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Strike Heelers

by O.O. Grant

from 1938 UKC Bloodlines

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STRIKE HEELERS

(By O. O. Grant, Owner of Semykennel)

Sometime ago I offered to write an article on English Shepherds but I haven't so far found time and courage, mainly because I don't want to make other breeders think they are out of line.

As hard as it is to say this, it is true from the best I can find out, and this includes my own dogs too. There are today, about one genuine Heeler pup born out of every 100 English Shepherds in America. You don't believe that do you, but it is true with my dogs and every other breeder's dogs. Now by that I don't mean that so small a percent are actually Heelers, but by Heelers, as I am giving it to you here, I mean Strike Heelers, not back-end biters. About one English Shepherd Pup out of every 100 are Strike Heelers.

You know, I must have several dogs, as during the month of December 1937 I fed my breeders 6 horses, 1 cow and 500 lbs. of granulated feeds and with all these dogs I have in my entire Kennel of breeders about 20 Strike Heelers, half of which are males or stud dogs. The rest are low heeling dogs, but not genuine Strike Heeling dogs. Some of these will Strike Heel on standing stock but bite high on running stock, so they are not in the class of Strike Heelers. A genuine Strike Heeler will strike right on the Fetlock above the hock of a cow or horse standing or running and for a stud to stand in this kennel he must be that kind of a dog. Another quality of the dog that stands here as a stud, he must be a dog that will respond readily to a command and a dog that if necessary you can wind his ear around your hand till he cries out and when you turn him loose, be ready to eat the heels off a mean animal if you say so, yet be a mild Heeler when just commanded to work. The dog that salks and runs to the house at a few cross words is culled entirely from our breeding stock. They must be able to take it whenever the need arises.

Now, we are more particular in a stud than a female because so few are really Strike Heelers that we cannot expect to have all Strike Heeling Females, but each year we are culling the females and replacing them with young Strike Heeling females. We expect it, at the present rate of breeding, to take us another 10 years to have and own 25 the



SEMY JIM (233438)

Semykennel 50 genuine Strike Heeling Females. When we reach that number of Strike Heeling females we expect to breed 50% Strike Heeling puppies. Sounds ridiculous doesn't it. Out of some 20 young females saved this past year, about three of them are genuine Strike Heelers. Although I have now some ready to whelp that I hope will run a bigger percent.

Here is the belief of one Eastern English Shepherd breeder. "I think too little attention has been paid by Eastern Shepherd breeders in mating to the dog that will just be a fairly good driver, as Eastern cows are stabled most of the time and are easy to drive, and so any good dog that will follow behind and bark is called a good dog for breeding purposes".

I agree with him in the respect that Eastern cows may be more easily driven with a dog, but that is not so in my sales territory. I know of plenty of herds of milk cows that will run an ordinary stock dog out of the pasture. The majority of men who buy dogs from me, want them to drive from 50 to 100 range cattle, and in many cases go out alone for horses and mules. There is only one dog in the world that can perform these things and that is the old genuine Strike Heeling Shepherd dog. But, the Shepherd Dogs our Grand-dads had are almost gone, so nearly gone in fact, with cross breeding an inbreeding, that today they produce about one genuine out of a hundred in their offspring.

We are offering to give \$100 for a male pup or young dog with at least a

three generation pedigree in the United Kennel Club that will develop into the genuine Strike Heeling class because we are saving a very few Strike Heeler females, that we have no unrelated stud to mate to, and we do not care to inbreed or family breed our dogs. As soon as I am able to do so, I plan to take my car and drive several thousand miles over the country and try to locate a male dog that we will consider is the class of a stud dog here. There is still some of this blood left in the states, although I believe very little of it registered with the U.K.C. We have spared no expense to better the American Farm Stock Dog anytime we had the means to spend. We are not satisfied to just breed a dog. You can always sell a few of the just dogs, but what piles up your sales is to ship into a new community, a genuine Strike Heeler. From that sale they will buy you out of all you have, including just dogs. I sold one pup in the South that has made 17 other pup sales in that community, and that is what should encourage any breeder to breed for the sake of what the American Farmer really wants.

I am offering Ozark Mountain Tip (241-892), a genuine Strike Heeling dog, to breed well bred females for a \$10 stud fee, and for every average good Heeler female that is mated to this dog, we will guarantee at least one pup to be born from the mating a genuine Strike Heeler. There may be more, but we guarantee at least one, and do you know, that any present day breeder would have in that one pup a dog worth \$100. We would not let him mate just any female, but any female we accept for breeding to this stud that does not whelp at least one genuine Strike Heeler, we will refund the stud fee. If any other English Shepherd Breeder in the U.K.C. registered in the Shepherd Dog field can offer me this proposition, I will ship him the very next good female I have ready to breed.

I am not stepping on any breeder, the fact merely is that not one man out of a thousand knows what a first class Heeling dog is. We would not accept \$500 for Ozark Mountain Tip. We have refused at one time \$200 for one Shepherd Dog in this kennel, and this offer was

(Continued on page 20)

STRIKE HEELERS

(Continued from page 8)

made by a wealthy cattle dealer in the South. The previous statement brings from practically everyone the old saying, "That was where two fools met". That, no doubt is true, but I just gave it to illustrate how few first class Heeling dogs are.

Let me tell you why the English Shepherd has gradually taken the place of the Scotch Collie on the American farm. In the South and West, the Collie could not bring in range stock, few of the present English Shepherds can do it either, but the very thing that is carrying the English Shepherds to the front today is not mainly what the present day English Shepherds are doing, but what they actually did years ago. The only reason they were ever less popular than the Collie was because no one bred and pushed them before the American Farmer's notice. But, their performances have passed down from Father to Son for generations. Go out among the Old Farmers of America and start talking Stock Dogs and see how soon you begin to hear the greatness of the old English Shepherd dog, sometimes referred to as the Old Time Shepherds and the Old Scotch Shepherds.

About every other Farmer that buys a stock dog from me writes that he previously had a Collie, but years ago owned a Shepherd and he wants to go back to a Shepherd. Or, he has heard that the Shepherds were more Gritty Heelers. Now, any average Shepherd or Collie can go out in the field and bring in a few old tame milk cows. But, you

have no idea how mean some of the present day cow herds are that have never been buffed by a good dog. So, I am trying to show you that the dog that makes a good Sheep dog is not in one case out of a hundred worth a snap of your finger for bigger stock.

In the Journal you have from time to time referred to the English Shepherd as a New Breed, as far as registration goes, yes, but as far as the dog, No. The Shepherd, no doubt, was the original Collie Dog. They pushed the Collie and let the real old Farm Dog die, and along with his dying, cross with about every one of the thirteen million dogs in America. Can you wonder that today he will reproduce only about 1% of his 50 to 75 year ago ancestors.

I have actual proof of this old Shepherd Dog being more than 100 years in America, and the praise that is given to him by the real old timers is enough to make the present day English Shepherd tuck his tail and hide. So, either the present Day English Shepherd breeders will get in the harness and breed the dog for what he was years ago, or he will die out in popularity far faster than has the Collie.

Let me sight you a little incident right up close to Home, last Christmas a lady from Escanaba, Mich., wrote me that she had seen my ad in a magazine and that she and the office staff would like to purchase a real old time English Shepherd for their employer as they had often heard him mention wanting to get one, as he had owned one years ago on a Western Ranch. Right at home mind you, this man did not know that there were today men breeding the Old

English Shepherds. You will say, well he did not read Bloodlines True, but you can not hang a man for that. I sold them a young dog and they wrote me as fine a letter as you ever read. I hope they are still as well pleased with the dog and that they send his papers in to your dog for transfer. That shows you again the dog is nothing new, but merely not pushed by his breeders, and for Goodness sake breeders, do something about the dog while you are pushing him. The English Shepherd Field today is the best of any dog field on the American market, and will stay so for another 100 years on end, if the old time quality is bred back into him. If not, it is going to be a sorry mistake on the dogs part and no one is going to suffer for it worse than the breeders. Right today, every Tom, Dick and Harry are peddling the so called English Shepherds, while in fact, they are really peddling mixed dogs of unknown ancestors and in the majority of cases unknown breeding, but puppies from one Shepherd dog that ran loose in the Country and mated to every dog that came along. Line bred in other words, tied to a close line and mated to the scum of the community.

It will take millions of dollars and plenty of good steady honest breeders with the good of the dog at heart to stamp out these peddlers. And, right here let me tell you that we cannot stick too close to one color scheme and bring the dog back. One Eastern Shepherd man wrote me that the dog I shipped to him did not have a true English Shepherd coloring, said he had a blue cast under the coat, that a true English Shepherd was not supposed to have. I told

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him he could ship him back or he could take my advise and breed to him for his quality, regardless of the color of his offspring, and I see he is offering him for stud.

Regardless whether or not you like what I say about it, you will see 10 years from now that I am right, maybe before. I am not pretending to know it all, I do not, in fact, know anything or very little, but I am not and have not for years let any chance slip to learn all I could about this dog and his past performances and I have had personal contact with them for almost 40 years. Even to looking them up during a stay in England, and I make it a point to read and study them continually. Recently I stood in the cold for an hour and listened to a man twice as old as myself tell all his past experiences with the Old English Shepherd Dog and he was a smart old Farmer. Let me describe a few things his dog can do.

He can bring in the meanest mule alive (except one I test my dogs on) and if he can not bring the mule in by heeling him, he will jump on his back or even the neck and chew him till he gets in his bluff. This dog, he tells me, knows about everything they say to him. (I wonder why they did not split his tongue so he could talk). One day while setting on the porch, some kittens decided to move from the barn to the house, an dhis wife said to him, "Now I'll be pestered with those cats around the kitchen." The dog, on hearing this got up and picked a kitten up by the neck and trotted off to the barn with it, and repeated this till he had them all back in the barn and he never allowed the cats at the house. Another incident that happened was, an old duck brought her little ones to the road one day and this man's wife happened to say, "A car will kill all those ducks." The dog went out, took his nose and pushed the little ducks out of the road and drove the old duck back to the pond. The wife always had to beat the hogs away from the gate when she went to feed the chickens and as soon as the dog was moved to this ranch, he noticed this and he jumped over the fence and drove the hogs away. Ever since that time, when she starts for the chicken pen the dog without telling, clears the way for her. This dog cannot be bought, but I offered to take good care of him for a year and pay \$10 for every time he served a female. Now that may sound like a lot of hooey to you gent, but I don't dispute anyone till I know they are wrong.

I once came up to the barn and found an old shepherd dog standing an old

sow off from the old hen and her brood of chicks. He has the sow in one corner of her stall and the old hen and brood were huddled up in another corner. I once saw an Old Shepherd Dog stop an old cat from moving her kittens from the barn to the house, believe it or not. So, you see, I believe that somewhere I will be able to buy some real old Shepherd Blood to cross into the best I now have here, and I will always be looking for new blood from year to year to cross.

Coonhounds and Field Trials

(By Mardo)



Just found out something of interest. 80% of the world's automobiles are in America and we believe that they are all on the street we are trying to cross.

Beware! there is an old adage, "Wine hath drowned more men than the sea."—Syrus.

I. B. Baker says it is quite a trick to crowd into the old uniform to appear in the Armistice parade.

Dude Marshall informs us that the first of his seed catalogues arrived and now all that remains is to wait around for spring and borrow a hoe.

Ray Miller gives this little hint to motorists. The hand is quicker than the eye which accounts for the nit-wit behind you blowing his horn when you are unable to move in a traffic jam.

A coonhound fancier writes us recently and says: "I make a motion that we change the name of Bloodlines to the 'Castoria Magazine.' They are all crying for it.

Ed Devaney says that he has been completely disillusioned. He could stand the populace doubting most anything but

some fellow told him that he doubts the theory that Cinderella's slippers were actually glass.

We don't want to mention any names but if some people don't take off their hats and sit down like gentlemen and keep their mouths shut the U.K.C. will spread all over them like a quilt on a cold night.

If you are a dog fancier and enjoy reading doggy dope, right straight from the shoulder not white-washed, you should write for a subscription to Bloodlines even if you are taking a dozen other journals.

This office is doing right well, two members got invited to the Victory Banquet after the National Leafy Oak Field Trials given by O'Connor and Conway of Oswego. Shortly after that, "Hans" Wagner sent the office a nice box of chocolates. Can we help it if we like those fellows?

Talk dog fellows, talk dog. Talk nice dog, talk real, clean, thoroughbred U.K.C. registered dog, then you know what you are talking about. Don't spend your time talking non-registered cur dog, because you don't know what you are talking about. You are trying to put one over, or you are telling something that somebody told you. (Records show).

In a recent letter from Jess Meyers, secretary of the Twin Valley Rod and Gun Club, West Alexandria, Ohio, he states: "This is the first year I have ever been a subscriber to your magazine and I suppose if it had not been through the efforts of Sam Tharr and Hugh Reynolds I would still be without it. I am thoroughly convinced that it is a magazine that no sportsman can be without."

If you do not care to follow Bloodlines and register with the U.K.C. that is all right. That is your business. The U.K.C. is not selfish, no person ever called at our office and were told that we were the only people who had the right to register dogs. No matter where your dog is reg-

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