



Arthur Seyfarth

A Study of a 19th Century German Dog Breeder

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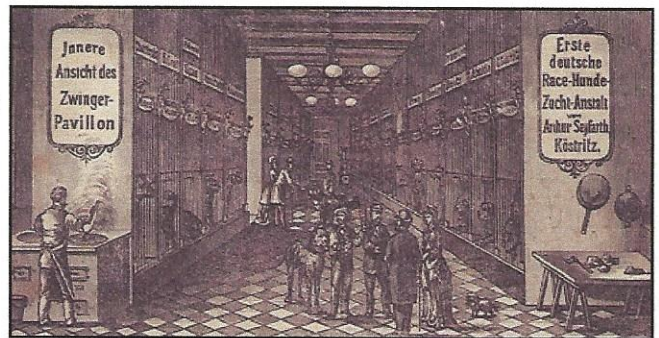
The adverts on this page have never been featured anywhere before! The catalogue they appear in is very rare and was produced by Arthur Seyfarth of Koestritz, Thuringen. This revised edition dates from 1911 - earlier catalogues from the 19th century are virtually identical to this one other than illustrations being engravings rather than photographs. Hopefully, true breed enthusiasts will appreciate this unique and insightful document.

Mr Seyfarth founded a dog breeding business in 1864, which as you can see by the engraving (top left), housed in an extremely sophisticated building. His dogs won medals all over Europe from Paris to Poland. His catalogue lists dozens of different dog breeds that he specialised in breeding.

right - inside Mr Seyfarth's kennel building

Mr Seyfarth was very successful and also wrote a book all about Dog Breeds and Kennel management that was very popular. He produced sales catalogues from time to time, his earlier catalogues were illustrated with engravings of his stock and later catalogues, such as mine, featured photographs. He gives a detailed description of each breed and his price list is very illuminating. Older dogs costing more than puppies!

In 1878, his name came to the forefront when a black Pomeranian he bred was successfully exhibited in England. His name was Black Peter and he was born in October 1877. His owner, Mr Goas of Manchester, listed Mr Seyfarth of Pomerania, as the breeder. I think this was stretching the truth as Koestritz is not in Pomerania, but it sounded good at the time, of course he may have owned a regional office. I found out a little about Mr Goas in Vero Shaw's book (1881) where he is quoted with an opinion concerning the origin of the Leonberger. It seems Mr Goas was a German living in England and was clearly thought well enough of to be cited by Shaw.



The Leonberger was associated with another famous German Kennel, operated by Messrs Essig and Burger of Leonberg (who also exported Zwerg-Spitze / Poms to England). Leonberg is located a few miles from Stuttgart. This area was famous for its breeders and from the point of view of Spitz/ Pom fans the region was the hub of the development of small specimens.

Black Peter placed a few times in 1878 but did better in 1879 - when he had firsts at Alexandra Palace, Exeter, Perth, Blydon on Tyne & Wolverhampton. By 1881 he was owned by Mr D Thomas of Pontypridd, Wales - he gained a first place at Crystal Palace that year. After this he fades out of history.

Mr Goas purchased another black Pomeranian called Black Gem from Mr Seyfarth. This dog was born July 1878 and was first shown in 1880 when he had a first place at Darlington. The location of Mr Seyfarth is not mentioned this time and yet again there is no pedigree given - this of course was very common at this time. In 1881, Black Gem only achieved a 4th place at the Leicester Show and this seemed to conclude his career.

I am not sure how many Zwerg-Spitze or Pomeranians were imported directly from Mr Seyfarth. There are many black Poms in the KC Stud books originating from the Wuerttemberg area (which includes Stuttgart, Mannheim etc). One example is General Dot imported by Mr Petrzywalski of London - Dot, previously had a 1st place in Stuttgart. In London he obtained a 2nd place at the Toy Dog show in 1887.

Brigitte Sovonja of Chips Pomeranians in Germany - a very knowledgeable enthusiast of Deutsche Spitze and also an expert in nuances of German dialect - has researched numerous early Pomeranian registrations, and has found evidence of Swabian dialect (the dialect originating in the Stuttgart area) in many of the names of the dogs, their ancestors when given, and additionally breeder names when stated. For instance Mr Siegle, the breeder of Spitz of Spa, a black Pom born in 1891, imported by George Krehl (editor of The Stock Keeper). He exhibited Spitz at Crufts in 1894. This dog was by Fritze (a Swabian name) and Sadi. Mr Siegle is known to have exhibited a black Spitz called Mohrle in Hanover 1882 and was referred to as a breeder from Stuttgart.

Numerous Poms were called Fritz - this was of course the pet name of Frederick III - the son-in-law of Queen Victoria. The Queen's son - the future King Edward - bought a 4lb black Pom from Bad Homburg (near Stuttgart) for his daughter in 1891.

Kaiser Wilhelm II owned two lovely white Spitz dogs purchased from a wine grower living near Stuttgart (ref. B Sovonja). In a recent re-enactment, two Mittel Spitz were selected to portray his dogs. The Kaiser's Spitz looked just like Miss Chell's champion white Pomeranians of this era.

The catalogue also lists the cost of shipping his stock - the freight to London was DM 35 and to New York DM 118. The exchange rate was DM 20.45 =£1 and DM 4.20 = \$1. Prices quoted for the dogs can be seen in the adverts.

One breed mentioned is not illustrated - the Loewenspitz. It is worthy of note that Mr Seyfarth said the Zwerg-Spitze (Mannheimer) was a small version of this breed. In an earlier catalogue there is an illustration of a black Spitz in a full, fashionable lion cut and this is his example of the larger Loewenspitz. The dog had noticeably small pricked ears. Was this the rare and highly prized black Spitz mentioned by Stonehenge in 1878?