



# Duck dogs: guns

## First fowling pieces

Gunpowder is a prerequisite for guns, and the invention of gunpowder is obscure. In 9th century China, this was used for fireworks, but not for firing projectiles. In the 13th century, Roger Bacon gave a recipe; its invention is also attributed to Berthold Schwarz, a German monk. In the 14th century, gunpowder was used for firearms, for example, to fire cannon at the Battle of Crécy (1346).

The primitive "hand-gonne" of the 15th century gave way in mid-century to a more effective weapon, the hand-culverin, designed to be handled by two men: one raised the gun to his shoulder and took aim, while the other raised the lighted match to its touch-hole. (In preference to the cross-bow, the Swiss employed 6,000 culverin at the battle of Morat in 1476.)

The match-lock, in popular use by 1600, enabled the user to fire by means of a slow match fixed to the gun, without disturbing aim. The earliest weapon to be fitted with a match-lock was the Harquebus.

The wheel lock was produced in Nuremburg as early as 1515; this mechanism uses a spring and wheel mechanism to create the spark. For the first time, the gun could be held ready for use while game was stalked; it was more reliable in damp conditions; it was more accurate (held against the cheek for firing to line up the sights); on the downside, it was expensive and fragile.

The flint-lock was developed in Holland in the late 16th century (said to be the invention of poachers) and appeared in England during the first quarter of the 17th century. The wheel lock, which continued to be improved, remained a preferred

weapon for waterfowlers who could afford it, until the invention of the percussion cap in the early 19th century. (See: David Coombs, *Sport and the Countryside* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1978), p. 91; Edwin Tunis, *Weapons: a Pictorial History* (NY: World, 1972); Vicken Nokhoudian's Period Firearms, where action-diagrams of the mechanics are very helpful; and J.N. George, *English Guns and Rifles...* (Plantersville, SC: Small-Arms Technical Publishing Co., 1947), pp. 3-50).

The wording of a gun-control statute passed by Parliament in England in 1541 indicates that "employment of guns by gamekeepers or huntsmen... preceded [by nearly 100 years] the adoption [ca 1600] of the fowling-piece as a sportsman's weapon...." During the whole of the 16th century, "the 'birding-piece' remained the weapon of the gamekeeper or warrener, or of the small-holder hunting to fill the family pot rather than of the gentleman sportsman in search of recreation." (George, pp. 12-3.) (For a rundown on "going to the brook", the method of duck hunting favoured by that period's gentleman sportsman, see Falconry...)

## Shooting a Harquebus over a water dog

A detailed training manual for the 17th-century Poodle ("water dog") is contained in Gervaise Markham's *Hungers Prevention* (London: 1621), 285 pp.; available to modern readers on microfilm: P&R 17362/21160, English Books 1475-1640, University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan. The section which relates to training a water dog, lightly-edited for modern readers, is attached here: "Our Original ('Perfect') Water Dog: the Poodle", having been previously published in *Poodle Review*, March/April 1995, pp. 38-47, and also in *ONLINE*, March/April 1995 (part 1), and May/June 1995 (part 2).

Markham, who spent his youth as a mercenary in watery Holland (a repository of duck-hunting know-how--see ...traps), explains in his preface that his intended audience is the pot-hunter. The author presents instructions in the art of choosing and using a Harquebus; introductions to hawking and netting (an age-old method of waterfowling); and devotes almost a third of his book to "liming" (application of adhesive) to rods (willow withes), string and straw. This endeavour to entrap birds through glueing (gumming up flight feathers) seems to us far-fetched, but was widely recognized at the time and is immortalized in Shakespeare.

In relation to training retrievers for waterfowling, Markham's text is an honourable and familiar precursor to those of modern specialists writing before the invention of the electronic collar. There are three significant differences: first, Markham predates retriever "handing", by which a dog is directed to a bird s/he has not seen fall (a useful skill derived from British sheep dog training developed after land-enclosure ca 1750); second, he does not describe duck dog breeds. For Markham, there is only one, and "The water dog is a creature of such general use, and so frequent amongst us here in England, that it is needless to make any large description of him: the rather since not any among us is so simple that he cannot say when he sees him: 'This is a water dog.'" Whereupon he follows with a detailed "breed description" (very familiar!), and presents the illustration used as headpiece for Main menu. Markham recommends use of the water dog to drive waterfowl in moult towards decoy traps (see ...traps), although he observes that some believe these take too many birds. Finally, although Markham's text is aimed at gentlemen (more precisely, peckish literates--would-be pot hunters) invading the province of lower social orders, Henry IV of France (1553-1610; king of France 1589-1610) was enthusiastic about all sorts of hunting, and he enjoyed waterfowling with his Barbets (we're searching for more information, but his biographers appear only interested in the deploring remarks of his diplomats).

A late 17th century description of use of a water dog: "Dampier's description of a floating carcass of a dead whale with thousands of birds about it is very fine; and it is also nice to know that he had a water-spaniel on board [water-spaniel is likely to be Moorhead's interpretation; Dampier is more likely to have used "water dog"; we have yet to check the primary reference as of July 2002]. During the calms the dog jumped overboard and retrieved the birds the sailors shot." Alan Moorhead, *The Fatal Impact: the Invasion of the South Pacific, 1767-1840* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1966). William Dampier (1652-1715) was an English buccaneer and explorer who eventually was made a British naval officer and given command of an expedition (1699-1701) to Australia, New Guinea, and New Britain, which he named; Hamilton used *Dampier's Voyages*, by Captain William Dampier, 2 vols. (1699), edited by John Masefield (Grant Richards, 1906).

**17th century Poodle: Spaniel? Retriever? Setter? Pointer? Duck herder?**

- Markham describes the water dog as a retriever; he also recommends use of the water dog as a duck drover (see [...traps](#)).
- Poodles, water spaniels, water dogs, etc., are traditionally categorized among the spaniels. However, they seem always to have been considered water spaniels, differentiated from upland "setting" (or "couching") spaniels, which originated in Spain (which, from 1200-1500, had the most highly-developed animal husbandry in Europe). The job of a setting spaniel was to lie down upon finding partridge for a market or pot hunter, who then threw a net over birds and dogs, or erected a funnel net into which the birds were slowly driven. Medieval spaniels spread across Europe and into England, where our familiar spaniel varieties were derived; also, crossed with the Spanish Pointer, produced familiar varieties of setters. The Spanish Pointer pointed birds, standing and was slow-moving (a useful quality during the early years of firearms because of the time it took to re-load).
- "Going to the brook" (see [Falconry...](#)) requires a dog to indicate (point at) a puddle-duck in cover, remain staunch until the falconer and the bird of prey position themselves, and to flush prey on command. Modern falconers in North America usually employ modern German versatile hunting breeds for this water-work; in England, Jack Russell terriers are now used, which makes sense because there's a barking desiderata which is unthinkable in today's sporting dogs. Traditionally, as we know from 15th and 16th century Flemish "hunting" tapestries, the job belonged to the Poodle and/or proto-Poodle (see [...Visuals](#)), and there was also a retrieving function.
- The head-piece illustration above depicts a Barbet (old French variety of water dog/Poodle) flushing a duck from the water's edge for the gun in the second half of the 19th century. Diguët, the author of the book (published 1889; please see footnote) from which this illustration is taken, observes that the Barbet is not much of an "arrêt" dog (pointer), which indicates that he had some expectation of that function; however, that distinguished veteran of the Napoleonic Wars, author, and through-and-through sportsman, Elzéar Blaze, was less optimistic, or perhaps more realistic. Neither the Barbet or the Caniche is mentioned in his exhaustive book *Le Chasseur au chien d'arrêt*, 4th edition, corrected (Paris: 1846), although Blaze is appreciative of Poodles and mentions them frequently in his lengthy *Histoire du Chien* (Paris: 1846); we've quoted extensively from *Histoire du Chien*

in various sections of the Poodle History Project.

- **Conclusion:** The Poodle is the original "versatile hunting dog", a flushing water dog (also traditionally a useful partner trapping waterfowl with nets), whose job includes retrieving and which, in relation to firearms in waterfowling, was historically dedicated to the latter function.

## More about early fowling pieces and their users

"Wildfowling," explains George, "...played a far more important part in the life of Stuart England than in that of the present day, being not only the favorite sport of the yeoman farmer and the smallholder, but actually a means of livelihood to a great part of the country population for many months of the year. In the Eastern Counties especially, vast tracts of country which have since been reclaimed and converted into farm land were then covered by fens and marshes--land dry enough in the Summer to afford rough grazing for the cattle of the neighboring villagers, but waterlogged during the Winter months, when it became the home of the endless flights of waterfowl, driven by stress of weather from their breeding grounds in Scandanavia. Upon which the graziers, having killed and salted down the greater part of their cattle as was the custom of the age, turned-to and reaped this harvest from across the North Sea, plying the profitable trade of the professional wildfowler until the following Spring sent the birds once more upon their Northern migration." (George, pp. 34-5)

"Of the guns used by these professional fowlers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries many still survive [George wrote in the 1930s] (though most of them in ruinous condition).... [These are] scattered over the Cambridge and Lincolnshire fen districts, the whole of the East Coast from the Thames estuary to the Wash, the coastal area about Southampton, and the marshy lands about Sedgemoor and the estuary of the Severn. In these districts wildfowl and fowler alike formerly flourished, undisturbed either by the inroads of gentlemen with their too-deadly artillery, or by the encroachment of farm lands and of drainage schemes upon their native marshes ....

"Two well-defined types [of gun were used]: the shoulder gun [weighing 14 pounds or more; 5.5' or 6' barrel]...and the great punt gun, with a barrel of eight,

nine or ten feet, which, being too heavy to fire without support, was mounted upon a lightly-built gunning punt, drawing only a few inches of water, in which the fowler could work his way through the shallows and marshes to within gunshot of the fowl, so as to let fly with his great gun as they took off from the water. The early punt guns were...merely supported upon a crutch set in the forepart of the boat, and were fired from the shoulder, with a protective cushion of straw and sacking wrapped around the butt, the gunner lying prone in the bottom of the punt, and bracing his feet against its sides as he made his shot, so that the force of the recoil should be distributed as evenly as possible, and the punt and gunner alike moving bodily backwards as the gun was discharged." (George, p. 124.)

Technical improvements included William Watts' invention of drop shot (uniform pellets of lead) in 1769 (George, p. 209) and Henry Nock's "Patent Breeching" ca 1785, which enabled shorter barrels and therefore a practical double-barreled gun (George, pp. 187-91). The final improvement to fowling pieces during the heyday of the Poodle as a duck dog was the Rev. J. A. Forsythe's invention of the detonating lock, patented in 1807: this greatly improved firing mechanism rendered guns less vulnerable to damp--and safer. Invention of the Forsythe lock, by which, incidentally, Jane Austen engineers the final proposal of marriage in *Persuasion*, combined with Watts' and Nock's improvements, greatly increased the appeal of waterfowling as a sport.

## Drainage

In Markham's day, wetlands were correctly understood to be malarial (and including in Norway). By the early 19th century, due to drainage programmes initiated in Holland during the High Middle Ages and progressively implemented throughout Europe in the succeeding centuries, incidence of malaria in Europe was greatly reduced.

Today, it's a stand-alone research project in the field of historical geography to trace the location of former wetlands which were the province of the Poodle. Study of a relief map of Europe is too simple an approach, since many low river valleys are fertile, well-drained agricultural land, and some wetlands lay on high plateaus, for example Pays des Dombes, the lake-dotted plateau which separates the rivers Ain and Salône, and lies at an average height of some 150 feet above

their valleys.

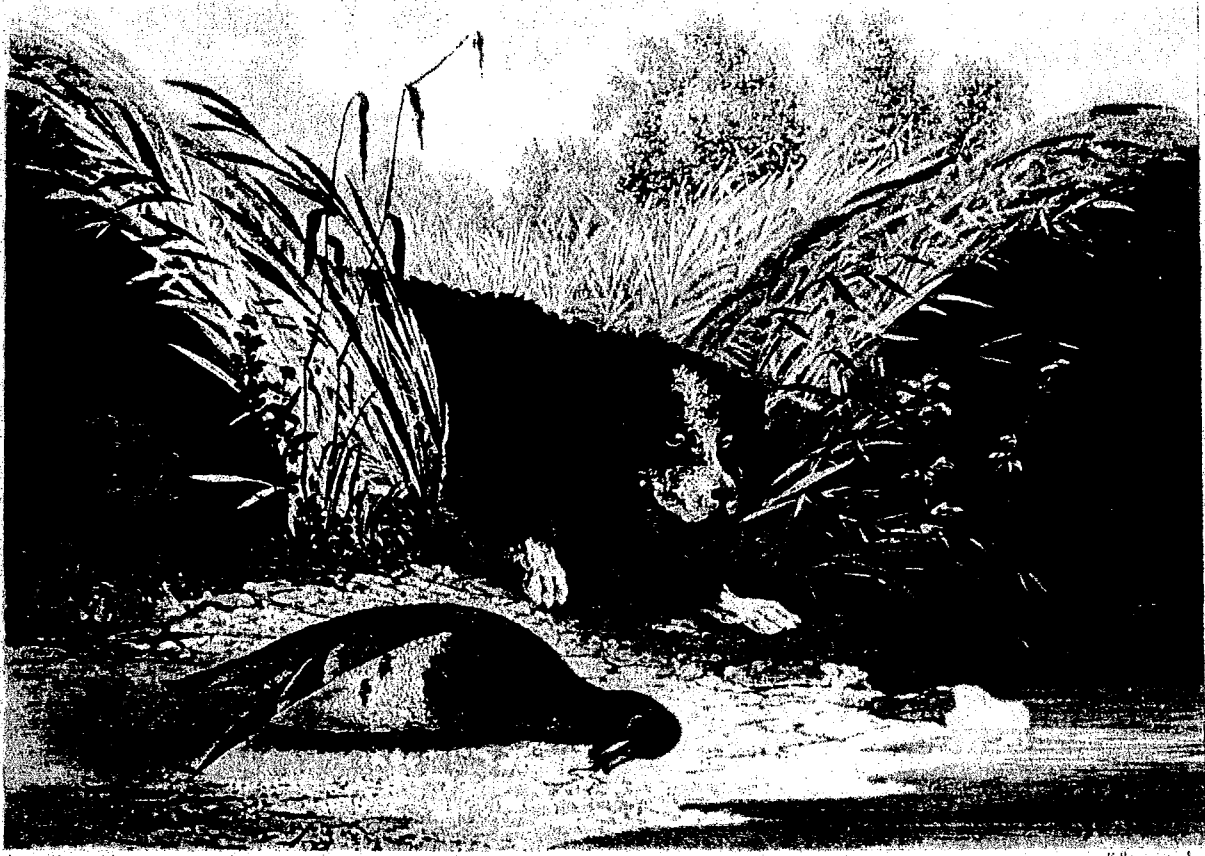
Improvement and enclosure reduced rough open country subject to "common right". Gradually, the ancient way of life of the old-time market hunters, whose water dogs helped put meat on their tables and money in their pockets, drew to a close. A clergyman writing ca 1770 put a happy spin on this process:

"The patient FEN-MAN, who endur'd long time  
 The various hardships of the wat'ry clime,  
 Whose slaught'ring gun and faithful dog had fed  
 His wife and little family with bread,  
 Now holds the plough, turns up the moory soil,  
 And finds a vast increase rewards his toil.  
 His fields are cropt with diff'rent sorts of grain,  
 His sheep and oxen raze the chearful plain."

From: "The Innundation, or The Life of a Fen-Man", by a Fen Parson, quoted in H.C. Darby, *The Draining of the Fens* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1956), p. 174. For further reading see Darby, particularly "Economic Activity", pp. 153-177; also, William H. TeBrake, *Medieval Frontier: Culture and Ecology in Rijnland* (College Station: Texas A&M Press, 1985), who notes that Pliny described fenmen and their immemorial way of life in what is now Holland.

## **Waterfowling in England during the 18th and 19th centuries\***

Taplin (1803) describes waterfowling for down with a water dog, using sod blinds: "near the Northern Coast there are numbers who support their families by [this]...industry....Upon the discharge of the gun,the sagacious animal instantly sallies forth, and rushes with incredible fortitude over every obstacle; for whether the bird falls dead amidst the infinite recesses of these rocks, or being wounded falls into the water at a considerable distance from land, it is the habit of this dog never to recede until he has brought the object of his mission to the hand of his master.... [Because] Water Fowl are more timid than any other this Water Dog must be as sensible as his master, and so truly obedient as to regulate his proceedings in the field by hand rather by words; yet he must be more tenacious in his courage and ardor of pursuit than dogs whose enjoyment of field sports afford



Water Spaniel, d-1

Falkenstein, w-1

A. J. B. F. T.

WATER-DOG.

The Ritter, Boulevard Montmartre, N° 10

only pleasure." [William Taplin] *The sportsman's cabinet...* (London: 1803-4; for a full citation, see linked text.)

Understandably, sportsmen--gentlemen who didn't rely on waterfowling to make their livings--were deterred by risk of malaria: "Wild-duck shooting appears to be a diversion by no means calculated to promote health, since these fowls are chiefly to be found in marshes and other wet places," warns T.B. Johnson in *The Shooter's Companion*, 2nd ed. (London, 1823), p. 53. Johnson continues: "The dog best calculated for this diversion is a water-spaniel, which ought to be taught to fetch a duck out of the water. As to a dog setting this kind of game, it is quite out of the question. The places where the ducks are known to resort, should be beat with as



little noise as possible, and the sportsman must take his chance of their rising within gunshot." By this remark, Johnson betrays his inexperience. Beating is a process by which upland birds in cover are driven towards the guns and flushed; for a quick overview of "beating" and all that's associated with that process, see "The Shoot" (Thames Colour Production, three-part documentary produced by Richard Broad, filmed in '76, shown in '77) featuring the famous gamekeeper Harry Churchill; Brian P. Marshall, *Tales of the Old Gamekeepers* (London: David & Charles, 1989), about Churchill and his colleagues; and Keith Erlandson, "British Retriever Trials," *The Retriever Journal*, June/July 1996.

However, many individual sportsmen among Johnson's contemporaries who possessed a special interest in waterfowling (see "...Visuals", Gainsborough) enjoyed the sport on its own cold, wet, and relatively solitary terms. Among these was Hawker, who in *The Diary of Colonel Peter Hawker, 1802-1853*, 2 vols. (London: 1893) and the various editions of *Instructions to Young Sportsmen in all that Relates to Guns and Shooting* (we used the 9th edition, published in London in 1844) maps the ascendancy of waterfowling as a sport, while deploring its increasing popularity of which he himself was a cause, while regretting loss of wetlands, and furthermore while betraying--for our benefit, but surely not their own--secrets of the old-time market gunners whose way of life was literally evaporating.

English sportsmen's new-found interest in duck hunting led directly to development of modern retriever "specialist" breeds, most notably the Labrador Retriever derived from the St. John's Newfoundland (see Fishermen's dogs...), which owed a debt, in turn, to the water dog (various forms of Poodle). These new varieties eclipsed the old water dog in England (which, however, survived in the IWS). More gradually, these were preferred by European sportsmen. In 1845, Youatt observed that the Poodle "was originally a water dog [but] .... its qualities as a sporting dog are seldom recognized by its owner" in England (for an expanded quotation, see Rare books, Youatt). Occasional British sportsmen continued to prefer Poodles as gundogs. For example: "Poodles on the Moors. For the last ten years I have used no others. I have trained retrievers and spaniels, and I prefer a poodle. For intelligence, personal devotion and endurance he is hard to beat. One recently deceased I used for ten years, and hardly knew him tired, though in September, 1922, he was out with me every day for a month, except

Sundays. He wd. hunt bushes, or stay in a butt and retrieve, tho' he much preferred standing where he cd. see and take an intelligent interest in the sport in progress. Quite at home in the water, he had a first rate nose and mouth. I have never had one with a hard mouth, but I do not know whether this is characteristic of the breed. I train them myself, and have supplied several to others for this purpose, the proceeds of such sale going to charity. --E.L. Browne, St. Andrews School, Eastbourne." *The Field*, 10 January 1924.

## **Across the English Channel; an eye-witness account of shooting over a Poodle in France in the 1870s**

The Poodle remained, at least until the end of the 19th century, a favoured breed of the market gunner and pot-hunter along the southern rim of the English Channel, the North Sea, the Baltic and in the marshes of the great north-flowing European rivers:

"...for one or two poodles that may be used by British wildfowl shooters, a hundred--nay, thousands perhaps--are used by their...confrères...in the vast marshes of the Continent, and especially in those marais of the French departments of Pas-de-Calais, Nord, and Somme; in Belgium, in Holland, in Denmark, in Northern Germany, and in Russia, where night-decoying [using tethered live ducks] of [wild] ducks to the hut [duck blind] is extensively practiced...at least half the birds fired at are only winged or disabled, and thus, without a dog gifted with sense, nose, and pluck, it would be perfectly impossible for the shooters, in the dead of night, to collect their game. This the poodle does, with a rapidity and intelligence which are simply unsurpassable." Thus wrote Lewis Clement under the pseudonym "Wildfowler" in his contribution, "The Poodle", to "Stonehenge"'s (pseud. J.H. Walsh) *Dogs of the British Islands* (London, 1878).

Clement, who in 1882 became first editor of *Shooting Times*, published, under the pseudonym "Snapshot", an account (presented in its entirety in the attached file) of shooting over one of these Poodles, "Duck Decoying in France" [in the Abbeville marshes near Amiens] (*Baily's Magazine*, January 1874, pp. 351-7). For a brief description of gundog training methods in France at this time, see *Hints on Shooting and Fishing, Etc: Both on Sea and Land and in the Freshwater Lochs of*

*Scotland. Being the Experiences of Christopher Idle, Esq*, by Christopher Idle (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1868), "The Method of Teaching Dogs to bring their Game on Land and from the Water, adopted in France" pp. 248-55. [Google books](#).

"In Germany and France the market hunters use them extensively for retrieving," wrote H.H. Hunnewell, Jr. twenty years later, ca 1894: "They have good noses, take to water readily, and are strong runners and beautiful jumpers." (See "[French Poodles](#)").

## First Poodles in North America

In North America, in 1600, salt marshes formed a paradise for waterfowl from Newfoundland to the Carolinas; a conjoined paradise included the fresh water marshes, rivers, ponds and lakes between the Atlantic coast and the Great Lakes flyway. Water dogs were among the first European dogs brought to North America from the time of settlement of St. John's, Newfoundland in 1583 (see [Ships' and/or fishermen's dogs..., Newfoundland](#)).

Otherwise, the early history of water dogs in North American is poorly documented, although we having living evidence, in the American Water Spaniel, that these were present. Likely places to begin a search for documentation are in visual and written records of French settlement along the St. Lawrence River from 1604 (and of Mississippi/Louisiana during the 18th century), of Dutch settlement along the Hudson River from 1623 (and including after surrender to the British in 1664), and 18th century German settlement of Pennsylvania.

## Looking through the American retroscope

Alexander Wilson (1766-1813) commenced publication of the nine volumes of his master-work, *American Ornithology*, in 1808. At the time, Wilson was also known for narrative verse: *The Foresters: A Poem description of a Pedestrian Journey to the Falls of Niagara in the Autumn of 1804*, a fascinatingly detailed poem, including even what he had for breakfast on one of the first several sailing vessels on Lake Ontario. In the course of an equally-detailed description of North

American waterfowl, Wilson describes the methods by which they were lured under the gun, including by tolling dogs, and also the popularity of wild ducks (supplied by the cart-load by market gunners) at "public dinners, hotels, and particular entertainments." Wilson's text was reprinted with notes by Jardine (to which is added a synopsis of American birds, including those described by Bonaparte, Audubon, Nuttall, and Richardson) in 1839 and 1854.

Several museums which present comprehensive exhibits of this "golden age" of waterfowling, through which Poodle owners can arrive at a better understanding of the tasks involved, and which, significantly, are close to the Poodle Club of America's new National Specialty site:

- Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, St. Michael's, MD (one building devoted to waterfowling, and a small boatshed containing punts, etc.);
- Decoy Museum, Havre de Grace, MD;
- Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD (explanatory exhibition and decoys);
- Finally, at Chincoteague, VA there's a small waterfowling museum which contains a horse-drawn duck hunting "coach" fitted with dog-boxes.

Waterfowl populations had begun to decline dramatically by the late 1890s, the inevitable result of development combined with overkill (by sportsmen who killed far more than they could use, according to the custom of the day, and market gunners). Spring shooting of waterfowl was banned in Massachusetts in 1909; in 1912, a law was passed which prohibited the sale of all game birds; however it was not until the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act was passed by Congress in 1918 that effective measures were in place; in 1935, the use of live decoys was prohibited. (Nancy V. Weare, *Plum Island, the Way it Was*, Newburyport, MA: 1993, pp. 88-9.) Thus, waterfowling became the entire province of the sportsman and his retriever.

## "Hunting Poodles" today

The first competitive licensed retriever trial sponsored by the American Kennel Club was held in 1931 (the Labrador Retriever provided the model for the licensed retriever trial rules, just as Standard Poodles, later in the decade, provided the

model for AKC obedience rules; see: Obedience dogs). Poodles were not eligible to participate in these trials because the American Kennel Club had followed the lead of the Kennel Club (Great Britain) and had slotted Poodles into the Non-Sporting Group from the kennel clubs' beginnings in the late 19th century.

By contrast, the Canadian Kennel Club, founded in 1888, had correctly categorized the Poodle in the Sporting Group (as did the United Kennel Club, founded in 1897; this categorization remains), which set the stage for Poodles to participate in licensed retriever trials in Canada. Unfortunately, Canadian Kennel Club competitive licensed retriever trials did not get underway until the early 1950s; in 1938 Standard Poodles had been moved into CKC's Non-Sporting Group when Miniature Poodles were recognized.

This near-miss--only a dozen or so years!--a mere blink of the eye, in Poodle-time--was rectified in the mid-1980s when the Canadian Kennel Club allowed Standard Poodles to participate in retriever Working Certificate, Working Certificate Intermediate, and Working Certificate Excellent tests. These WC/I/X tests were the CKC's initial response to the North American hunting retriever movement, and credit for triggering this response goes to Jacqueline Harbour, Tudorose Standard Poodles, then living in Ancaster, Ontario. The following article about field-training Tudorose "Licor," the first CKC SP retriever WC, predates CKC acceptance by several years: Hilayne Cavanaugh, "Field Trial Poodle: Poodle Variety Interviews Jacqueline Harbour," *Poodle Variety*, October/November 1982, pp. 26-30. Of similar interest, Hilayne Cavanaugh, "[Bibelot] Demon Does It All," *Poodle Variety*, October/November 1982, pp. 42-3.

The North American hunting retriever movement developed in reaction to unrealistic tests set in order to place top-achievers in the licensed retriever trials. Retrievers and training methods had become so good that realism was thrown to the winds in order to place the highly-competitive top-achievers. Also, as the licensed trials developed, a relaxed venue had been lost: the Qualifying stake in the licensed trials, which "is an evolvment from the old 'nonwinners' stake which used to be jammed with hunters and their meat dogs...because this [now] is a qualifying stake, judges are reluctant to view it as the relatively informal event it once was" (James Lamb Free, *Training Your Retriever*, 7th revised edition, NY: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1980, first published 1949, p. 179). Finally,

"hunter stakes" at picnic trials (fun trials) had enabled people and their retrievers to experience informally the pleasures which could be formally concentrated in the various hunt tests.

In the United States, Richard Wolters,\* one of whose many gifts was promotional, and who was retriever columnist for *Gun Dog* magazine, published, in May/June 1982, "The Gun Dog Stake", a column which pulled together ideas which had swirled around for several years, and followed this later in the summer with a column which contained draft hunt test rules. Other enthusiasts involved were Omar Driskill, founding president of the United Kennel Club's Hunting Retriever Club, and Bill Tarrant, who published, in *Field & Stream*, April, 1983, an article: "The Mechanical Dog", in which "ink was replaced by fire" (Omar Driskill, introduction to Bill Tarrant, *Training the Hunting Retriever*, NY: Howell, 1991).

A period of rapid (and confusing!) evolution in the first half of the 1980's resulted in creation of the North American Hunting Retriever Association in 1983; the first NAHRA hunt test was held in February, 1985. The United Kennel Club's brand new Hunting Retriever Club conferred its first HR CH title in 1984. In November, 1985 the American Kennel Club, following a period of association with NAHRA, approved all-AKC retriever Hunting Test rules (*AKC Gazette*, January 1996, official section).

When the dust from all this activity cleared away in the late 1980's, Standard Poodles, the original duck-dogs, were fully eligible to participate in CKC's WC/I/X tests (rules adopted in 1981 for implementation in 1982; approval to allow SPs to run probably given in late 1985, since first SP title was awarded in June 1986); the United Kennel Club's Hunting Retriever Club's tests (UKC categorization enabled SPs to participate from the tests' inception); and to a limited degree in NAHRA tests (Poodles became fully eligible in the early 1990s). In June, 1993, the Poodle Club of America initiated a retriever Working Certificate programme, the required pre-requisite for eligibility to participate in the AKC's retriever Hunting Tests. In 1996, the CKC initiated retriever Hunt Tests (AKC Hunting Tests lookalikes) for which Standard Poodles were eligible from their inception. As of 1 September 1998, Poodles are eligible to participate in AKC Hunting Tests. From January 2002, Miniature Poodles were enabled to run CKC WC/I/X tests.

In Canada, Poodles' eligibility to participate owes much to Jacqueline Harbour (Tudorose Standard Poodles), whose response to inception of the CKC WC/I/X tests was to train for the day when her dogs could participate, and to work with the chairperson of the WC/I/X committee to ensure this. See: "The Field Trial Poodle: PV Interviews Jacqueline Harbour", by Hylayne Cavanaugh, *Poodle Variety*, October/November 1982, pp. 25-30, and also: "In conversation with Jacqueline Harbour", *Dogs in Canada*, September, 1997, p. 112. It is due to efforts made particularly by Roslyn Beaman and Elaine Whitney that Miniature Poodles were allowed to run in CKC WC/I/X tests as of 1 January 2002, and the Poodle Club of Canada was enabled to hold these tests. The first Poodle Club sanctioned test was held on 20 June 2002.

This would have delighted an organized handful of venerable Standard Poodle fanciers in the United States. The earliest published evidence of this interest we've found so far is a photograph by Hayes Blake Hoyt of AKC Ch Blakeen Café Parfait returning a duck from water illustrating an article, "Non-Sporting Dogs," by Freeman Lloyd (*National Geographic*, November, 1943).

A decade later, members of the Greenspring (MD) Poodle Club (founded, 1953), enjoyed field-training their dogs. See: Charles Le Boutiller, Jr., "The Poodle as a Retriever" and Hayes Blake Hoyt, "Still a Sporting Dog?", *Poodle Showcase*, January, 1966 (see [Poodle books/magazines in English, 1948-1965, etc.](#)). The editorial in this issue supports the Poodle Club of America's plan to offer a retriever working certificate: the idea of a PCA WC/X certificate evidently predates the actuality by some three decades. On the cover is a colour drawing of a wet SP (Wyetown Filou Glacé) with a duck in his mouth. LeBoutillier's article (with 46 pictures) is a training manual for starting retrievers. Hoyt's article describes the training of Blakeen Café Parfait and Blakeen Vige Le Brun as retrievers (seven photos), and an account of very successfully running a Standard Poodle out of contention in--to use the Canadian term--a licensed retriever trial. This article ends, nevertheless, with a demurral RE field-training Standard Poodles, a typical viewpoint among fanciers of all less-used retriever breeds before the North American retriever Hunt Test movement gathered a head of steam; Le Boutillier rebuts this in a subsequent article "Does the Poodle have a Nose?" which the Poodle History Project possesses in manuscript with a covering letter dated 27 April 1966.

Further to the Greenspring Club's early activities pioneered and piloted by Charles LeBoutiller, see *The Greenspring Poodle Club and the Revival of Poodles as Retrievers* (Brookeville, MD: Greenspring Poodle Club, 2000), 8.5" x 11", 40 pp. cerlox bound, illus. Essays, articles, memorabilia, bibliography, appendix. Published in celebration of the Poodle Club of America's first WC/X test held in conjunction with the National Specialty 2000.

See also "Poodle in the Field" (*Poodle Showcase*, June 1965, pp. 26-7), a letter to the editor by Barbara Bacheller of Billings, Montana, containing a letter written by her husband, Frank Bacheller, to Joy Tongue (Acadia Standard Poodles, Portland, Oregon), about the pleasures of shooting over Acadia "Bogie" during his first season: "Bogie was born for the field. He has the desire, the nose, the basic intelligence, the heart and the stamina. He is on his way to being a full fledged hunting dog....No dog could love it more." Included are five photos of Bogie retrieving a pheasant.

See: Kurt Unkelbach, *Knowing, Training, and Enjoying those Loveable Retrievers* (NY: McGraw-Hill, 1973), pp. 129-37 for a discussion of hunting Poodles, including field-training two Toys (owned by two different people) to retrieve dove, Doc and Pauline Edmond who imported (SP) breeding stock from Germany, and a dog from France, and "together they bred, trained, sold and hunted over [not AKC registered] Standard Poodles...big-boned, sturdy canines..." Unkelbach retells the anecdote about Hayes Blake Hoyt successfully competing with SP Blakeen Café Parfait, albeit out of contention, in an AKC licensed retriever trial. (A similar anecdote is attached.) He describes picnic trials held 1957-60 by the Greenspring Poodle Club, and mentions a John Parsons "of Canada" who "has been using poodles for many years on waterfowl, upland birds, and small game. All of John's poodles carry their natural tails. He feels that the docked tail does not serve as the best rudder..." This book also has photos of the following dogs: Ch Kaeley Noteworthy Guy CDX and Kaeley Snow Storm, who were in training for field work; Ch Blakeen Café Parfait CDX, first Poodle to run out of contention in an AKC licensed retriever trial, Café Parfait Zing (owned by Hayes Blake Hoyt), and photos of the Greenspring Club's picnic trials, 1959. Unkelbach is also the author of *Uncle Charlie's Poodle* (NY: Dodd Mead, 1975), a story about a boy and his Uncle Charlie & Charlie's black Poodle dog, Hans. To read a review of this children's book, see Shorter Poodle Lit. post-1929.