



The right life can be seen through a prism of history. It's a story that's been told in many ways. In fact, a "good" story can have a long and varied life. It's a story that's been told in many ways. In fact, a "good" story can have a long and varied life.

OORANG was the brainchild of Walter Lingo, an outdoors enthusiast, entrepreneur and businessman. Seeing the growing popularity of the Airedale, he jumped on the bandwagon in 1912. He wanted to breed “the finest sport and utility dogs in the world.” In Lingo’s mind, Ch. Crompton Oorang embodied all the traits for which the Airedale was renowned, so he used the dog to found his kennel. Lingo latched onto the name and made it one of the most recognized canine bloodlines in the world.

The last real Oorang Airedale, quaintly named Boozer Oorang, passed away in the late 1970s. An Internet search of “Oorang,” however, will reveal scores of people claiming to sell “Oorang Airedales” or “Oorang type,” although they have no more claim to the name than does a Poodle. Nonetheless, the name has cachet decades after the kennel closed.

Publicity

Lingo bred and trained his dogs to be working animals and advertised (somewhat shamelessly) in many weird and wonderful ways. He claimed to spend \$2,000 a month on advertising in over a dozen outdoors magazines. He employed the writer Horace Lytle to write kennel pamphlets about Oorang, and sold or gave dogs to noted celebrities, such as Gary Cooper and Ty Cobb, then used their pictures (alongside their Oorang Airedales, of course) in promotional literature. He created a magazine, *Athlete & Sportsman*, as a vehicle to promote his various endeavours. More impressive, perhaps, is that he hired America’s “outstanding athlete of the first half of the 20th century,” Jim Thorpe, to promote his dogs at a salary of \$500 a week in the 1920s.

Lingo briefly owned a National Football League team, the Oorang Indians. All were Native Americans and exceptional athletes – in some cases, like Thorpe, Olympians. Nonetheless, they lost over 90 per cent of their games, but that wasn’t the reason for their being. They were there to promote Oorang Airedales and so, during halftime, Thorpe’s team would dress in “traditional” Native garb and put on demonstrations, using the dogs to retrieve, then track raccoons, coyotes and black bear. At the game’s conclusion, the Airedales put on a war dog

The Oorang story

The Oorang Airedale Kennel of LaRue, Ohio, was the largest kennel in history and one of the most renowned. It is also – simultaneously – one of the most highly praised and maligned.

BY BRYAN CUMMINS PHOTOS BY DEAN PALMER

demonstration. The Oorang Indians existed for only two years, but the team reaped huge rewards for the kennel and was, in Lingo's own words, "one of the greatest publicity stunts on record." Thorpe maintained his relationship in various capacities, with both Lingo and Oorang, until his death in 1953.

Nonconforming

Oorang is almost universally dismissed by today's Airedale fanciers. Breed books barely mention the line, if at all, and almost always in a dismissive manner. There are two main reasons for this: Oorang is perceived as a puppy mill (nothing can be further from the truth), and Lingo did not care much for the conformation world – his were primarily working dogs. Perhaps somewhat regrettably, most breed books are written by and for conformation folk with little attention paid to working matters. Thus, Oorang is barely mentioned.

Oorang's breeding practices were rare, if not unique. Lingo maintained the sires, generally about a dozen, in LaRue. There, they were taken out hunting six nights a week by Thorpe and his men. Lingo kept a menagerie of bears, wolves, raccoons and other animals for training purposes. The stud dogs were available for service to bitches other than Oorang, provided they were healthy and of suitable quality. The pedigrees of the prominent Oorang sires include such notable dogs as Ch. Crompton Oorang, Rockley Oorang, Ch. Soudan Swiveller and Ch. Midland Royal.

Lingo placed his bitches with farmers, one bitch per farm. He paid the farmers for their service and provided food and veterinary care. He also paid for a telephone that was connected to the main kennel in LaRue in case of emergency. The bitches worked with cattle, sheep or poultry, guarded the farm, perhaps hunted large or small game, and kept the farm and its animals free from predators. They were working farm dogs.

When the bitch was ready to be bred, a kennel man

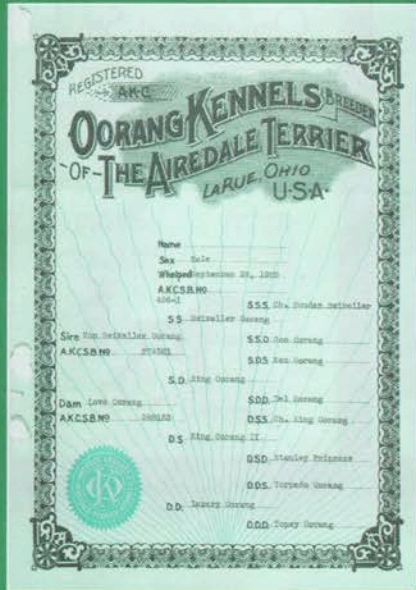


(Photo: Hedger, Lytham) "Our Dogs" Series. Mr. Wm. Proudlove's Airedale Terrier, Ch. "CROMPTON OORANG."

Top, left: Oorang founder Walter Lingo

Top, right: Olympic Gold Medalist and Oorang promoter Jim Thorpe

Above: Ch. Crompton Oorang, who in Lingo's mind embodied all the traits for which the breed was renowned.



ORDER BLANK FOR DOGS

Oorang Kennels, LaRue, Ohio, U. S. A. Date _____
 Customers: This Order Invoice is a certified check, bank draft, money order or express order for \$_____ for which send to the address given below the following:

No. of Dogs	RECORD	Sex	Color or Lat	Price

For what purposes the dog will be used, Mark X

<input type="checkbox"/> Best Breeding	<input type="checkbox"/> Police Breeding	<input type="checkbox"/> Police Dog
<input type="checkbox"/> Best Hunting	<input type="checkbox"/> Quail Hunting	<input type="checkbox"/> Airedale Dog
<input type="checkbox"/> Wolf Hunting	<input type="checkbox"/> Fox Hunting	<input type="checkbox"/> Fox Hunt Dog
<input type="checkbox"/> Coyote Hunting	<input type="checkbox"/> Water Retrieving	<input type="checkbox"/> Obedience
<input type="checkbox"/> Fox Hunting	<input type="checkbox"/> Water and Land Hunting	<input type="checkbox"/> Akita's Companion
<input type="checkbox"/> Wildcat Hunting	<input type="checkbox"/> Conventional Hunting	<input type="checkbox"/> Automobile Dog
<input type="checkbox"/> Black Hunting	<input type="checkbox"/> Fox Dog	<input type="checkbox"/> House Dog
<input type="checkbox"/> Deer Hunting	<input type="checkbox"/> Stock Driver	<input type="checkbox"/> Show Dog
<input type="checkbox"/> Prairie Hunting	<input type="checkbox"/> Runner	<input type="checkbox"/> Hunt Dog
<input type="checkbox"/> Rabbit Hunting	<input type="checkbox"/> Watch Dog	<input type="checkbox"/> Guard Watcher

Order Blank for Merchandise

Number	NAME OF ARTICLE	Price

Remarks _____

Purchaser's Address	Address where shipment is to be made
Name _____	Name _____
Street _____	Street _____
City _____	City _____
State _____	State _____
Zip _____	Zip _____
Phone _____	Phone _____
Country _____	Country _____

PUPPY STOCK OFFERED FOR SALE

BY
The Oorang Kennels, LaRue, Ohio, U. S. A.
 Oorang Airedales now Eligible to Registration in American Kennel Club

Each dog we offer for sale is a good Airedale in perfect health. Under no circumstances will we permit a puppy or adult dog to have any disease. Some cases there are the Airedales, standard their colors. Of course they will not be show dogs, but they are as hard strong and healthy, good workers of the farm and in the other sporting occupations, better quality, stock dogs, or hunting purposes. Choosing pupps are carefully graded so that they are not priced according to their type and quality.

Lot One
 These are the choice pupps from our world famous Oorang strain of Airedale Terriers. The selection is made through judicious possession of scientific breeding and careful selection. "The Best Airedales of England."
*Price Males \$20.00 each
 Price Females \$25.00 each*

Lot Two
 This lot is our second selection but they are equal in every respect. They are bred from the finest blood in the breed, and are selected for their high rank with many families, dark eyes, small well formed ears, plenty of bone, short backs with dark saddle and not too markings. Being true representatives of the Airedale breed, they are a rare combination of type, size, etc.
*Price Males \$20.00 each
 Price Females \$25.00 each*

Lot Three
 This lot is our third selection but they are equal to some Airedales advertised for sale as "best of the breed" specimens. They are rough and sturdy specimens and combine the best, genuine and strength in their nature. While they might lack a few points in type or quality, they are most desirable from a physical standpoint. This breeding is good and they are genuine Oorang Airedales. They make splendid companions, guard homes, farms and stock dogs.
*Price Males \$20.00 each
 Price Females \$25.00 each*

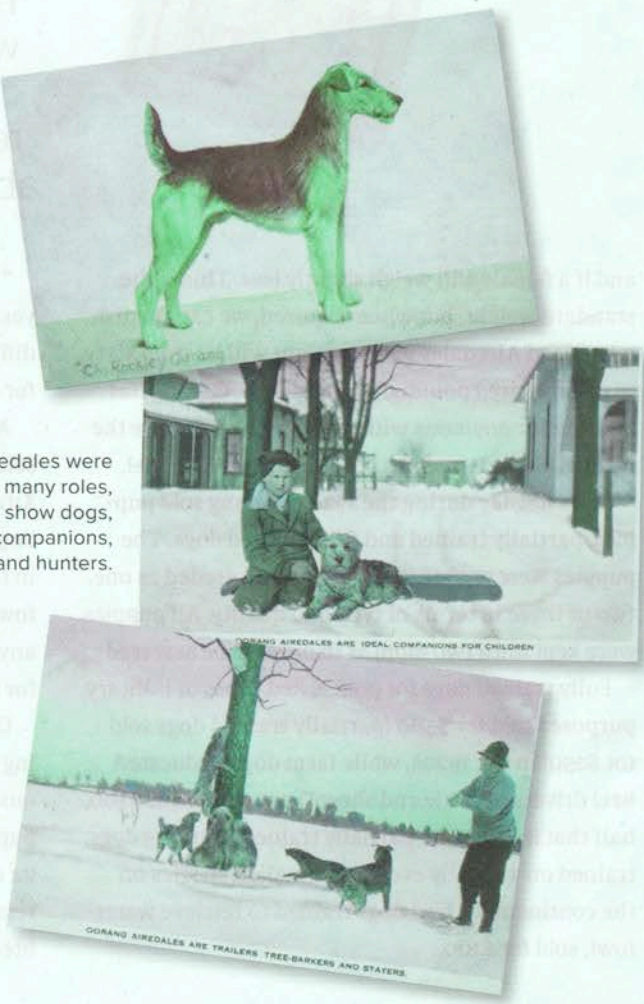
One of the many advantages the purchaser of Oorang Airedales derive over others, is that in his home breeding system that his stock is really safe, stable & due to the great reputation of the LaRue strain. The advice for carefulness given in the breeding papers are after a flourish of an interest. A year will make for three more than \$100 a year. The same are in good demand and are really rare.
 We will give Oorang and names to all female pups (including those from litters at 1/2 mile fee). The idea being good at all times and in a proportionate work contribution.
 We breed with only Oorang Airedales a beautiful guaranteed type of puppies, also a copy of "The Airedale" or available booklet of general information on the raising and management of Airedales has prepared in nature.

from LaRue collected her and brought her to the main kennel and, after breeding, she was returned to the farmer. When the pups were two months old, they went to LaRue for conditioning and grading.

With hundreds of bitches placed with Ohio farmers, Oorang sold literally thousands of dogs a year. For this reason, Lingo's detractors have referred to Oorang as a "puppy mill," but clearly it was not in the conventional sense of the word. There were no dirty, flea- and vermin-infested kennels or pens. In LaRue, the breeding rooms were all elevated a considerable height from the ground to prevent dampness and dirt. His was a breeding program that, while minimizing work on his part, ensured that the puppies and their parents had access to the outdoors. More importantly, perhaps, the sires hunted and the dams were working farm dogs. All in all, it was a pretty good life for an Airedale.

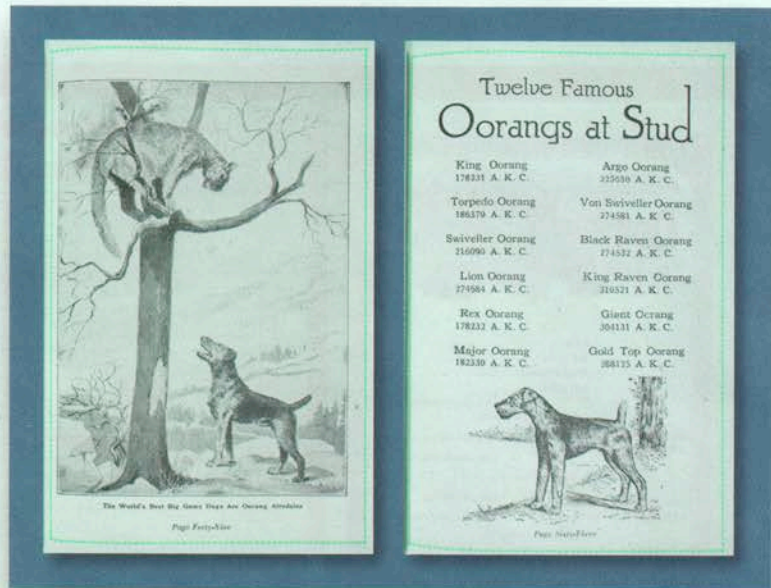
Type and quality
 And what kinds of dogs and puppies were produced? A common misperception is that all Oorang Airedales were huge, 100-pound dogs. In truth, Oorang's literature stated that "When full grown, your Airedale dog will weigh from forty to fifty-five pounds

Oorang Airedales were sought for many roles, including as show dogs, children's companions, and hunters.





Kennel pamphlets by dog writer Horace Lytle.



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and if a female will weigh slightly less. This is the standard weight, but when required, we can furnish over-sized Airedales whose weight will be from sixty to one hundred pounds.” Nonetheless, Oorang has become synonymous with big Airedales, despite the fact that large Airedales preceded Lingo’s kennel.

In its heyday during the 1920s, Oorang sold puppies, partially trained and fully trained dogs. The puppies were guaranteed healthy and graded as one, two or three in terms of type and quality. All puppies were kept until two months in order to be assessed.

Fully trained dogs for police, Red Cross or military purposes sold for \$500 (partially trained dogs sold for \$250) in the 1920s, while farm dogs (“educated heel drivers of cattle and sheep”) were priced at \$200, half that if they were partially trained. Hunting dogs, trained on virtually every mammalian species on the continent, or bird dogs trained to retrieve waterfowl, sold for \$100.

“Watch dogs and guard dogs” from one to five years of age, were priced at \$50, \$100 and \$200, the difference being not training – which was the same for all – but conformation.

And yes, Lingo did acknowledge the show ring, selling show-quality pups aged six to 12 months for \$100. The crème de la crème of Oorang stock were dogs aged three to five years guaranteed to do well in the show ring, hunt any big game, retrieve waterfowl, guard the home and car, and “make good at any task that can be performed by a dog.” They sold for \$500.

Oorang was hit hard by the Depression and changing taste in dog breeds, but it persisted, under various names, into the 1970s. To its critics, it was a puppy mill that was the ruination of the breed. For its supporters, Oorang preserved the real Airedale temperament and working ability, and all that the breed has to offer.