

Belgian Shepherd and Dutch Shepherd

HISTORY AND CURRENT TOPICS

Jean-Marie Vanbutsele

Belgian Dogs Publications
BELGIUM

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I would particularly like to thank Fabienne Guéneau.

Without her, I would never have known that this last manuscript of my father existed and this book would not have seen the light of day.



Preface

From the oblivion of history to the rejected Standard proposal

The first part of this work is devoted to the brilliant analysis by Louis Huyghebaert on the origins and the first years of the Belgian Shepherd. The original illustration has been enriched and some summary tables of the origins of the varieties have been added. It is a report of high informative value. It is followed by numerous articles that bring the forgotten history chapters back to the surface.

What to think about how the Société Royale Saint-Hubert (SRSB) is managed? They recently rejected a proposal to update the Breed Standard for the Belgian Shepherd. Without any argumentation, the SRSB responds laconically that the proposal does not have any added value. The best response to counter this unfounded excuse is to publish the entire text of the proposal and its motivation here in this book. It is followed by the Breed Standard update proposal with all the proposed changes, including the application of the relevant FCI guidelines as well as the recommendations on health.

A good part of the book is devoted to the history of the Dutch Shepherd Dog. Why this interest? It was Louis Huyghebaert who led me along this path and more particularly his article entitled: Rough-haired Belgian and Dutch Shepherds. With common features such as the same origin, structure and genetics, it can be said that the Dutch Shepherd is the twin brother of the Belgian Shepherd. Only the brindle coat colour has become their prerogative. All this emerges from the many writings evoked in the chapter on the Dutch Shepherd.

Jean-Marie Vanbutsele, Brakel, October 2015

Note about the translation:

The original articles and citations included in this book were written in old-fashioned and quite verbose French. Although I have tried to retain some of the style of the period, I often had to ‘modernise’ the translation to make the sentences comprehensible to the modern reader.

Pascale Vanbutsele

The origins of the Belgian Shepherd Dog

By Louis Huyghebaert

‘I shall endeavour to explain how Professor Adolphe Reul succeeded in making the shepherd dog transition from the herd to the bourgeois milieu, and how his efforts were followed abroad.

When I had just left Mechelen, I had the good fortune to meet Professor Reul on one of his trips to Neckerspoel, where, before the introduction of cattle, there was a flourishing trade in Dutch dairy cows. Most of these were imported from Holland and kept in the meadows along the Dyle, between Neckerspoel and Muizen, until the farmers came to buy them at the weekly markets of Mechelen.

Reul was a member of the jury which would appoint the winners at the annual cattle competition in Mechelen. It was also Professor Reul who was usually selected by our government to represent Belgium at international meetings abroad. It was on one of these occasions that he was able to make the following observation about the region, considered as the country of origin of the ancestors of our present Malinois, who, as we know, were initially classified as short-haired Belgian Shepherd Dogs.

It is in the Antwerp Kempen² in the direction of the Dutch border, and later in North Brabant, that this type of short-haired shepherd dogs has kept its consistency.

‘Great was my astonishment to meet last year (7 September 1892), on the occasion of an agricultural exhibition organised by the Noord-Brabantse Maatschappij van Landbouw in Oosterhout, a few hours away from the Antwerp border, a dozen short-haired sheepdogs of the most characteristic type, belonging to farmers in the vicinity.

I possess, so continues Reul, a not so good photo of this group of similar looking dogs. They are the size of a fox or a wolf: they are short-haired and brindle-coloured, their ears are beautifully perpendicular, fine and pointed, and open towards the front. Other features: the muzzle is rectangular and sharp, the nose is jet black, the tail well

² Region east of the city of Mechelen, Campine in French

worn, almost horizontal, but slightly raised at the tip, is hairy, in the shape of a spike.'

To fix the form of this type of dogs through inbreeding, Professor Reul addressed a letter to all the former pupils of the Veterinary School of Cureghem and all the Belgian Veterinary surgeons. He invited them to look for the most typical dogs in their respective area and to encourage their owners to send them to the exhibition of the Veterinary School in Cureghem, Brussels.

And so, on 15 November 1891, 117 shepherd dogs were gathered, 'thanks,' writes Reul, 'to the patriotism of the veterinarians, who always know how to gracefully serve the country when it concerns a question of public interest.'

It is only after studying and carefully comparing all these various shepherd dogs that the Club du Chien de Berger Belge founded on 29 September 1891, established by its General Assembly of 2 April 1892, the characteristic points of the breed obtained by Professor Reul's comparative studies.

The latter gathered information in particular by consulting foreign sources, which he lists in his book: Menault, inspector of agriculture in France and his compatriot, veterinarian Megin. Hugh Dalziel, the author of *The Collie* published in 1888, and Ludwig Beckman for the German Shepherds.

As stipulated in the Belgian club's first regulation, published in 1898, the aim was 'the pursuit of improving the native shepherd dogs by inbreeding'. But before starting the creation of families by inbreeding and selection, it was necessary to make a first choice among the best existing types. I will try to clarify this with pictures. What I want to emphasise now is the international nature of the first efforts of Professor Reul and his devoted collaborators.

In 1898, at his insistence, I founded a club in Mechelen, together with a group of amateurs, to concentrate exclusively on the improvement of the short-haired sheepdog, which, as mentioned before, originated from the Mechelen area. Dr Gustaaf Geudens, a veterinarian and director of the communal slaughterhouse, was its chairman. The club was a section of the Brussels club.

The first illustrated brochure about the shepherd dogs was published by this club in Mechelen in 1898, and Reul, who had kept in contact with foreign amateurs, asked me to send a copy to Arthur

le 25/11 - 1900.

Mon cher M^r Huyghebaert,

Vous m'obligeriez en voulant bien adresser à Arthur Meyer secrétaire du Club de chiens d'élevage allemand (Bismarckstr. 49, Stuttgart) un exemplaire de la brochure que vous avez publiée sur le chien à poil court du Club méridional. Il s'agit de faire connaître le chien belge à l'étranger & c'est pourquoi c'est ma seule publication & photo.

En attendant, acceptez de vous serrer la main, je vous prie mon cher Monsieur Huyghebaert, d'agréer mes cordiales salutations.

Bien vôtre,
A. Reul

Letter from Reul to Huyghebaert

richly illustrated Breed Standard of the German Shepherd, as soon as it was ready.

Arthur Meyer was not able to complete this project, and it was not until a year after his death that his successor, the Rittmeister von Stephanitz, sent me the promised brochure. It contained no less than fifty photos and drawings, starting of course with the *Stammvater* (founding father) Wolf, who was close to his heart. It ended with a portrait of what all the German breeders had produced up to that time. Strangely enough, Professor Reul's studies are not mentioned in this important and carefully laid out book. There is only an image of the typical representatives of other European shepherd breeds.

Tjop — about whom I shall speak later — is depicted as the best representative for the short-haired Belgian Shepherds and the couple Mira and Bazoef as typical Belgian rough-haired shepherds.

The initiative taken in Belgium in 1891 by Professor Reul was not only echoed in Germany but also in France and Holland. It was only in Germany that immediate practical direction was given to breeding shepherd dogs by creating, on a commercial basis, the *Verein*, which later became so powerful.

Meyer, the first secretary and co-founder of the *Verein für Deutsche Schäferhunde* (German Shepherd Dog Association). It was, writes Reul, to make the Belgian shepherds known through photographs.

Arthur Meyer, who wrote and spoke French fluently, sent me in exchange the characteristic breeding points of the German Shepherd, fixed at Frankfurt am Main on 30 September 1899, as well as his notes as a judge of these dogs at the first special exhibition, organised in the same city. He told me at the same time that he would quickly send me a copy of the first edition of the

The descendants of Tjop and Dewet



Fram du Bois de la Deule

'If I went into detail about the origins of Tjop and Dewet, it is mainly because these two dogs gave their names to two family lines. Their matings and lineage later gave us admirable offspring. Among them is Fram du Bois de la Deule, French champion, owned by Mr Danna from Lille, and the valiant representative of the Malinois variety in the north of France.

The grandmother of Fram du Bois de la Deule (LOSH 8297) was Flèche II (LOF 11898), offspring from Tjop and Lolo de Watermael and owned by Mr Duchenoy, the first secretary of the Club du Chien de Berger Belge.

If we descend further down the pedigree, we meet an even more famous descendant of Tjop and Dewet: Ninon de l'Enclus, belonging to Mr Couvreur, the well-known breeder from Amougies (near Renaix). Ninon was so perfect in all respects that for seven years (1907-1914), she held the first place in all the dog shows organised during this period.

Meanwhile, other breeders had also used Tjop's blood. The 'Chenil des Elfes' of Mr Marcel Cotte, had a typical representative in Rolf des Elfes, a grandson of Tjop, both on the paternal and maternal side.



Ninon de l'Enclus

The kennel 'Ter Heide', sold by your servant to the knight Hynderick of Theulegoet, used as stud dog, after selection, Knap ter Heide, a son, grandson and great-grandson of Tjop.

These two kennels and many others — it would be too long to list them all — disappeared in the unhappy years 1914-1918 and among the



Knap ter Heide

post-war dogs, none of their direct descendants came to shine as a 'great' dog.

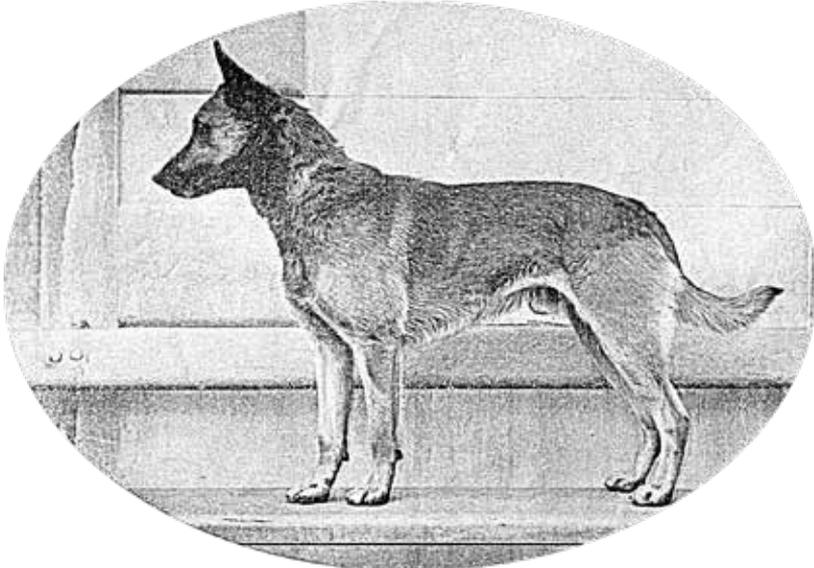
Based on the same principles, many dogs were bred in the Mechelen area, especially after the police dog competitions — about which I will elaborate later on — had made the good reputation of the Malinois known everywhere.

By chance a Malinois fell into good hands; it was Wip, raised by Mr Beullens from Sint-Katelijne-Waver, near Mechelen. Wip had Tjop as father and his mother, was a daughter of the same male. Although not free from defects, Wip was nevertheless a remarkable animal with a noble head and a typical expression.



From left to right : Bergeot du Bois de la Deule, Luronne de la Saulx and champion Fram du Bois de la Deule, Malinois owned by Mr Georges Danna.

After being sold to a Frenchman near Valenciennes, he was noticed there by a connoisseur from Mons and brought back to Belgium. In the female offspring from Dewet, who then lived in the same area in Wallonia (Frameries), suitable mating material was found for reproduction. His best offspring were dogs from the daughters of Tjop, especially Beth, who with Wip gave Tititte and Dingo (LOSH 3199).



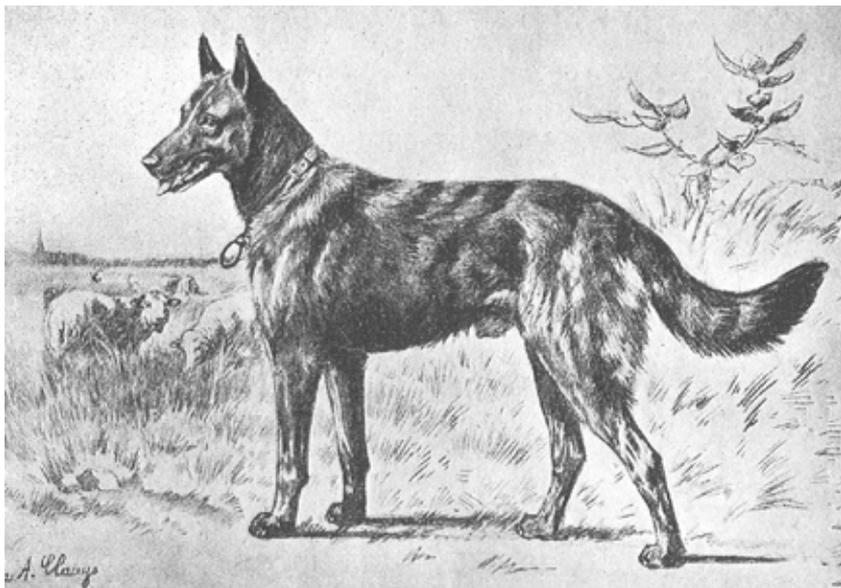
Mastock

Dingo belonged to Mr Dupuis from Bracquegnies who was a very prominent breeder in Wallonia. Although Dingo served very little as a stud dog, he nevertheless produced some stars such as Fram du Bois de la Deule, mentioned above, and Mastock. The latter comes from Corette, daughter of Dewet and Wanna II, sister of Beth, already mentioned, and the daughter of Tjop.

One of the best bitches in Mr Danna's kennel was Flèche II, daughter of Tjop and Lolo de Watermael. Her mating with Duc de Bruges gave Javotte du Bois de la Deule, who, with her father's pretty fawn colour and soft black mask, unfortunately also brought flabby ears that did not point easily. This was due to her overly frail constitution.

The brindle Belgian Shepherds

At the time, there was a very well built short-haired male with a brindle fawn coat, who was never beaten in the exhibitions where he won seven first prizes. This dog was Samlô owned by Prosper Beernaert. Due to the lack of assorted bitches, this stud dog did not have the opportunity to reproduce his typical features in suitable conditions.



Samlô, Belgian Shepherd Dog with short hair owned by Mr P. Beernaert from Brussels, drawing by Alexandre Clarys (1897).

There were many brindle dogs at the time and dogs could be born without a tail, as attested by this classified ad published in *Chasse et Pêche*:

News from the kennels

The country shepherd dog Mab (LOSH 3016), belonging to Mr A. Wendelen, gave birth on 5 October 1894 to a litter of two males and five females by Samlô owned by Mr P. Beernaert. All the young are brindled fawn, three of them are born without a tail. Samlô won the first prize in Brussels in 1894 and the first prize in Antwerp in 1894. Mab won the first prize in Brussels in 1892, the first prize and special prize in Brussels in 1893, the second prize and special prize in Spa in 1893 and the honorary prize in Antwerp in 1894.

The Club du Chien de Berger Belge committed itself in 1898 to achieve uniformity by selecting a particular colour for each of the three types of coat according to the following terms:

- solid black for the long-hair,
- fawn with black overlay (with a black mask as much as possible) for the short-hair,
- dark ash grey for the rough-hair.

Was it right or wrong to enact such a measure? The choice of the unique colour for rough-hair was the most unfortunate of all. Dark ash-grey dogs were exceptions. Despite the exclusion from the Club, the majority of this variety were fawn coloured dogs. Opponents of this restrictive classification met and founded the Berger Belge Club on 18 July 1898. Joseph Demulder was chairman of the association until January 1931. On 24 September 1899 the Standard assigning a distinct colour by hair type was published in *Chasse et Pêche*. Charles Hüge commented:

‘This decision repudiated all the choice breeders of the other colours, i.e. sixty per cent of the shepherd dogs that were living in the country at that time, among which the brindle dogs were the most numerous.’

During the dog show organised on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the foundation of the Club du Chien de Berger Belge in Brussels on 21 April 1901, the judge counts no less than nine dogs that he describes as brindled in his report on short-hairs. Some of them had rough hair.

Dog show in Jemeppe-sur-Meuse at the Cockerill factories on 20 and 21 June 1914

At the major ‘all breeds’ dog show organised by the Club du Chien de Berger in Jemeppe at the Cockerill factories, the black short-haired shepherds are well represented. The sixteen enrolled dogs formed a perfectly homogeneous group. Show judge Legros wrote in his report:

‘This variety is undoubtedly definitively created, thanks to the numerous enthusiasts in the Liège region who direct their breeding towards this new type. Remember that black short-haired shepherd dogs are gifted with superior intelligence. They are easy to handle and have a social character. At the same time, they have a good bite when attacking and are very devoted to their master. They also have a strong sense of smell.’

Dickson belonging to Joseph Lambert and Mirette belonging to Émile Gateaux won the first prize in the open class. At the same exhibition in Jemeppe brindled dogs with long hair made their reappearance.



Raksha der Bastaarden, brindle born from Groenendael parents

But what happened to our brindles who were once prize-winning at dog shows? Since their eviction in 1899, many of the excluded dogs, born in Belgium to Belgian parents, were registered in the Stud Book as ‘Dutch Shepherd Dogs’. Some pedigrees even bear the mention: ‘Belgian Shepherd Dog called Dutch’. One of the most famous of them (because you will find him in many pedigrees) is none other than Sam registered in the Dutch NHSB Stud Book with number 1488.

About brindles and in response to a reader’s letter (*Chasse et Pêche* of 20 September 1913), Charles Hüge develops some genetic aspects under the heading ‘All our shepherds are a single family’:

‘You say that your purebred Groenendael bitch has been mated with a purebred Groenendael male and yet you get two brindles; you are

confident that this mating was unique. Nothing more natural. Before the selection of blacks, yellows, etc., the shepherds of our farms, who didn't care much about the coat colour (not a single one was in fashion), crossbred their dogs to obtain working qualities. However, as there were a majority of brindle dogs in Belgium, it is quite normal that according to the laws of heredity, even after six or seven generations, the colour would return. For thirty years people have been trying to eliminate white spots from the Irish Red Setter to comply with 'fashion' (which I don't question, but which did a lot of harm to all the breeds where this principle was applied exclusively for dog show purposes). However, there are few red litters where the white spot doesn't appear at birth. The same goes for the Gordon Setters. I recall a most extraordinary case of a Tervueren shepherd who won the first prize in an exhibition and came from two very purebred and dog show winning Malinois. Nature sometimes has more tenacity than breeders and manages to thwart their fantasies for occult reasons that should not be scorned.

Your brindle dogs will undoubtedly be models of the new 'wonderful' variety, on the day when a club will give them a name that will suit them and will earnestly take care of this variety. Everything comes to an end in this world, but one day everything comes back with a novelty label. Until the clubs have accepted this colour as one of the most Belgian, you will be condemned to register them as Dutch Shepherds. And if they're well built, you'll win prizes. It may be a little illogical. 'Sed lex.' (That is the way of the world.)'



Dutch Shepherd with fawn brindle short hair, photo by Pauline van Vliet

History of the Dutch Shepherd: from the origin until 1913

The years before 1898

It was during the last quarter of the 19th century that official cynology in the Netherlands began to show interest in the 'native shepherd dog'. Something similar also happened in Germany, Belgium and other countries. The wide-open spaces of moors and heathland stretched across national borders. The flocks with their shepherds and dogs grazed in its vast expanses.



Dutch shepherd with his dog

It was not about the outward appearance, but about ability and character. In those days, the dogs, now our national breeds, resembled each other more than they do today. Rough, short or long coats were mated between them. Colour was not taken into account. The use as a working dog was the only criterion. Only the Scottish Collie had already become a show dog.

In 1874 the Koninklijke Nederlandse Jagersvereniging Nimrod (Royal Dutch Hunters Association Nimrod) was founded. They created the original NHSB (Nederlandse Honden Stamboom) Stud Book and organised dog shows. Later, in 1901, the Raad van Beheer op Kynologisch Gebied (Cynology Management Board) was formed and took over the original NHSB Stud Book, the recognition of dog associations, the regulation of dog shows, etc...

On 11 and 12 April 1874, the first indigenous shepherd dog was shown in Amsterdam during a livestock exhibition. In 1875, the description of such a dog was published by the Nimrod in a book for judges.

In the catalogue of the second dog show held in 1878, the mention 'Native Shepherd Dogs' was replaced for the first time by 'Dutch Shepherd Dogs' (Hollandse Herdershond). For some people, this denomi-

tion was a mistake, and they would have preferred the name 'Shepherd Dogs from the Netherlands' (Nederlandse Herdershond). We will not enter into this controversy, which has no cynological significance.

During the years between 1890 and 1898 the number of dog shows increased, but barely a dozen Dutch Shepherds were exhibited there. This limited number did not allow to discern the characteristics of the breed. They were dogs without typical features, no known descent and probably chosen at random. This did not allow to distinguish the varieties and specific colours.



Early 20th century interrelations

between the Laekenois, Dutch Shepherd and Bouvier, by Mara Lee Jiles, June 2002.

Jan-Baptist Jansen purchased a yellow rough-haired male, Vos, in the area of Boom, Belgium. Vos, born in 1885, became the foundation sire for the Laekenois and Malinois varieties of the Belgian Shepherd Dogs, and can also be found in the extended pedigrees of several Dutch Shepherds and early Bouviers, in the Raad van Beheer's NHSB studbooks.

Vos (later designated Vos I) was mated to a brown brindle shorthaired female known as Lieske, or Lise de Laeken. From this mating came Diane and Mouche, (short-hairs who played important roles in the development of the Malinois), Tom de Vilvorde, a grey rough hair, and Spits, also presumed a rough-hair. Spits was bred back to Vos to produce Moor, a black rough-hair who is also apparently one of the first recessive blacks in the history of the Belgian Shepherd Dogs. Moor, bred back to her grandsire, Vos, produced Poets, a light fawn rough-haired Laekenois female who did well in several exhibitions at the end of the 19th Century.

Poets played a larger role in this history than previously realized. Bred to her great-uncle, Tom de Vilvorde, she produced Vos II and Belle de Saint-Nicolas. This couple, mentioned only once in the Saint-Hubert studbooks as parents of Turc, appear numerous times as the ancestors not only of Malinois, but early Laekens, Dutch Shepherds, and Bouviers. Bred to Duc II, Pouts produced Pitt and Belle II, who appear in the ancestry of some Dutch Shepherds, but remain unmentioned in Belgian Shepherd history.

1901 was the first year that the Belgian Shepherd Dogs were admitted to the Société Royale Saint-Hubert studbooks, but an 1898 color decision by the breed



Zorka (LOSH 7824, NHSB 3044) Famous rough-haired female shepherd dog owned by Mr Carl Farenthold.