



left - Glass Spitz dog from Wuerttemberg area of Germany c200BC

The Italian Volpino (incorporated in pre-1915 Pom breeding programmes) has the same ancient origins as the German Spitz according to the FCI and Italian historians and has been a small dog for at least 2400 years as evidenced in Greek artefacts. Skeletal remains of small adult Spitz type dogs found in excavations at Sitagroi in E. Greece dating back to between 5500 – 2200BC (ref. Colin Renfrew) suggest small Spitz dogs have very ancient ancestry indeed.

Therefore historical and archaeological evidence suggests Spitz type dogs are known to have existed in Central and E. Central Europe for at least 4500 to 7500 years!

Note – another breed apparently incorporated

in late Victorian Pom breeding programmes in England was the Seidenspitz. This breed shown in Germany around 1900 and favoured by wealthy ladies as a lapdog is now extinct – 19th century canine historians (cynologists) thought it was originally developed by interbreeding small Spitz dogs with the Maltese dog so the early origin of this breed would also be the same as the Volpino and German Spitz. They look really cute in old photographs!

right - Small Pom with child on Greek tombstone - 2300 years old - From *The New Complete Pomeranian* by V Ricketts 1965



Toy Pomeranian with Child  
Greek tombstone from Alexandria, Egypt  
(about 3rd century B.C.)

#### Some websites and books say that Poms are descended from sled/sledge dogs from Iceland and Lapland?

The best thing is to compare the breed history of the German Spitz and the Pomeranian on the American Kennel Club's website. It states the German Spitz was known as the Pomeranian in England in the 18th century and was very fashionable and popular. This is correct – the Pomeranian figures in many high status paintings from this era. Also described is the FCI version of the breed's history as given above. The AKC history of the Pomeranian refers to it descending from the sled dogs of Iceland and Lapland and unnoticed in Britain until the mid 19th century (there are other statements that differ from known fact but these will become apparent later).

A bit of logic – if the German Spitz was called a Pomeranian in Georgian England – and the Pom and the German Spitz were one and the same - then the ancestry of the Pomeranian and the German Spitz will be precisely the same.

Now compare the AKC history of the Keeshond and the American Eskimo Dog and contrast this with the Pom and the German Spitz – as both the both AED and the Kees are colour specific breeds emerging after the show fancy abandoned the over 7lb weight of Pomeranians around 1915, it would be reasonable to believe their ancestry is also shared with the German Spitz and the Pomeranian (and the Volpino in the case of the Eskie).

And lastly – the Icelandic breed most often compared to the Pomeranian historically was actually the Icelandic sheepdog, if you read its AKC breed history you will not find any association with sled dogs.

Below - This page from Hutchinsons 1935 is very interesting. Space does not permit adding the previous page but this is what it said - "The name "Spitz" embraces dogs of a very large and ancient family. On the Continent it stands for the Samoyed, the Elkhound, the Laphund, the Volpino, the Pomeranian, and many other varieties, but the variety usually known by the simple name "Spitz" is claimed by the Germans as their national breed. The first fossil remains of prehistoric dogs were found in Scandinavia, Russia and in Switzerland ... rest on page illustrated. Please note - Dr Ostrander's DNA research apparently suggests the Norwegian Elkhound is not as old a breed as previously believed.