure Welsh dog to bitches selected from the Badminton, Rufford, and the late Lord Poltimore's kennels

The Welsh hound has played a conspicuous part in building up the modern otter-hound



ROUGH WELSH HOUNDS 1901 Tuner and Tippler



## THE OTTER-HOUND

The otter has been hunted from early times, as is proved by the references to the maintenance of hounds for the purpose in ancient records. King John (1199-1216) kept otter-hounds. In July, 1212, when his court was at Bristol, he sent orders to the Sheriff of Somersetshire to provide necessaries for

“Ralph the huntsman and Godfrey his fellow, with two men and two horses and twelve otter hounds as long as they find employment in capturing otters in your shire. And as soon as they cannot capture any [more], you are forthwith to send them back to us, and any cost you may incur through them shall be accounted to you at the Exchequer”

The wording of this order makes it sufficiently clear that the otters were regarded as noxious beasts, to be destroyed as vermin

Edward II had a pack of “twelve otter dogs and a couple of greyhounds” under the charge of two feeders; and Henry IV retained one William Melbourne as “valet” of the otter-

hounds. Melbourne appears to have written on the subject of otter hunting, as the Duke of York, in *The Master of Game*, says: "of the rest of his [the otter's] nature I refer to Melbourne, the King's otter hunter"; but the treatise, if such existed, has been lost

There can be little doubt but that the royal otter-hounds in those days were kept rather to keep down the increase of an animal so harmful to fish than for sport. Fish in pre-Reformation times formed a far more important part of the people's diet than it has done since, and the fisheries of our rivers were very valuable as a source of food supply. Hence it would be in keeping with the duty a king owed his people to maintain hounds to kill down otters, as an example to others who were in a position to keep hounds

There are occasional references to the otter which suggest that it was regarded as game. In 1290, one John de Clarel and others were fined the then enormous sum of £100 for killing one stag and two otters in Peak Forest, Derbyshire. The offenders petitioned the king for remission of the fine, but were denied. It may be conjectured that if John de Clarel and his friends had not killed the deer they would have heard little about the two otters

In Edward III's reign (1327-1377) the Prince of Wales' "water dogs," which hunted the rivers of North Wales, were maintained at the public expense. The tenantry found food and drink for the huntsman, some holding their lands by the service of training otter-hounds

In *The Master of Game*, the otter is bracketed with the fox, wild cat, marten and polecat as an animal which "no good hunter goeth to the wood intending to hunt"; a statement which confirms the view that this animal was killed as a fish-destroyer rather than for the sake of the sport. The otter, as *The Master of Game* says, was "common enough"; and the more common the greater the necessity for keeping down its numbers

The spear was in use for otter-hunting in those days.\* A quaint illustration shows men pursuing the animal with spears: one man with a trident has speared the quarry through the neck; but we gain no idea as to the character of the hounds employed in the chase.

In one of his letters to his cousin Plumpton, written in 1544 (*The Plumpton Correspondence*), Sir Henry Savill says:—

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\*The spear remained in use until the early years of Queen Victoria's reign.

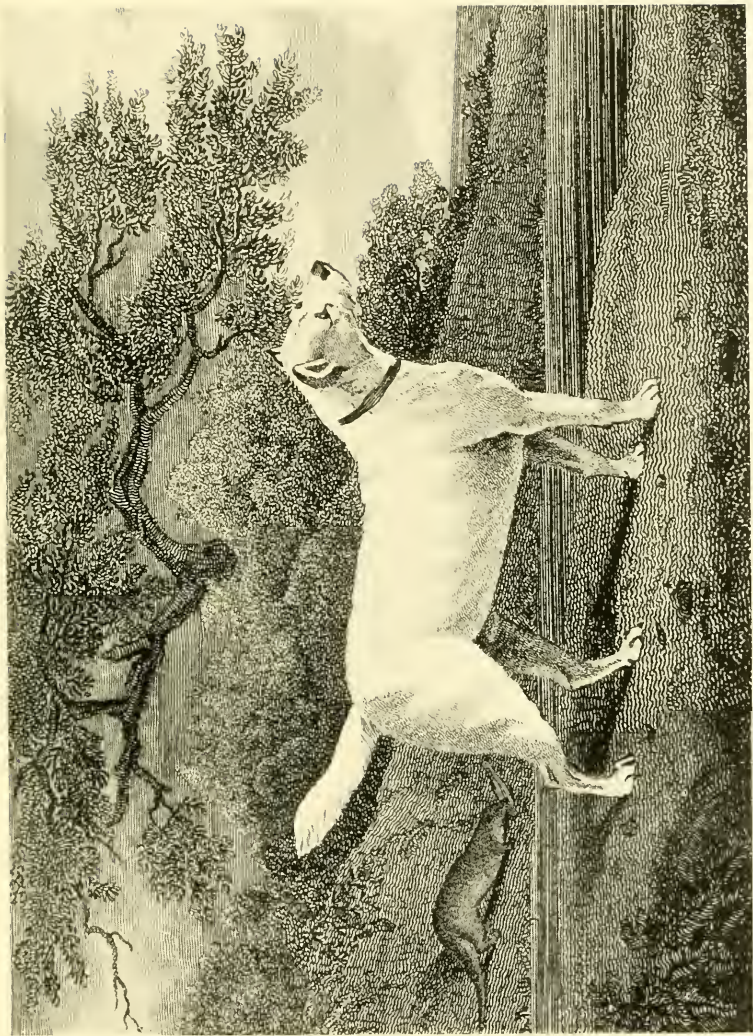


“The cause of my sending of my servant at this time is this; he informs me that in your country there is a man that can kill otters very well; wherefor I have sent to get him to me for a week. I assure you they do me exceeding much harm at divers places . . . My folks see them daily and I cannot kill them, my hounds be not used to them”

We may infer from the wording of this letter that there lived near Plumpton a man who made it his business to travel the country with trained otter-hounds, much as the mole-catcher travels his district at the present day. The man referred to by Sir Henry Savill would have been no use without hounds

A curious old licence or charter granted about this period by Henry VIII (1509-1547) to Thomas Hordern, Master of the royal otter-hounds, bears out the view that they were maintained for the public benefit. This document lays commands on all persons to give Hordern assistance as he may require; suggesting that his mission was to travel the country with his pack, killing otters wherever his services might be required

It is from Caius' *Englishe Dogges* (1575) we first obtain information concerning the kind of



OTTER-HOUND The property of the Hon. Mr. Leslie



hound used for hunting the otter. Writing of the bloodhound, he says :—

“ Of this kind there is none that taketh to the water naturally, except it please you so to suppose of them which follow the otter which sometimes haunts the land and sometimes useth the water. And yet, nevertheless all the kind of them [every bloodhound] boiling and boiling with greedy desire of the prey which by swimming passeth through river and flood, plunge amid the stream and pass the stream with their paws ”

Turbervile describes the method of hunting the otter. First, four servants were to take each a bloodhound that would “ draw in the lyam ”—work out the line in leash—and draw the banks for the trail, two going upstream one on either bank, and two down. The line being found the hounds were laid on ; and

“ If the hounds be good otter hounds and perfectly entered they will come chanting and trailing along by the riverside and will beat every tree-root, every holm, every osier bed and tuft of rushes ; yea, sometimes also, they will take the river and beat it like a water spaniel ”

“ Bloodhounds,” as has been shown on an earlier page, were not at this time a distinct

breed; they were St. Huberts, or "Fallow hounds," with particularly good noses

Turberville adds that an old otter-hound may prove "an excellent good buckhound"; but this only if he be not too old before he was entered at buck. Which confirms the conjecture that Southern Hounds were used for otter-hunting

Cockaine, moreover, says of the otter that it is :—

"chiefly to be hunted with slow hounds, great mouthed, which to a young man is very earnest sport, he [the otter] will vent so often . . . and the hounds will spend their mouths very lustily. Thus you may have good sport at an otter, two or three hours, if you list"

The slow hounds referred to were the Southern Hounds which, there is every reason to believe, were descended from the St. Huberts and other northern French breeds—those of Normandy, Artois and Picardy, to which reference has been made in connection with staghounds

James I seems to have been fond of otter-hunting. In 1604, the last year in which "commissions" for taking up hounds (see page 26) were in force, John Parry, Master of the royal otter-hounds, was directed to take up dogs for the king's diversion; and the document

which empowered Parry to thus appropriate otter-hounds required all millers to "stay their water-courses at the time of hunting," in other words, to let the water out of their dams, or hold it up, as might be required for the convenience of the chase

Otter-hunting was not a sport of sufficient importance to make it worth while breeding hounds especially for the purpose, though it seems to have been popular in many parts of the country. The frequency of allusion to otter-hunting in Izaak Walton's *Compleat Angler*, published in 1653, will be remembered. As an angler Walton naturally came in frequent contact with the otter-hounds

It will be safe to assume that in those days the man who hunted the otter used whatever hounds he happened to possess. Markham (1611) mentions as a merit of the white hound, or the white with black spots, that it would hunt any quarry exceedingly well, the otter being included, with the remark that this hound was equally at home in covert or water

The royal otter-hounds were still in existence in the time of Charles II (1660-1685), Simon Smith being the "serjeant" or Master

It is impossible to suggest how the otter-hound shown opposite page 114 was bred.

The plate is reproduced from the *Sporting Magazine*, Vol. 39, of 1811/2, and the accompanying letterpress states that the animal "is said to be the only one of this description living." This hound was the property of the Hon. Mr. Leslie; it has not been feasible to discover anything relating to this gentleman's pack

Otterhounds of this breed could never have been common

Mr. T. B. Johnson, in his *Hunting Directory*, written in 1826, says "the dog for the purpose chiefly used has been produced by a cross between the Southern Hound and the water spaniel"; but he does not say at what period this cross was made

Inasmuch as otter-hunting had gone much out of favour at the time Johnson wrote, the hound for the purpose must have been produced many years before his time.

Spalding's picture "The Otter Stream" (page 120) appeared in Vol. 117 of the *Sporting Magazine*: it refers to the eighteen forties, when the spear was going out of use but had not yet been universally discarded. Mr. Bulteel's hunt had laid the otter spear aside in the year 1839. The hounds portrayed are

not unlike the modern otterhound, though the head of that in the foreground is lacking in hound character

Mr. Rawdon Lee, in his *Modern Dogs*, refers to the assertion that the otter-hound is a cross between the Welsh harrier, Southern Hound and terrier. Mr. Lee's own belief was that the breed had a cross of the bloodhound ; but with regard to this we must bear in mind the intimate connection between the Southern Hound and the St. Hubert, whence the bloodhound is descended

What particular breed of terrier is supposed to have gone towards the making of the otter-hound does not appear

Mr. Lee's view as to the use of Welsh blood in producing the otter hound is borne out by the Count de Canteleu, whose researches take the enquiry a stage further back

The Count's statement that the Bresse hound of the eastern provinces of France was much employed in England and especially in Wales for hare-hunting has been cited in connection with the Welsh hound

In the year 1870, when the Franco-German war threatened, the Count disposed of some Bresse hounds to Mr. Waldron Hill, then Master of otter-hounds in East Lothian. Save

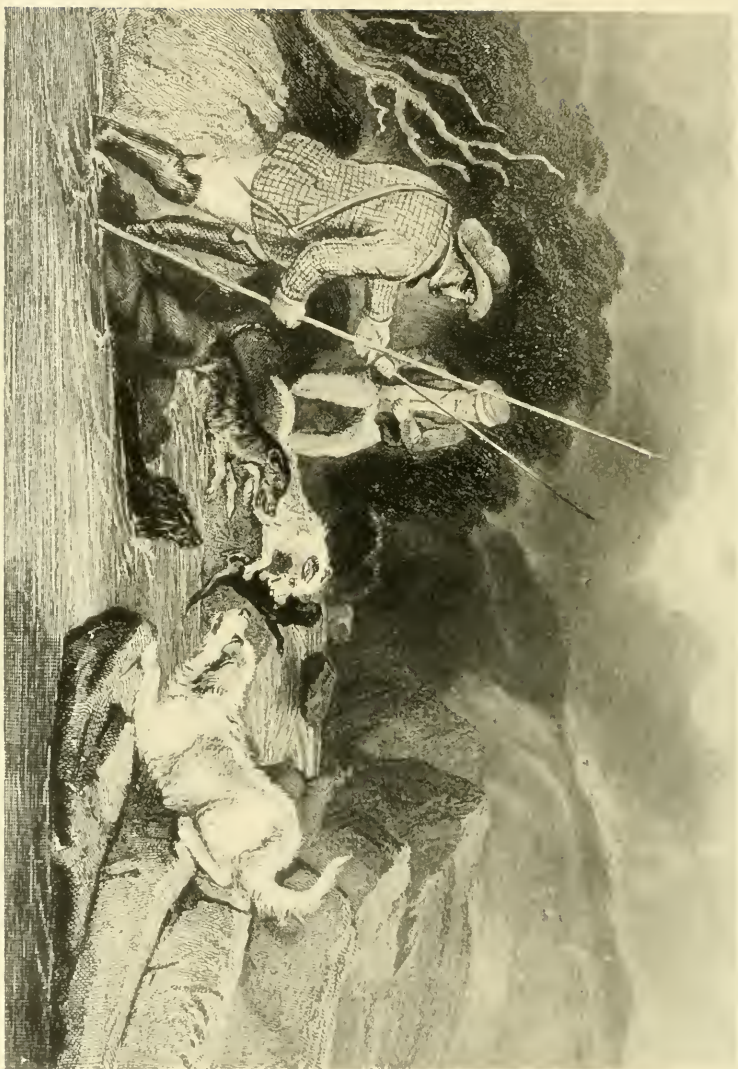


in respect of colour, these hounds proved to be identical with Mr. Waldron Hill's own otter-hounds

Various strains of blood have been used in breeding otter-hounds within modern times. In 1869, two rough-coated French hounds of the red Brittany breed, not very unlike the Bresse hound, were purchased at the National Dog Show at Islington by a Master of otter-hounds

The most singular cross used for this sport is, of course, the French hound (*griffon*)—wolf hybrid which was bred by the Count de Canteleu. The Count put a she-wolf to the hound; and put a daughter of this mating to a hound; result progeny, one-fourth wolf. A daughter of this mating was put to a hound; result progeny, one-eighth wolf. These animals, seven-eighths hound and one-eighth wolf, were sold to Mr. Waldron Hill, who entered them with remarkable success. They and their progeny were considered the finest hounds ever seen on the line of an otter. The great objection to them was their ferocity, though while actually hunting they were peculiarly amenable to discipline





THE OTTER STREAM By C. B. Spalding

## APPENDIX A

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### THE WHITE HOUND OF FRANCE

This is described by the old writers as the hound most fit for princes. It was large, powerful and very fast, and its courage was a great recommendation, as it was not easily disturbed by the crowd of horsemen who would accompany a royal personage in the hunting field. It was "white" only in name, for the colour varied much; some were white, some white spotted with red (tan), some were marked or spotted with black or dun (yellow, or as we should say lemon), some were all black, and others were "like unto fryse" (frieze, or badger colour). Its principal fault was a tendency to run at tame beasts

Ancient drawings show the White Hound to have been shaped much like a greyhound or Scottish deerhound; and the accounts given of its great speed bear out the accuracy of the pictures

Some curious letters written by Jacques de Brézé, huntsman to Francis I (1515-1547) show what the white hounds could do. The following was addressed to the Marshal de Montmorency in January, 1524:—

“ . . . Tuesday last the King went out to hunt the great stag of Bryon which was missed when the English were here, the day that we slept at Monfroult. After two days search the King unharboured it himself, and gave it [*i.e.*, the line] to the pack at the same place where it had been

unharboured before. From there it led us to Bauxmalles, where it gave us a deal of trouble to avoid a change and secreted itself so well that we quite lost it, and before we had come upon its track again the night came on. Anyhow we found it was retracing its steps, and we followed it to the river which it swam near Bryon. The King determined to have his revenge the next day, and taking up the track on foot we followed our animal so well that at last we were able to show it to the dogs in the underwood at the other end of the forest; in this harbour it did not run more than half an hour from the time we laid the dogs on the scent; but we were very much delighted at this, and His Majesty went home as well pleased with the day's sport as he had ever been in his life. The stag had no more than fourteen points on each horn, but it was one of the most beautiful heads ever seen in France"\*

Count de Canteleu, quoting Brantome, says that Henri II (1547-1559) had arrived at a breed of hounds "even more swift than the old one"

Charles IX (1560-1574) remarks of the hounds in the royal kennels in his reign they "were as tall as greyhounds, with heads as fine as those of *braques* † [pointers]; they only hunted the right scent [deer] and when the game tried to put them off they behaved gloriously"

These were the hounds that made the reputation of French venery

\* *Les Chasses de Francois I.* By the Count de la Ferriere. 1869

† "Braques": the term "rache" and "brache" were applied to dog hounds and bitch hounds that hunted by scent

This breed, which came to be known as the "Great White Hound," reached the height of its fame during the reign of Louis XIII (1610-1643).\* // It is stated that they would run down a stag in half an hour, and the most vigorous stag could not stand up before them for more than three-quarters of an hour, and that they would kill as many as four stags one after another in a day's hunting; also that they would remain staunch to the line of their hunted stag through covert which might contain two hundred warrantable deer

This would explain why the White Hound in its purity did not gain acceptance in England. It ran rather by sight than by scent; there was nothing "cunning," *i.e.*, clever and patient, in its method of pursuit such as the English taste of the period approved; there would be little "questing and melody," see page 51, with hounds that ran into and pulled down their game so speedily. At the same time, the general appearance and qualities of these hounds, when considered with those of our old English staghounds, permit the assumption that the latter owed something of their speed, nose and colour to a cross of the French White Hound //

The French royal pack of White Hounds held its position and fame until the later years of Louis XIV (1643-1715), when they underwent a change. The king was growing old, could no longer ride to hounds, and wished to follow the chase on wheels. The White Hounds were too fast to be followed thus, so, to meet the old king's wishes, they were crossed with the breed known as Normandy hounds. This blood was introduced into the royal kennels about the year 1700

Little is known of this Normandy hound. The Count de Canteleu thinks it was descended from a

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\* *Histoire de la Chasse en France.* By the Baron de Noirmont

series of crosses between the St. Huberts and other breeds, basing his belief to some extent upon its "tricolour" coat—black, red (tan) and white. It was a large hound, standing between 26 and 30 inches; it had a fine powerful voice, was a staunch and close hunter, admirable for retrieving a cold scent; but its chief recommendation as a cross with the White Hounds of Louis XIV lay in the fact that it was slow

Louis XIV's action in crossing the white and Normandy breeds led to a proceeding on the part of his successor, Louis XV (1715-1774), which bears out the belief that the White Hound, or at least White Hound blood, had been used in England

Louis XV wished to restore the speed of the royal pack. The cross-bred White-Normandy hounds did not satisfy him. To achieve his end he procured some cross-bred hounds from England. His reason was that they were "fleeter and more vigorous and better hunters" than his own pack

## APPENDIX B

## THE ALAUNTE

These dogs, it is thought, were of Caucasian origin. They were used for warlike purposes, and, in the days when bear and boar were hunted were employed to grapple with those animals. Whether they were used for the pursuit of deer is at least doubtful

Three kinds were recognised: the "Alaunte gentle," the "hunting Alaunte" and the "Alaunte of the butcheries." The hunting variety was shaped like a greyhound, but was of heavier build; the head was large and short, the eye small and the jaw square; the ears were trimmed and pointed; in colour it was white, grey or blackish. The dog which, on a white coat, had black markings near the head and above the tail was most liked

The Alaunte of the butcheries was a drover's dog, and was used with cattle; it was also employed for bull- and bear-baiting

The Alaunte was prone to attack domestic animals. *The Master of Game* says: "It is better shaped and stronger for harm than any other beast," but it was treacherous and foolish and "of evil understanding." A good hunting Alaunte would run as fast as a greyhound, and would "catch and hold." Mr. Baillie Grohman, in his edition of *The Master of Game*, suggests that this dog was very like the German boarhound. It may have been the dog from which the German boarhound is descended.



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