
HISTORY

BUTCHER'S DOG

In northwest England one can find the county of Lancashire. The western coastal area, bounded by the Irish Sea, is level. The hilly Forest of Bowland is situated in the north, and in the east are the foothills of the The Pennines. Lancashire is known as one of the centres of the 19th-century Industrial Revolution. In those days, the cities grew bigger and people needed more

Heelers (Welsh Corgis) with small black-and-tan terriers from the county of Manchester. The result was a smart little dog that worked independently to prevent the cattle from disappearing down the narrow streets. After the cattle were sold, the heelers escorted them on their last journey to the slaughterhouse or the butcher. That's why they were also called the butcher's dog.

A rather big concentration of heel-

THE NIP 'N' DUCK DOG

LANCASHIRE HEELER

ORMSKIRK HEELER OR ORMSKIRK TERRIER

text and illustrations by RIA HÖRTER

food, especially meat, so local markets flourished. The cattle arrived by vessel from Ireland and were transported on foot to pastures in the neighbourhood of the cities where they stayed there until they were ready to be transported to the cattle markets in town.

Although there had been larger dogs driving cattle from one pasture to another for ages, smaller 'heelers' were needed to bring the cattle into town. It is assumed that these small heelers originated in the crossbreeding of Welsh

ers was living around the little town of Ormskirk. Their old names - Ormskirk Heeler or Ormskirk Terrier - are still in use today. The early dogs of Ormskirk were long-bodied and short-legged. Evidence is available that the Lancashire Heeler has been known as a purebred dog in its native county for more than 150 years.

THE NIP 'N' DUCK DOG

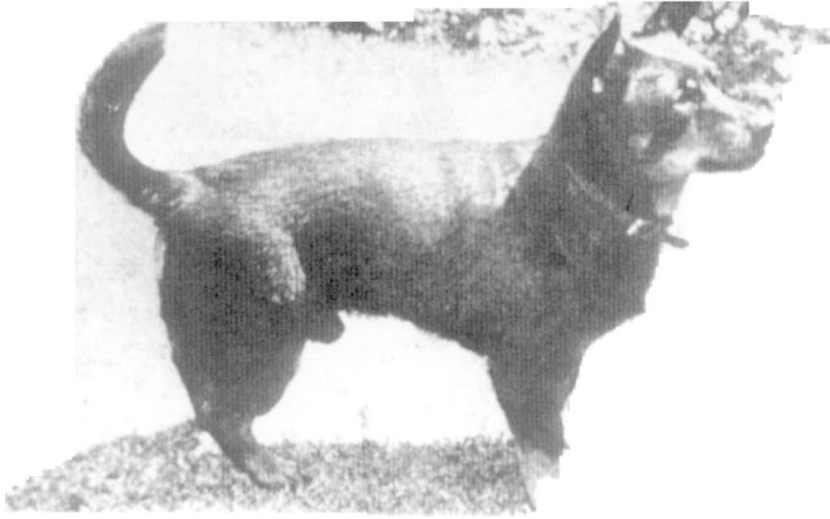
Although these heelers are small dogs, they are able to drive cattle quite

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“Despite its small stature, the Heeler has boundless energy. It has a great love of people and children, but it is important for him to work. It doesn't matter what kind of work - obedience, agility, fly ball, etc. – but it needs to be kept fully occupied.”

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*Old picture of a Lancashire Heeler.
The early dogs of Ormskirk were long-bodied and short-legged.*

easily. Their method of working is rather simple: biting the cattle in the hock or the pastern so the animal is forced to move on. Often, the reaction was a firm kick in the direction of the dog; the Heeler then ducks down and that's why the English say "the nip 'n' duck dog". Although small, the dogs are also strong and

agile. An old description reads, "A Lancashire Heeler should be down round your heels not up round your knees."

When cattle transport began to take place by train or truck, the Heelers more or less lost their jobs. Shepherds and farmers all over took up the breed for general farm work



photo Raija Isotalo

*The Norfolk and Yorkshire Heelers are extinct now
and the Welsh Heeler was renamed Welsh Corgi.
Photo: Raija Isotalo*

like herding, rat catching and rabbit hunting. The farmers continued breeding and puppies were sold outside Lancashire.

CONTROLLING VERMIN AND HERDING CATTLE

Heelers were known not only in Lancashire, but also in Norfolk, Yorkshire and Wales. The Norfolk and Yorkshire Heelers are extinct now and the Welsh Heeler was renamed Welsh Corgi. Breeders in Norfolk played an important role in the development of today's Lancashire Heeler, but the name of Lord Sefton should be mentioned here as well. On his estates and farmsteads the Lancashire Heeler evolved in the



*Black-and-white Terrier
or Manchester Terrier
by Charles van den Eycken (1809-1891).
It is assumed that small Heelers originated in
the crossbreeding of Welsh Heelers
with small black-and-tan terriers
from the county of Manchester.
Photo: Encore Editions*

first part of the 20th century and proved to be a versatile dual-purpose dog, controlling vermin and herding cattle.

RECENT HISTORY

In the early 1960s, a certain Mrs. Gwen Mackintosh (affix Acremead) from Norfolk started breeding Lancashire Heelers. She took a liking to a Heeler owned by a relative and began to breed. The puppies went mostly to family and friends. She



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started keeping records. In the late 1970s, a group of Lancashire Heelers was brought together under the watchful eye of The Kennel Club. The result was a breed standard and the decision to recognize only the black-and-tans. Together with several enthusiasts, Mrs. Mackintosh founded the Lancashire Heeler Club in 1978. Official Kennel Club recognition, as a rare breed, followed in 1981; the first Heeler to be registered was Acremead Bogey, owned and bred by the same Mrs. Mackintosh. In 1989, 817 Heelers were registered in the studbook.

The first classes for Lancashire Heelers were held at Blackpool in 1982; eight dogs were entered. The judge was Ben Johnson, who had been involved in the initial discussions to get the breed recognized. Thirty-eight Heelers were judged by Ferelith Somerfield at the first club show under K.C. rules (May 1984), and they appeared at Crufts for the first time in 1988.

In 1989, The Kennel Club announced that they would no longer accept dogs registered by the breed club and the club's register was closed. A new



Most Heelers are not suitable for a life in kennels; they are very devoted to people and love their company. Photo: swanndaleheelers.com

breed standard was drawn up in 1995 with the additions of the word "courageous" under 'Temperament' and that the hindquarters should be well angulated. In 1999, the liver-and-tan color was officially accepted.

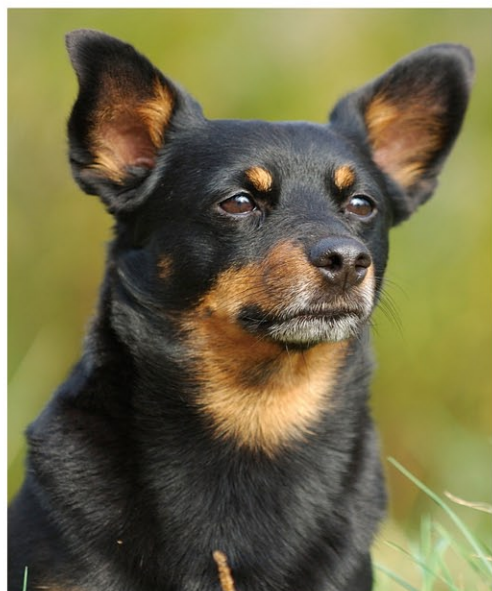
The Lancashire Heeler is not yet recognized by the FCI. However, the Scandinavian countries, Baltic States and Ireland have recognized the breed and Heelers were present at the 2001 World Show in Portugal. Both Sweden and Finland have their own breed clubs. The American Kennel Club has been registering the Lancashire Heeler since 2001 and recognition can follow when 350 dogs are in the stud book; however, there is still a long way to go – there are

currently fewer than 30 Heelers in the States.

BOUNDLESS ENERGY

Despite its small stature, the Heeler has boundless energy. It has a great love of people and children, but it is important for him to work. It doesn't matter what kind of work - obedience, agility, fly ball, etc. – but it needs to be kept fully occupied. Its terrier blood makes the Heeler a bit more stubborn than other pastoral dogs, but they have a great amount of will to please. Heelers are intelligent and therefore trainable, but need to be handled in a firm but gentle way.

Not many health problems are



*The head, with moderate stop, must be in proportion to the body.
Photo: Hannie Warendorf*

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Black-and-White Terrier or Manchester Terrier by Charles van den Eycken (1809-1891). It is assumed that small Heelers originated in the crossbreeding of Welsh Heelers with small black-and-tan terriers from the county of Manchester. Encore Editions

known in this breed. Responsible breeders check for Collie Eye Anomaly (CEA) when breeding and sometimes there are cases of lens luxation. Most Heelers are not suitable for a life in kennels; they are very devoted to people and love their company.

ORIGIN: 19TH CENTURY ENGLAND.

Original purpose: Herding livestock and controlling vermin. Now also a companion dog.

Description: Small, powerfully and sturdily built dog. Alert, courageous, a cattle driver with an instinct for rabbits, rats and mice. The body is low-set, strong with good ribbing, about 1 inch longer (from the withers to the tail set) than the

height at the withers. The legs are short in relation to the body. Topline is firm, level and never dipping at the withers or falling at the croup. The head, with moderate stop, must be in proportion to the body. The skull and muzzle have to be on parallel planes. The ears are prick or semi-erect and the medium-sized, almond-shaped eyes are dark. Drop ears showing no lift are undesirable. Lips are firm, the jaws strong with a perfect scissors bite. The neck is of moderate length, well laid into the shoulders. Front feet turn slightly outward but the pasterns have to be strong. Those feet are typical for this breed. The natural tail is set on high and carried over the back in a slight curve when alert, but not forming a complete ring. The forequarters are amply boned; hindquarters are muscular with well-turned stifles and low-set hocks. The fine undercoat is covered throughout by a weather resistant, short, thick, hard flat topcoat. The length of the coat varies according to the time of year, from sleek to longer. Accepted colors are black or liver with rich tan markings on the muzzle, spots on the cheeks and often above the eyes. A very small white spot on the forechest is permitted. Sometimes the markings fade away with age. Black 'thumb-marks' above the front feet are very characteristic. Movement is smart and brisk.

In the breed standard the temperament is described as courageous, happy and affectionate to the owner.

Height/weight: ideal height for dogs 30 centimetres; ideal height for bitches 25 centimetres.

Information: www.lancashireheelers.org (English breed club, in English) and www.thekennelclub.org (The Kennel Club, in English)



*The Lancashire Heeler is not yet recognized by the FCI, yet the breed was present at the 2001 World Show in Portugal.
Photo: Hannie Warendorf*