

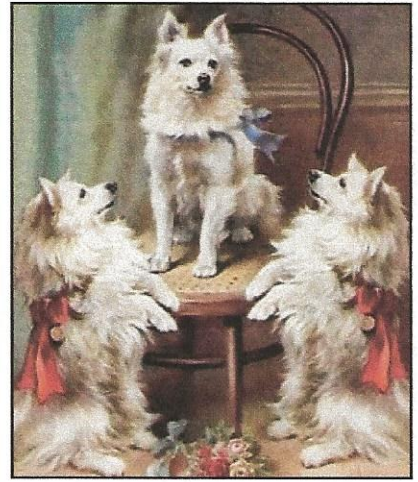
### ...a rose by any other name

The obvious solution was to categorise traditional whites by another name ... a rose by any other name will smell as sweet.

In America the larger white Pomeranian or Spitz eventually became the American Eskimo Dog but first it was classified as an American or German Spitz. (There are references to German Spitz in the New York Times archives as late as the 1930's).

According to the UKC website they recognised the American Eskimo dog in 1913 but not by that name – they mention they were originally called the German Spitz, but do not clarify if this is what the UKC called them, however, many breeders feel the original 1913 name was the American Spitz and not the German Spitz. The name American Eskimo Dog was first used in 1917 (by which time Mr and Mrs Hall of Pittsburgh had a 3 generation pedigree dating back to 1910), and of course in that year America joined in World War One – which raged since 1914. According to German Spitz expert Britta Schweikl the name American Eskimo dog was the official name as of 1923. Please note, this breed is not to be confused with the Eskimo Dog, originally called the Esquimax, and by this name was often exhibited at 19th century dog shows alongside Pomeranians or Spitz dogs.

There is a general feeling the final name change to American Eskimo dog was because of anti-German sentiment and this may be true. Allegations of this sort were banded back forward at this time. Kaiser Wilhelm II was famously anti-English and blamed their doctors for killing his father and crippling his own arm. Although the grandson of Queen Victoria, he declared (circa 1879) after a nose bleed that it was 'good to be rid of this damned English blood'. (Queen Victoria -C. Hibbert, 2000)



However, the visit on June 28th 1913 of Baroness Ursula von Kalinowski of Wiesbaden to the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, accompanied by two dogs one of them being a Spitz given to her as a gift by the German Emperor, did not result in any adverse criticism by the press of either the dog or its previous owner.

The Kaiser's relative Koenig Wilhelm II of Wuerttemberg, was photographed around 1910, with his two white Spitz dogs, Ali and Rubi. He obtained them from the Wuerttemberg region, an area long famed for its beautiful Spitz of various sizes and colours. In 2006 there was a German tribute to the history of Wuerttemberg. Koenig Wilhelm was portrayed with his famous dogs - two Mittel Spitz were recruited to play the part of the King's dogs).

The King's dogs resemble the beautiful white Pomeranians exhibited at the turn of the century by Miss Chell of Belper kennel fame (*left photo*). Miss Chell's dogs are very similar to many American Eskimo Dogs that can be seen today on websites and in books. In 1878, Walsh made note of the eye colour of the Pomeranian, dark or hazel. Eskies even today can be seen with lighter eye colour. Other slight changes are more to do with breed standards as each country has their own preference. A modern American Pom is noticeably different from its British counterpart – there are differences in type, and styles within the concept of type. The modern Eskie is slightly different in type to a Mittel Spitz or Gross Spitz for the same reason.



### ...the hidden past of the American Eskimo Dog

Hopefully, this rather lengthy article has finally accounted for the 'hidden' past of the American Eskimo Dog. It seems re-branding, and efforts to distance the breed from the adverse press of the late 1870's, has been so successful that today the only reason submitted for the name change is 'anti-German sentiment'. Any residual stigma from the mad dog scare would be for the Spitz dog, not the American Eskimo Dog. It was therefore a clever move to drop the 1913 name that still involved the Spitz word. No book gives a satisfactory explanation of how the imported German Spitz of the 1800's became the American Eskimo Dog and these findings may fill in the gaps.

Another important aspect to be considered is the affect of breed specific targeting by authorities as well as the public. In this case historical references to a tendency to snappiness were maximised to great advantage. Natural traits of the breed (for instance a love of working off energy by dashing around madly for a few minutes – called appropriately 'a bezerker' by author H. Jones) were clearly viewed as signs of madness. Canine diseases such as epilepsy, hysteria (proven in the 1940's to have been caused by chemical agents formerly used in flour making – biscuits and kibble) and personality disorders, may have accounted for odd behaviour. There was no hard evidence at all that the white Spitz dogs were pre-disposed to rabies!

Please visit the incredible and fascinating archives of The New York Times – become a member and read the original reports. Once on the archive page put 'Hydrophobia' – 'Spitz Dog' or 'Spitz Dogs' in their site search to learn more about these subjects.

### Visit these links to read more:

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