

## BUILT ON THE SHOULDERS OF VETERINARY GIANTS

### "The Wonder Dog"

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Jim was quite a dog (1925 – 1937). He was believed by some to be a clairvoyant. Others are skeptical. You be the judge.

The Llewellyn Setter was born of championship hunting stock in Louisiana. However, it's said he was the worst pup in the litter. As the story goes, Jim was purchased by Sam VanArsdale of Marshall, MO for less than half of what his more promising litter mates brought. For a reason that follows, Sam started to wonder if half payment wasn't too much.

Yes, the dog was warm and friendly, but as for hunting Jim would lie in the shade of the tree line as other dogs jumped to the chase. As time passed, Sam began to notice Jim indeed was a proficient hunter only when birds were present. In fact, *Outdoor Life* magazine reported Jim successfully tracked over 5,000 birds. That was when Sam stopped counting. This remarkable achievement led Jim to be called the "Hunting Dog of the Country".

Stranger things were about to happen. During a walk, Sam said "Let's rest under that Hickory tree." Obediently, Jim went to the Hickory in a forest treed with many varieties. Sam asked him to go to a Walnut, then a Cedar, a stump and a tin can. It's said that Jim did so perfectly.

Jim lived in Marshall's Ruff Hotel (not a pun!), which was owned by VanArsdale. Regularly, Jim performed his talents for guests by going to cars on commands such as "Find the car from Mississippi" and other locations, vehicle colors and owner occupations. Sam did this without error. He predicted the sex of babies to be born, Kentucky Derby winners (seven for seven), World Series winners and more. Of course, Jim didn't talk, but he could paw at pictures and words. Skeptics are laughing. Read on!

Sam took Jim to MU for a demonstration. He passed each command with flying colors. He appeared before the Missouri Legislature and at the State Fair. His fame began to spread across the country. After a 1935 performance in Wyoming Jim was called "The Wonder Dog" and he was featured in Ripley's *Believe It or Not*.

Sadly, following a serious accident in the Ozarks, Jim was taken to the G&G Veterinary Hospital in Sedalia where he died. This is the same hospital we featured in *News and Notes* in January and mentioned in this issue. Jim is buried in Marshall's Ridge Park Cemetery. A Memorial Park on the grounds of the old Ruff Hotel was built in Jim's honor. Perhaps you'll plan a visit.



Read and watch more about Jim at his web site: [www.jimthewonderdog.com](http://www.jimthewonderdog.com).