

1927 THE CHOONAM CHOW CHOWS



COUNTRY LIFE MAGAZINE ENGLAND

Archived at ChowTales.com

THE CHOONAM CHOW CHOWS

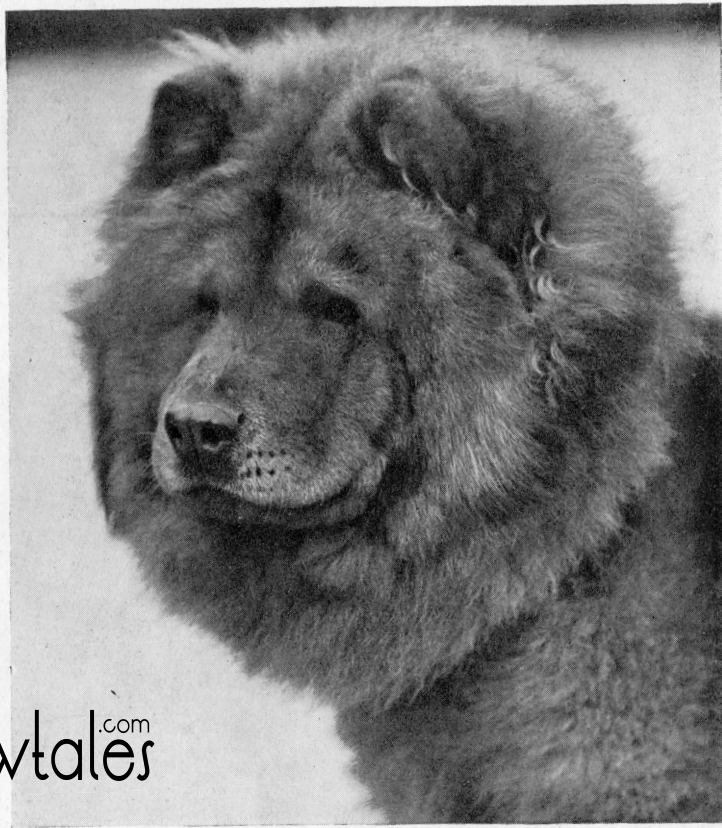
THOSE who delight in coincidences may be interested in comparing the stories of two kennels that have attained prominence in the chow chow world, both, to some extent, running on parallel lines. Towards the close of the old pre-war *régime* Mrs. Herbert Adam sprang a surprise by exhibiting Prince's Double when he was somewhat advanced in years, as a dog's life goes. In a short time he became a champion, judges being almost unanimous in proclaiming his merits. An immediate ancestor—I forget whether it was his mother or grandmother—was bought for three or four guineas

in one of the West End stores. Mrs. Mannooch, whose dogs are illustrated to-day, after winning a few prizes with Chin T'song, son of Ping Suey, given to her in 1919, bought a daughter of Ch. Prince's Double and Ch. Pickles, The Lotus Flower by name, which soon earned the desired prefix. Although she was not young, and had not done much the only time she had been shown, under the care of her new mistress she quickly won four challenge certificates, and now, in her twelfth year, she is in as perfect condition as ever. Indeed, her owner is sometimes asked the age of her "puppy." As one of the triumvirate



T. Fall.

CHAMPION THE LOTUS FLOWER.



Copyright.

CHOONAM JERRY INCE.

TWO STUDIES IN CHOW EXPRESSION;



CHOONAM WANG-TAI.



CHOONAM PRUNELLA.

chowtales.com

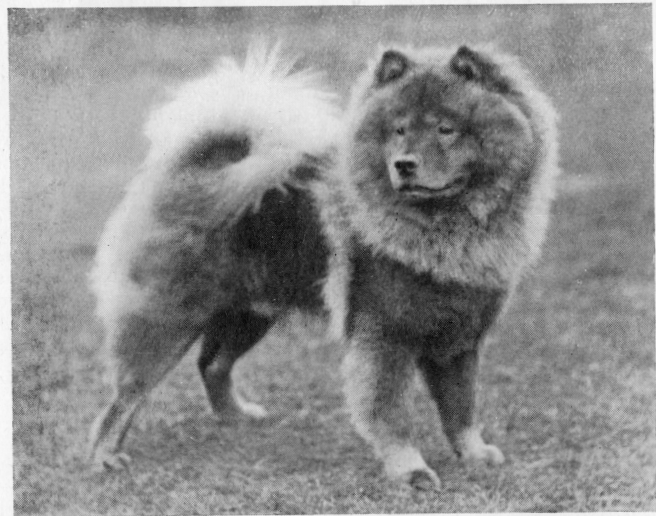
of judges invited by Mr. Cruft to deal with the all-round classes at his recent show, I had the opportunity of examining her again carefully, and it was almost impossible to believe that she is so old. Her type is all that could be wished.

Encouraged by her earlier successes, Mrs. Mannooch, in 1922, bought a dog puppy registered as Choonam Wong Tai, and the bitch Ashvale Chop Chop, which will go down to history as the dam of the famous dog of all time—at least of the show era. This is where the coincidence comes in. Two of the greatest chows we have had were bred by ladies of limited experience, who had not kept the breed for more than a few years. In that time, however, Mrs. Mannooch had been busily occupied in picking up chow lore, and we must give her the credit of pursuing a well considered policy in buying Chop Chop and mating her in the first place to Ch. Ragavarno. From this union came Choonam Tang Foo, the Indian champion, a dog which, after doing well at Manchester in 1924, was sold to the Maharaja of Patiala, who has a remarkable collection of British

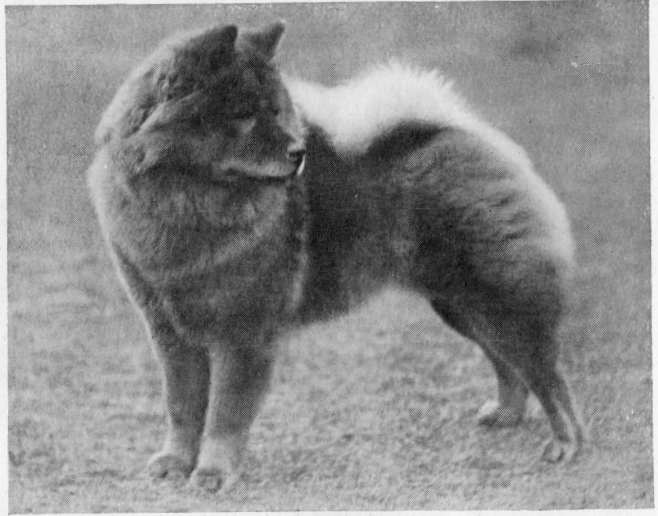
dogs. There was a lot of approving talk when Mr. Holland Buckley awarded him the Governor's Cup for the best exhibit at the Calcutta Kennel Club Show last year. Of the sixty-two entries in the grand challenge class, twenty were English champions, and the precedence then assigned to the chow was a memorable victory.

The character of Ashvale Chop Chop's next alliance was determined by Ch. Akbar's appearance at the Kennel Club Show of 1923. Although he was quite young, Mrs. Mannooch was so impressed that the choice fell upon him, and never was decision more justified by the result, for in the subsequent litter of five bitches and one dog were Choonam Brilliantine and Choonam Brilliantina, both of which were champions within six months. Surely, the fates were kind and the judgment sound in willing that these two should be kept. They may have been conspicuous in babyhood for all I know, but selecting the best is never an easy matter, the younglings having a habit of undergoing various metamorphoses, undealt with by Ovid, as they grow up.

as they grow up.



CHOONAM LI WING HONG.

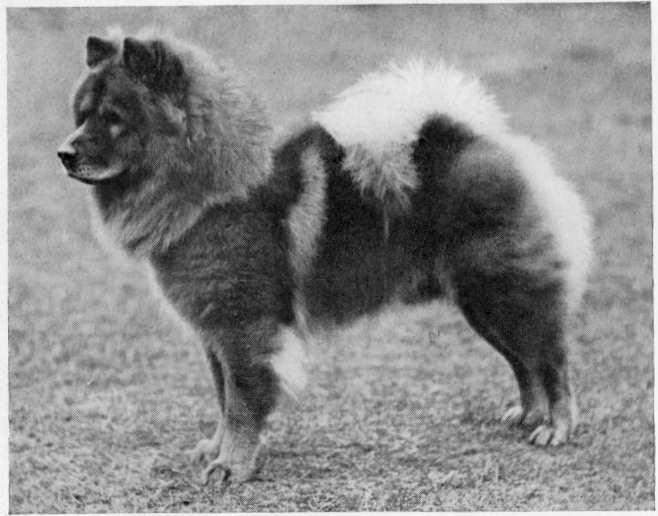


CHOONAM BRILLIANCE.



T. Fall.

ASHVALE CHOP-CHOP.



CHOONAM JERRY MEE

Catwright

chowtales.com

Nothing new remains to be said of Choonam Brilliantine. Lady Faudel-Phillips, with the good sportsmanship characteristic of her, drew my attention to him when he made his *début* at Cruft's in 1925, and in the following issue of COUNTRY LIFE I wrote: "Another significant feature was the imposing array of chow chows, the occasion of an unusual entry being very properly signalled by the appearance of a new luminary that excited the envy of all beholders. One cannot avoid superlatives in speaking of Mrs. Mannooch's Choonam Brilliantine, a gorgeous red puppy that recalls all the glories of the past. He is the sort that gladdens the heart of a judge, who realises instinctively that there is going to be neither hesitation nor doubt about the destination of the challenge certificate."

Considering that he was not a year old, the eulogy may have sounded extravagant, but events proved that it was not pitched in too high a key. It is said that Mrs. Mannooch refused an offer of £150 for him that day, which was another stroke of fortune, since in six months he was on his way to America, Mrs. Earl Hoover having paid the enormous sum of £1,800 for him. This price has never been approached, though a number are recorded in excess of £1,000. Offers of well over that sum have come from American sources for Brilliantina, but she remains at Chalfont St. Peter. It is a pity that maternal duties prevented the inclusion of her photograph among the present set. Brilliantine left four exceptionally good puppies behind him, these being Choonam Brilliance, Choonam Brilliancy, Choonam Mi Jee and Choonam Tswee Tsong. Choonam Prunella, another daughter of his bred by Miss Crookenden, is also doing a lot of winning for Mrs. Mannooch. Brilliance took first for the best puppy of all breeds in an entry of forty-six when he came out, and Brilliancy is already credited with two challenge certificates, and has been four times reserve for the honour. The former is in France, having been sold to the Baroness Eugene de Rothschild as a playmate for another Choonam dog. Choonam Jerry Mee, also by Brilliantine, has done remarkably well. Choonam Li Wing Hong, a son of Choonam Sen Yen, now owned by the Maharaja of Patiala, is thoroughly typical, but there are so many beauties in the Buckinghamshire kennels that it is difficult to describe them all.

In looking over them I could not help being impressed with the family likeness running through the stock. Whether purchased or home-bred, there is a consistency of type and character that is evidence of Mrs. Mannooch's discrimination. Knowing what she wants, she is at some pains to see that she



SIX WEEKS OLD.

gets it. With such material to work upon, the future should be hopeful, though dog breeding has its tragedies as well as its rewards. Among the young ones that are coming along are a brace that are unusually full of promise, one, in fact, being superlative but for one drawback: he has a light nose.

I think most people will agree that the fortunes of a breed may be materially influenced by the reputation of an outstanding dog, one that gets talked about among the general public and attracts sightseers to the benches. I should not care to guess, however, how much of the advance that had to be noted last year was attributable to the sensation caused by Brilliantine's sale to America. Chows had been moving upwards before that event occurred, the registrations at the Kennel Club showing a uniform advance every year since hostilities ceased, and, as far as one can tell, they are likely to go on gathering strength. They are now among the eighteen breeds that have upwards of 1,000 registrations a year. No one will grudge them the prominence they have attained, for the old breeders have put in much solid work for many years, relying entirely upon the steady worth of the dogs rather than resorting to publicity methods that cannot always be commended. Outside the ranks of exhibitors there is, of course, a steady demand, the Chinese dogs being appreciated for qualities that make them a little different from the ordinary run. There is nothing cringing or obsequious in their attitude towards human beings; perhaps they are a little too independent and aloof to please everybody, but I think one of the soundest recommendations they could have



T. Fall,

MRS. MANNOOCH AND TWO PUPPIES.

Copyright.

but I think one of the soundest recommendations they could have is that one who has once started a kennel seldom gives it up.

One of the charms of breeding chow chows is the variety of colours obtainable, those most usually seen being blacks, reds and blues, but occasionally fawns or whites come. Reds are the most general, either whole-coloured or red with light shadings, the latter, I believe, being most favoured in China. There is also a smooth-coated variety, which resembles the other in every respect except for the length of coat. Of course, everyone is aware that a black mouth and tongue are peculiarities of these dogs which have never yet been explained. Why is it that they are so distinctively different from others? Another characteristic of the chow has its disadvantages. The scowling expression that is considered so desirable may be attributed to a contraction of the muscles, which, in turn, is the cause of the inverted eyelids that sometimes cause so much discomfort. Mr. Will Hally, an old authority, wrote recently that "one hardly ever gets bad type in a chow with inverted eyelids; indeed, my experience has been that they are often an accompaniment of ideal type, and they could only be eliminated by also eliminating a certain very defined chowiness." A chow without the scowl is certainly not typical, and it follows from what I have said that the eye trouble is associated with the same thing.

In a French work on "Veterinary Ophthalmology," done into English by Mr. Henry Gray, this inversion is termed "entropion" or "entropium," and is described as being one of the commonest affections in the eyes of animals, either congenital or acquired. At its worst it may be the means of defective sight, and in a less aggravated form it may cause an unpleasant weeping through the lashes irritating the eyeball. The only remedy is an operation, which is successful if performed when the dog is young.

Appearance seems to indicate that the chow is allied to the Spitz family, and the inference, therefore, is that at some time or other it was imported into the country. Mr. E. C. Ash, in his recently published work on the dog, finds justification for this supposition in the fact that chows are the edible dogs of China. He quotes from Legge's "Chinese Classics" an ancient law to the effect that a prince should value the things of his own country, and not keep horses or dogs that are not native. Consequently, the populace might eat the strange dogs while respecting their own.

A. CROXTON SMITH.