

Norwich Terriers, 11-13

Title: Kennel Prefixes: Does History Matter?

The convention of using a kennel name as the prefix in a dog's registered name brings meaning to a pedigree, conveying much about an individual dog's history at a glance. As noted by the AKC, using registered kennel names allows breeders "to name dogs of their breeding in an identifiable manner creating a prominent familial foundation in the breed". Likewise, the Kennel Club (UK) describes a kennel name as a "breeder signature ... an exclusive word that is associated with you and your dogs." As the Norwich Terrier (once a well-kept secret) has become increasingly popular, more people are breeding them, sometimes with little regard for their pedigrees and history. As such, we are at risk for losing this snapshot of history if our kennel names/prefixes are not protected.

Many of us have used a kennel name for decades without registering it, not realizing that someone else could simply pick that prefix and register it as their own. If your kennel prefix is not registered and that happens, you won't be able to use it again! We also have old kennel names, no longer active, that are significant to our history. There are many examples of significant Norwich kennels and individual dogs. Some like King's Prevention and Chidley are household names. Others sit farther back in our pedigrees, like the Dungeness Norwich that are behind two of the most well-known "modern" Norwich today, Ch Chidley Willum the Conqueror (1994 Westminster BIS) and Ch Royal Rock Don of Chidley, and behind one of the best known Norwich dams, Chidley Little Nell (Norwich Terriers U.S.A. 1936-1966, edited by Constance Larrabee and Joan Read for the Norwich Terrier Club, USA (published 1967, 1986), page 57). As noted by Bo Bengtson in a recent issue of *Dogs in Review*, most breeds have old kennel names that are historically important and "if we have any respect for the past, ought never to be used again."

While new breeders may simply be unaware of the past, others may be indifferent. And, this begs the question of whether history matters. Centuries ago, family history was emphasized to help a child understand who he is. History defined. But our modern society is fast-paced and rapidly changing. We prefer to define ourselves by where we are going, not where we came from—the past is outdated and irrelevant. What about dog breed history? Our breeders are to be commended for preserving the Norwich Terrier standard. It has remained relatively unchanged since the first English standard in 1932. But, if we disregard the "signatures" of our breeders, the integrity of our pedigrees will soon be forever muddied and lost.

There are some things we can do. First, individual breeders can register their own kennel prefixes. Unless your kennel name is registered, anyone can use it without approval. Second, the parent breed clubs can petition AKC to permanently retire a prefix with historical significance. The parent clubs and AKC have the responsibility to protect these legendary prefixes that are an important part of dog breed history. And finally, parent clubs can educate their members and emphasize the importance of their breed history. Yes, history matters.

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