

## Norwich Terriers, 5-22

### Title: Our Bella

I write of a dear little item called “Bella.” *Dog* is such a small word for something that takes so much room in your heart. Bella meets that description in full measure. She’s Norwich – a true combination of adoration, and an edgy independence, which often reminds me of the temperament of a Tallulah Bankhead. Bella can be unrelenting tough ... and determined – yet, trustworthy – even very cuddly.

Growing up in the 1940s with beautiful English Setters (my father was a quail hunter), I knew very little about Norwich and Norfolk terriers. Strangely, we were introduced to the breed by a business associate – Edwin L. Levy, Jr. Levy owned and operated Old Dominion Press in Richmond, VA. My occupation was associated with the Cauthorne Paper Company, Inc. in Richmond. Ed Levy was a client of mine; sitting in his office one day I became fascinated with a photo of two Norwich Terriers. They were stunningly beautiful, and winsome beyond words.

Edwin Levy and wife, Hope, were long time Norwich enthusiasts and served on the Special Jubilee Issue Committee of the NORWICH AND NORFOLK NEWS (The Official publication of the Norwich and Norfolk Terrier Club, 1936 – 1986). Not surprisingly, my history degrees, generated by research, kicked in. NORWICH TERRIERS U.S.A. 1936-1966, edited by Constance Stuart Larrabee and Joan Redmon Read, became a rich resource:

Mary Baird, Castle Point: *“When I first got interested they weren’t called anything but rough coated terriers. I was in England in 1929 when I read of a lady in Windsor who was selling rough coated terriers for three quid a piece. I went there and picked up this creature – he was black and tan – and I called him Snuff after my father’s steeplechaser. Sylvia Warren’s Tuff would grow black and tan, though red himself. So did his son Simon. Molly Bernard and he lived quite happily until he died of old age. I imported Tawny Pipit, named after an apple, and she was a lovely little thing, beautiful, marvelous color and she had three puppies. I got other bitches from England and one I bred to Tuff and got Simon. He was excellent stock and good producers. They loved the ladies. Finally I have a stud of first quality – CH. Hatchwood’s Crème de Menth of Cracknor – the gayest rascal we have around. I have been very lucky.*

In the 1980s, our Norwich relationship began to grow; Ed and Hope Levy completely engineered the new life. **Red Clay Rupert Rabbit** was our first experience in Norwichland. Jeanne Roberts, Charlottesville, VA ran the Red Clay Kennel; wonderful **Hope Levy** played a significant role in our contact. **Rupert** was beautifully red, very mild mannered – not particularly feisty. He was a perfect fit for the newbie Wallaces. Over the years of experience, I figured **Rupert** was kind of an exceptional Norwich.

**Dahlia** – later known as **Dally** – was our second Norwich, and lived, by far the longest (almost 18 years). We selfishly did not want to let her go ... and she suffered in that last week of life ... it haunts us to this day. Dally was a light fluffy wheaten color, female. Hope Levy advised on a female as we already had a male in the family. She came to us from Mrs. Roslyn D. Young, Jr., Chevy Chase, MD.

**Fairfield Winston**, who became simply **Winston**, came to us from Mrs. Peggy Cone, Fairfield Colony Shop, and Berryville, VA: (Breeder – Mrs. Theodora A. Randolph, Oakley Farm, Upperville, VA. **Winston** was our only grizzle and different experience. Hope Levy laughed at me when she viewed the male pup. “Ha, Ray, you got yourself a Grizzle ... Ray, Grizzle’s are not for the faint of heart.” And he was a pistol – the only Norwich that actually caught a squirrel in our front yard. Winston endured kidney stones and lived to be on 13+ years, leaving us broken-hearted.

**Bella**, who was **Belle Star**, came to us from Ascot Norwich Terriers; Jane R. Schubart / William J. Schubart, Linglestown, PA on Valentine’s Day, 2011. I reported early on to Jane that Bella was deeply independent, and overly fond of her personal choices such as the furniture; she quickly made herself comfortable in our “No-No Chair”, and the behavior became relentless ... until we relented. Jane wrote: *“It does sound like the ‘real’ Bella is emerging. She’s very confident and I suspect that she was the alpha-bitch here – a self-appointed and self-assured leader that no one questioned. Bella does not hide her feelings.”* It took Bella some time, but now she has access to the Big Bed, I reluctantly report, and is in total control. Bella does not appreciate any of us fooling with her front paws; her Groomer says she is always edgy when he goes after them. There is no question that she has become a deeply entitled little lady – and suckers that we are – we love it.

Famously, Winston Churchill defined Russia as *“a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside of an enigma.”* That’s Bella. We simply marvel at her retentive acumen; all you have to do is

change her schedule, particular feeding, and it is Bella banked. Any change in routine, by a half-hour, and she wants to know what the hell is going on. Her retentive capacity is predictable and totally humorous.

When I visualize my dear four Norwich Terriers, I do not become maudlin, but almost sadly romantic, and drift into that old Irving Berlin lyric – *What'll I do when you are far away. And I am blue, What'll I do? What'll I do when I am wondering who is patting you. What'll I do? What'll I do. With just a photograph to tell my troubles to? When I'm alone with only dreams of you that won't come true, What'll I do?*

**Guest Columnist**

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