



Diminutive dogs

"The universal esteem in which the Poodle has been held since the beginning of modern history is attested by the many variations in color and size that are found in this popular breed. Few other dogs have climbed to such high favor in so many different countries as has the Poodle. So early did he spring up in different parts of the world that there even is some doubt as to the land of his origin.

"While it is concluded by all authorities that the large-sized specimens of the breed are the older varieties, there is sufficient evidence to show that the Toy Poodle was developed only a short time after the breed assumed the general type in which it is known today. This type, incidentally, has changed less than that of almost any other breed. It is a dog that has come down to us as the ancients knew it. Refinements have been effected, but there has been no change in the essential characteristics.

"Those bas-reliefs, dating from the first century, that are found along the shores of the Mediterranean, portray the Poodle very much as he is seen in the twentieth century. Clipped to resemble the lion, he is not unlike some of the specimens seen at the earliest bench shows.

"It is possible that in the dim past there was a link between the dog attributed to the Island of Melita--now known as the Maltese--and the Toy Poodle. Similarly, there probably was a relationship between the Poodle and the dog of Spain--the spaniel. If not from the same progenitor, the paths of their ancestors must have crossed at some remote time.

"The first concrete evidence of the existence of the Toy Poodle in England is not found until the eighteenth century, when a toy known as the 'White Cuban' became exceedingly popular in England. It was a sleeve dog, and it soon became the pet of every grand lady in the country. This breed's origin was attributed to the West Indian island of Cuba, from whence it travelled to Spain, and from there to England. Queen Anne had several of these dogs in her latter years. She had first seen them about 1700 when there came to England a troupe of performing dogs known as 'The Ball of Little Dogs.' These Toy Poodles were exceptionally well trained, and they danced to music in almost human fashion.

"The Continent had known the Toy Poodle several centuries before it came to England, and there are line drawings by the great German artist, Dürer, that definitely establish the breed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. How long the dog had been known in Spain is problematical, but it was definitely the principal pet dog of the latter eighteenth century. This is known through the paintings of the famous Spanish artist, Goya. In many of his portraits of the ladies of the court may be seen excellent examples of the Toy Poodle. And France enthroned the Toy Poodle as the pampered favorite during the reign of Louis XVI, about the same period.

"Considerable mystery surrounds the 'White Cuban.' Subsequent histories of the dog leave no conviction that this breed was indigenous to Cuba. No doubt, specimens of the poodle or the Maltese--possibly both--had been carried to the West Indies by early explorers and traders. According to Lloyd, the White Cuban was a cross between the German or French white corded poodles and the Maltese. These dogs were larger than the Maltese, and their cords trailed on the ground.

"The Toy Poodle is credited with being the principal ancestor of the truffle dog of England. It is believed that the Toy Poodle was crossed with a small terrier to produce a dog that was ideal for its strange occupation. The truffle is an edible fungus that formerly was considered a great delicacy. The high prices were so attractive that the hunting of truffles became a widespread trade, especially throughout certain parts of Hampshire and Wiltshire. The difficulty of procuring truffles lay in the fact that the fungus grew underground. They had to be scented out by a dog so that the master could dig them out. The dogs had to be carefully trained, and usually they were white in color, because truffle-hunting was done at night. The sagacity and the scenting powers of the poodle were said to form a perfect complement to the terrier's ability to go to earth.

"The modern history of the Toy Poodle is a straight descent from the size of the standard and miniature poodles. Standards are 15 inches or more at the shoulder; miniatures under 15 inches. The Toy must never exceed 12 pounds. The standards for all three are identical except in the matter of size. The so-called 'White Cuban phase'

of the breed is believed to have no influence on the present-day specimens. The dogs of the eighteenth century in England probably left few, if any, descendants."

The Complete Dog Book, new and revised edition (NY: Halcyon House, 1938; first published, 1935), book two, copyright American Kennel Club, pp. 663-5.

Please note: for a description of Toy Poodle registries at the American Kennel Club, please see Frank Fretwell, "Poodles and Toy Poodle Champions 1884-1928", *Poodles in America*, vol. V, pp 109-12; precis: there was only one AKC Stud Book for Poodles from 1884-1918. The separate AKC Stud Book for Toy Poodles then established was ultimately abandoned, being folded back into the Poodle Stud Book in 1943.

19th century small North American Poodles

Please note that the earliest complete reference we have, as of 8/2000, for any Poodles in North America are the two small dogs Fin and Finette, brought from Montreal to Hamilton, Ontario in 1846 by Sir Allan Napier MacNab (1798-1862; Prime Minister of the United Canadas, 1854-1856), whose 35-room Dundurn Castle (1832-55) is now a house-museum. These were gifts to his two small daughters, the older, Sophia, wrote a diary which is one of the museum's treasures, and the portion which records the arrival of Fin and Finette is contained in *The Surprise*, Mel Bailey, ed., and is available from the museum (York Blvd., L8R 3H1). See also [Poodle Lit. pre-1929](#), MacNab.

In an attempt to push back the 1846 date, we wrote to the National Archives of Canada, requesting a search of French records for references to "barbets" or "caniche" and received a reply, 12 May 2000, file #8188-2000-W/29404, listing an illustration of a corded Poodle (Nero, a German Corded-coat Poodle at the Berlin I International Dog Show) published in *Canadian Illustrated News*, 4 September 1880, p. 153; and a late 19th century trade card showing two Poodles pulling a shoe (accession #1985-61-126). The replying Reference Archivist suggested that "information documenting the presence of 'barbets/caniches' would be more likely found in the personal papers of individuals and most probably someone from the nobility/bureaucrate or bourgeoisie level (merchant). With this in mind, I would suggest that you contact the Archives Nationales du Québec. They might be able to help you. Their headquarters are in Quebec City and you can reach them through their web site."

Please also note that the Canadian Kennel Club stud books prior to 1900 contain references to small Poodles. Write to: Canadian Kennel Club, 200 Ronson Drive, Suite 400, Etobicoke, ON M9W 5Z9.

French Toy Poodles.

We breed these beautiful and intelligent miniature specimens, white—with curly coats, from 5 to 8 pounds in weight.

PUPPIES \$20 TO \$25 EACH.

The
Eberhart
Kennels.

CAMP DENNISON, OHIO



20 July 2000 on eBay, was sold item #381987118, "Rare Antique 1902 Print Poodle..." half-page (page size, 6" x 9") advertisement printed in the back of a book, or a large catalogue (visible but illegible 3-digit folio), for The Eberhart Kennels, Camp Dennison, Ohio: "French Toy Poodles. We breed these beautiful and intelligent miniature specimens, white -- with curly coats, from 5 to 8 pounds in weight. Puppies \$20 to \$25 each." Photo of a modern-looking dog:

"At Stud Fee \$10." Unfortunately, we don't have more complete bibliographical information for this interesting reference, other than "from an old dog book published by the Eberhart Kennels" (B.: seller, eBay #381987118, 20 July 2000, forwarded by MC, 15 August 2000): you might have luck beginning with the Ohio Historical Society, 1985 Velma Ave., Columbus, OH, 43211.

Honoured!

[Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.](#), the first historically African-American sorority founded at a historically and predominately white university, was organized in 1922 in Indianapolis, Indiana by seven teachers. The group became an incorporated national collegiate sorority in 1929, when a charter was granted to Alpha chapter at Butler University. The sorority mascot is the French Toy Poodle.

Diminutive hunting dogs

Miniature Poodles are allowed to run in North American Hunting Retriever Association tests, pioneered by a multi-titled Canadian Mini, Percy. See: Roslyn D. Beaman, "A Miniature Retriever" (*NAHRA News*, vol. xiii, no. 3, 1998, p. 7) about her in-size Mini's enthusiastic participation in a NAHRA Started test sponsored in August 1998 by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Hunting Retriever Club. To read this article and see pictures of duck-dog Percy, go to [Percy...](#); from that home-page click on *Percy*, and thence on *Article* ("Miniature Retriever"). (We've also placed this item in [Duck dogs: guns](#); you're not seeing double!) Percy qualified for his Poodle Club of America WC title on June 24, 1999 running second WC test dog at the Mountain Valley Retriever Training Club's WC/I/X test at Alberton, Ontario. Percy's mega-titled constant companion, also a Mini, Meya, qualified for her PCA WC by running WC test dog at the Mountain Valley Retriever Training Club's WC/I/X test at Alberton, Ontario on 20 July 2000.

See [Longer Poodle Lit. post-1929](#) for a review of and ordering information for Rufus Cate's *God Made But One: Duchess' Chocolate Truffles*, Cate's biography of his hunting dog, Truff, a Miniature Poodle, a must-read for Poodle-lovers.

Love of water



"Love of water is an essential element in correct Poodle temperament, no matter how small the water dog. It's hard to keep my Toys out of my swimming pool in Brantford, Ontario. Here we have (L to R, back row first) Cullen's

Reuben James Can Am CDX, RA, age 15; Ch. Lyn-Del Ravendune Autum Leaf, age 3; Magicstar Penny Puymeras CD, RN, age 9 and OTCh Cullen's Flaming Star RA, age 5, all enjoying a sunny afternoon in August, 2008." (K.C., 30/08/08)

For further reference

Here's a useful art-history website, focussed on Bichon, and relevant to our smaller Poodles: [The Bichon Frisé in art](#).

For more about truffle hunting, see [Finders \(arrows and truffles\)](#); for art history references to ancient Roman, Dürer, and Goya images as well as those depicting the Havanese (White Cuban), see "[Gordon's Poodle Visuals](#)". For orientation to the Poodle-loving French kings, see [Companions to genius \(and etc.\)](#). You will also find general remarks about small Poodles in the various 19th century dog encyclopedias and compendiums listed in [Rare books](#). Finally, [Circus dogs](#) contains frequent references to small Poodles.

The headpiece for this section comes from Macer's *De Virtutibus herbarum* (Baquetier, c. 1510). Woodcut, 6.5 x 10.5 cm. The first printed edition of 1477 is the first herbal ever to be printed; this 1510 edition is headed by a portrait of Macer seated in his study writing his herbal, a small dog in moderate Continental sitting at his feet. Alludes to icons of St. Jerome in *his* study with his pet lion whose paw he healed. Frank J. Anderson, *An Illustrated History of Herbals* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1977), p. 33.