

The Raglan Story by Dan Ericsson

Basically my family was non-doggy, but I was an animal-loving child who used to take dogs for walks, buried dead birds, looked after cats and much more, all connected with animals. My paternal grandmother was however a dog lover and had had various breeds including Giant Schnauzers and Kerry Blues and I was fascinated by her stories about the dogs. She persuaded my parents to let me have a dog and she was the one who suggested a Scottie. I knew very little about them and had only seen a couple of Scotties ever, but was very happy to have a dog of my own, so any breed would have done, I think! I remember that my father wanted a Pug by then, but once a decision had been made, I sat about trying to find out everything I could about Scotties. Quickly, I discovered that most show winners were bred by Mrs. Westerström of Ferox fame or sired by her impressive team of stud dogs. She was the first lady of the breed at that time, another top person was Sven Sundquist. They never got on, but both had good dogs and imported some very valuable stock from England. I rang them and expressed an interest, and in hindsight, I am surprised that they had such patience with a schoolboy who must have been very trying! Mrs Westerström's top sire at the time was Ch Gaywn Marquis (Ch Bardene Bingo – Ch Gaywyn Viscountess, thus litter brother to Chs Gaywyn Emperor and Gaywyn Titania), bred in the UK by her good friend Muriel Owen. Marquis had sired a litter locally at the Torslochs kennel of Birgit Norman. This was in the winter of 1970 and I still remember when we set off to look at the puppies in heavy snow. The only bitch in the litter was to become my foundation bitch and later Ch Torsloch Terzette. She was a big bitch, very hard-coated and correct but could have had a bit more overall quality. By this time I had become very friendly with Birgit Norman and spent all my school holidays at her kennels working there from early morning until I collapsed in bed, and I loved it! I could not get enough of dogs and I gradually started trimming and showing her dogs, many of which became champions. Her best dog was Terzette's brindle brother Ch Torsloch Torture, who later sired one of my first top winners, Ch Raglan Red Rarity (ex UK import Ch Reanda Ravita). His younger sister Raglan Rambling Rose produced the beautiful brindle bitch Ch Raglan Regatta, sired by Ch Raglan Rolls Royce (Ch Gaywyn Macalister – Ch Raglan Rio Rita, the kennel's first homebred champion).

It was not easy for me to keep more than a few dogs at home, so many of my early dogs lived with Birgit Norman. She was always very fond of Elsa Meyer's Reanda dogs, so I eventually wrote to her in my halting school English asking her if I could possibly stay with her one summer to help with the dogs. Much to my surprise, she immediately answered and said I was more than welcome. I stayed with her for six weeks the first time – in 1971 or 1972, I am not sure – and she opened up a new world to me! She ran a very busy famous kennel and bred on a fairly large scale. Many of her clients were from other countries and through her I became acquainted with a lot of well-known people in the breed, not least from various overseas countries. Early on, I bought a brindle puppy from her sired by Miss Penn-Bull's Ch Kennelgarth Knight Errant (sired by the famous Ch Kennelgarth Viking ex a Bardene-bitch, Bingotessa) out of a daughter to Ch Reanda Ringold, one of her famous dogs sired by Ch Bardene Bingo. Ravita was an immediate success in the ring and won BIS once at the Swedish Scottie club show under Alan Gill, but she was also a group winner. I think it would be true to say that she was my 2nd foundation bitch, and most of the Raglan dogs over the years trace back to either her or Terzette.

I was of course very influenced by Elsa Meyer and like her, wanted a prefix beginning with an R. My first choice, Rockford, was denied by the KC, so I choose Raglan, which I thought was short and had a British connection. More than 100 champions have since carried the prefix. My contact with Elsa Meyer continued uninterrupted throughout her life and she was a very close friend who in many ways treated me as a son. Through her I got to know German-born Bergit Coady-Kabel, famous Scottie handler in the USA, having previously come from Germany to work with the Reanda dogs. It was almost as if we were the two Reanda kids and when Elsa Meyer died at the grand age of over 90, Bergit and I donated a trophy to The Scottish Terrier Club (England) in her memory.

Elsa Meyer was a born breeder and was an expert on rearing puppies. In all, I think she owned 36 UK champions – quite an achievement! Through her I also came to know the other great Scottie breeders of that time: Betty Penn-Bull, Muriel Owen and Maureen Micklethwaite in particular. They did not always agree, but there was mutual respect and they all knew that the others knew too, which made them respectful. I call it healthy rivalry, and the breed prospered! Sadly, most of these breeders are no longer with us, or do not breed anymore, which accounts for the overall decline in quality and quantity.

On one of my early visits to England, I visited Nellie Holland (Noonsun) up in the north. She introduced me to many of the famous breeders in that area including the Gills, parents Willie and Elsie plus son Alan. Their prefixes were Gillsie and Gillson and I remember how very impressed I was with their dogs, all kept in wonderful condition showing like stars. One of their young dogs, Gillson Grand Monarch (Bardene Blue Steptoe – Ch Gillsie Highland Lass) had just been sold to Sweden, and I immediately decided that I must use him on my first bitch Terzette, who carried much of the same bloodlines through her sire Ch Gaywyn Marquis. The result was beyond expectation and from that mating my first homebred champion emerged, Ch Raglan Rio Rita. A repeat mating produced several more winners including Ch Raglan Rough Tweed and Ch Raglan Rich-and-Rare, who mated to the Kennelgarth-bred dog Ch Noonsun New Generation produced Ch Raglan Royal Commander, one of the kennel's top dogs of all times and twice Top Terrier in the mid 1980's. A little later I saw Ray & Ava Platt's Tamzin-dogs whose type reminded me of the Gillsie/Gillson dogs, so it was perhaps no surprise that I also admired them a lot. Ch Tamzin Toy Soldier (Ch Wildermist Clifford ex Tamzin Total Era) came to me as a promising puppy and he became a valuable stud dog and is behind many top class dogs all over Europe. Tamzin and Raglan-lines have proved to be very compatible and some of the best European dogs today trace back to a combination of these bloodlines.

By now I had become very friendly with Betty Penn-Bull having visited her many times when staying at Reanda. It took a little time before we "found" each other, but she too became a lifelong friend and I think of her every day. I admired her in every way and found her endlessly knowledgeable and inspiring. She could spot correct type at a glance and had that unique ability of being able to distinguish between faults and minor failings. Her life was Scottish Terriers and I miss her more than words can express. Looking in the show rings and at people's dogs at home, I quickly realised that almost all winners of note had one common link – Kennelgarth. Her dogs were always of a certain type and great producers, and I was keen to incorporate this. I was lucky inasmuch as both my foundation bitches carried strong Kennelgarth-lines and I have always tried hard to keep within that line in order to safeguard breed type. I was lucky enough to purchase Ch Paddington Bear of Kennelgarth from Miss Penn-Bull as a young dog. He was sired by Ch Kennelgarth Toyboy, whom I liked a lot ex Stuanne Gypsy Queen and bred by June and Maurice Marshall. To say that he was a good sire

is an understatement! He sired top class Scotties in virtually every litter and in particular good bitches of which six different ones become group winners and general championship show BIS-winners. His daughter Ch Raglan Royal Serenade, Top Terrier in Sweden in 2006, is one of the best bitches bred here and she was a great favourite with most judges, all-rounders and breed experts alike. She won BOB under Miss Penn-Bull in 1996 here in Sweden and this was to become Miss Bull's last judging appointment.

Following a series of health scares, Miss Penn-Bull decided to cut down on the number of dogs and offered me Here's Wallace of Kennelgarth as a gift. He was also by Toyboy and all Kennelgarth-breeding on his dam's side, bred my Miss Wallis. Wallace was not a great dog, but, as always, of excellent breed type, and mated to some of the best bitches here, proved his worth at stud producing a string of winners including the group-winner Ch Raglan Rockport and his sister Ch Raglan Rowena, the dam of Ch Rhum Tea for Two who came to me as a baby and had a spectacular career winning at every level at the height of her career. Miss Penn-Bull died at the age of 93 leaving a gap which can never be filled. I miss not being able to speak to her about Scotties more than words can express.

Muriel Owen's Gaywyn dogs played a very important role in the development of the breed here in Sweden and she was another legendary breeder whom I got to know well. They ran a large boarding kennel and grooming business alongside their famous kennel of primarily Scotties, although a few top class Westies and Sealyhams were kept and bred. The success of their dogs, always immaculately kept, trimmed and presented by either husband Chink or daughters Catherine or Susan (later to become Susan Gaskell) was astounding, all of a certain lovely type teeming with quality. Muriel's expertise is much missed today and she was a strong force in the breed in every way ensuring the future of Scottish Terriers. Their home near St Albans was a constant source of inspiration and hospitality and it was like heaven talking to her about Scotties too! Ch Gaywyn Venturesome, sired by Ch Gaywn Adventure Story ex Gaywyn Vogue) and brother to the lovely Ch Gaywyn Victoria, joined the Raglans as a 5 months' old puppy and I was very lucky to be given the chance to buy him. He won well at every show and was a multiple group winner, but more importantly a very good sire producing particularly well when mated to stock by Paddington Bear. Venturesome was one of the great favourites at home and lived a long healthy life with his kennel mates. The influence of the Gaywyn line has been very beneficial to the breed worldwide and their stud dogs are sorely missed today.

Over the years, I had admired Jane Miller's Brio Scotties and one of the first dogs to make a huge impact on me was Ch Brio Pickpocket, exported to Sweden in the early 70's and a major winner here. Jane Miller seems to have an enviable knack of constantly producing top class dogs and her dogs have always been a source to be reckoned with. On my first judging appointment in the UK in 1983 at The Scottish Terrier Club (England) Centenary Open Show I made Ch Brio Once Upon a Time BIS and I rank her as one of the best Scotties I have ever known. Gradually, I got to know Jane more, but it was a huge surprise to me when she via Muriel Owen expressed an interest in having one of my dogs, and I wondered if I would ever be able to breed one that was good enough. However, Raglan Rose Maiden, seemed to fulfil her early promise and came to live with Jane. The rest is history and in the capable hands and expert care of Jane, she blossomed into a real star crowning her career with res BIS at Crufts 2004 plus Top Terrier in 2003- a dream had come true, none of which had been possible without Jane, who has since become a close personal friend. Rose Maiden was followed by the brindle male Royal Connection, who won two resCCs, but, more importantly, has made a very valuable contribution as a sire. So far he has sired no fewer than seven UK champions

plus some exciting youngsters destined for the upper house. His champion tally include Rose Maiden's two daughters Ch Brio Exquizite and Ch Brio Inquizite plus last year's top puppy in the UK, Stuart Plane's Ch Stuane Florette..

Rose Maiden's first litter consisted of only males sired by the wheaten dog Ch Sweet Romeo du Moulin de MacGregor, bred in France by Ruth O'Connor and the only wheaten ever to be kept at Raglan. Over the years I had admired her dogs and wanted to show people that wheatens could be good Scotties also, not just wheaten in colour, so managed to import him. He was shown sparingly, but produced well to good bitches. His best progeny is perhaps Ch Raglan Rufus, top terrier in Estonia and a good producer of winners for his owner. From Rose Maiden's litter, the black dog Brio French Connection came to live with me. He was a very outgoing ultra showy dog who was shown twice winning each time including topping the Terrier Group. Sadly he died very young from a nasty tick disease. This was a hard blow, but despite very limited opportunities, he produced several good Scotties including the lovely Ch Raglan Rival Queen, also a group winner.

Sweet Romeo's black daughter Raglan Roman Empress (ex Ch Floreo Watercress, by Ch Here's Wallace of Kennelgarth) was exported to Pam Pagram of the well-known Torcraig kennel in the UK. Empress was never shown in the UK, but mated to Ch All Shook Up at Torcraig she became a champion mum producing three UK champions, two Wheatens and one black. It has given me enormous pleasure and pride to see Raglan stock winning well in the UK, all thanks to knowledgeable breeders and judges of integrity and expertise.

The best Raglan dog ever has so far been omitted, namely Ch Raglan Rory, Top Dog All Breeds in Sweden in 2001 and Top Terrier of All Times in Sweden with 25 group wins. Rory was a wonderful dog in every way: a great joy to have around, never aggressive always on his best behaviour, very obedient and not quarrelsome, always showing and a top-producer of truly outstanding Scotties including UK Chs Raglan Rose Maiden at Brio and Ch So What Excalibur plus the big winning Italian -owned Ch Raglan Roslin Williams. He returned to me after his owner Marina Guidetti's sad death in 2008 after an illustrious career all over Europe.

Rory was the sort of dog one dreams of and I still feel a lump when his name is mentioned. He was a source of daily joy. His breeding was basically British being sired by the lovely black Ch Kantorns Johnny Walker (Ch Balgownie Brilliance ex Ch Raglan Rather Posh, by Ch Gaywyn Venturesome) out of another very good bitch imported from the UK, Ch Brueik Spellbinder (Ch Wiljoy Wizardy ex Bruieik Tapestry), bred by the Misses Bradley and Herd. She was a difficult bitch to get in whelp, and despite many attempts only produced one puppy – Rory! Through him her name will go down in the history of the breed.

Ch Raglan Royal Serenade was now coming up to 7, but in fine form, so I could not resist the temptation to mate her to Ch R Rory. The litter consisted of 3 puppies, and it was obvious from the start that one of them was going to be special. Her name was Ch Raglan Royal Prospect, a lovely bitch and very difficult to fault. She had an illustrious career winning BIS at club shows as well at general championship shows. Her biggest achievement must however be to win BIs at the Swedish Terrier Club Centenary Show in 2003 under Harry O'Donoghue, the breed had been judged by Jane Miller. Prospect turned out to be a very prolific brood bitch producing three sizeable litters and when mated to Ch Dundee Cool Trooper (by Ch Gaywyn Venturesome ex a daughter of Ch Balgownie Brilliance) she produced the group winner Ch Raglan Royal Lady and Royal Connection, who has been such a good producer in the UK.

Back home in Sweden, I continued to live a busy life, and still do, graduating from school and later moving on to university where I graduated with a Bachelor's and Master's degree in English and French concentrating on a teaching career, which I still pursue, although various commitments now make it impossible to work full-time.

At my very first show in Sweden as an exhibitor, I got to know Monika Knutsson-Hall of Floreo fame and we instantly became friends, a friendship which has now lasted for more than four decades without any hiccups whatsoever. We share a common love for the breed and mostly see dogs similarly sharing the same visions and ideal. This has been a very fruitful and important friendship on a personal level, but also when it comes to breeding and showing Scottish Terriers. We have often used each other's stud dogs and sometimes exchanged puppies, all bred similarly, and this has resulted in some very good dogs. Ch Raglan Rebecca was a lovely bitch owned by Floreo who mated to Ch Raglan Royal Commander produced many champions including BIS winners Chs F Musseron, Mirabell and Mistletoe, the dam of Ch R Royal Serenade (sired by Paddington Bear). One of the best bitches that I have owned was my special favourite Ch Floreo Althaea, a truly beautiful bitch, a good shower a fantastic brood bitch with heaps of top winners in the ring including Chs Royal Scot, Rafflesia etc. In hindsight, I would say that Althaea probably was the most correct bitch ever to live here. I still value the friendship and exchange of views with Monika whom I like so very much, in fact I think she is probably the wisest and best person that I have ever known.

Early on in the 70's, Elsa Meyer introduced me to Maureen Micklethwaite, "Glenecker". She took me under her wings as a young boy and we have kept in touch ever since. I must have travelled the length and breadth of the UK together with Maureen driving, always up early and one of the first to arrive at the shows! Looking back, Maureen's influence on me in dogs has been phenomenal. She was the one who taught me the importance of good neck and shoulders which virtually all of her dogs possessed, but her overall interest in dogs and various breeds has been very inspirational. In years gone by, she used to go around her area in Worcestershire delivering dog food to various kennels and thus became acquainted with many famous personalities in the world of dogs. Unlike most of the other great Scottie personalities, Maureen Micklethwaite's interest was not limited to Scotties and through her I became friendly and interested in many more breeds, including Labradors. I remember well visiting Sandylands and Gwen Broadley in connection with a WELKs committee meeting, but also visiting Miss Mayhew of Peke fame and the Riu Gu Japanese Chins plus many more. I loved all this and looking back, I think this was very educational for me during what must surely have been my formative years in dogs. Labradors had always fascinated and I have followed the breed for many decades through various friends and by attending shows etc, and they now share my life too and I have been lucky with my breeding having produced several champions, mainly from my foundation bitch Ch Guideline's Eden Wall. She produced three champions from two litters, Mastermind, Morning Rain and the favourite, Ch Braveheart who has done well at every level. I now have half a dozen Labradors at home including Ch R Nickname, multiple BOB winner and group placements plus her promising daughter R Fairytale. Time permitting I am also hoping to be able to campaign the two young black males Jolson and Captain Cook, both CC-winners despite very limited showing. For some ten years I also kept a few Pekes, another favourite breed, and managed to produce one homebred champion. My greatest achievement in Pekes was however to win BIS at the club show under Fiona Mirylees (Beaupres) and later BIS under Ulla Segerström, the famous Swedish allrounder, and Eve Bentinck with the English-bred dog, Ch Lien Rus Boi of Hyldewood, whom I had spotted in the ring shown by his owner Hilda Garwood, who was another great

character that I got to know well. Gradually, I realised that it was impossible to do two coated breeds justice simultaneously so I stopped breeding Pekes in the 90's. I often think longingly of the years when the breed was the crown of the toy group and often wonder what has gone wrong?

I started judging very early and had my first appointment to judge Scottish Terriers was in Sweden in 1976. BOB was the lovely Ch Gaywyn Bow Bells, bred in the UK by Muriel Owen but owned by the Jernhakes who had by then returned to Sweden after a short spell in the UK. Since then I have had the pleasure of judging in most parts of the world and have met some wonderful people and seen some outstanding dogs. This inevitably means that my own breeding and showing activities have had to take a back-seat, but I still have about 10 good Scotties and half a dozen Labradors at home, all making sure that the days are never dull! Laughingly, I often say that it is a humbling experience for judges to have to clean out kennels and look after dogs on a daily basis – I hope to be able to continue this for many more years to come!!

On top of other commitments, I am also chairman of The Scottish Terrier Club and The Labrador Club, as well as sitting on various KC committees. I enjoy it all very much, but often wish that there were more than 24 hours in a day!