

The Stillman Letter

This is an open letter from Marie Stillman to Dorothy Benitez, - no date - probably early to mid 60's. Retyped by Dorothy Cohen from poor xerox in late 60's early 70's, scanned and retyped again 1996. Re-paragraphing has been done to improve readability. The disease she calls "diabetes insipidus is hereditary renal dysplasia or HRD)

Early in 1940 my son Alfred and I decided we needed some hobby that we could share together. At that time Alfred's health had prevented him from leading a normal life . We had always had dogs as pets so we decided on German Shepherds. We had a number of litters and a few fair puppies but I cannot claim benefiting the breed.

In 1950 our location made it necessary to go into a smaller breed. There were not many in the show ring at that time and few breeders. I did have good advice to go to the Suydam Cuttings at Hamilton Farms for our foundation stock. I was told their dogs' heritage was the best to be found.

Our first female was Ham. Suchau and first male Ham. Tsang. They were the sire and dam of our first litter in 1952, This litter produced nice puppies but he also passed on his brown nose. Brown nose or not, he did win over our Ch. Hamilton Torma 7 times. Torma was only shown 73 times and she was BOB 60 times, 12 BOS, and only once was she beaten in the classes, and that time she went Res. to Mrs. De Greys Fu. La Quartita. Torma was a true beautiful golden with as perfect a front as I have seen on any breed. I am only going into Torma's quality that you may see what a sad loss we found she was to the breed when we found she was a carrier of that miserable diabetes insipidus.

I have been told that I go about hinting that many dogs that are being bred that I feel should not be, but that I never come out in print and name names etc. Anyone that does know me will tell you that I am too outspoken. But why not. This has been a hobby -very few of my puppies have been sold - most have been gifts. I have hoped that the many Apso breeders would get together and honestly compare notes on their puppies and try and rid this darling breed of this miserable thing.

Now I have decided to list the puppies I have had to put to sleep with this D.I. and the ones I have reason to believe have been carriers.

Torma's 1st litter had 2 males 1 female. The two males were never bred. The one bitch Rika did not have this but she had 4 litters. Rika's 1st litter by Ham. Kalon March 4, 1955. 5 puppies one a darling little brown bitch had DI, Americal's Licos Linga.

Rika's 2nd litter by Ch. Americal's Leng Kong May 1956, had 5 puppies - 1 born malformed 1 died two hours after birth, From this litter Mrs. Cohen bought a female Mula who had DI.

Rika's 3rd litter (Rika and Leng Kong Dec. 19, 1956) had 6 puppies-2 born dead, 2 died next day, a male and a female lived. I do not know if they were ever bred.

Rika's 4th. litter born June 10,1958, 6 females. Lost three, 3 lived, Nya, Karo, and one was sold as a pet, and I do not think it was ever bred. Nya and Karo-La were bred. Karo La did have it and a son of Nya bred to a Karo daughter did produce Puppies that had it.

Back to Torma - her 2nd litter to Ham. Kalon had 5 males Nov 11, 1954. Lost one. Two still living but were not bred.

Torma's third litter had 6 puppies 3 m. 3 f. born Oct. 26, 1955 (Sire Ham. Kalon). Lost one, one still living and I think one other in Mexico.

Torma's 4th litter by Ham. Chang Tang, 1 male Americal's Torma Lu. Torma lu did not have the DI but he did prove a carrier. He was bred to Karma Mandala. She was okay - had 3 puppies June 30, 1961. Two were never bred, One was given as a pet with the understanding he was not to be used as a stud. I understand he was bred once but I do not know the result of that mating.

Hamilton Lhamo (clear as far as I know) was bred to Ch. Hamilton Chang Tang (his dam was Ch. Ham. Samada- litter sister to Torma). From this Lhamo x Chang Tang mating 4 puppies were born Sept. 2, 1962. All four were tested at 8 weeks and had DI and were put to sleep.

Ch. Ham Chang Tang sired a litter by Lady Pamu - 4 pups Born July 9, 1962. One male, Am. Sandur was a carrier and several of his children produced it.

By this time Mr. Huyler of Hamilton Farm told me that Torma's dam Hamilton Lachen had died, having a litter, from a kidney condition and she was the only one they have had with that trouble.

My experience has been that this skips one, or more often, two generations and then pops out. By this time I had listed all this with a Vet. here, a Dr. Lippencott, who has always found time to contact several universities to see if we could find one interested and able to do some research on this rare and miserable thing. Cornell, U.C. and several others were interested but none had the space or grants for this type of Diabetes which is very rare in humans. Germany is doing some research, So far no cure, but up at the Vet. School at Davis, Calif. where they had a female for several weeks returned her saying no dogs having it should be bred nor should any born in the litter be bred.

Another thing that has not added to my popularity has been my not breeding out of the Hamilton Farm line. I have always been more intrigued by the breeding than I have by the showing - also I have been blessed with many friends so the popularity has not bothered me any. My not breeding to the Apsos that have Shih Tzu back of them is only important to me. Ruth Smith once said to me she thought by breeding the best of both strains, the breed would benefit and she might have been right - who knows???

I have wanted to check back and send this sketchy record to Dorothy Benitez. She has done so much in caring for the Ham. dogs through the years, I have never heard a critical or unkind word about anyone's dogs, She is at liberty to show this to any one who in her judgment could benefit by my findings, Another bit of advice would be to have any puppies checked that at weaning drink great amounts of water and void frequently. Perhaps I have helped a few to save some of the heartache and disappointment I had had, but there is considerable truth in the old saying that "only fools give advice and wise men take it.