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Rare expertise

Nick Waters is the author of 'The French Bulldog: Heritage & Art'. BBPress already published two 'Heritage & Art' books written by him, one featuring the Pug and the other the Newfoundland. His popular columns devoted to the dog in art in Dog World in the United Kingdom and Dog News in America are proof of his rare expertise as a canine historian. He has also contributed features on the subject to many other books, magazines and journals that have been published worldwide given the publications extra cachet.

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Prepublication

The French Bulldog – Heritage & Art

Portraits, Pets and People

In the words of author, radio personality and chairman of The Brains Trust, the late C.E.M. Joad, “It all depends what you mean by ...” and in this case it's the French Bulldog.

Text: Nick Waters

This chapter does not set out to be a complete catalogue raisonné of all the pictures painted of French Bulldogs, or indeed the artists who have painted them. With the breed appealing to such a broad spectrum of artists, including

many talented provincial artists, such a task would have been impossible. Hopefully though, it will give a broad insight into the depth of work that has been produced over the last hundred and thirty years or so, how artists have observed the breed, famous artists who have painted it and some famous dogs that have been portrayed.



Dean Wolstenholme (1757-1837). An early 19th century Bulldog showing remarkable similarity to a French Bulldog of virtually a hundred years later. (Photograph courtesy William Secord Gallery, New York)



Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. Bouboule, Mme. Palmyre's pet

Nottingham Frank, illustrated earlier, is always given as an early type, as at times are the dogs in paintings by Henry Bernard Chalon, Abraham Cooper, Dean Wolstenholme and others, but were they French Bulldogs? The answer is probably no. In a breed like the French Bulldog, whose background is shrouded by mystery and not without a little romanticism, and is unquestionably intertwined with other breeds, it is not easy deciding on a starting point for the breed as seen through the eyes of the artist.

For me it seems fitting for a French breed to start in France and with artists from the 19th century. Auguste Vimar (1851-1916), Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864-1901) and Edgar Degas (1834-1917), who between them exemplified the art movement of their time, and in their individual and distinctive ways have captured everything that defined the breed and the social contrasts that surrounded it.

Vimar's work is very narrative. *Causerie des Chiens*, 'gossiping dogs', which was exhibited at the Paris Salon in

1885, the year it was painted, and is now in the Musée des Beaux Arts, Marseille, depicts a somewhat haughty French Bulldog sitting on a tapestry upholstered easy chair, attempting to be the centre of the conversation. Listening intently are a Greyhound, a terrier, its front paws resting on the arm of the chair so not to miss a word, whilst a Toy Spaniel lies curled up beside the French Bulldog oblivious to all that is going on.

The dogs Vimar portrayed were probably his, or at least well-known to him, for the French Bulldog, terrier and Greyhound, along with a second Greyhound and a monkey, appear in a second painting by the artist, *The Connoisseurs*. The animals are admiring a portrait of the French Bulldog on an easel, the subject itself sitting central to the easel to determine the true likeness, the other animals are grouped either side and slightly in front, so that the Frenchie can gage their opinion whilst forming his own.

We know for certain who the dog is in Toulouse-Lautrec's pastel of 1897, *Bouboule*, owned by Mme. Palmyre. His story is told vividly by Robert Rosenblum in *The Dog in*



Auguste Vimar. The Connoisseurs. (Photograph courtesy William Secord Gallery, New York)

Art from Rococo to Post-Modernism (1988). “The dog, Bouboule (a French nickname that, applied to dogs and people, suggests a podgy, butterball face and physique), belonged to a certain Mme. Palmyre, who ran a well-known lesbian restaurant, La Souris, in that seedy, underground milieu Toulouse-Lautrec embraced in both life and his art. As is so often noticed about dogs and their owners, Bouboule was said to resemble Mme. Palmyre, or vice versa, both of them seeming gruff and belligerent, but having barks louder than their bites. Nevertheless, Bouboule, unlike his mistress, presumably disliked women, and according to eyewitness accounts, often ducked under the restaurant tables and urinated on the clients' dresses. Even without being privy to such stories, we can tell, thanks to Toulouse-Lautrec's genius at instant characterisation, that this dog is a memorably streetwise Parisian, a vivid personality in the portrait gallery of fin-de-siècle entertainers and social outcasts created by the artist in the 1890s. Nervously alert from ears to belly, Bouboule seems to be quivering before our eyes, about to growl or snap at any trespasser.”

This swiftly drawn sketch by Toulouse-Lautrec was a first idea for a lithograph destined for a menu and was

reproduced by the French Bulldog Club of America on their menu for the banquet celebrating the club's centennial.

In another work by Toulouse-Lautrec, also painted in 1897, *Le Marchand de Marrons*, the 'chestnut vendor', a self-assured streetwise French Bulldog walks down a dimly lit wet Montmartre street in winter, unnoticed by the vendor, prostitute and beggars. Toulouse-Lautrec was a master at going beyond capturing the moment visually; he was also capable of showing the innermost feelings of those he observed and in this picture the only one who appears to have a purpose in life is the French Bulldog.

Degas' picture which he painted in 1869, and which is now in the Museum of Fine Art in Boston, is one of those 'areas of grey'. Titled *Carriage at the Races*, it is a portrait of the Valpinçon family, pausing in their elegant carriage whilst the wet-nurse, one breast bared, attends to baby Paul. Father watches protectively from his seat, whip in hand and their pet dog keeps vigil beside him. The dog resembles a Toy Bulldog more than it does a French Bulldog of thirty years later, but at least is evidence that



Ilya Repin. Madame Alisa Rivoir with her Pet Dog. (Courtesy of MacDougall Auctions)



Boris Kustodiev. Portrait of Feodor Chaliapin



The late Lady Rose McLaren, the Marquess of Anglesey's sister, photographed with her last Frenchie, Mabel, at her home, Old Bodnant, in 2003 two years before she died. (Photograph courtesy Maureen Bootle)

small Bulldogs were in France at that early date and, importantly, owned by the aristocratic families and not just the lace workers and rural and urban peasants.

Ilya Repin's (1844-1930) portrait, Madame Alisa Rivoir with her Pet Dog, created an auction record for the artist when it was sold by specialist Russian art auctioneers MacDougall's in London in the summer of 2009. The buyer was the Ukrainian collector, Alina Aivazova, wife of the mayor of Kiev, Leonid Chernovetskyi. At £1.2 million pounds it also has to be some sort of record for a piece of artwork in which a French Bulldog is featured. Madame Rivoir is reclining on a sofa surrounded by cushions, seductively baring all for the artist, and petting her brindled French Bulldog who sleeps with his head on her naked thigh.

The picture is not all that at first it appears to be. Having been examined with the assistance of X-rays in the National Gallery in Prague, it turns out that the delicate female body has been painted over the powerful figure of the most famous Russian opera singer of the 20th century,

Feodor Ivanovich Chaliapin, who rose from a peasant background to stardom.

The Chaliapin picture was painted in 1914 and exhibited at the Itinerants Exhibition that year. For reasons that are not wholly clear, Repin decided that a few years later he would superimpose a nude woman on top of Chaliapin's figure, only his French Bulldog, the dark brindled Bull'ka, remains. Repin, aged seventy-two, had become fascinated with Alisa Rivoir, a French language teacher, and her portrait was painted over that of Chaliapin in 1918.

Repin was born in the small Ukrainian town of Tchuguev, he studied art at St. Petersburg Academy of Arts, in Italy and in Paris and was witness to the first exhibition of the Impressionists. He returned to Russia and lived in Moscow until the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 when he moved to Finland. This picture was painted in Russia, was witness to the Bolshevik Revolution, re-painted in Finland, bought by the Czechoslovakian collector Emil Salus, seized by the State, restituted to Salus's niece, sold at Sotheby's, bought by a collector in Europe, sold by MacDougall's, and now owned by the wife of the mayor of Kiev. If such pictures could talk they would have a fascinating story to tell.

Chaliapin was again painted with a French Bulldog, this time in 1922 with a pied dog. The artist was Boris Kustodiev (1878-1927) who was born in Astrakhan and the picture is now in the National Russian Museum. Kustodiev studied art at the Imperial Academy of Arts from where he received a grant to study in France and Spain. He also visited Germany and Austria before returning to Russia, where, in 1923, he joined the Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia. His work is often dramatic in composition evoking images of his fatherland which he missed when abroad.

This is true of his portrait of Chaliapin, an imposing figure befitting for the great Russian bass singer, wearing a Cossack hat, large fur-lined overcoat, patent shoes and spats, leaning on a swagger cane, his daughter Marina's pet French Bulldog Roika at his side. He stands on a snow-covered rise against an evocative Russian scene with a fair in the background and in the middle ground, walking through the snow to the fair, are Marina, her elder sister Marfusha and Isaika Dvorischin, a chorister at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg.

For me the most iconic of English pictures of the breed is Rex Whistler's mural at Plas Newydd in North Wales. Even though it was painted in Wales and is hanging in Wales I deliberately used the word 'English', for Whistler's art was peculiarly English of the period being rather kitsch and deliberately nostalgic.

It is known to all lovers of French Bulldog paintings yet,



Carl Reichert. 'Two Heads are Better than One'

ironically, the breed appears in only a small segment. It is Whistler's masterpiece, a vast mural created for the 6th Marquess of Anglesey and covers an entire wall of the dining room. The 'mural' is in fact a painting 58 feet wide, it was executed on one enormous canvas Whistler had made on a special French loom.

Reginald John 'Rex' Whistler was born in London in 1905 and was killed by a mortar bomb in Normandy in July 1944. In his relatively brief career a series of witty, story-telling murals had established Whistler as a singularly figurative artist. His admirers have suggested that had he lived, he would have gone on to rival Hockney and Freud.

He was accepted for the Royal Academy school but disliked the regime and was sacked for incompetence. From there he went on to study at the Slade and on leaving the Slade embarked on a dazzling career. He moved with and painted many members of London society, including Edith Sitwell, Cecil Beaton, the Mitfords and others, and along with them he was a member of the deliberately fey set known as the 'Bright Young Things'.

The Marquess of Anglesey was Lord Chamberlain to Queen Mary but he was surprisingly unstuffy. He was an accomplished home-movie maker and there was often a

slightly Bohemian air about Plas Newydd. Whistler would have been the obvious choice to fulfil Anglesey's commission.

Whistler's personal story is one of original talent, unrequited love and a tragic death and it could be said that the backdrop to his story is Plas Newydd.



Arthur Heyer. A White Persian Kitten with a French Bulldog. Heyer was as much a cat artist as he was a dog artist and had a penchant for white



Enjar Vindfeldt. 'Frog Dog' is a nickname used fondly when referring to French Bulldogs

Painted between 1936 and 1937, others have commented that the mural is full of love but tinged with sadness for the family as a whole, but most of all for the Anglesey's one daughter, Lady Caroline. The artist's love for her, who married someone else, is revealed in the coded references he includes in his Arcadian and Romantic view of a coastal landscape. His romantic feelings for her echoed on the left side of the mural and include a depiction of Romeo and Juliet in which the young Whistler (Romeo) languishes beneath the balcony of Lady Caroline (Juliet). The reality though is that he could never have Juliet and he contents himself as the gardener on the mural sweeping leaves.

The painting is also filled with expressions of Whistler's humour, most notable being the family's pet dogs, a Pug and the pampered French Bulldog, Cheekie, resplendent in a pearl collar and lying on a pink tasselled cushion, his back turned to a bowl of stew, for he only eats best steak. The Pug stands on two books in order to reach the top of the step to get a better view of all that is going on, and by its side Lady Anglesey's glasses and her smouldering cigarette end. The Pug lacks the courage to move any closer to the food.

The story the mural has to tell only adds to its everlasting appeal.

The Marchioness of Anglesey was an enthusiastic French Bulldog owner and joined the French Bulldog Club of England in 1934, quite possibly at the time she had Cheekie. She and Caroline's sister, Lady Elizabeth, selected a French Bulldog on a visit to Crufts. Her third daughter, Lady Rose McLaren was a devotee of French Bulldogs all her life and for many years was Patron of the club.

Lady Rose had her first dog when she was old enough to care for a dog herself and she named her Zinnia, after her

favourite flower. Zinnia is also on the mural at the bottom of the stairs, peeping round the column. Her husband John, the second son of Lord Aberconway whom she married in 1940, bought her second French Bulldog, Dinah, who was followed by Zsa Zsa, Zellie and others, and she owned Mabel at the time of her death. Dinah was photographed by Baron who was seen by many as the founder of fashion photography. He sent her a signed photograph with the dedication 'to Dinah with love from Baron'.

Before marrying John, Rose was engaged twice to the Duke of Wellington. John died in tragic circumstances in 1953 and it was a devastating blow to Rose who never remarried. For years she lived in London and, like Whistler, moved with the avant-garde set and visited the Colony Room in Soho where she mixed with Francis Bacon, Lucian Freud and others. In 1958 she began a flower business from the basement of her Chelsea home and created the floral displays for Princess Margaret's wedding to Antony Armstrong-Jones. In 1975 she returned to North Wales to a house on the Aberconway estate, Old Bodnant, where she lived the aristocratic social life expected of a Marquess's daughter and died in 2005 aged eighty-six. She lived a colourful and interesting life like other famous ladies before her who all fell for the charm and looks of the French Bulldog.

Another of the great 20th century artists attracted to the French Bulldog was the America pop artist Andy Warhol (1928-1987), the son of immigrants from what was known as Czechoslovakia. With the breed's individuality, its attractive ugliness and favoured by those who stretched the boundaries of sexuality, the French Bulldog was perhaps an obvious choice.



Paul Kapell. A Standing French Bulldog. (Photograph Courtesy William Secord Gallery, New York)



Richard Hewitt Moore. Ch Ninon De L'Enclos

For French fashion icon, Yves Saint Laurent (YSL), Warhol painted Moujik II (each of YSL's French Bulldogs were known as Moujik), the subject of the final portrait painted by Warhol a year before he died, and the only dog ever immortalised by the great pop artist who helped immortalise such icons as Marilyn Monroe and Campbell's Soup.

For over twenty years YSL designed small season's greetings posters entitled Love. Generally they were pop art images with a heart appearing as the central motif. His 1991 image was different as it represented one of YSL's true loves, his beloved Moujik II. Using four images of his pet painted by Warhol, YSL arranges them against a bright yellow background interspaced with a text that translates as 'He is Moujik, my dog, painted by Andy Warhol, I am Yves Saint Laurent', and with 'Love 1991' along the bottom of the poster.

Allegedly, YSL chose the name Moujik for all his dogs because he was a close friend of Lilya Brik who had been the darling of the Russian avant-garde. She had been the girlfriend of Vladimir Mayakovsky, one of the most famous Russian poets of the early 1900s, who had a brindle Frenchie named Bulka. Mayakovsky supported the Bolsheviks until he understood what Stalin had in store and then he killed himself, although some people have suggested that he was murdered following an order of the KGB. It is perhaps surprising that Mayakovsky had a Frenchie knowing that the Soviet authorities thought the breed was somehow a sign of the 'forever gone appalling days of Tsarist Russian'. Lilya Brik managed to escape Russia with a pied French Bulldog named Moujik.

Two continental artists working throughout the latter part of the 19th century and into the 20th deserving of inclusion are the Austrian, Carl Reichert and his German-born contemporary Arthur Heyer. Carl Reichert was born



Richard Hewitt Moore. Hunk

in Vienna in 1836 and died in 1918 at Graz. He came from a family of artists, his father was the painter, Heinrich Reichert and his brother, also called Heinrich, was a theatre painter in Prague. A member of Vienna Artists' Union, Künstlerhaus, for the latter part of the 19th century he lived in the city where he created his best dog and cat genre paintings.

Reichert's work, often small in scale, is carefully observed and detailed and has a depth of realism that defined much of the work of continental animal painters at that time. Many of his paintings depict dogs interacting with one another, sometimes with cats, often engaged in humorous play. His original paintings appear in auction from time to time, but he is known to a wide section of enthusiasts through much of his work having been published in postcard form. His paintings of French Bulldogs are some of the earliest portraits of the breed.

Primarily a painter of cats and kittens, Arthur Heyer was



Maud Earl. King Edward VII's Peter



Maud Earl. Ch Qui Qui of Amersham

born in Haarhausen, Germany in 1872 and died in 1931 in Budapest, Hungary. He studied art in Berlin. Like Reichert, his pictures frequently depict animals interacting with one another, very often one being a white Persian cat. In fact he seemed to have a penchant for white as the French Bulldogs he painted were often very light in colour. With cats being his most popular subject, when shown with dogs, his pictures often had a moral behind them; for example brain – the cat – triumphing over brawn – the dog.

Other listed continental artists whose work has featured the breed include two Danish artists, Ejnar Vindfeldt (1905-1953) and Otto Bache (1839-1927), the German Artist, Paul Kapell (1876-1943) and the Austrian artist, Leo Sauer (b.1944).

Vindfeldt painted a brindle Frenchie standing on the edge of a wood looking at a toad on a rock (Frog Dog is a nickname used fondly when referring to French Bulldogs). On the back of the picture is an old label inscribed "Janat' Malet af Dyremaleren. Exhibited National Art Gallery Charlottenborg November 1953 Year of Artist's death.' Bache's picture painted in 1900 shows Princess Marie d'Orleans with a French Bulldog given to her by her father, Prince Robert d'Orleans, when she married Prince Valdemar of Denmark in 1885, to remind her of her fatherland. Kapell's portrait dated 1928 is done in an impressionistic style and shows a standing French Bulldog wearing a traditional badger/hog's hair collar. Sauer's acrylic is titled *So What?* and shows a pied dog sitting on a window ledge with an imaginary landscape of trees, cliffs, a waterfall and boats beyond. This picture was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1984.

Princess Zenaida Nikolaievna Yusupov was one of the outstanding beauties of her day. In 1894 the French academic painter, Francois Flameng (1856-1923) painted two portraits of the Princess, one in a sumptuous dress decorated with the famous La Pelegrina Pearl, which once belonged to King Philip II of Spain, and one with her two sons in the gardens at Arkhangelskoïe. Sitting prominently in the foreground of the picture is her pet French Bulldog, evidently very important in her life. The artist, in addition to being a portrait and historical painter and one who decorated public buildings, was one of the most renowned illustrators of the Great War in France.

Zenaida was one of the greatest Russian heiresses of her day and last of her line at the House of Yusupov, whose panoply of wealth was so colossal as to be beyond the power of its owners to assess. She married Count Felix Nikolaievich Soumarokoff-Elston and he took his wife's family name. She was a leading figure in pre-Revolutionary Russia who was famed for her lavish hospitality. In private life she was a severe critic of

Empress Alexandra who told her in 1916 never to appear again in her presence. Zenaida's eldest son, Prince Nicolas, was killed in a duel over a married woman, Countess Marina Heyden. Following the Russian Revolution the family lived in Rome but when Count Felix died she moved to Paris where she died in 1939.

Valentin Aleksandrovich Serov (1865-1911) was one of the foremost Russian Impressionists who numbered many members of the Russian aristocracy amongst his clients. In 1904 he painted Princess Zenaida's surviving son, the seventeen-year-old Count Felix Soumarokoff-Elston (later Prince Felix Yusupov) with his fawn French Bulldog, Gugusse, which now hangs in the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg. A photograph exists showing Serov working on the portrait, Felix standing to one side of the easel, his dog in his arms. Like so many other dogs in portraits around this time, the finished portrait of Gugusse looks very different to Gugusse in real life. Felix, like so many other owners, wanted the world to see his beloved pet looking as perfect as possible, so with a few strokes of the brush, the rather soft ears suddenly became bat ears!

In *Lost Splendour* (1953), Felix writes "Serov was much pleased with the portrait he painted of me. Diaghilev asked us to allow him to include it in the exhibition of Russian art which he organised in Venice in 1907, but it brought me so much notoriety that my parents were annoyed and requested Diaghilev to withdraw it from the exhibition."

Considered one of the spoilt darlings of his age, Felix took pleasure in pushing his parents to their limit. At parties he trotted out his drunken friend, who then relieved himself on the elegant guests, much to Felix's amusement.

He indulged Gugusse, purchased in Paris in 1900, on chocolates and champagne and one day he went too far. He dressed his dog as a prostitute, complete with dress and wig, face paint and powder, and sent him into the drawing room where the minister of religion was being received. The dog promptly sprayed the illustrious visitor, driving the minister out of the palace in a near fit.

Serov's portrait rather belies the fact that Felix would grow up to be remembered as the man who allegedly in 1916, in what was then considered a patriotic act, murdered the 'Mad Monk', Grigori Rasputin, one of Russia's most notorious figures. However, much of what Felix wrote and said is believed to be based on half fact and half fiction, and the real part he played in the killing of Rasputin remains to be proven.

After the death of his brother, Felix became heir to the

vast Yusupov inheritance. He married the Tsar's niece, Princess Irina of Russia and they had one daughter, also called Irina. Following the abdication of the Tsar, the family went into exile, taking with them jewellery and two paintings by Rembrandt, the sale proceeds of which helped sustain the family in exile. From St. Petersburg they travelled to the Crimea where they boarded the British warship, HMS Marlborough, for Malta. From there they travelled to Italy, bribing the officials with diamonds as they had no visas, then by train to Paris, before going on to London.

They returned to Paris in 1920 where they ran a fashion house called Irfe (Irina and Felix). In Paris they befriended and helped many fellow displaced Russians. In 1934 Felix successfully sued MGM for alleged libel in the film *Rasputin and the Empress*, and was awarded damages of £25,000, an enormous sum at that time. In 1965 he sued Columbia Broadcasting Systems in a New York court for televising a play based upon the Rasputin assassination. The claim was that some of the events were fictionalized. CBS eventually won the case. Felix died in Paris in 1967, it is said haunted by Rasputin's murder.

The image portrayed by Serov in this portrait – a pampered pet of the over-privileged classes whose autocratic, arrogant and sometimes dissolute lifestyles would ultimately contribute to their downfall – could not have been further removed from that portrayed by Richard Hewitt Moore (late 19th/early 20th century) in his pair of pen and ink portraits of Ch Ninon De L'Enclos and Hunk – pure-bred animals fast establishing themselves on the burgeoning international show scene.

Moore was from North Leigh in Oxfordshire and on leaving school he apprenticed as a wood engraver but eventually gave up this medium, feeling the technique too confining. He took up drawing as a profession, studying the figure and portraiture, then moving on to animal studies before almost exclusively devoting himself to dogs.

He contributed illustrations to *The Stock-Keeper*, *Sporting and Dramatic News*, *Fancier's Gazette*, *Fox Terrier Journal*, *Illustrated London News* and many others. He illustrated numerous books including Rawdon B. Lee's *Modern Dogs* and C.H. Lane's *All About Dogs* and it is this book, published in 1900, which is the most complete source for Moore's work.

Moore's drawings of Ch. Ninon De L'Enclos and Hunk were drawn at the end of the 19th century and reproduced in *The Stock-Keeper* and are amongst the earliest portraits of named French Bulldogs. The drawings were included in the first selling catalogue issued by the great bibliophile, Gerald Massey, in 1945 and were priced at £5

for the pair.

Hunk and Ninon were 'areas of grey' as both were CC winning Toy Bulldogs owned by Lady Kathleen Pilkington, Hunk won the dog CC at Crufts in 1902 and Ninon the bitch CC two years later. Lady Pilkington considered Ninon "upheld the prestige of the breed on the show-bench." She was named after Anne 'Ninon' De L'Enclos, French authoress, courtesan and patron of the arts who died in 1705. Saint-Simon summed up her career: "A shining example of the triumph of vice, when directed with intelligence and redeemed by a little virtue."

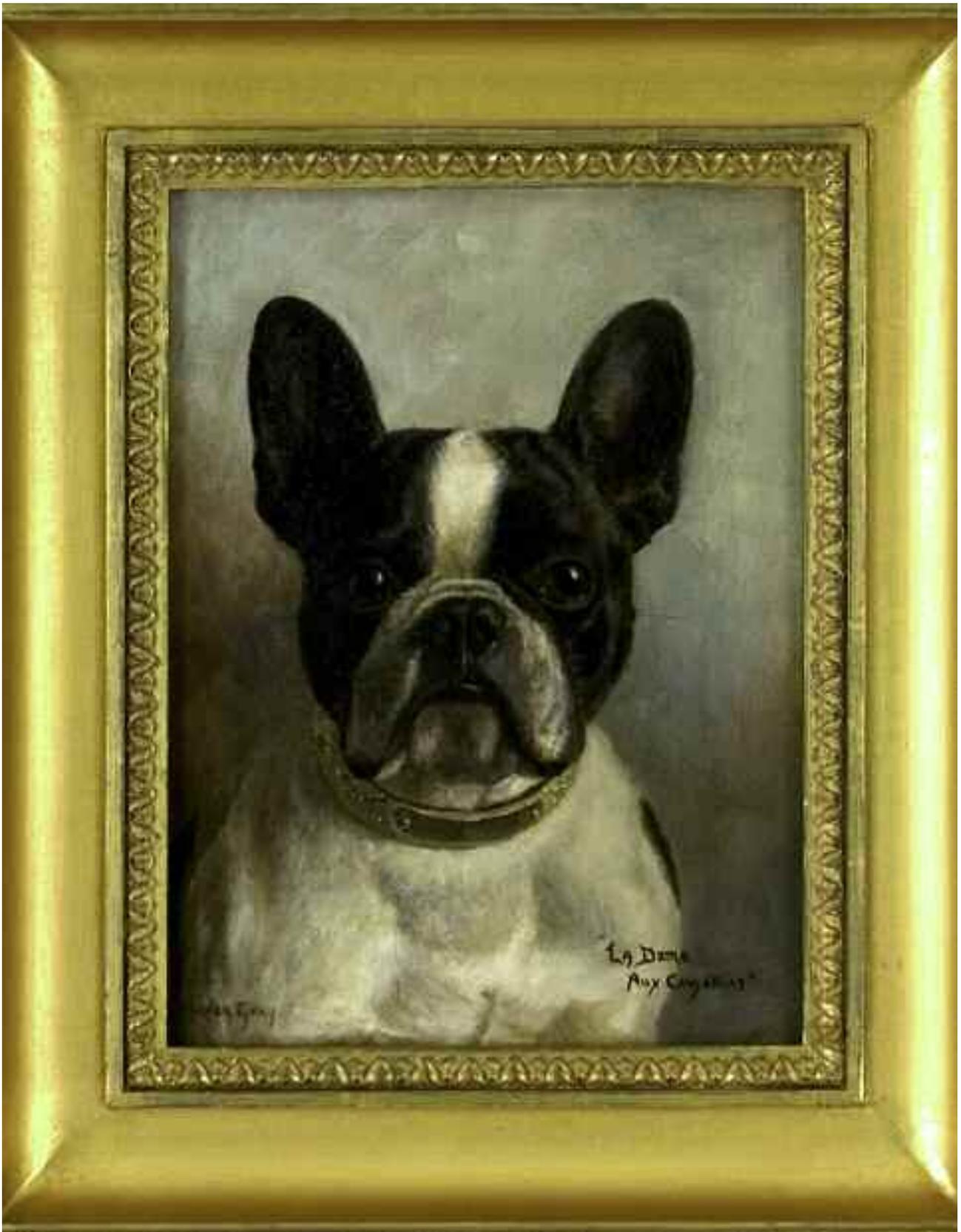
Ninon also appeared in a painting by Maud Earl (1863-1943), along with the bat-eared Ch Peter Amos. The original painting now hangs in the Kennel Club's collection and was reproduced as a photogravure, number 22, in Maud Earl's 1903 portfolio, *Terriers and Toys*, with the title *Toy Bulldogs. England Expects*.

The name Maud Earl became virtually synonymous with paintings of pedigree dogs and she returned to the 'breed' (be it Toy Bulldogs or French Bulldogs) on a number of occasions. Apart from the picture mentioned above and the double portrait of Samuel Goldenburg's Nellcote Polo and Nellcote Miss Columbia, as mentioned earlier, there were others. King Edward VII's Toy Bulldog, Peter, a second double portrait for Lady Pilkington showing Ch Chevet Punch, one of the last champion Toy Bulldogs, made up in 1911, and Chevet Daisy, who traced back to Ch Prince Albert, one of the most illustrious of the 'standard' Bulldogs.

Others included Ch Dinnette, owned by Mrs Charles Waterlow and painted in 1913; Ch Qui Qui of Amersham owned by Mrs Pelham Clinton, and reproduced in black and white as one of the plates in Earl's portfolio published in 1913, *Whose Dog Art Thou?* with quotations from Omar Khayyam, and a portrait of an unidentified dog painted in 1910.

There were also two patriotic/political paintings; *England Expects*, showing a Bulldog and a French Bulldog, which was published as a print by Thos. Agnew & Sons, London in 1914 as the world was entering the most devastating and bloody war ever, and *The Allies*, which shows a Frenchie together with a Borzoi, Japanese Chin, Griffon Bruxellois and Bulldog, which was reproduced as a supplement to the *Illustrated London News*.

Some years later she painted a decorative panel showing a brindle and two light fawns. Such panels Maud Earl referred to as her 'Chinese style' but they were actually more influenced by Japanese art. Titled *King Edward's Bulls* and dated 1927, many years after the King's death and also the artist's move to America in 1915, it is not



Monica Gray. La Dame Aux Camellias. (Photograph Courtesy William Secord Gallery, New York)



Monica Gray. An Old Friend. Because of this picture's interesting background, the current owner keeps it in its un-restored state

clear if the title refers to dogs owned by King Edward VII, or, more likely, the breed that was the King's favourite, Peter being his most notable companion and with whom he was frequently photographed. Gertrude Massey (1868-1957) as a tribute to the King's affection for Peter painted a small watercolour portrait of the dog on ivory. The artist was well known for her miniature portraits of the Royal Family, including the King, then Prince of Wales, as a young boy.

English artist Monica Gray was working in the closing years of the 19th century until the 1920s. A landscape painter whose talents also extended to dogs, specialising in head studies, with at least five studies by her of French Bulldogs known. A brindle and white titled *La dame aux Caméllias*, a brindle, and a pair of small oils of *Ch La Valliere* and her son *Ch André*, who won the CC at Crufts in 1915. These last two pictures were sold by Gerald Massey in 1945 for £10 the pair.

The fifth picture is also a small oil of an unidentified dog titled *An Old Friend*. This picture once belonged to the late Miss H.M. Loughrey, a member of one of the old Anglo-Irish families who lived in Londonderry in Northern Ireland. She was a great character in her distinctive pin-striped suit and trilby hat and was one of



Florence Mabel Hollams. Lady Dorchester's four French Bulldogs. (Photograph Courtesy Dreweatt-Neate)

the top all-round judges in Britain, having previously, together with her sister, been a successful breeder and exhibitor of Deerhounds. Her last years were not happy ones, alone, struggling with increasing blindness, her house was twice ransacked, once by drunken soldiers from an army regiment and once by the IRA. This small picture is un-restored and has a slash allegedly inflicted by a member of the IRA.

Florence Mabel Hollams (Mrs. Charles Lionel Fox) (1877-1963) was another British artist whose work includes a number of pictures of French Bulldogs. A member of the Society of Women Artists, she studied art at the Cauldron School of Animal Painting in London and at the Atelier Julian in Paris. In her early years as an artist she had four paintings hung at the Royal Academy.

First and foremost an equestrian artist, she also painted many dogs and her work is characterised by the image being straightforwardly presented against a plain background. She was herself a lady of means and moved with the 'county set' and it is alleged that she rarely discussed money with her clients. Clients collecting finished pictures were always bid farewell by her butler with a silver salver on which they were expected to place £25 – in cash!

Lady Dorchester, owner of the four French Bulldogs in one of her paintings, was typical of Hollams' patrons. She was the daughter of Baron de Blaquiere, Great Alnager of Ireland. Of the four dogs in this picture, one is the bitch, Faux-Pas, one her son, Mon Homme, and one her daughter, Gage D'Amour, both children bred by Lady Dorchester. The only one which has been identified is Gage D'Amour, who is on the right.

Faux-Pas was Lady Dorchester's first French Bulldog; she was bred by Mrs Clyne by Gaminot Fils ex Plain Jane. All her litter-mates were bought by Mrs Lesmoir-Gordon and given her Hadley affix. Gaminot Fils traces back to Lady Kathleen Pilkington's famous Toy Bulldog, Ch Pere Boojum, who was born in 1896. Plain Jane soon goes back to unregistered dogs – was that why she was given such an unfortunate name?

When Lady Dorchester bred from Faux-Pas she chose one of Mrs. Hubert Roberts' leading stud dogs, Ch L'Enfant Prodigue. He was homebred, being by Mrs Armour's Ch Hunks Bequest, a dog imported from America, ex Lillah, who went back to Countess Sponneck-Meyer's Ch Sans Pareil. Gage D'Amour was the only one of Lady Dorchester's dogs to be shown and was qualified for the Stud Book by her win in the open bitch class at the Ranelagh show under Mrs Lesmoir-Gordon.

Of her other French Bulldog pictures, the most important



Frederick Thomas Daws. Melise of the Bandbox, a winner at Westminster in 1921

is Bonham's Close Tamus. Bred by Mr Clayton, Tamus was born in 1944 and sired by Major Barnaby ex Bonham's Close Tringa. This picture was sold by Bonhams in London in 1986 for £600 and is now in a private collection in America. Hollams also painted Tamus's son, the pied dog, Ashmill Pierrot, and Bonhams sold this picture in 1997 for £1,000. It had come to auction from F.G. Chiswell. Both dogs were owned by Joyce Hargreaves who bought Tamus (Buzzy) in 1946 from Mrs Cochrane for £8. He was offered at stud for five guineas.

Tamus was also painted by Alix Jennings (Mrs) (b.1900 fl.1927-1948). In many cases when two or more artists painted the same dog, because of their individual styles, it is not always possible to recognise the dog portrayed as being the same individual. Tamus obviously had a strong personality, for although the Jennings is not a copy of the Hollams, and both artists have stamped their own styles on the portraits, both are unquestionably Tamus.

A famous Fox Terrier of the early 20th century was painted by John Emms, Maud Earl and Arthur Wardle and because of the artists' individual approach to their art – paint thickly and loosely applied by Emms, an almost impressionistic style from Maud Earl, and a realism recording perfection by Arthur Wardle – the three



Fannie Moody. A Quartet of Frenchies

portraits at a glance look like three different dogs.

In depicting the French Bulldog, Hollams was joined by a number of fellow British artists who painted dogs, including Arthur Wardle, Frederick Thomas Daws, Fannie Moody, George Vernon Stokes, Bridget Olerenshaw, Herbert Dicksee and Lionel Edwards.

It is perhaps wrong to give Lionel Edwards (1878-1966) the appellation of 'dog artist' for he was one of Britain's leading sporting artists, mainly hunting and horses. For Joyce Hargreaves he painted headstudies of two of her dogs and these were always prominently displayed in her dining room.

Arthur Wardle (1864-1949) was, and indeed still is, one of Britain's best known and highly regarded dog artists. He had little, if any, formal training and went on to exhibit 113 works at the Royal Academy and held his first solo exhibition at the Fine Art Society in 1931. His output was extensive, producing a great body of commercial work and countless private commissions. Very much associated with terriers, he did though include two French Bulldogs in a gouache study of a number of prize winning dogs that

would have been painted on commission for the Illustrated London News or similar. Dated circa 1895 the two dogs are W.W. Crocker's Parisiana and Lady Lewis's Harpton Puck. The reality is, that although French Bulldog enthusiasts look at this illustration and think 'French Bulldog', they are in fact Toy Bulldogs.

Frederick Thomas Daws (b.1878) studied at Lambeth School of Art and although he is perhaps best known as a painter, he was, in my opinion, more accomplished as a sculptor. A number of his pieces were cast in bronze, including a French Bulldog, but his legacy is the series of models he produced for Royal Doulton for their 'Champion Dogs' range. As an artist he is best remembered for the many pictures he painted of the Mannerhead Poodles for their owner, Mrs Campbell Inglis. Daws also found success in India and America and a French Bulldog he painted in America was Melise of the Bandbox, painted at Westminster in 1921.

Fannie Moody (Mrs. Gilbert King) (1861-c.1947) was a member of the Society of Women Artists and exhibited regularly at a number of galleries, including the Royal Academy. The Kennel Club has in its collection a painting



Herbert Dicksee. Shaver, the artist's dog

titled *Entente Cordiale* featuring a Bulldog and a French Bulldog. The understanding between Britain and France reached in 1904 formed the basis of Anglo-French cooperation in the First World War. This painting is a fine example of her work and repeats a theme the artist used many times of painting portrait studies of two similar breeds, each complementing the other.

A second pastel by Fannie Moody shows a group of four Frenchies which would have been a commission. Sadly their identities are lost to the passage of time, as so often happens when portraits are not inscribed.

Herbert Dicksee (1862-1942) is best known for his etchings. He was born into an artistic family and grew up alongside many of the famous sporting and animal artists. Although dogs account for the bulk of his work, he never portrayed the show dog, Dicksee's dogs were companions and comforters, guards, finding a role alongside man and being appreciated for it. Dicksee's family were great dog owners and virtually all the dogs in his pictures were painted from life and belonging to members of the family. His own favourite breed was the Bloodhound but he also owned a French Bulldog named Shaver, who is the one featured in his etchings.

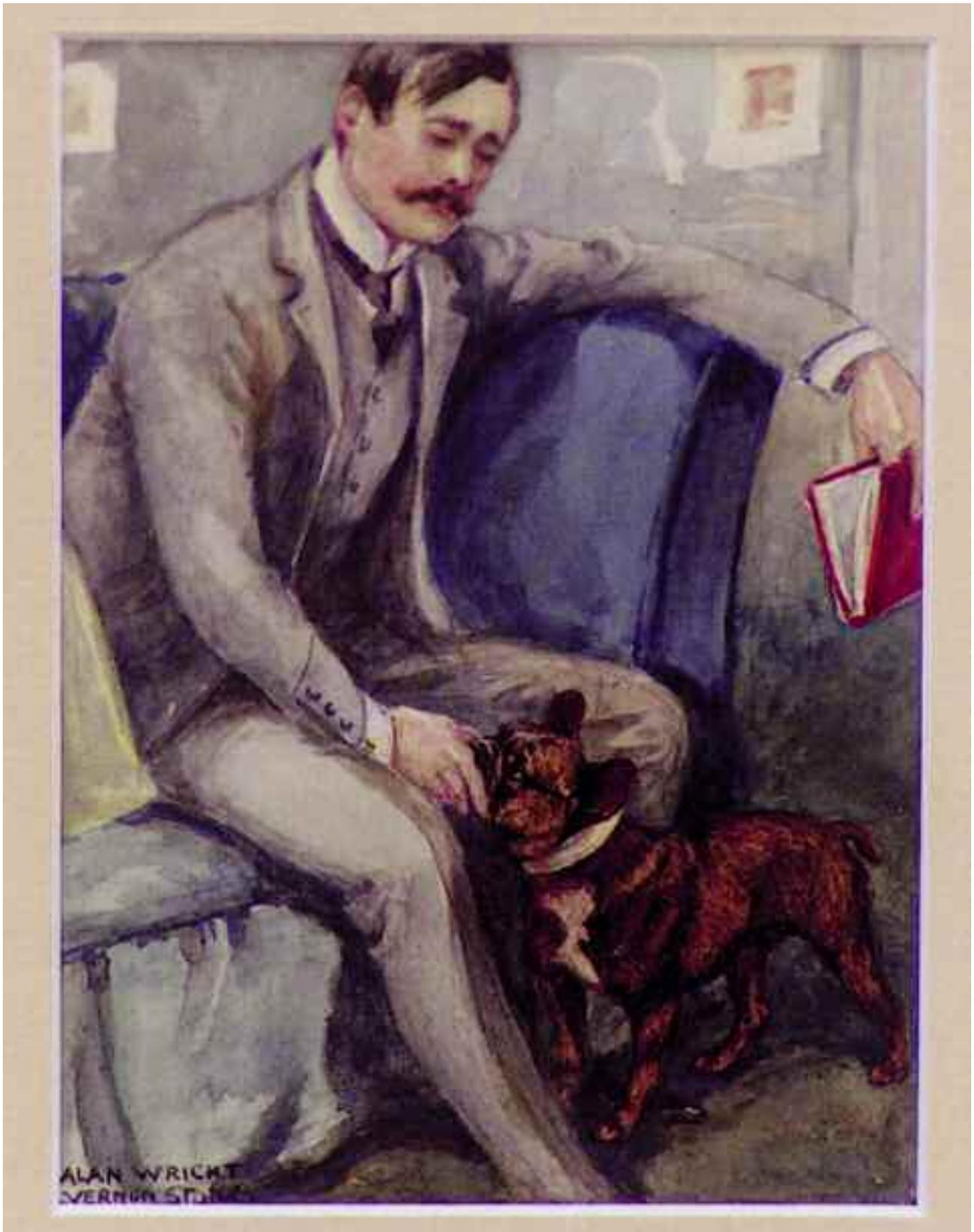
Shaver was also the only dog he ever entered at a show –



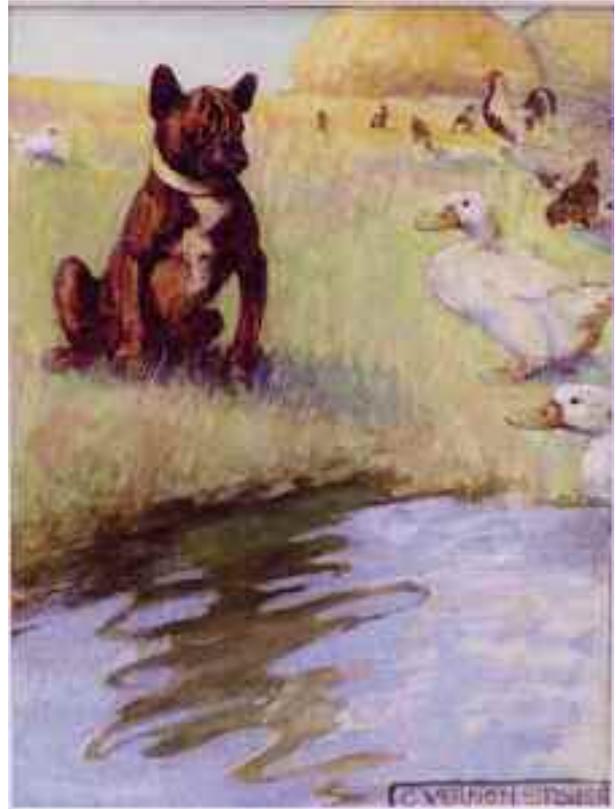
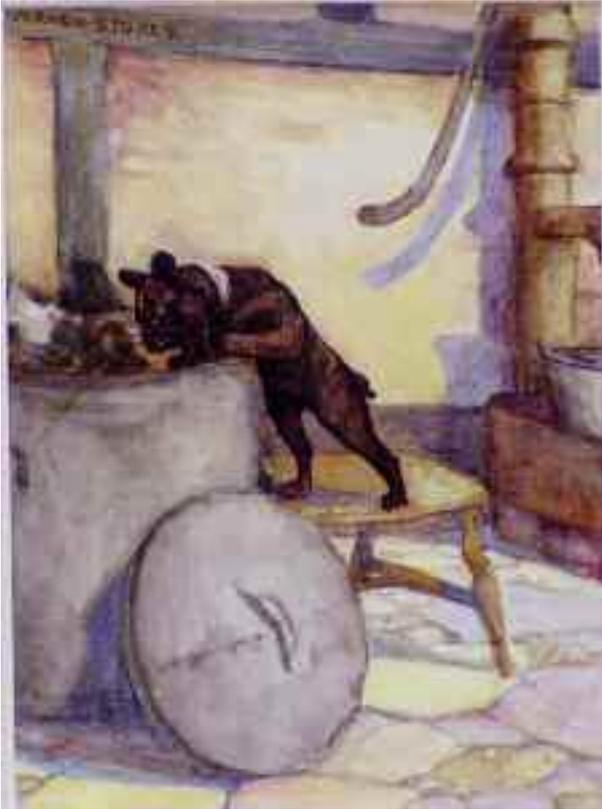
Marjorie Cox. Ch Fifinette of the Moorings



Marjorie Cox. Ch Quatt Tiger Tim



George Vernon Stokes and Alan Wright. An illustration for Maurice Maeterlinck's My Dog. The subjects are believed to be Maeterlinck and his dog Pelléas



George Vernon Stokes. Illustrations for Maurice Maeterlinck's *My Dog*

one at Olympia in London. He decided the dog was too fat to show, so they walked from Hampstead to the venue to get weight off the dog before they went in the ring. History does not relate if the exercise was successful, whether either had the strength to go in the ring when they got there, or indeed if they won a prize!

Another artist who, like Dicksee, is remembered today for his engravings rather than his paintings, is Kurt Meyer-Eberhardt (1895-1977). Born in Leipzig, he studied at the Weimar Academy of Arts, where he was a master student of the artists Theodor Hagen and Lyonel Feininger. He rejected the offer of a professorship in Weimar in order to continue painting independently. In 1926 he had his last exhibition in the New Secession, Munich and afterwards gradually retired from the public art scene. His copper engravings, which were published by Hanfstaengl, include six French Bulldogs and one group engraving that includes a Frenchie.

Marjorie Cox (1915-2003) was one of the most prolific dog artists Britain has produced. She trained at Heatherley's Art School in London and started selling work while still at the studio. She worked in the tradition of the jobbing provincial artists of old, travelling the country, being chauffeured from one commission to another by her patrons. Although she did paint many show

dogs, sadly the bulk of her output is inscribed with the dogs' pet names only.

The pastels of French Bulldogs she completed included Ch Fifi of the Moorings, owned by Major and Mrs Gibson, and Ch Quatt Tiger Tim owned by Joan Cottrell. Fifi was the first post-war bitch champion in her breed and winner of the group at Blackpool in 1947 and reserve BIS at Richmond the same year.

George Vernon Stokes (1873-1954) was a sporting and animal painter, often of dogs; he was also an accomplished etcher and illustrator of note. For a while he worked in Carlisle and the Lake District was obviously a great influence on much of his work. His illustrations appear in many magazines and over a dozen dog books, including the first edition of Maurice Maeterlinck's *My Dog*. His book, *The Drawing and Painting of Dogs*, was published in 1934.

Most of the six illustrations he completed for *My Dog* are known still to exist. The human figure in one of the watercolours was painted by Alan Wright (1864-1959), whose style complemented that of Stokes. It is thought to be Maeterlinck, who owned several French Bulldogs, one of which, Pelléas, is the subject of *My Dog*.



Bridget Olerenshaw. Ch Benhooks Cider Cup with his three Crufts Best of Breed cards

Bridget Olerenshaw (op. 1960s/70s) is the least well known of the group of British artists mentioned, nevertheless she painted many top winning dogs. She also illustrated Sonia Lampson's *Country Life Book of Dogs* (1963). Her contribution to the French Bulldog in art is a painting of the first British fawn champion, Mrs Pat Cox's Ch Benhooks Cider Cup, three times BOB at Crufts from 1964 to 1966. A ringside reporter at the 1965 show described him as a "fabulous fawn whose movement is a poem, lovely size, massive bone and short back."

This next picture appears to have had in effect four 'incarnations'. Photographed by Ylla (Camilla Koffler) (1911-1955), a talented photographer with a studio in Paris but whose untimely death came in India when she fell from the hood of a Jeep whilst photographing a bullock cart race. Next it was reproduced by Senior Service cigarettes as number 30 in a series of 48 studies of dogs.

The photograph of this rather soulful pied dog then became the inspiration for Camille Bombois (1883-1970) picture that he painted in France during the occupation. A remarkable character, he had travelled with a circus as a strongman and wrestler, once had a job on a newspaper by night and received three decorations for bravery following World War I.

A great opportunist, he gave his picture to Clementine Churchill, wife of Winston Churchill, around 1944/45 because he thought it looked like Winston. Surprisingly she liked and appreciated it and it hung in his study at Chartwell for many years. She was not afraid to be critical of art and famously had Graham Sutherland's portrait of Sir Winston (who was knighted by The Queen in 1953 at Windsor Castle) destroyed which had been commissioned by Parliament in honour of Sir Winston's 80th birthday. When Lady Churchill moved to her London flat the Bombois picture was one of the few she took with her.

It was one of a group of six pictures Lady Churchill was forced to sell shortly before she died to meet rising costs. It was bought at Christie's in London in March 1977 for £10,000 by Canadian lawyer and collector Harry Zahoruk, who had corresponded with Lady Churchill about the picture just a few days before she died.

The fourth 'incarnation' is a painting by the French Dadaist/Surrealist painter and poet, Francis Picabia (1879-1953), which he painted in 1942. In *Femmes au Bulldog*, the rather soulful Frenchie has acquired a rather sly cheeky look, or is it one's imagination simply because he is now accompanied by two curvaceous naked ladies? *Femmes au Bulldog* was included in Tate Modern's big spring show in London in March 2008 titled Duchamp, Man Ray, Picabia.

I strongly suspect that Lady Churchill would not have been amused by this painting. The very thought of an image that had been likened to Sir Winston being shown with two naked Parisienne beauties would have been too much for her to bear! Not to mention her husband being likened to a symbol of French nationhood! In accepting the Bombois painting she could not have considered this, or perhaps like some others who do not know breeds, failed to differentiate between a French Bulldog and a 'British' Bulldog.

Born before the First World War into a Welsh Nonconformist family, Leta Ogwen-Jones has lived an interesting life. Educated at Cheltenham Ladies' College, an early proponent of racial equality, social work in the slums of Liverpool during the Thirties, relief work with dispossessed refugees in Eastern Europe following the Second World War and finally she had to confront this century's heart of darkness, when she entered the gates of the concentration camp at Dachau.



Ylla (Camilla Koffler). A Senior Service cigarette card from the series 'Dogs' 1939

In the late 1950s, Leta saw a postcard of a French Bulldog wearing a badger collar. She instantly fell in love with the breed, a love-affair that endures to this day. In the 1970s she took up pottery, painting, drawing and illustrative work and has captured the many moods and the individuality of the Frenchie. Her work has a freshness and freedom to it and she manages to capture so much with seemingly little effort.

Depictions of French Bulldogs were not restricted, however, to Britain and Europe. In the United States the breed achieved even greater popularity than in Europe, with vast numbers being imported. Considering the popularity of the breed, and the wealthy and influential owners it attracted in the early years of the 20th century, it is surprising that so few paintings of French Bulldogs remain or are recorded, if indeed they were ever painted.



Leta Ogwen-Jones. Waiting for my Mistress



Alexander Pope. La Belle Wanda (Photograph Courtesy William Secord Gallery, New York)



Fred Sitzler. Ch Le Petit Marques de La France II. (Photograph Courtesy William Secord Gallery, New York)



Joseph Sulkowski. Popcorn. (Photograph Courtesy William Secord Gallery, New York)

One of the earliest known is a particularly fine portrait of a brindle bitch, La Belle Wanda, reserve Winners Bitch at the French Bulldog Club of America Specialty show in 1916. The painting was commissioned by the dog's breeder, John B. Fox, and painted in 1917 by Alexander Pope (1849-1924), a virtually self-taught artist who became one of America's most accomplished sporting and dog artists. He published a portfolio of prints entitled Upland Game Birds and Water Fowl of the United States, as well as Celebrated Dogs of The United States.

A painting inscribed 'Ch Parsque' was painted by Marguerite Kirmse (1864-1954), although, tantalisingly, we cannot be certain if the dog is Parsque, who was owned by Mrs Winthrop Turner, or Ch Denault's Parsque, who was Best in Show at the French Bulldog Club of America Specialty in 1925.

Kirmse was born in England where she trained as an artist and harpist. She was offered a position as a harpist with an orchestra in America which she accepted and from then on made America her home. Her love of dogs and her



Christine Merrill. Ch Razzamatazz. (Photograph Courtesy William Secord Gallery, New York)

artistic talent proved a winning combination, and before World War I she had established herself as a canine artist of note and illustrated many books.

Another American artist known particularly for his illustrative work was Morgan Dennis (1892-1960) and

one of his many sketches features a Frenchie. He also did work for advertising campaigns, most famously for Black and White Scotch Whisky in America.

American 20th century artist, Fred Sitzler, is known for his pictures of champion dogs and horses. One of his most important dog portraits, painted in 1954, shows the Frenchie Ch Petit Marquis de la France II who had the distinction of winning the French Bulldog Club of America Specialty in 1949, 1950, 1951 and again in 1955.

Modern American artists who have created portrait studies of the breed include, Christine Merrill with Ch Razzamatazz, Charlotte Sorré with Mr. E.M. Hershey's three dogs, Oreo, Popcorn and Licorice, Constance Payne with Ch. Hollycroft's Going Supersonic, and a particularly fine portrait by Joseph Sulkowski of Popcorn which featured in the artist's solo exhibition at the William Secord Gallery in New York in 1996.

Three very contemporary artists, not necessarily associated with dogs, who have been attracted to the breed are the American artists, John Nava born in 1947 and Hal Yaskulka born in 1997 and the English artist, Nicola Grellier.



Charlotte Sorré. Oreo, Popcorn and Licorice (Photograph Courtesy William Secord Gallery, New York)



Constance Payne. Ch Hollycrofts Going Supersonic. (Photograph Courtesy William Secord Gallery, New York)



Nicola Grellier. 'Mad in England'

Nava's art has been described as classical realism, as his portrait of Kelly M. and her French Bulldog, Mavis, so eloquently shows. Kelly sits demurely for her portrait as many a young Victorian lady must have done, her long hair cascading down her back, her hands held together on her knees, but the wooden chair on which she sits, and Mavis, who insisted on being in the portrait lying beside the chair, remove any hint of Victorian stuffiness from this charming picture.

Yaskulka's is a sketch of his pet dog Mona, curled up in a tight ball asleep. She is frequently his studio partner, so knows all about resting whilst her master works, and is the subject of many quick sketches, and no doubt as other dogs have done before, has at times provided much needed inspiration.

Nicola Grellier combines painting, collage and fabric in her art. Her dogs are in the tradition of classical dog portraiture in outline, but with their own individuality created for them by Nicola. Each fabric image is encased by the silhouette of the perceived perfect show dog. The 'perfect' French Bulldog proclaims 'Mad in England'. Is the dog suggesting the English are mad, it is mad to even think the breed could have originated in England, or would the French be mad to live in England. According to the artist; "I was just playing around with the image and words, so make of it what you will!" The picture was included in the exhibition Boondoggle held at Tetbury, England in 2005.

One mystery picture that has been owned by and delighted three doyennes of the breed in Britain, all of whom have at one time been President of a French

Bulldog Club, is a gouache of a dark brindle dog resplendent in his collar. It was first owned by Jean Cochrane (Bonham's Close), who gave it to Joyce Hargreaves (Comeytrove), who in turn gave it to Maureen Bootle (Tommyville). The mystery that has eluded these three ladies is, who is Toby Chien and who painted him?

I began this chapter with something very traditional, Vimar's Causerie des Chiens, and end it with something totally surrealist, Jean Miró's (1893-1983) Femme et Chien Devant la Lune 'Lady with the Dog before the Moon'.

Miró was a Spanish Catalan painter, sculptor and ceramist. He expressed contempt for conventional painting methods as a way of supporting bourgeois society, and famously declared an "assassination of painting" in favour of upsetting the visual elements of established painting.

Femme et Chien was published in 1936 as a pochoir print in colour – the hand-colouring of an individual black outline print, done with the help of a thin zinc or copper cut-out stencil guide, a stencil for each colour. It was in an edition of sixty published by Adlan of Barcelona. Number twenty-two of the edition sold at Christie's in New York in October 2009 for \$21,250.



Jean Miró. *Femme et Chien Devant la Lune*