



Pom Shows in America Pre-1915

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Article written/researched by Vivienne Peterson BA - First published July 2008 - Copyright Protected

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Toon and Thomas's Pomeranian 'Sheffield Lad' shared 2nd place and the \$10 prize money with Dr F Cook's Esquimax in the Miscellaneous Class at the 14th annual Westminster Kennel Club Show on the 22nd February 1894. The winner was Flossie a Maltese Terrier. Mr Toon was from Sheffield in England, where he once exhibited Pomeranians in partnership with Mr Symonds. Toon often entered other breeds of dogs at the Westminster KC Show, sometimes he shipped dogs over from England by steamer to New York so that other people could exhibit his stock.

Sheffield Lad fades out of the show records after 1894 and enters into Pom history as the first named Pomeranian to be shown in America. However, this is not strictly accurate. While researching for this article an earlier entry was discovered. Chubb, a Spitz, was a prize-winner at the Springfield show in 1876.

The Pomeranian and the Spitz Dog were one and the same! In 1878 the 2nd annual show of the Westminster Kennel Club used the standard of points for assessing exhibits as set out in *The Dogs of the British Isles* by J.H. Walsh (Stonehenge). In this book is a chapter titled *The Pomeranian or Spitz Dog*. In the American edition of this book titled *The Dogs of Great Britain, America and other countries* the same chapter appeared. Walsh used the same illustration in both books and that is Mrs Prosser's white dog Joe, who was a 1st prize winner at Islington in 1877. In the British edition he is called 'a Pomeranian' and in the American edition 'a Spitz'.

However, Pomeranians or Spitz dogs were refused entry at the 1878 show!

Vale Nicholas a contributor to the *Kennel Encyclopaedia* (1907), wrote in the chapter on Pomeranians, that early imports were usually white and had been branded 'snappish' and then he makes this extraordinary statement. "In America the opinion was so deeply rooted that they were prone to develop rabies, that no entries of Pomeranians were accepted at the New York Show for a year or two after 1880."

In an article in *The New York Times*, prior to the 1878 Westminster show, it was noted 'several persons have tried to enter Spitz dogs, but have been refused'.

The entire mad dog scare of old New York is a very complex story and a separate article has been written dealing with this most unhappy era of breed specific persecution. (See article about White Spitz on this website)

By 1888 Pomeranians first 'became registrable' with the American Kennel Club. It is little wonder the English name was used and not the more common name of Spitz Dog associated with so much recent adverse publicity. According to Sari Brewster Tietjin the first registered Pom was called 'Dick', it is not known if he was ever shown. All eyes must have been on Sheffield Lad when he was exhibited in 1894!

At the Westminster KC Show in 1896 two Pomeranians were exhibited. Michael Dillon's Pomeranian 'Wilfang' was 3rd in Miscellaneous Class 245 for Dogs and Bitches over 25lbs and Mr C Schlicke's Pomeranian Prince Bismarck gained a 2nd in Miscellaneous Class 246 for Dogs & Bitches under 25lbs. The latter Pom may possibly have been imported from England as a dog of this name was recorded as the sire of the blue & white Harlequin lky in 1894 and the black & white Nawab also in '94. After this Prince Bismarck disappears from the records – exported? He was by Snider out of Allegro. Wilfang is sometimes recorded by the name Wolfgang.

Mrs Hofman writing in the mid-1930s mentions the English Pom Clayton Chieftain was exhibited in Kansas City in 1898. He was a black under 8lb dog by Nubian Sam x Blackie. Nubian Sam was by Nubian King born 1892 and the famous bitch Hiyya, also called Huzza – amazingly even more variations of her name exist.

In 1896 an English judge called George Roper was selected to judge several breeds at Westminster including Pomeranians. However there is no record of any being exhibited. This may indicate a Class was scheduled for them.

THE FIRST SHOW WITH CLASSES FOR POMERANIANS

At the American Pet Dog Thanksgiving Day Show on December 1st 1899 – nine classes were scheduled for Pomeranians. This is possibly the earliest show providing classes for the breed. At least 18 Poms were present (only the winners are recorded) and classes were provided for blue, black, white, brown and any other colour. There was also a Team class for the best exhibitor of four Poms together. Lakewood Pomeranians gained six 1st places and Swiss Mountain Kennels three 1st places.

Nubian Rebel newly imported from England by Mrs Smythe of Swiss Mountain Kennel may well have debuted at this show with a first place in Novice Dog – brown. He was born in July 1896 bred by Mr Crang (Nubian Sunny x Nubian Stella) and sold to JJ Holgate who showed him at Cruft's (the original spelling of the show) and Northampton, placing at both shows. He is weighed less than 8 lbs. Haughty Brownie another import of Mrs Smythe's (bred by Chris Houlker) won Novice Bitch – brown.

The first annual American Pet Dog Club Show was held May 31st 1893 at the Lenox, Lyceum. The club was formed six years earlier to 'encourage the breeding of small, or pet dogs to the highest standard of perfection ... and to ...promote the comfort and welfare of the dogs themselves'. Poms are listed as one of the breeds to be assessed under judge James Mortimer but no show results or names can be found. The AKC suspended the Club in 1900 following complaints of non-payment of prizes from the 1899 show. It looks as though the Ladies Kennel Association of America took over this niche being recognised by the AKC at this time – March 1900.

1900 TO 1901

At the Westminster Kennel Club Show on February 20th 1900 there was at least one class for Pomeranians. Mrs Smythe had entered 32 dogs in the show including Poms (she also showed St Bernards, Spaniels and Skye Terriers). Nubian Rebel won the class with Haughty Brunette in Reserve. It is unclear how many Poms were entered – could be just those two.