

## WHICH CAME FIRST, THE D.E. OR THE P.E.

(Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News 1932)

In those early days many breeders were still breeding prick-eared dogs to drop-eared bitches and vice-versa. It is most clearly seen in two pre-war Champions [Miss Manette](#) (prick-eared) and [Airmans Brown Smudge](#) (drop-eared) who were both sired by the prick-eared "[Smudge](#)". After the recommencement of dog shows in the 1930s, after the war, there was serious talk in dividing the breed on ear carriage. One reason was there were more drop eared registered at the Kennel Club. The Kennel Club awarded Challenge Certificates on the number of each breed registered that year. The prick-ears won most of the CCs. A flair-up began the breeders of the two types and this would last until 1964.

There were eleven attempts to prove that one or the other was the original, and therefore correct, which was absurd as both drop-ear and prick-ear breeds have been used in the evolution of the breed. One such argument started in 1947 by Miss Macfie, who asked in one of the canine journals, "Can anyone tell me when and by whom the prick-eared Norwich was introduced? As far as I hear it has only appeared in the last 30 years.

The prick-ear breeders were not about to take this statement sitting down and the next 18 months there was a great deal of correspondence on the subject. Miss Macfie contended that her photo of Hepper, painted in 1857, showing little red drop ear terriers was proof that the drop-ear was the original. Mrs. Fagan countered by saying that she had known the breed since the early 1890s and had never known them as drop eared until it was made legal to crop them, and that with near 40 years of experience with the breed no drop-eared puppies had appeared in any litter she had bred.

Another argument was that drop ears were better for going to ground as they gave protection against earth and such getting in the ear, and therefore that's what the early breeders were after. But this was countered by using the example of the fox, who has prick ears and also goes to ground successfully.

A comment by Mrs. Fagan in 1948 really sums up the question as to the original, she said "no one really knows whether the original Norwich was a drop-ear or prick-eared, for the breed has grown to be known as the Norwich, had their ears cropped in the first place. Mrs. Fagan's own first Norwich "Brownie" had cropped ears, but Mrs. Fagan never cropped any she bred.