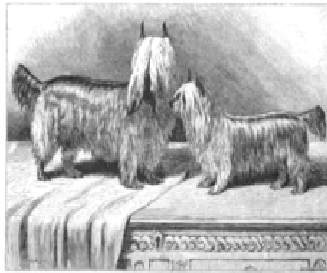


# YORKSHIRE TERRIER HISTORY



Yorkshire Terriers—Mrs. Norton's "Emancipation Bell" and Lady Grenville's "Katie."

## Legacy

The Yorkie was bred as a ratter, used to kill mice and rats in small places. There is some evidence that they may have been used for hunting as well. Like most terriers developed in the early 19th Century, it was common for Yorkies to demonstrate their prowess as vermin killers in what were known as "rat killer"

As a hunting group, terriers specialize in pursuing animals (usually vermin) that live in dens or burrows. Animals that are cornered and defending their young will fight ferociously. Therefore, any dog that would willingly pursue them must have an extraordinary degree of courage; terriers are bred for that quality.

## Ancestry

As the name implies, the Yorkshire Terrier originated in Yorkshire (and the adjoining Lancashire), a rugged region in northern England. In the mid-nineteenth century, at the peak of England's industrial revolution, miners and mill workers from Scotland came to Yorkshire in search of work and brought with them several different varieties of small long-coated terriers, generally known as Broken Haired Scotch terriers (*not* Scotties). The specific breeds that make up the Yorkshire Terrier's ancestry are not known, since the breeders at that time did not keep records of the bloodlines. Certain breeds, however, are commonly thought to be the main forebears. The likely source of the Yorkie's small stature, long-haired coat and blue color are the Clydesdale, Paisley, Skye and Waterside terriers, all English terriers transported to England at various times. The English Black and Tan Terrier bloodline probably gave the Yorkie its signature color pattern. These breeds were all working dogs, used to keep vermin under control in the textile mills and coal mines. Many have suggested that the Maltese, an ancient breed (likely originating in Asia), may be in the Yorkshire Terrier's background as well.

The breed first appeared at an 1861 bench show in England as the Broken-Haired Scotch Terrier, named for the dog's Scottish terrier ancestors. Early Yorkies were also known simply as Toy Terriers, in both rough and broken haired varieties. Yorkshire Terriers were given their breed name by 1874.

## **Huddersfield Ben**

A dog known as Huddersfield Ben is universally acknowledged to be the foundation sire of the Yorkshire Terrier breed. He was born in 1865 in the town of Huddersfield, county of Yorkshire. The very public life of this dog, owned by M.A. Foster, did much to popularize the breed in England. Ben died in an accident at the age of six, but in his short life he won more than 70 prizes at dog shows and also demonstrated exceptional skill in ratting contests. Ben was a highly sought after stud dog because he was one of the first to consistently sire Yorkies true to type and under 5 pounds.

## **In America**

The Yorkshire Terrier was introduced in the United States in 1872. The first Yorkie was registered with the American Kennel Club in 1878, making it one of the first twenty-five breeds to be approved for registration by the AKC. During the late Victorian era, the Yorkshire Terrier quickly became a popular pet, and as Americans embraced Victorian customs, so too did they embrace the Yorkshire Terrier. The breed's popularity dipped in the 1940's, when the percentage of small breed dogs registered fell to an all-time low of 18% of total registrations. Smoky, a Yorkie and famous war dog from World War II, is credited with beginning a renewal of interest in the then obscure Yorkshire Terrier breed.

## **Today**

The Yorkshire Terrier dog owners known and love today is slightly smaller than the original breed, and is now considered more of a fashion accessory than a hunter or a way for people to control pests. The Yorkie loves to be pampered by their owner, yet he still enjoys activity and remains a terrier at heart.