



Spado - General Lee's Pomeranian

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Article written/researched by Vivienne Peterson BA - First published March 2009 - Copyright Protected

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Breaking News... Spado has been found, more to come on his fascinating story shortly

FIRST KNOWN WHEN LOST

Spado is one of the most unique Pomeranians in history! He appears to be America's first recorded Pomeranian.

If he had not gone missing in 1776 his importance may never have been known as the research for this article began with the discovery of a lost or stolen advert in the Virginia Gazette March 7th 1777, placed by William Finnie a future Mayor of Williamsburg. Here is the exact transcript of the notice.

Twenty Dollars Reward

LOST or STOLEN, a very remarkable black shaggy dog of the Pomerania breed, called SPADO. He belongs to our brave but unfortunate general LEE, and was seen in the possession of a person who called himself JOSEPH BLOCK, at Wright's Ferry, on Susquehannah, about the 25th of December last. It is supposed that BLOCK, who pretended to have undertaken to carry him to Berkeley County, Virginia, has parted with him for a trifling consideration, or lost him on the road. Whoever gives information where the said dog may be had, or will bring him to the subscriber in Williamsburg, shall receive the above reward, and no questions asked. WILLIAM FINNIE

By March 10th 1777, Abigail Adams, the wife of John Adams the future 2nd President of the United States, wrote in a letter to her husband;

'I see by the newspapers you sent me that Spado is lost. I mourn for him. If you know anything of His Master pray let me hear, what treatment he meets with, where he is confined...'

Spado was no ordinary dog, he was owned by Major General Charles Lee, the second in command to George Washington in the Continental Army, who had been captured by the British on December 13th 1776 at Baskingridge in New Jersey.

CHARLES LEE

Charles Lee was a fascinating character a 'soldier of fortune'. Known to be impulsive, opinionated and restless he had an adventurous life before going to America in 1773. Born in England in 1731 he was the son of a land -owner and army colonel. He was well -educated attending school in Switzerland and spoke several languages fluently. He served as an officer in the British Army in America between 1754 -1760. Living with the Mohawk Indians for a while who made him a chief with the name "Boiling Water" – perhaps a clue to his disposition. Wounded at Fort Duquesne he returned to England.

After this he served in Portugal, spent a short time with Frederick the Great of Prussia, joined the Polish Army and served in a campaign in Turkey. Upon returning to Poland he decided to return to England via Austria and Italy (1770) – while there he shot and killed a man in a duel, losing two of his fingers – the first of several duels in his life. He became very discontent after George III refused him promotion and became outspoken in his criticism of ministerial oppression. In 1772 he travelled to France and Switzerland before deciding to quit England and move to America. He arrived in New York October 1773 and quickly familiarised himself with the revolutionary leaders.

It is said that it was Lee who first broached the concept of declaring independence. Concerned about his property in England being forfeited should he serve against the British, Congress apparently advanced him \$30,000 to indemnify him against this loss. With some of this money he purchased an estate called Prato Rio in Berkeley County, Virginia. He had hoped to lead the army and was disgruntled at the prospect of being the second in command.