

Dexter History in America

The native home of the Dexter is in the south and southwestern parts of Ireland where they were kept by small landholders and roamed about the mountainous districts in an almost wild state of nature.

The origin of the Dexter is quite obscure. The common assumption has been that the Dexter breed was derived from the Kerry breed or that it was a cross between the Kerry and some other breed, perhaps the Devon. It has also been claimed that a "Mr. Dexter", agent to Lord Hawarden, was responsible for developing this Irish breed by selection from the "best of the mountain cattle of the district".

In January 1887, the "Farmer's Gazette" of Dublin published the first register of "Pure Kerry Cattle and Dexters" in Ireland. This first Register included 46 Kerry bulls, 100 Kerry cows, and only 10 Dexter cows. It did not include any Dexter bulls. The Royal Dublin Society acquired rights from the publishers of the Farmer's Gazette for this Register. In 1890, the cattle with the original numbers assigned to them, were thus included in Volume One of the "Kerry and Dexter Herd Book", as published by the Royal Dublin Society in Ireland. The Royal Dublin Society, Volume One included 118 Kerry bulls, 942 Kerry cows, 26 Dexter bulls and 210 Dexter cows. By January 1912, the Royal Dublin Society had published fourteen volumes with the following number of animal registrations: 678 Kerry bulls, 3,565 Kerry cows, 565 Dexter bulls, and 2,349 Dexter cows.

The English Kerry and Dexter Cattle Society was organized in 1892 in England. Previous to that date, breeders of Kerry and Dexter cattle were obliged to register their cattle in the books of the Royal Dublin Society of Ireland. Volume One of the English Herd Book was published in 1900 and Volume Two was published in 1902. By January 1912, eleven volumes of the English Herd Book had been published and the following number of animals registered: 238 Kerry bulls, 1,334 Kerry cows, 455 Dexter bulls, and 1,820 Dexter cows. In 1924, the English Kerry and Dexter Cattle Society changed its purpose to the exclusive one of promoting Dexter cattle and adopted the title of the "Dexter Cattle Society" in Volume 25 of their Herd Book. Herd Book Volume 27, in 1926, showed that 986 bulls and 3,896 cows had been recorded since the foundation of the English herd book in 1892.

The introduction of Dexters to America probably occurred long ago, when there was no distinction made between Kerries and Dexters in importations. The first recorded knowledge of Dexters in America occurred when over two hundred Dexters and Kerries were imported to the United States between 1905 and 1915. A large percentage of these were imported to Elmendorf Farm (Elmendorf Herd) in Lexington, Kentucky, Howard Gould (Castlegould Herd) of Port Washington, New York, and Mrs. James J. Hill (North Oaks Herd) of Gladstone, Minnesota.

In 1910, Professor Charles S. Plumb of Ohio State University, sought by correspondence to ascertain information on the ownership and size of Kerry and Dexter herds in America. He sent letters to every person whom he could find owning these cattle. Less than 20 herds were located, but some of these were large and were actively engaged in development. There was interest in forming an organization, however it was not expedient to have a meeting. Consequently, the interested breeders formed an organization by means of correspondence and a mail vote and it became officially known as the "American Kerry and Dexter Cattle Club" in July 1911 when G.M. Carnochan of New York, New York was elected President; C.H. Berryman, Mgr. Elmendorf Farm in Lexington, Kentucky was elected Vice

President; Charles S. Plumb of Columbus, Ohio was elected Secretary-Treasurer. At that time, they also formed an Executive Committee consisting of G.M. Carnochan, C.H. Berryman, C.S. Plumb, Maurice Molloy - agent of Castlegould in Port Washington, New York, and B. Nason Hamlin of Boston, Massachusetts. They also adopted Articles of Association by mail vote. The membership fee was set at \$10.00.

The American Kerry and Dexter Cattle Club kept Kerry cattle registrations separate from Dexter cattle registrations, each forming an independent group. The offspring of a cross of Kerry and Dexter was regarded as a "cross bred" and was ineligible for registration. The American registration record through January 1, 1919 included 16 Kerry bulls, 61 Kerry cows, 52 Dexter bulls, and 240 Dexter cows.

Mrs. James J. Hill of Gladstone, Minnesota imported Dexters in 1914 and established the North Oaks Herd. Mr. H.C. Lawton was employed as the "Superintendent Breeder of Dexters" for this herd. Additional animals were later purchased by Mrs. Hill from Mrs. Clarence Moore of Washington, D.C. and from Elmendorf Farm.

Mrs. Whitelaw Reid owned the Ophir Herd in Purchase, New York. It was a small herd of both Dexters and Kerries. F.E. Stevens of Glen Falls, New York was actively breeding Kerry cattle prior to the formation of the American Kerry and Dexter Cattle Club in 1911.

In 1914, August A. Busch of St. Louis, Missouri purchased Dexters from C.D. Gregg of St. Louis and established the Grant's Farm Herd. Additional animals were purchased by August Busch in 1915 from Elmendorf Farm in Lexington, Kentucky. The Elmendorf Herd was dispersed in 1917.

In 1917, James N. Hill of New York, New York purchased a small herd of Dexters from Elmendorf Farm and established the Big Tree Herd in New York.

In 1917, E.F. Simms of Houston, Texas purchased a small herd of Dexters from Elmendorf Farm and established the Xalapa Herd in Paris, Kentucky.

In 1917, William R. Bush of Benson, Vermont purchased a small herd of Dexters from Elmendorf Farm and established the Mountain View Herd in Vermont.

In 1917, the Castlegould Herd was sold to Daniel Guggenheim of Port Washington, New York. Guggenheim changed the herd name from Castlegould to Hempstead House. Several years later, a part of the Hempstead House Herd was sold to Mrs. Louisa Satterlee (Dover House Farm) of Greenwich, Connecticut.

The last registration record (all registrations and transfers up to and including December 31, 1920) of the American Kerry and Dexter Cattle Club were published in a Herd Book in 1921 and included 63 Dexter bulls and 260 Dexter cows. Soon after the publication of this Herd Book, the club ceased to operate and its records were put in the care of the Animal Husbandry Department of Ohio State University.

In 1940, the American Kerry and Dexter Club was reorganized by John Logsdon of Decorah, Iowa and Roy A. Cook, Secretary of the American Milking Shorthorn Association. Mr. Cook served as Secretary-Treasurer of the American Kerry and Dexter Club until his death in 1949 and he published a second printing of Volume I of the American Kerry and Dexter Club Herd Book with entries of 471 Dexters, including those of the first printing from 1921. In 1950, Mrs. Daisy Moore was elected Secretary-Treasurer and continued such duties until

September 1982. In 1957, the name American Kerry and Dexter Club was changed to American Dexter Cattle Association. There had been no Kerry registrations since 1920.

Two other herds got their Dexters directly from herds created by the original importations to America. Foundation stock for the Clove Brook Herd (last owned by Jan van Heerden, son-in-law of Mabel Ingalls) was obtained from Mrs. Ingalls' mother, Mrs. Louisa Satterlee (Dover House Herd). Mrs. Ingalls also imported Dexters from England. The foundation for the Peerless Herd in Decorah, Iowa; was obtained in 1918 by John Logsdon for his daughter Nancy Logsdon from the Elmendorf Herd, Grant's Farm Herd (August A. Busch), and North Oaks Herd (Mrs. James J. Hill). Later, Nancy Logsdon acquired two of Daniel Guggenheim's bulls: Warrior of Hempstead House and Captain of Hempstead House. In 1944, when the Peerless Herd had their first public sale, the herd numbered 150 head of cows and heifers. Ownership of the Peerless Herd was passed from Nancy Logsdon to her sister, Daisy Moore, and then to Daisy's daughter and son, Kay Moore Baker and Michael Moore. The Peerless Herd is the oldest Dexter herd in the United States.

Starting in the 1950's, Mrs. Mabel Ingalls (Clove Brook Herd), Stewart and Frances Kellogg (Bedford Herd), Edward C. Lord, and Mrs. Margaret Rhodes imported several head of Dexters from several prominent herds (Grinstead Herd, Atlantic Herd, and Parndon Herd) in England. Importations of Dexters from England continued in the 1960's and 1970's. In 1978, Doris Crowe (Cranworth Herd), Ross Stone (Lockwood Herd), Larratt and Paddy Higgins (Trillium Herd), and Eric Lawlor (Aldebaran Herd) joined together to purchase four Dexter heifers from Beryl Rutherford's Woodmagic Herd in England and imported these animals into Canada.

In 1978, Doris Crowe and some of her associates traveled to Pennsylvania to attend the American Dexter Cattle Association annual meeting. While there, Mrs. Crowe purchased a Dexter bull, Highland Perseus and imported him into Canada. In 1979, Doris Crowe imported six more Dexter heifers and a bull from Beryl Rutherford's Woodmagic Herd and these became the foundation of her Cranworth Herd. Many dun colored Dexters trace back to these imports from the Woodmagic Herd. The Cranworth Herd was dispersed in 1989. Descendents of Cranworth bulls and cows are found in many pedigrees of our Dexters today.

The first Dexter bull in the United States collected for artificial insemination (A.I.) was Parndon Bullfinch and semen was made available to Dexter breeders in 1968. Since that time, more than 50 Dexter bulls have been collected in the United States and made available to Dexter breeders. In 1994, Fred Chesterley (Llanfair Herd) imported semen from England from a registered polled Dexter bull, Saltaire Platinum. Mr. Chesterley used Saltaire Platinum in his own breeding program and also made this semen available to other Dexter breeders that wanted to breed polled Dexters in the United States.

At a special meeting on April 28, 1960, in Decorah, Iowa, John Logsdon, after serving as President for 20 years, stepped down; and Otto C. Jensen (Tak-Sca-Du-Hav Herd) was elected President of the American Dexter Cattle Association. During Otto's six years as President, the regular annual shows at the Hamburg, New York Fair were held. In addition, a special exhibition of Dexters, including an ox team that toured the fairgrounds, was held in September 1960, in Allentown, at the Pennsylvania State Fair.

Annual meetings were held at Hamburg and Cooperstown, New York. At the annual meeting in Albany, New York, on June 11, 1966, Palmer Langdon (New Jersey Herd) was elected

President. During his term, a bred Dexter cow was kept on display at the Central Park Zoo, in New York City, and rotated after her calf reached six months of age.

Frank McCabe (Alander Herd), a prominent New York State banker, was elected President at the annual meeting in Albany on October 5, 1968. During his term, a large meeting was hosted in Cooperstown for all the county agricultural agents of upstate New York. At the November 10, 1974 annual meeting in Newburg, New York, William Carcaud (Melbourne Herd), an active Canadian breeder, became President, but he died two weeks later. Mark Davis (Colorado Herd) of Delaware succeeded him.

In 1977, with impetus from President Mark Davis, the American Dexter Cattle Association became a newly formed, non-profit Delaware corporation. Ten geographical regions were established, each represented by a member of the Board of Directors, elected for a term of three years by the members in good standing of the respective region.

In 1979, James J. (Jim) Johnson (o'Briar Hill Herd) of Ohio was elected President and he served for eight years. Dean Fleharty (Shome Herd) of Missouri served as President in 1987. Sandra Thomas (Thomas' Herd) of Oregon served as President from 1988 to 1989, Philip Martz (Pretty Rolling Meadows, "P.R.M." Herd) of Pennsylvania served as President from 1990 to 1993, Wes Patton (Glenn Land Herd) of California served from 1993 to 1995, R.S. "Shep" Springer (Green Valley Herd) of Colorado and Missouri served from 1995 to 1997, and Jim Johnson of Ohio served again from 1997 to 1999. In 1999, Patrick "Pat" Mitchell (Shamrock Herd) of Michigan was elected as President and served until 2003. Kathy Smith (K-Ro Herd) of New York was President from 2003 to 2004. Chris Ricard (Celestial Herd) of Oregon served as President from 2004 to 2006. Pat Mitchell served again as President from 2006 to 2007. David Jones (Bar None Herd) of Texas was elected President at the annual meeting in Grand Junction, Colorado on June 24, 2007. He served through 2009, when Roberta Wieringa (Wieringa Dexter Farm) was elected. She served through 2011, when she was succeeded by Pam Malcuit, who served through 2013. Jim Woehl was elected in 2013 and is the current President.

Daisy Moore's daughter, Kay Moore Baker (Peerless Herd), became Secretary-Treasurer in September 1982 and served in that capacity until December 1986. Rosemary Fleharty (Shome Herd) became Acting Secretary-Treasurer-Registrar in January 1987, and then Secretary-Treasurer-Registrar in 1988. Rosemary served in that capacity until 2004. In 2004, the American Dexter Cattle Association went through a reorganization, and Chuck Daggett (Daggett's Herd) of Minnesota became the Registrar and Webmaster, Bonnie Boudreau (R & B Herd) of Washington became the Secretary, and James Smith (Whistle Herd) of Missouri became the Treasurer. Bonnie Boudreau served as Secretary until June 2007, when Carol Ann Traynor (Hi-Country Herd) of Colorado became the Secretary. In 2012, Jill Delaney (Delaney Cattle Co.) became Registrar, Ray Delaney (Delaney Cattle Co.) the webmaster, and James Smith continues to serve as Treasurer.

National Dexter shows, in conjunction with an Annual General Meeting (AGM), were held in 1988 and 2002 in Oregon, 1989 in Pennsylvania, 1994 and 2001 in California, 1997 in connection with the Calgary Stampede in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, 2003 and 2011 in Oklahoma, 2004 in Pennsylvania, 1996, 2000, 2005, 2006, and 2013 in Missouri, and 2007 in Colorado. The American Dexter Cattle Association celebrated its 50th Anniversary, 1957 – 2007, with a "Colorado Gold Rush Celebration" in Grand Junction, Colorado in June 2007. In 2008 and again in 2014, the AGM, Show and Sale was held in Texas. Fort Dodge, IA

hosted in 2009. In 2010, the Show moved to Athens, TN, with Fort Wayne, IN the host city in 2012. The 2015 AGM, Show and Sale will be held in Harrisonburg, VA.

Dexter cattle have steadily increased in popularity in America through the years as indicated by the increasing number of registrations and members in the Association. In 1952 there were only 38 Owner/Breeders located in 18 different states. By year-end in 1982 there were a total of 183 Owner/Breeders located in 41 different states and two Canadian Provinces. By year-end in 2005 there were a total of 797 American Dexter Cattle Association members located in 45 different states and four Canadian Provinces. By the end of 2014, there were over 1400 ADCA members in 46 states (including Hawaii!) and four Canadian Provinces.