

The Modern Borzoi

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[Valeska Borzoi](#)

For Suzy and Nelson.

*Opinion is a flitting thing,
But truth outlasts the sun-
If then we cannot own them both-
Possess the oldest one-*

Emily Dickinson

Breeding For Behavioral Shape

"The faster he went, the prettier he got" Raymond Coppinger

The idea of a purebred “ancient type” Borzoi has long been with us. In his book, *Observations on Borzoi*, 1912, [1: 26-45] and also in other writings, Joseph Thomas [2: 3-5], [3: 18-19] speaks of the “ancient type” often. However, we shall see by examining the pedigrees and backgrounds of the dogs Thomas speaks of that they were by no means a pure ancient type, nor were they very different in pedigree from dogs imported by others from Russia to England and the U.S. Also they were not an attempt to recreate an ancient type. They were a true modern Borzoi, deliberately different from the older Borzoi breeds.

One hundred years ago breeds and breeding were conceptually quite different than they are today. Today we have one central registration body, and all breeds consist solely of individuals descended from those registered there. But this is a recent concept, and for most of history breeds and breeding were not maintained in this way. Performance and personal choice rather than registry were more significant in selection. The old Russian hunters and breeders crossed the different types of sighthounds to get the performance they wanted and they still considered their dogs to be pure because they were pure sighthound, or borzoi, defined by function rather than pedigree. This would be similar to how the Alaskan Husky is bred today, Joe Runyan, 2000, wrote, “In fact, to an Alaska musher it would be silly and absurd to define a work animal such as the Alaska Husky in purely mechanical and descriptive terms. How could you guarantee that an animal of this build or that description would be a good sled dog? For example, if one were to approach a group of nomads in Syria and inquire if they owned Salukis, an Alaskan musher would automatically assume that they would show you a dog that ran and caught game. If it didn't, how could a pragmatic people call this a saluki? In the same way, Alaskan mushers automatically assume an Alaskan Husky is a genuine draft animal. All other

dogs, even if they 'look' like an Alaskan husky, are not accepted as an 'Alaskan'" [4]. To illustrate this point Runyan asked Iditarod musher Dee Jonrowe if she considered all her dogs to be "typical and representative Alaskan Huskies." Her response was, "Yes, all of mine I would say are Alaskan Huskies. Well, wait a minute, two of them aren't. I bought them recently and thought they looked like huskies but they just can't perform on the same level as the other dogs." [4]. Here she is defining the dogs by their ability to do the work and not by their look. In another example, a woman was trying to determine whether her dog was a border collie or an English shepherd based on the dog's head shape. A working border collie expert explained to her that border collies have a variety of head shapes and the nuances she was examining were not indicative of the breed. Rather than looking at external head shape, he asked instead about the "behavioral shapes" the dog assumed -- did it crouch, stalk, exhibit eye? If it did, it was a border collie. If it did not, it was not.

"Behavioral shape" is a term coined by Raymond Coppinger, a professor of biology at Hampshire College. His explanation, following, use the racing sled dog as an example, can't be improved upon. "I want to see the shape of the dog at twenty miles an hour. I don't care about the standing shape, or what the shape is at twenty miles an hour when the dog is free--running, chasing a ball. I want to see the shape of the dog putting pressure on the back strap of its harness, at speed. That is the only meaningful shape for a running sled dog. That is why serious sled doggers have little interest in a dog show. It is not how they want to see a dog. Another way to say this is: standing is a behavior. Running is a behavior. If I want standing dogs, I select for dogs that stand easily and economically. I select for dogs that like to stand and have a beautiful standing shape. As a sled dog racer, I am not much interested in a standing shape."

The Russians use the word borzoi for all sighthounds or running dogs, just like the word Alaskan is used for all racing sled dogs. This was also true of the Greyhound. E.G. Walsh, in his book *Lurchers and Longdogs*, 1978, wrote about the use of the word greyhound in England from the 11th to the 14th century, "...the word always used for the coursing dog, whatever he looked like, is *leporarius* which is translated as *greyhound*." [5 :7]. In the Jan.-Feb. 2001 *Sighthound Review*, Gail Goodman wrote while visiting Salukis in Israel she saw a Saluki with a rose ear and wondered if it was a purebred or not. She then went on to reflect on correspondence she had had with Mike Ratcliffe and wrote, "It was an interchange between Mike and a Saudi Arabian Bedouin. Mike tells the man that he thinks his Saluqi has 'foreign' or other than purebred Saluqis (by western standards) as ancestors. The Saudi Bedouin, a hunter of renown, replies to Mike, 'I don't care what the ancestors were, MY Saluqi is *asil* (purebred)'. And since the ultimate evaluation of what is or isn't *asil* is that of the knowledgeable Bedouin, I reflected that of course that Saudi hunter was correct." [6: 108-109]. Here again the dog is being defined by its function and not its ancestors. Another example of the ultimate relationship of being and doing was presented by Ursula Birr, Gerald Krakauer, and Daniela Osiander, in the book, *Dog's Best Friend*, 1996, when talking about the aidi dog and the sloughi in Morocco, "A life as a pet would rob both these animals of a defining part of their identity. This is how the Borzoi and some terriers lost part of their character. The moral of an anecdote told by Hans Jorgen Strassner, azawakh friend and traveler in Africa,

applies to all of them. According to the anecdote, in 1853 the Egyptian vice-regent, Abba Pascha, said to the messenger of King Wilhelm I. Von Wurttemberg, Freiherr von Hugel: 'I do not doubt that you will be able to obtain Arab horses. But do not believe that you will now be able to breed Arabs; because each pure-blooded Arab is only pure-blooded as long as it breathes the expanse of the desert and feels its warmth under its hooves.'" [7 :133]. Though this may seem hard to accept to the western mind inculcated with our current idea of what constitutes "breed", in a larger sense it is the truth. When removed from the environment in which it developed, any animal will change over generations and lose aspects that make it functionally integrated into that world. Regardless of what it looks like, it will therefore functionally cease to be the kind of animal that it had been.

In the July 1999 Atlantic Monthly, Stephen Budiansky writes about how breeding was done 100 years ago; "genetic markers imply that up until a century or so ago people did successfully develop many highly distinctive varieties of dogs--everything from lap dogs to attack dogs--bird dogs to sled dogs--without a loss of overall genetic diversity, and without a rise in physical or behavioral abnormalities. The evidence also suggests that the problems that have arisen are less a direct consequence of deliberate breeding practice - as is usually alleged - than a largely avoidable side effect of it."

"Historically, dogs were mostly categorized by general type. There were sheep dogs, fox hounds, spaniels, pointers, retrievers. But pointers were just pointers, - they weren't German short-haired pointers or Vizslas or Weimaraners. As Wayne's genetic data show, interbreeding and a flow of genes on a worldwide scale was continuing even as this segregation into types was taking place. The types were distinct in both physical appearance and behavior; they clearly had been selected with specific human aims in mind. But the crucial point is that these dogs were defined by form and function rather than by parentage. [This is true of the Borzoi in Russia also. R.M.] They were what livestock breeders would call 'open' or 'grade' breeds." [8 :48]. In the book Dog's Best Friend, Birr, Krakauer, and Osiander also talk about this separating of types into breeds by Westerners. About the dogs of Nepal they say, "Today five races can be traced back to the lion-dogs: lhasa apsos, shih tzus, Pekinese, Tibetan terriers, and Tibetan spaniels. However, this strict differentiation among races is made by Western breeders and is unknown in the dog's homeland." [7 :114], and about sloughis, "In 1907 the first sloughis arrived in England but were not yet differentiated racially from their cousins, the salukis, a differentiation that is also foreign to many Arabs. But the FCI makes a clear distinction: salukis always have medium length to long fur, while sloughis always have short straight fur. The Swiss cynologist Hans Raber believes the differences among Arabic dog races are 'very fluid.' For example, there are breeding families that contain dogs with longer fur as well as dogs with short, straight fur. The azawakh, who used to be thought of as a perversion of the sloughi, is now also listed as an independent race." [7 :135]. This was also true in Russia. The different regional types of sighthounds, (borzoi), were interbred and they were all considered pure.

More from Stephen Budiansky, 1999: “Beginning around 1870, however, with the establishment of kennel clubs in Britain and the United States, closed breeding books were introduced in the name of developing and maintaining ‘purebred’ animals. A dog could be registered as a Vizsla only if both of its parents were registered as Vizslas. There was more than a little racist thinking behind all of this; writings about animal breeding from the late 1800’s and early 1900’s are full of exhortations to eliminate “weaklings” and to invigorate the race by maintaining the ‘purity’ of its ‘blood lines’ ” [8: 48]. “But to believe that one can trace the ancestry of a modern-day saluki directly and exclusively back to the Pharaohs is a fallacy that says more about nineteenth-century racial theories of noble blood than about the dogs themselves.” [9: 30]. And this would also be true of the Borzoi. Budiansky said, “only in the last century or two has the idea of breeding purity for purity’s sake seized hold.” [9: 36]. Baron G. D. Rozen felt that even the people in Russia that advocated the pure breed dog did crossing in their own hunts and that the different sighthounds should not be separated into different breeds. He wrote in *An Outline of the History of the Borzoi*, 1891, “Many hunters want the Imperial Society to separate dog breeds for dog shows into thick-haired, long-haired, and purebred long-haired dogs, but I know not whether that division would lead to anything in dog breeding. Hardly! ... I have drawn the conclusion that our hunters say one thing but do something else in their hunts. That is ... without holding to one of the types mentioned above, and does however circumstances allow and however he likes.” [10: 54]. “Both before and now ... there were long-haired, short-haired, Crimean, and bearded dogs, and they all were interbred by the very same hunting veterans who cry about the pure-bloodness and breeding of the borzois of old.” [10: 52]. The then new idea of maintaining pureblood lines may be one reason why Thomas, and others, place so much emphasis on a pure bred “ancient type” Borzoi.

It was also about 1870 that the Russians began to form kennel clubs. Up until the late 1800’s the Borzoi was thoughtfully and deliberately mixed with other types of sighthounds to improve performance by many of the breeders. P. M. Semchenkov in the Fall 1990 *Borzoi International* said “Almost 50 years the blood of Mountain and Crimean Borzois has been added to the Russian Borzois, and for still longer time, Khorty (Polish) blood has been added, and these experiments were performed by worthy, educated and highly intellectual people. They did not out of boredom or to while the time away, but having set themselves a clear and positive task: to improve the strength (and racing endurance) of the Russian Borzoi.” [11: 108]. Joseph Thomas himself explains this very aptly in the Oct., 1906, *Illustrated Outdoor News*, “all but the modern ‘fancy’ breeds of dogs have come down through the ages bred for a purpose, improved for a purpose, existing only because they fill the needs of the will of man.” [2: 3]. No one could say it better. Before the formation of the kennel clubs the Russians were breeding Borzoi mostly to maintain or improve the hunting ability of the dog, not for the purity of the breed in the sense we think of today. P. M. Semchenkov wrote in the Spring 1993 *Borzoi International*, “that the breeding process lasted almost 200 years and all the time the

selection was primarily based on the working properties, which means that breeders focused on the dogs coursing characteristics and behavior features.” [12: 22]. These dogs were being bred for a purpose. As Aatis Lillstrom put it in the Winter 1979-80 Borzoi Quarterly, “Lurchers in England and cross-bred hounds in the American West are probably being bred in the manner that the Russians in the 1800s bred Borzoi.” [13: 10]. E.G. Walsh, in his book *Lurchers and Longdogs*, suggests that the Greyhound was bred the same way up until the late 1600s when he wrote, “The lurcher has not changed because he was and is a dog bred purely for work; and that work has not changed throughout the centuries. The only difference is that until the late 1600s he was, at least in print, known as a greyhound.” [5 :1]. This is also true of the Borzoi, except that it wasn’t until the late 1800s that the Borzoi became a “pure” breed by today’s definition. Budiansky, 2000, wrote, “Even a few hundred years ago there was a great deal of gene flow between dogs of separate ‘breeds’ but similar type.” [9: 220]. This is how the Russians bred Borzoi up until the late 1800’s. They often crossed to other sighthound “breeds” to improve the hunting abilities of their own “breed”.

In Russia

So – onward to what is really known about the Borzoi in Russia. Coursing hounds have been known in Russia for hundreds of years. But they were not the modern Borzoi (known in Russia as the *Russkaya Psovaya Borzaya* or the *Psovaya Borzoi*) that we know. In Russia the term *borzoi* is used for all sighthounds and this can lead to confusion. Because the word *borzoi* is used it does not necessarily mean what we call a Borzoi. Joseph Thomas, 1912, wrote, “to be sure there does appear to be a lamentable amount of ignorance concerning the history and uses of the Borzoi,” [1: 1]. This seems to hold true even today. From the appearance of the first coursing hounds in Russia, through changes in land use and prey species, through the hardships of the revolution, and on to today, Russian breeders and hunters have put in hundreds of years worth of knowledge, love and effort to produce the modern Borzoi. We should not waste this effort but use it to our advantage.

Leonid Pavlovich Sabaneev was a well known Russian biologist and breed historian. He never owned Borzoi so he did not write about the raising, breeding or hunting of them, but exclusively about their history. P.M. Semchenkov wrote about Sabaneev in the Fall 1990 *Borzoi International*. “Being an outstanding biologist and a person of encyclopedic knowledge, L. Sabaneev focused his attention on the history of the breed. He is highly merited for his analysis of the breed history in close unity with the history of the Russian state having departed from legend and fairy tales.” [11: 100].

The following information is a synopsis from the book *Hunting Dogs: Borzois and Hounds*, by Leonid Sabaneev 1899. Toward the end of the 16th century the eastern borzoi came into Russia from Persia. These dogs were crossed to sharp eared wolf like northern

dogs. This crossing was done to improve the breeds ability to cope with the colder weather of Russia. This new breed of borzoi had longer hair with fringes plus an undercoat and a mane on the neck. They also had standing or half standing ears. This was the first true Russian borzoi.

At the beginning of the 18th century the Russian hunters crossed the borzoi of the time out to the English (greyhound), Polish (Khorty) and Bearded Borzoi of Assyria. The cross with the English became extinct because it was said that no good came of it. However some hunters did use first generation crosses of the English and Russian borzoi. These hunters were trying to improve the hunting abilities of the current borzoi. If a cross did not improve these abilities it was not repeated and the offspring were not bred on from. The cross with the Bearded Borzoi was called the Kurlyandskaya Psovaya Borzaya. The Bearded Borzoi was descended from a cross of Assyrian (Egyptian) Borzoi and the Mountain Bearded dog. The breeding to the Bearded Borzoi was done to improve the spite (or fighting ability of the dog usually against wolves) and strength (or endurance) of the Russian breed [14: 5-148]. The Kurlyandskaya Psovaya Borzaya may have been the real "Russian Wolfhound" that was bred specifically to hunt wild boar, wolves and other large game. In the Feb. 1839 Gentleman's Magazine, the Russian Greyhound is described as "a large powerful dog, nearly equal in strength to the Irish Greyhound, which he also resembles in shape, ... the color of the Russian Greyhound is generally of a dark umber brown, but sometimes black. His coat is rough and shaggy." [15: 185]. This sounds much more like an Irish Wolfhound than a modern Borzoi.

The Kurlyandskaya Psovaya Borzaya was then crossed back into the Russian hound; again this Russian hound was the cross of the Persian with the sharp eared northern dog. This crossing back eventually produced the Gustopsovaya Borzoi [14: 5-148]. That is the breed pointed to by many as the "pure ancient type" Borzoi, but by today's standards of ancestry this dog would not be considered a breed at all, just another mixed breed or Lurcher.

The Gustopsovaya Borzoi had high speed for a short distance combined with the spite and strength (endurance) of the Bearded Borzoi. A main characteristic of this breed was the last minute rush (fling, dash) after the game [16: 131]. This is a behavioral, functional trait, not a visually discernible one and thus not a trait that could be determined in the show ring. This fling was the ability of the dog to put on a burst of increased running speed as it got close to the game and thus keep the game from escaping by making a turn.

This was an adaptation for hare coursing, because hare will dart and turn to avoid the Borzoi but wolves usually run straight to cover without turning.

With the freeing of the serfs and other political and social changes in Russia in the early to mid 1800's, the large estates were broken up, causing changes in the agricultural practices of central Russia. Farm fields became much larger and the tracts of forest between fields became smaller and further apart as a result. These changes occurred over a vast area of many thousands of square kilometers. The white hare is a forest animal and was the common game animal in the small, woods-bordered fields before the 1860's; but as the forest began to disappear the white hare population decreased and the population of the brown hare, which is an animal adapted for the open fields, began to increase. Catching the white hare required a dog that accelerated quickly, reaching speed in a short distance in the small fields. The brown hare is faster and runs farther than the white hare, an adaptation to living in more open areas. The hare was the main prey of the Borzoi, and the changes in field size and game species required corresponding changes in the hunting borzoi [17: 98-100]. The brown hare has the ability to increase its speed in burst of up to 45 miles per hour. The fling in the Borzoi, mentioned above, is also an adaptation of the Borzoi to this burst of speed in its prey, the brown hare.

The Gustopsovaya Borzoi was only effective for short runs of 700 - 800 yards in small fields. As the hunting conditions changed to longer runs in larger fields, the Gustopsovaya Borzoi lost usefulness as a hunter, and breeders began seeking to improve the endurance of their dogs. Some of the breeders crossed to the Mountain Borzoi of the Transcaucasian Tatars and Persian Kurds. These dogs had endurance and speed over distance. By the 1870's these crossed dogs were very popular in Russia, and some breeds such as the Kurlyandskaya Psovaya Borzoi and the Gustopsovaya Borzoi became extinct and were replaced by the new breed, the modern borzoi, the Psovaya Borzoi. Lieut. G. Tarnooski of the Transcaspian Province of Russia in the Jan. 21, 1892, Forest and Stream, makes reference to "The 'Gustopsovoi' being practically extinct ... (whatever Mr. Kareloff and others may assert to the contrary)." [18: 59]. Mr. Sabaneev felt that the Gustopsovaya Borzoi was extinct. Mr. Kareloff from above, was said to be the only Russian breeder that bred strictly for sale. His dogs were like the old Gustopsovaya Borzoi, having good ears, coat, tail and size. They were also very fast over a short distance and had very bony and poorly muscled backs. Because of these traits they were referred to as the "sturgeons of the Psovoi breed" [19: 474].

A famous Russian Borzoi hunter and breeder named P. M. Machevarianov was one of the breeders that crossed to the Mountain Borzoi. He crossed his Gustopsovaya Borzoi with the Mountain Borzoi of A. V. Zhikhareff and A. A. Stolypine in the late 1840's to make his dogs broader bodied with more rib spring and to increase the muscle mass for endurance running and strength. [12: 16] He also did this crossing to get better, larger and darker eyes from the Mountain Borzoi. He then bred these crosses back into the so called

pure Russian Borzoi (Gustopsovaya Borzoi). This gave him a new breed of borzoi that were considered to be some of the best modern Russian Borzoi. Machevarianov was developing a new breed of Borzoi and as P.M. Semchenkov wrote in the Winter 1993 Borzoi International, "He was dreaming of creating a new breed that would not be inferior to the old breed in swiftness and fighting ability, and would significantly exceed the latter in strength ('sila', or endurance at speed racing)." [20: 190]. The Russian Borzoi owners use the word strong or strength to mean running endurance. P.M. Semchenkov explains, "The notion 'strong' as applied to the Borzoi has always had the one meaning namely, strong is 'the Borzoi distinguished by his outstanding endurance in racing and capable to easily catch brown hares in fields, i.e. vast spaces and when released from a far distance' (P. Gubin). P.M. Matschevarianaff specially emphasized that the term 'strength' has nothing to do with wolves." [11: 111]. The crosses with the Mountain Borzoi, were extremely fast and had very nice fine (narrow) heads, huge eyes and wide rears. But they had shorter hair and the ears and tails were not of the best quality [14: 5-148]. Machevarianov acquired his Borzoi from N. M. Naumoff in 1831. Naumoff had his own lines and kept 200-300 hundred Borzoi. Naumoff had learned about Borzoi from Count A. G. Orloff. By 1870 the Machevarianov dogs were so inbred that they began to lose size and spite, spite being the fighting ability of the dog usually against fox and wolves. So to increase genetic diversity and correct the problems he had acquired through lengthy inbreeding Mr. Machevarianov combined his blood lines with another breeder who had also crossed the Gustopsovaya Borzoi to the Mountain Borzoi for the same reasons that he had. This breeder was N. P. Ermolov and by 1873 they had combined their bloodlines into one [14: 5-148].

N. P. Ermolov was also a very famous Russian breeder. His family had bred sighthounds for over 200 years by the 1880's. In fact P. M. Semchenkov suggested that the Ermolov dogs had the oldest pedigrees of any Borzoi when he said in the Winter 1992 Borzoi International, "The Ermoloff dogs possessed the most ancient pedigree records." [21: 24]. Mr. Ermolov was considered to be one of the best breeders in Russia. He won the first ever prize for proper breeding work given in Russia in 1888. Mr. Ermolov also wrote the first official Borzoi standard approved in 1888 at Russia's congress of Borzoi hunters. He had crossed out to the Mountain Borzoi twice before combining his lines with those of Machevarianov to accomplish the same purpose: increased rib spring (chest width), increased muscle mass and increased endurance. The Ermolov dogs were considered to be second in quality only to the Machevarianov dogs. Mr. Ermolov and Mr. Machevarianov are the fathers of the modern Borzoi breed, the Psovaya Borzoi. As Ermolov said in 1888 in the Description of Typical Features of Hunting Dogs, "This is how the unforgettable M. Machevarianov and I highly rate those solitary hunters, Russian harehounds, which were produced by crossing with Mountain Borzoi." [22: 4]. They were producing the modern Russian Borzoi, the Psovaya Borzoi, the same breed we have today. As Ermolov said, the "Russian Harehound". Again, these crosses were done to improve the chest width (ribspring), endurance or strength ,as the Russians called it, and

muscle mass of the ancient borzoi breed.

Mr. Sabaneev wrote in the Hunters Calendar and Reference Book of 1892, "The ancient breeds of Russian borzoys have been obliged to change and lose some of their former characteristics, owing to changes taking place in the country; as for instance, decrease in size of woods. The short [slight? R.M.] dog, unable to run long distances, is gradually losing importance, and signs of greater endurance are being cultivated, like barrel-shaped ribs and strong muscles. But some signs and qualities of the ancient type are still being carefully preserved. The well known breeders, P. M. Machevarianov and N. P. Ermolov have crossed their dogs with the Mountain Borzoi and have obtained dogs of rounded ribs and strong muscles at the same time retaining the length of ribs below the elbows, the touching of the ears behind, and possessing high speed in general with the ability to increase this to a last lightning - like effort or spurt. Powers and qualities that had been considered incompatible." [23: 57]. Ermolov said of the Mountain Borzoi and their crosses. "I knew several unquestionably purebred Mountain Borzoi and even saw their speed against hares. They were all solitary hunters, of average friskiness, but of boundless and surprising meanness and strong-leggedness; their immediate offspring ancestors in a mixture with the Psovaya dogs were considerably faster, and there often were examples of unusual daring - these dogs truly went out spirited." [22: 9]. They were improving the weak points of the ancient breed while trying to retain its good points. Mr. Kareloff wanted the Ermolov dogs disqualified from competitions because they had Mountain Borzoi blood in them. But as Ermolov wrote, 1888, "There are no longer any purebred Psovaya dogs; all modern Psovaya dogs contain impurities, whether smooth-haired or mountain. They clearly do not exist, and one therefore now should try only to preserve and improve existing breeds of purebred Psovaya dogs through proper breeding." [22: 1]. The Russian breeders were very knowledgeable and they did not cross to another breed just because it was new to them. They knew dog breeding and bred for the improvement of hunting abilities. If the breeding did not improve the hunting abilities it was not done again and the offspring were not bred on from. Thomas ,1912, writes about a "craze" of crossing by the Russians [1: 25], and of "A fad for cross-breeding seized the country." [2: 4]. This would not have happened because these men had been breeding dogs for many years, sometimes for generations, and they knew what they were doing.

In the 1870's kennel clubs with closed stud books started to form. The first dog show in Russia was in 1874. This is when the Russian hunting societies decided to close the stud books on the Borzoi and the Russians began to breed a "Pure bred" Borzoi. This was not done because the so called purebred Borzoi were better hunters. It was done to satisfy the requirements of the kennel clubs. This is also when the Borzoi breed that we have today began to take shape. Winifred E. Chadwick in her book Borzois, 1971 said, "The wavy-haired Borzoi, as we know it, however, was not developed until the sixteenth century" [24: 10]. As I have just shown the Modern Borzoi as we know it was actually not developed until the late 19th century.

The modern borzoi differed from the ancient type by having more muscle, strength, width of chest and rib spring, all for more endurance. They kept the high speed and the rush of the narrower ancient type dogs. The development of the modern Borzoi breed (the Psovaya Borzoi) was hampered, beginning in the 1870's, by an antagonism between "show hunters" and "field hunters". This difference in orientation led to absolutely different demands on the breed. The "show hunters" placed more importance on head, height and beauty points of the dog, whereas the "field hunters" placed more importance on working abilities, the build of the body and spite. This division is still the case today all over the world. All the Russians of that time except Mr. Karelloff, who bred for sale, were field hunters.

N. A. Bolderov

N. A. Bolderov was a well known breeder and hunter in Russia. He was also a judge and president of the Imperial Society in 1892. The Bolderov hunt was started in 1866. His ideal type was the Ermolov dog. As was shown above these dogs were combined with the Machevarianov bloodlines. Both Ermolov and Machevarianov had crossed out to the Mountain Borzoi to get better eyes, endurance, rounded ribs and strong muscles but still retaining the length of rib and ears touching. The Dec. 31, 1891, Forest and Stream, stated that Mr. N. A. Bolderov "Thinks the reproduction of the old types quite impossible and his ideals are called Ermolov dogs." [19: 474]. N. A. Bolderov bred the modern Psovaya Borzoi in his hunt and after the deaths of Ermolov and Machevarianov he, with the help of others, continued the work of Ermolov and Machevarianov in developing this modern borzoi breed. The other hunters he worked with were Dimitry Waltzoff (the future kennel manager at Perchina) , J.P. Sokoloff and S. W. Ozerov. [24: 146], [11: 108] N. A. Bolderov was the uncle of Artem Bolderov. Artem took over the hunt from his uncle in 1896, 30 years after its establishment. He owned a Machevarianov dog named Ubie, who won the highest award given out at the sixth annual Moscow Dog Show of 1881, the Grand Silver Medal [20: 24]. We will show that many Borzoi of N.A. Bolderov lines were imported to the U.S. even before Joseph Thomas went to Russia in 1903.

Outside Russia

In the 1880's the Modern Borzoi was still not fully established as a breed and this is when the Borzoi first came to this country. So we will now look at where the early American Borzoi came from and where they went. Also we will look at who imported them and why.

Paul Hacke

Mr. Paul Hacke was the first American to import Borzoi. In 1888 he had 2 which he selected from an exhibition in Paris. The June 14, 1888 *Forest and Stream* stated that, "Mr. Paul Hacke of Pittsburgh, Pa., is the owner of a pair of Russian wolfhounds, the only specimens known to be in the country. They are built like deerhounds, but have soft silky coats." [25: 418] He took the kennel name of Muscovite in 1892. Mr. Hacke was also the first American to visit Russia and bring back Borzoi. He was interested in the Borzoi as a hunting dog. Col. Roger D. Williams, who also owned Borzoi, wrote in the book *Hunting in Many Lands* 1895, "Mr. Paul Hacke, an enthusiastic fancier of Pittsburgh Pa., while in Russia attending a wolf-killing contest in which barzois contested with captive wolves. He became so much enamored of the sport that he purchased a number of trained borzois and brought them to this country." [26: 350].

Two of Mr. Hacke's early imports were Czar and his son Ivan. Czar showed some evidence of the old crossing to the Bearded Borzoi. William Wade, another early importer of Borzoi, wrote in the May 9, 1889, *Forest and Stream*, "Mr. Hacke's dog Czar, shown at Pittsburgh, was too much of the deerhound type, with a curly somewhat soft or wooly coat, not the sleek, shiny one of his son or of the New York dog; his face had the rudiment of a beard and was not as finely drawn as it should be. His son, shown at the same show, was about perfection: very large with great length, roached like a cat, with tremendous quarters, tucked up flank, coat just right, and exquisite head, tail nicely tucked in and feathered on only about three - quarters of its length." [27: 323]. This shows how this young breed was still not uniform in type and perhaps never will be or should be. The uniformity in appearance sought today in the show ring goes far beyond the uniformity in appearance sought or expected before the kennel clubs were formed with their closed studbooks. The uniformity sought in old Russia was in performance. As P. M. Semchenkov wrote in the Spring 1993 *Borzoi International*, "Every expert and devoted breeder should be aware of the fact that the Russian Borzoi breed had never had and will never have the uniformity that is characteristic of many European breeds. A characteristic feature of all Russia's aboriginal breeds is a great number of interbreed types." [12: 20]. Budiansky, 2000, wrote, "Simply from a mathematical view, it is very hard to dispute that in the single-minded pursuit of a fairly narrow set of mostly visual criteria, many dog breeders have tipped way too far toward uniformity on the uniformity-diversity continuum." [9: 222].

In 1891 Czar "strayed away" from Mr. Hacke's home. This is the description used in an advertisement to find him, "He is a white dog, with gray sides and edge of ears lemon, which are small and lay like a greyhound's: head smooth and rather heavy for a barzoi; eyes hazel: coat long and silky like a setter's; forelegs feathered and tail fringed. One of his hindlegs had been broken and has a lump at point of fracture on the inside above the

hock joint. He stands 29 in. at shoulder.” [28: 481]. Czar was later found and returned to Mr. Hacke. Mr. Hacke had at least 14 Borzoi in 1891. One of Hacke’s imported bitches, bred by Mr. Tchelrscheffs, named Prokaza won a \$250 prize at a wolf hunt and she won the Silver Medal at the Great Dog Show at St. Petersburg in 1889. On Oct. 8th 1890 she had 11 puppies by N. A. Bolderov’s Ataman, at Mr. Hacke’s kennel. Ataman was the sire of some of the early Russian imports to the U.S., and he was also in the Perchina hunt blood lines. N.A. Bolderov was the uncle of Artem. We will show that many of the early imports to the US and Europe came from N. A. Bolderov.

Many of Mr. Hacke's dogs had been hunted on wolves in Russia which they showed with scars and injuries. One of his dogs, Zloeem, from Prince Galitzine born May 1, 1888, won the Gold Medal at St. Petersburg in wolf coursing. He was said to be “unsound in one foot” (caused by a broken toe). Zloeem was 29 ¾ inches tall at the shoulder [29: 12].

Zloeem was tried on wolves by Mr. Hacke in Colorado. The wolf got away but as the judge, Roger D. Williams, said in 1895 it was “one of the most glaring instances of improper training and handling of wolfhounds that ever came under my observation.” [26: 170]. Zloeem’s sire was Onoran, by Oudar out of Roussalka II and his dam was Iskra, by Tchorkai out of Pobeda. Mr. Hacke wanted to start a kennel in Colorado in order to advance the working abilities of the Borzoi. In the April 28, 1892 Forest and Stream it was stated that “Mr. Hacke contemplated establishing a kennel of his dogs in Colorado, thus affording them every facility for proper training on the most formidable gladiator the grey wolf. Dogs bred and raised in Colorado have the further advantage of being acclimated and physically fit for the work required of them.” [30: 402].

Here is a list of one importation made by Mr. Hacke in 1891; “Abreck, all white dog, scar on left hindleg (wolf bite), Viewga, all white bitch, with light lemon ears, Oudoff, all white dog, with light lemon tint, Viola, white bitch, ears, forehead and left side of body fawn, and a small fawn spot on right side, Pospeck, large white dog, with lemon tint, Zanoza, white bitch, fawn patch on top of tail, fawn patch on each flank, both ears fawn, nose light, and has two scars on nose (wolf bites), Armedia, white bitch, light brindle ears, brindle patch on top of tail, and a black spot on middle of back, Ospec, white and brindle dog, white face, and is of the old Gustopsovaya type, Osmadee, white and brindle dog, brindle head and ears, and one side of muzzle white, Karai, white dog, with lemon ears, and a light lemon patch on right side.” [31: 89].

One story about Mr. Hacke was that he was to buy the entire hunt of the Grand Duke George Michaelovitch. It was said that the Grand Duke had fallen into disfavor with the Tsar because he had married a bridesmaid of the Tsar's mother. Because of this disfavor the Grand Duke Michaelovitch was no longer able to keep his hunt and was going to sell all his Borzoi. From this sale Mr. Hacke was going to import 75 Borzoi. I could find no truth to this story. An importation of this size would have been big news, yet I found nothing about it actually happening. There was a Grand Duke Michaelovitch but he was married to a Greek Princess and they were not married until 1907.

In the book *The Complete Borzoi* by Lorraine Groshans, she says of Mr. Hacke's dogs "Many of these died in transit" [32: 26], but actually only 2 died and this was after they had been jerked onto their backs by one of the handlers on the docks in Russia [31: 89].

William Wade

Another early importer was William Wade. Many books say that Mr. Wade was the first American to import Borzoi, but he was at least the third. Mr. Wade wrote the Borzoi section in the *American Book of the Dog* for 1889 and he also did the "Russian Greyhound" entries in the 1891 National Greyhound Club stud book. Mr. Wade along with Mr. Fellows and Mr. Wixom owned the Hornell-Harmony Kennel. Mr. Wade was one of the few early importers that did not want to hunt with his Borzoi. Mostly he imported for resale. As he wrote in the May 9, 1889, *Forest and Stream*, "I would like to 'boon' the breed. I am not circumstanced so that I can breed them myself, or I would go into them at once, for they are the loveliest dogs I have ever seen, ... To be honest with you. I have tried to forestall the market by sending an order to England, and this in the nature of a free ad. I don't intend to keep the dogs myself; but I know a good fellow who will take care of that end of the string." [27: 323]. He also felt that the Borzoi had no use in the U.S. and wrote in the March 20, 1890, *Forest and Stream*, "The use of the Russian dogs is for 'no use'; simply as ornamental dogs, and for this I maintain that no other dog is their peer. That they are full fledged 'fancy' articles is shown by the prices they are held at." [33: 173]. One of Mr. Wade's early Borzoi was Elsie. Though she never made it to the U.S., Mr. Wade owned Elsie when she had her litter in England by Krilutt. Mr. Wade did want to know what the correct type was for the Borzoi and to that end he brought in Russian hunting publications and had them translated into English, these were published in hunting magazines of the late 1800's, which was a great aid to all the Borzoi fanciers of that day and today.

The Duchess of Newcastle

The Duchess of Newcastle, although not an American, did supply many of the early imports to the US. Even early on she had great knowledge of the breed. She went to Russia in 1891 and met with the Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaievich (Nicholas) of the Perchina hunt and with Prince Galitzin of the Imperial hunt, in St. Petersburg. The Grand Duke had brought 3 of his dogs from his hunt at Perchina with him. The Duchess got instructions on the points of a good Borzoi from the Grand Duke. She bought dogs from the Grand Duke and also from N. A. Bolderov. In 1891 she bought Nagraj dai II from Colonel Tchebishoff. N. A. Bolderov considered his body to be “perfection” and the Duchess said of him “Wider in front than any I have yet seen, very deep chest, splendid shoulders with straight tail, well let down to the hocks and can go a great pace.” [34: 475] This width in the front is a modern Borzoi trait. Nagraj dai II was the grandson of Nagraj dai who at that time was the only Borzoi, according to the Duchess, to have taken the gold medal single handed. She wrote of the Borzoi in the Dec. 31, 1891, Forest and Stream, “English judges will soon ruin this breed if they form a fresh standard; they will breed animals (not dogs) as top heavy and useless as the present St. Bernard, simply through trying to make elephants of them. In Russia they do not consider height a point, simply symmetry of form and speed for hunting. The average height of the dogs is from 16 to 18 vershoks (28 to 31 1/2 inches), over this height they become coarse and loose symmetry and speed which are so much valued.” [34: 475]. This was after her visit with the Grand Duke. She bought, from the Grand Duke, littermates out of Mr. Waltzoff's (the manager of Perchina) Podrooga II, of Machevarianov lines, and by N. A. Bolderov's Ataman (also of Waltzoff breeding). This is the same Ataman that was bred to Paul Hacks' Prokaza. From this litter she sold 3 to H. W. Huntington in the US. One of the dogs she kept from this litter was Ooslad. This same breeding produced a bitch named Rosaida who remained in Russia and was a great grand dam of Almas, Bistri's sire. Please refer to the pedigree of Almas that we have included. Bistri of Perchina was one of the first Borzoi that Joseph Thomas imported from Russia and was considered to be the best Borzoi in the U.S. when he was imported. Bistri was also said by Thomas to be of the “pure ancient type” and as Thomas (1906) said, “ the first hound of the ‘ancient type’ to leave Russia.” [2: 5]. Now we are coming full circle, and finding out who these dogs really were.

Pedigree of Almas of Perchina

Sire of Bistri of Perchina

Sire Golub Perchina hunt	Sire Tsharodyei Prince Vassiltschikoff hunt	Sire Sverkai Prince Vassiltschikoff hunt (Leekhoi and Lekftodeyka were littermates owned by Hanks of the Seacroft Kennel)	Sire Ryesvy Prince D.B. Golitzin's hunt
		Dam Raskida II Prince Vassiltschikoff hunt	Sire Nayan Count S.A. Strogonoff hunt
			Dam Lebyedka I S.S. Kareyeff's hunt
			Dam Lebyedka I S.S. Kareyeff hunt
	Dam Golubka S.W. Ozerov hunt	Sire Ataman Waltzoff hunt	Sire Aspid Waltzoff hunt
			Dam Sudorka W.P. Glebow hunt
		Dam Almaska S.W. Ozerov hunt	Sire Liebed Waltzoff hunt
			Dam Golubko A.J. Nikolayeff hunt
Dam Strela Perchina hunt	Sire Serdetschny P.J. Durasoff hunt	Sire Naglaty P.N. Lorotugeff hunt (Krillutt was a littermate, imported to England and bred to Elsie)	Sire Dorogai N.A. Bolderov hunt
			Dam Nagla M.P. Kororuyeff hunt
		Dam Druschba I P.F. Durasoff hunt	Sire Dorogai P.F. Durasoff hunt
			Dam Jasva I Nasoryeff hunt

		Sire Kaisad Memirowsky hunt	Sire Nachal II W.A. Scheremetyeff hunt
	Dam Vyuga J.P. Sokoloff hunt	Dam Rosaida J.P. Sokoloff hunt (Argoss, Oudar, Pogwal, owned by Huntington and Osslad, owned by the Duchess of New Castle, were littermates)	Dam Krosotka Nemirowsky hunt
			Sire Ataman N.A. Bolderov hunt Bred by Waltzoff
			Dam Podrooga II Waltzoff hunt

The Duchess later imported the bitch Tsaritsa, from N. A. Bolderov. She was of Waltzoff, Bolderov, Ermolov, and Machevarianov lines (see the accompanying pedigree of Tsaritsa). Her grand dam, on the sire's side, was Zavlada, who was also imported by the Duchess, and was a littermate to Kidai Molodoi. Kidai Molodoi was the first Borzoi that was not gray marked bought by the Grand Duke Nicholas for Perchina. The Grand Duke bought Kidai Molodoi from N. A. Bolderov. Both of her parents were of Waltzoff breeding, the dam side being mostly of Ermolov blood.[24: 142] Marksman was a littermate of Tsaritsa, and was imported to the U.S. We will talk about him later in this article. By 1892 the Duchess of Newcastle had already owned nearly 50 Borzoi [34: 475].

Pedigree for Marksman and Tsaritsa.

Marksman was owned by the Seacroft kennel and bred at Valley Farm kennel.

Tsaritsa was owned by the Duchess of Newcastle.

Sire Pilai N. A. Bolderov hunt	Sire Podar N.A. Bolderov hunt	Sire Podrouga Prince Obolensky hunt	Sire Pilai Nazimoff hunt
			Dam Liotka Prince Obolensky hunt

		Dam Porojai <i>Protassieff hunt</i>	Sire Kidai I <i>Protassieff hunt</i>	
			Dam Kolpitsa <i>Protassieff hunt</i>	
	Dam Zavlada <i>N.A. Bolderov hunt</i> <i>Imported to England</i> <i>by the Duchess of</i> <i>Newcastle. Kidai</i> <i>Molodoi of the</i> <i>Perchina hunt was a</i> <i>littermate.</i>	Sire Almas <i>Waltzoff hunt</i>	Sire Kidai II <i>Protassieff hunt</i>	
			Dam Podrooga Prince Obolensky hunt	
		Dam Kolpitsa <i>Waltzoff hunt</i>	Sire Porojai II <i>Waltzoff hunt</i>	
			Dam Loukavka <i>Ermolov hunt</i>	
Dam Kolpitsa <i>Prince Vassilchikoff</i> <i>hunt</i>	Sire Svirep <i>Karieff hunt</i>	<i>Sire</i>	<i>Sire</i>	
			<i>Dam</i>	
	Dam Lebedka II <i>Prince Vassilchikoff</i> <i>hunt</i>	<i>Dam</i>	<i>Sire</i>	<i>Dam</i>
			<i>Dam</i>	<i>Dam</i>
		<i>Sire</i>	<i>Sire</i>	<i>Dam</i>
		<i>Dam</i>	<i>Dam</i>	<i>Dam</i>

H. W. Huntington

H. W. Huntington was the owner of the Marlborough greyhound kennel. He was a coursing and show judge and he was also a hunter and was interested in the Borzoi for coursing. His three dogs, bought from the Duchess of Newcastle who imported them from Russia, were Pagwal, Oudar and Argoss. Argoss was a Silver Medal winner for wolves in Russia. He was the first American and International Borzoi Champion. He won 58 first and special prizes in his lifetime. Oudar was 30 ½ inch. at the shoulder and weighed 105 lbs [13: 10]. Mr. Huntington bought the Krilutt X Elsie litter from Mr. Wade, two of which were the first two Borzoi registered with the AKC. Elsie was 27 inches at the shoulder [35: 21]. Krilutt was born on April 27, 1888. He was a Silver

Medal winner in Russia, was imported to England and became the first English Borzoi Champion. The Dog Owner's Annual of 1892 gave Krilutt's height as 30 ¼ inches at the shoulder and his weight as 100 pounds [1: 31]. When Krilutt was shown at the Alexandra Palace in 1889, he was said to be taller than any other dog in his class [36: 223]. Rawdon B. Lee wrote, in 1893, about Krilutt's height "Captain Graham tells me he measured Krilutt carefully on more than one occasion, but could not make him more than 29 ¾ inches at the shoulder, and I have made him full height bare 30 inches." [36: 231]. Krilutt would be a small dog by today's standards but in his day he was considered large. Krilutt's sire was Dorogai owned by N. A. Bolderov of Waltzoff lines, and his dam was Nagla of Ermolov, Machevarianov lines. This same breeding produced Naglaty, a great grand sire of Almas, Bistri's sire. This is another Perchina dog relative that was imported before Thomas's 1903 imports. Again please refer to the Almas pedigree. Mr. Huntington also imported Borzoi from Germany, including one named Zerry.

Lorraine Groshans said in her book *The Complete Borzoi*, 1981, "Mr. Huntington's interest in the breed lasted but a very short time before he returned to the greyhound fancy." [32: 26]. This is true and in 1894 he sold all his Borzoi to the Terra Cotta Kennel in Canada. But we will show that his dogs carried on.

The Terra Cotta Kennel

The Terra Cotta Kennel was also a greyhound kennel owned by Mr. W.J. Tulk and Mr. Kent. Mr. Kent was the president of the Canadian Kennel Club and later became the first Vice-President of the Russian Wolfhound Club of America. They imported many dogs from N.A. Bolderov including Ataman IV who won the Silver Medal in Moscow for 1892. He was said to be "strong and powerful". Another import of theirs was a bitch named Bidy Rees. She was by N.A. Bolderov's Ataman out of Mr. Rousseau's Outschischka. [37] Outschischka was said to be the only Borzoi living holding the Russian Kennel Clubs Gold Medal. Her sire Ataman is the same dog that was bred to Paul Hacks' Prokaza and he was also the sire of Argoss whose littermate Rosaída was behind Thomas's Bistri. The Terra Cotta Kennel also had many Borzoi from the Duchess of Newcastle. Some of the Terra Cotta dogs were later used for breeding by the Valley Farm Kennel. The first Borzoi registered with the Canadian Kennel Club was Kernishky, a Terra Cotta dog. His sire was Barin whose sire was Opromiot, an N. A. Bolderov dog [38: 22]. They also registered some of their dogs with the American Kennel Club.

Colonel Roger D. Williams

Colonel Roger D. Williams was a coursing and show judge. He was the keeper of the National Coursing Board's greyhound stud book for the first 2 years of its existence, and

was an avid hunter and breeder. He owned Kaluga by Philos out of Modjeska (Modjeska was from the Krilutt-Elsie litter) and Flovidka by Colonel Dietz. Colonel Dietz was a son of Leekhoi (of the Seacroft kennel) and he was bred into the Valley Farm Kennel lines.

Colonel Williams demanded and got high performance from all of his dogs. Theodore Roosevelt in his book *Hunting the Grisly and Other Sketches* of 1893 said, "Col. Roger D. Williams of Lexington, Kentucky, who more than any other American is entitled to speak upon coursing, and especially upon coursing large game. Col. Williams, like a true son of Kentucky, has bred his own thoroughbred horses and thoroughbred hounds for many years; and during a series of long hunting trips extending over nearly a quarter of a century he has tried his pack on almost every game animal to be found among the foot-hills of the Rockies and on the great plains." [39: 157]. Col. Williams was judging Greyhounds and Foxhounds at the Grand Rapids show of 1892 and he showed one of his Borzoi at that show. R. Water wrote of that dog, "There was but one, and that one was for exhibition only. He is owned by Mr. Roger Williams, who had him wonderfully conditioned, the muscles being well developed and exceedingly hard all over his legs and body, thus showing that the Psovoi can be conditioned to perfection." [40: 274]. Col. Williams later went into fox hounds and fox hunting.

General Henry T. Allen

One man who is mostly unknown, even though he did more for the Borzoi in the US than almost any other person, was General Henry T. Allen. General Allen was raised with hunting dogs. In the early 1880's while at Fort Keogh, Montana, he had a pack of greyhounds and he hunted with them. Heath Twichell Jr. wrote of Allen in the book *Allen The Biography of an Army Officer*, 1974, "In his spare time, he explored the ninety square miles of the Keogh Reservation. His pack of greyhounds went along to chase the rabbits, coyotes, and antelope from the thickets of cane and willow along the river bank and through the sagebrush and wildflowers on the rolling tabletop above." [41: 30]. Allen in a letter to his future wife Dora wrote, "I have had elegant sport chasing this winter, have in fact caught jack rabbits, coyotes, deer and antelope ... with my hounds. I have a magnificent pack now 7 in all." [41: 34]. Allen's coursing sometimes got him in trouble. He was transferred from Keogh to Fort Walla Walla, Washington, and Twichell, 1974, wrote about Allen that during the trip "He often roamed far from the column, and once was 'taken to task' for chasing antelope with his greyhounds." [41: 34]. Allen continued to course his greyhounds around Fort Walla Walla until in 1885 when he went to explore Alaska for the Army. While in Alaska Allen became very interested in Russia and the Russian people.

In 1889 Allen was sent to Russia as the American Military Attaché to the court of the Tsar (Alexander III) in St. Petersburg. At that time a Lieutenant, he became friends with members of the Tsar's family and went on several Borzoi hunts with the Imperial Hunt. After the hunts they often had large banquets. Allen in a letter to his wife Dora wrote of one such banquet, "This is the day of our gala dinner. Mrs. Ponamareff, her daughter and son-in-law, the Malakoffs, the young lady visitor (the gypsy singer whose name I don't know), the Uncle Ponamareff ... Alexander Dietz, Vladimir Dietz, Gen'l Grunwaldt (Comdg Chevalier Guards), Prince Golystin and myself. ... It was a five course dinner and the guitar of young P with the singing of the young lady offered a spicy accompaniment to the coffee and cigarettes. There was drunk in all 5 bot[tles] champagne, 4 bots beer, 2 1/2 cognac, 2 1/2 madeira, 1 red wine, 4 white wine, 3/4 whiskey and 4 large samovars of water. What is more, Alex. Dietz and myself drank very little, as did one or two of the ladies. ... It was really one of the greatest drinking bouts I ever saw and greatly encouraged by the ladies." [41: 80].

Charles Stedman Hanks

In 1889 Charles Stedman Hanks, who was Leut. Allen's cousin, with his wife came to St. Petersburg to visit Leut. Allen. Mr. Hanks owned Seacroft Kennel and raised Fox Terriers. Mr. Hanks' son Stedman Shumway Hanks said of these two men in his book *The Borzoi The Most Noble Greyhound*, 1960, "Mr. Hanks and General Allen were enthusiastic about all sporting activities; the Borzoi pleased them most." [42: 7]. Both of these men were coursing enthusiasts and preferred the working dog. Mr. Hanks either brought with him or had 7 Borzoi shipped to the US in 1890. He was given Borzoi as gifts by Prince Galitzen of the Imperial Hunt. One was the bitch Kinjat, who had won the Bronze Medal at St. Petersburg in 1891. He also bought dogs from other people. It was said that Mr. Hanks was "Smitten with the Barzoi fever" while in Russia [43: 92]. He obtained dogs from the Grand Duke Peter Nicholas, Prince Galitzin, Colonel Dietz, the man who the dog was later named for, and A. Schermetieff. Joseph Thomas said, 1906, that Schermetieff had 50 of the ancient type Borzoi and that Schermetieff was one of only three hunts that had the "ancient type" in any significant numbers; the other two being N. A. Bolderov and the Grand Duke Nicholas at Perchina [2: 4]. One bitch of Hanks', Svodka from A.J. Rousseau, was bred to N.A. Bolderov's Ataman before she left Russia [44: 191]. Two others he imported were Leekhoi and his litter sister Lekftodeyka. Their dam was Lebyedka I and their sire was Ryesvy. This same breeding produced Sverkai, a great grandsire of Almas, Bistri's sire, and provides another instance of prior importation of stock closely related to the later Thomas imports. Lekftodeyka won the Silver Medal at a field trial in Russia with an entry of 52 [45: 333].

Mr. Hanks later imported the dog Marksman, a littermate to the Duchess of Newcastle's Tsaritsa. As was shown above Marksman's blood lines are in the Perchina dogs. Marksman was later bred into the Valley Farm Kennel lines. A Marksman son, Valley Wer Wolf and a Marksman daughter, Valley Ku Klux were bred several times each at Valley Farm [46: multiple pages]. Mr. Hanks became very knowledgeable of the

Borzoi in Russia and of its breeders. He knew of the Grand Duke Nicholas' dogs and in 1894 referred to the Grand Duke as one of the best breeders in Russia [47: 103]. The Seacroft Kennel and Mr. Hanks sent some of its Borzoi to Fort Custer where they were used to course jackrabbits, wolves and coyotes. One dog sent was Groubian, and also a bitch who had a litter while at the fort.

When Leut. Allen returned to America he brought 2 Borzoi with him to Fort Riley, Kansas. He also had 3 Borzoi from the Seacroft Kennel. Leut. Allen said of these dogs. "I could get no better dogs or better bred ones in Russia than these I have." [48: 432] One dog which he bred was later bred into the Valley Farm Kennel [46: 787]. Stedman Shumway Hanks, 1960, said of Leut. Allen and coursing "He began to practice this sport enthusiastically around Fort Riley." [42: 11]. Twichell, 1974, wrote of Allen, "With three fine horses just purchased in Kentucky and his pack of four greyhounds, five foxhounds, and five wolfhounds (the latter brought from Russia), he was the undisputed new leader of the post's sporting set. He organized a polo club and was elected master of the hounds of the riding club." [41: 85]. He hunted actively for several years with Leut. Gordon Johnson, Commander McDonald, and Leut-colonel Treat. They coursed jackrabbits, wolves and coyotes. Allen was then transferred to Europe where he commanded the 90th division in France through World War I and after the war he became Commander of all American forces in Germany.

In Oct. 1892 Mr. Hanks hired Tom Turner to manage the Seacroft Kennel. By the late 1890's Mr. Hanks became dissatisfied with his Borzoi and after some bad experiences at shows, including the death of his favorite dog Leekhoi from heat stroke, he stopped showing and breeding Borzoi and turned the kennel over to his manager Tom Turner.

During this time opinion of some in England was that the English had improved the Borzoi beyond what the original Russian breeders had created. H. W. Huntington in the Aug. 1898 Outing magazine said, "In fact, so much has the breed degenerated in Russia for want of intelligent mating, that one of our greatest German fanciers and judges of the breed claims that the purchasers of good specimens must here after look to Germany and Great Britain for what they want, and never think of seeking anything in Russia." [49: 490]. They felt that the Russians did not know "the essential and correct points of the

breed.” [49: 490] This seems very odd considering that the Russians are the ones who determined the essential and correct points of this Russian breed. Some people also felt the Russian standard was not correct. As H.W. Huntington wrote in the book *The Show Dog*, 1901, “The standard used by the Russians in judging this breed proved to be so unsatisfactory that the English fanciers very wisely formulated one of their own and while it is not perfect, if followed closely, will greatly improve the breed.” [50: 162].

Not everyone shared this opinion! Charles Stedman Hanks said of these European dogs “that they were in a way more ‘kennel dogs’ than ‘working dogs’. They possessed much of the charm, the beauty, and the characteristics of their breed but lacked the vigor necessary for the working dog.” [42: 11]. *The Canine Encyclopedia*, Paris, 1955 stated “The English type modified itself toward a general refining of type and a lowering of physical resistance.” [42: 16]. *The Hutchinson Encyclopedia of the Dog* said, about the English Borzoi, “The extremely fine head became the main attention of breeders and in time, by constantly breeding for heads, without considering the other parts of the dog, they obtained remarkable heads on hooped bodies and little more. The breed became distinctly weedy and unsound and rapidly lost ground.” [51: 173]. There was no Borzoi club in the US until 1904, so the English club had a great influence in America. This dissatisfaction with how the breed was evolving, in England, without selective pressure based on hunting was also occurring in America, and the breed experienced a drop in popularity here. By this time Roger D. Williams had left the breed for foxhound, H.W. Huntington had sold all his Borzoi and Hanks left too after his Leekhoi died. The drop in popularity was so great that Tom Turner of Seacroft Kennel was almost the only exhibitor in America.

Enter The Enthusiastic Young Man:

Then an enthusiastic young man came into the breed. He was Joseph B. Thomas Jr. Mr. Thomas became close friends with both Charles Stedman Hanks and General Allen, then a Major. Stedman Shumway Hanks, 1960, said that his father and Mr. Thomas felt that the US Borzoi “lacked the resistance and strength necessary for the hunt.” [42: 11]. Mr. Thomas learned all that he could from Mr. Hanks and General Allen. General Allen and Thomas became close friends and in 1912 General Allen persuaded Thomas to write his book as a “Collection of letters to a friend”. General Allen was that friend and he also wrote the forward to the book. General Allen had written many articles on the Borzoi as well as descriptions of hunting with them in Russia. In 1899 Mr. Thomas, along with several other investors, started the Valley Farm Kennel and set about procuring stock. Thomas stated that he had started in Borzoi a year earlier in 1898 [52: 151]. Mr. Hanks instructed his kennel manager, Tom Turner, to sell to Valley Farm the best Borzoi that Seacroft had. Mr. Thomas also went to Canada and obtained at least one Borzoi from the

Terra Cotta Kennel. So some of the foundation dogs for Valley Farm were the decedents of some of the first Borzoi imported to the US and some of the first imports from N.A. Bolderov, the Duchess of Newcastle and the Imperial Kennel. This also shows that the early imports had an influence on the current American Borzoi, and not just the later imports.

Mr. Thomas was not impressed with the German Borzoi imported by Mr. Krauss and said of them, 1912, "These hounds had good heads and good coats, but had evidently been kennel-raised for many generations and seemed to show it in disposition and lack of stamina. Many of them were very weedy, although pretty to look at." [1: 37]. Mr. Thomas was more interested in a working dog as were General Allen and Mr. Hanks. According to Aatis Lillstrom in the Summer 1983 Borzoi Quarterly, Germany did have "...many imports directly from the Oseroff Hunt..." [53: 56]. As we have seen Ozerov (or Oseroff) was breeding with Waltzoff, Sokoloff and N.A. Bolderov to complete the work of Ermolov and Machevarianov on the modern Borzoi. But Thomas never went to Germany.

By 1903 Valley Farm Kennel had 35 Borzoi. Many of these were bred by Valley Farm from Seacroft and Terra Cotta dogs. One Seacroft dog, Col. Dietz, was bred at least 4 times at Valley Farm. Col. Dietz was a Leekhoi son [46: 789]. Leekhoi was one of Hank's best Borzoi. With so few working dogs in America and none in Europe, Mr. Thomas became frustrated with what he could find and went to Europe and Russia in search of his "Ideal" Borzoi. Mr. Thomas based his ideal on one photo of a dog that he had obtained from Mr. Musgrave who was an agent for the Duchess of Newcastle. Mr. Musgrave had made several trips to Russia on behalf of the Duchess to purchase Borzoi. Mr. Thomas unfortunately began to call his ideal the "ancient type" but this type is definitely a modern Borzoi, the Psovaya Borzoi. In Europe Mr. Thomas found little of what he liked and in his enthusiasm and new found knowledge of the breed he ran afoul of the Duchess of Newcastle, which was too bad for him because the Duchess was perhaps the most knowledgeable person in the breed, outside of Russia, and he could have learned much about Borzoi from her. Mr. Thomas said of the European Borzoi, 1912, "Although several large kennels existed in France, Belgium, and Holland, the hounds lacked class and uniformity of type;" [1: 37]. This lack of uniformity is because the modern Borzoi was a very young breed at this time and as P. Semchenkov, 1993, stated, "... the Russian Borzoi breed had never had and will never have the uniformity that is characteristic of many European breeds." [12: 20].

Actually many of the Borzoi in Belgium and Holland were from N.A. Bolderoff and Waltzoff blood lines. Also many of the Borzoi in England were from the kennel of the Grand Duke Nicholas. Aatis Lillstrom wrote in the Summer 1983 Borzoi Quarterly, "The

Kennel Gazette Registry of March 1892, page 90, gives the sire and dam of eleven Borzoi [in English. R.M.] bred between 1887 and 1891, all from the kennels of the Grand Duke Nicholas of Russia.” [53: 56].

Mr. Thomas did find one bitch in Belgium that he liked. She was from N. A. Bolderov lines. Mr. Thomas said of the English dogs ,1912, “the then principle kennel was most notable for the size and coarseness of its dogs, which characteristic, together with the fact that many of them were very unsound, made them anything but coursing types. In the minor kennels there were a great many weeds.” [1: 40], and once again his search is based on capability for work. Mr. Thomas found only 2 Borzoi in Europe that he liked and he bought them. He then headed to Russia. At first he didn’t find what he was looking for in Russia either. Then as he put it he “gleaned” from the “editor of a little sporting paper...that Mr. Artem Bolderov had an excellent kennel, and he thought moreover that H.I.H. the Grand Duke Nicholas also had ‘some hounds’”. [1: 44] The Grand Duke’s hunt was at Perchina near St. Petersburg. Thomas went on to say about the dogs at Perchina “although nobody, not even the Russians, seemed to be aware of what was to be seen.” [1: 49] This statement by Thomas is utter nonsense. The Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaievich was well known all over Russia, Europe and the U.S. as a great sportsman and dog person. His dogs were considered by many as the best that could be found, and as we have shown, many of his dogs had already been imported to the US and Europe. Edwin H. Morris wrote in the Aug. 1890 issue of Frank Leslie’s Popular Monthly, “Opromiote is owned by H.I.H. Grand Duke Nicholas, and is the winner of the Gold Medal at Moscow. He is a magnificent specimen with great vigor, speed and courage, and is considered by Prince Galitzine, the chief of the Imperial Hunt, to be one of the finest specimens ever produced.” [56: 183]. This was 13 years before Mr. Thomas’ visit. As stated previously Mr. Thomas’ friend Mr. Hanks called the Grand Duke Nicholas one of the best breeders in Russian in 1894, 9 years before Thomas’ visit [47: 103]. Henry T. Allen called the Grand Duke’s hunt a “famous kenne!” in 1893, 10 years before Thomas’ visit [26: 170]. The Duchess of Newcastle wrote in the 1898 Our Dogs “I think I am right in saying that the Grand Duke Nicholas is the most enthusiastic breeder in Russia, and he owns the best dogs there at present. His Imperial Highness has been breeding for a long time, crossing several different strains to get at what he considers should be the type.” [13: 10]. This was 5 years before Thomas’ visit. So the Grand Duke’s hunt and his dogs were well known all over Russia, Europe and the U.S. long before Thomas’ Russian visit.

Thomas says, “One’s first thought is, why have not the English and American breeders secured specimens of these dogs and why has not more been heard of them.” [1: 50] As we have seen, many N.A. Bolderov and Waltzoff dogs were already imported, as were many that were related to the Perchina dogs. Please refer to the pedigrees we have included. Much had been heard about them. Thomas then says that this “ancient type” was unobtainable before 1903. This suggests that the modern Psovaya Borzoi, of the

Perchina hunt, was still a work in progress as a breed at the time of Thomas' 1903 Russian visit.

The Grand Duke

Let's take a closer look at the Grand Duke and the timeline of his breeding efforts at Perchina. The Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaievich Romanov, the younger (Nicholas) was the first son of the Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaievich, the elder, grandson of Tsar Nicholas I and the second cousin (known as second uncle in Russia) of Tsar Nicholas II. He was called Nikolasha by Tsar Nicholas II and the "Dread (or Terrible) Uncle" by others within the royal family. He was said to be quick tempered, egocentric, and Count Witte said of him "...being convinced that the Grand Duke, who is very certain of himself, is, to put it mildly, unbalanced." [57: 354]. He was an army officer commissioned in 1872, called "The Giant" (also Nicholas the Long) by his troops. He stood 6' 6" tall and had blazing blue eyes. He served in the Russo-Turkish war from 1877-1878, introduced major military reforms during his career and was well liked by his troops. The Grand Duke Nicholas was a great sportsman. Aatis Lillstrom wrote in the Fall 1984 Borzoi Quarterly that he "was the president of the Society for the Encouragement of Sport that had in 1889 written a composite Borzoi Standard under the hand of the hunter Yermoloff." (or Ermolov) [58: 47]. The Grand Duchess George said of the Grand Duke, "He was a real soldier and did not care about social life. Sport, hunting and shooting were his passions, and whenever he could get away from his military service he used to go to the country." [59: 84]. The Grand Duke once bought the Greyhound Simonian from Col. North for \$1,500 and after winning the Russian Waterloo Cup and other stakes he sold the dog back to Col. North for \$3,625 [60]. The Grand Duke sold his first hunt of Borzoi in 1884 when military obligations required it. In 1884 the Grand Duke was 28 years old. At that time he gave the dog Nagradka to Tsar Alexander III. Nagradka and all his descendants were bred into the Gatchina (Imperial) Hunt. Some of these descendants were also bought by the Duchess of Newcastle. In 1887 the Grand Duke returned to St Petersburg and bought the estate at Perchina. He hired Dimitry Waltzoff to be his kennel manager. Waltzoff along with other hunters N. A. Bolderov, Sokoloff and S. Ozerov, had been trying to complete the work of Ermolov and Machevarianov, producing the modern Borzoi. P. Semchenkov wrote in the Winter 1992 Borzoi International [21: 19], "Waltzoff & Co. undertook to disprove the widely shared opinion that the combination of swiftness and good fighting abilities with exquisite exterior is hardly probable." They were putting the finishing touches on the modern Borzoi, the Psovaya Borzoi. With the great resources of the Grand Duke Nicholas they were able to do just that. The Imperial family of Russia was very wealthy. This quote from Thomas, 1912, shows some of the Grand Duke's opulence. "Nearly every room in the lodge is hung with hunting-trophies killed by the Grand Duke, and rigorously 'protected' by his clown, a dwarf about three feet six inches tall, bearing on his thumb the Seigneur's signet ring, a curious relic of medieval custom." [1: 46]. Waltzoff had this wealth at his disposal to aid him in his breeding.

The Grand Duke was heavily involved in the Russian government and military. He was the Inspector General of the cavalry from 1895 until 1905. He then became Commander of Military Forces around St. Petersburg and the first President of the Imperial Committee for National Defense. For the first year of World War I he was Commander and Chief of all of Russia's military forces. In 1914 because of pressure from the Tsaritsa Alexandra and Rasputin, the Tsar removed the Grand Duke from his command and made him commander in the Caucasus, where he remained until he left Russia, for France in 1919. The Grand Duke was married on March 12, 1907 to Princess Anastasia (aka Stana) daughter of Nicolas I, the King of Montenegro. They had no children. The Grand Duke and his wife believed in mysticism and the occult, and were Rasputin's supporters at first. In fact Princess Anastasia, the Grand Duke's wife, and her sister (who was married to the Grand Duke's brother) had sponsored Rasputin and introduced him to the Tsaritsa. Later the Grand Duke came to hate Rasputin and once when Rasputin offered to come to the front and dedicate an icon for the Grand Duke he replied, "Come and I'll hang you." [61: 171] The Grand Duke had a very strong personality and was said to be more popular than the Tsar. There were even rumors that the Grand Duke was planning to kidnap the Tsar and install himself as Tsar Nicholas III, but in truth the Grand Duke was very dedicated to the Tsar. The Grand Duke made an impression on everyone that met him, and the following quote demonstrates the effect he had on people. Donald Thompson was a young news photographer that spent time in Russia during World War I. He met the Grand Duke Nicholas and wrote enthusiastically about him in his book, Donald Thompson in Russia, 1918, "The one man who, in my judgment, could bring order out of chaos and stand the nation on its feet, is the Grand Duke Nicolas, the biggest man in all Russia, the man that German intrigue never could buy, the man who was deposed as commander-in-chief of the Russian armies and sent to the Caucasus because the German armies could not whip him. Every true friend of Russia should pray for the day when he shall start his march from the Caucasus toward the capital, for millions of loyal Russians will flock to his standard, and the Bolsheviki, the Socialists and the anarchists will be crushed under the Russian steam-roller with the Grand Duke Nicolas at the throttle." [62: xviii]. Because of all his military duties and work with the government, the Grand Duke was unable to spend much time at Perchina. Waltzoff was in charge of the hunt most of the time and was the person who did the breeding at Perchina. Waltzoff, N.A. Bolderov, Sokoloff and Ozerov were continuing the production of the modern Borzoi, started in the 1840's by Ermolov and Machevarianov.

The Grand Duke and Waltzoff began to gather Borzoi from all over Russia. In the Grand Duke's first hunt, before he hired Waltzoff, he was most interested in the spite, or fighting ability, of the dogs. Because of this his dogs began to lose speed and were not good in the chase. At Perchina the Grand Duke shifted his attention to the speed of the dogs. As Waltzoff said in the Perchina Hunt, 1912, "In his former pack the Grand Duke had devoted his entire attention to the pluck of the hounds. The breeders were selected according to their degree of pluck, where as beauty of form and regularity were

frequently placed in the background or entirely neglected. This, in the end, affected the speed of the dogs, without which a successful chase of full-grown wolves is impossible. Now, in the new pack of the Grand Duke, attention was paid in the first instance, to speed, pure strain and the build of the breeding animals." [24: 142]. The breeding for pluck or fighting abilities was done by others also and as Baron Rozen said, 1891, "Intensified coursing of wolves, ignoring hares, has drawn modern dog breeders into an enormous mistake in the breeding of studs, and this mistake has of course resulted in a loss of the dog's speed in favor of their ferocity." [10: 53]. The modern Borzoi was developed to hunt hares and wolf hunting was a sideline. Therefore speed was more important to the breed than fighting ability. If the Borzoi did not have the speed to catch the game they were of no use for hunting. Speed was important enough to the Grand Duke that he would bring a leash of Greyhound to the field to test the speed of his Borzoi against. As Waltzoff said, "Behind the Grand Duke, his stable boy (assistant of the Imperial huntsmen) rides with a Borzoi and an English greyhound, in order to be able to compare the running of the Russian with that of the English greyhound. For wolf-hunting a leash of English greyhounds is made up." [24: 132]. Some Borzoi were used to hunt wolves but they were especially selected and trained to do so. The Borzoi that hunted wolves were not typical of the breed, and as you can see from the above quote the Russians also used English Greyhounds to hunt wolves and hares. The individual dogs, of both breeds, that were especially selected and trained to hunt wolves were called wolfhounds but the Russians never applied that name to the whole breed of Greyhounds or Borzoi.

Waltzoff and the Grand Duke felt that once they had speed they could then breed for other points of the dog. As Waltzoff, 1912, said of their view "if one already possesses a record speed in one's hunting hounds, one is not in danger in using for breeding a hound that is not so fleet, provided only that the hound is pure bred, keen and in shape and type suitable for the bitch." [24: 146]. Baron Rozen also felt that speed was important and harder to get than other points of the breed as he wrote in 1891, "...in my view it is more pleasant to take a full-grown wolf from under six fast dogs than from under one dull one, no matter what its dashing ferocity, especially since the ferocity of borzois can be developed very quickly, at least more quickly than speed." [10: 54]. Speed was the first characteristic they wanted in the Perchina Borzoi.

The Grand Duke's preferred type of the modern breed were the Durasoff dogs. The Durasoff dogs were descended from Stupischinsky and Nasaryseff dogs. The Nasaryseff dogs were from Machevarianov, Ermolov lines, which as we have seen are from a cross with the Mountain Borzoi and are the modern breed. A foundation bitch of the Perchina hunt was Vyuga. She was from Raskide, of Waltzoff lines, and Kiasak, of Machevarianov, Ermolov lines, having Mountain Borzoi behind them and being the modern borzoi or Psovaya Borzoi.

After acquiring his foundation bitch the Grand Duke then sent Mr. Waltzoff to buy his foundation stud. Waltzoff, 1912, said “I was sent by the Grand Duke to the government of Simbirsk to Durasoff’s estate and there purchased ‘Chodlik II’, a dog of splendid build. I only once before beheld such ideal shape in 1876 in the hunt of Machevarianov in the case of one of his best hounds ‘Kaitar’.” [24: 145]. Waltzoff described Chodlik II as being about 30 inches tall at the shoulder and “the hound was tremendously broad in the shoulders and also in the shanks, with well arched back.” This breadth is of the modern, not the ancient type. Chodlik was bred to Vyugo to start the Perchina line and as Waltzoff said “thus the hounds of the Perchina hunt were derived from one root,” namely Machevarianov, Ermolov lines and they were the modern breed, Psovaya Borzoi. Waltzoff also said “thanks to these dogs, the Perchina hunt attained its narrow fine heads.” So according to Mr. Waltzoff the manager and breeder of the Perchina hunt, all the Perchina hounds were of mixed blood and of the modern breed, and the fine, narrower heads of the ancient type had been set in the modern Borzoi before the Perchina hunt began. The Grand Duke and Waltzoff continued to incorporate Ermolov and Durasoff dogs into the Perchina bloodlines. As Waltzoff, 1912, said “The results of the blending of the Yermoloff [or Ermolov] and the Durasoff hounds with the Perchina hounds induced the Grand Duke to purchase hounds of the said hunts at every opportunity. Thus the red marked ‘Savladai’, breeder Ermolov, was bought, which in conjunction with ‘Sirotko’, the daughter of ‘Serdyetschny’, yielded the bitch ‘Sorka’. She obtained the Great Gold Medal at the Jubilee Show of the ‘Imperial Moscow Society’. Thereupon the gray ‘Kidai’, Ermolov half strain, was purchased; his blood flows in the veins of the best hounds of the Perchina hunt. The Durasoff sires ‘Chodlik’ and ‘Krylat’ were also purchased for breeding, and this also led to notable results in the Perchina hunt.” [24: 148].

With the speed and fine heads set in the Perchina foundation stock all that was left to breed into the modern Borzoi were the ears, tail, and coat from the “ancient type.” Modern Borzoi with these points are what Thomas calls the “ancient type” Borzoi. (see picture from *The Illustrated Outdoor News*, 1903) In order to get these fine points of the “ancient type” the Grand Duke once bought a dog with good ears and little else to offer the dogs of the Perchina hunt. He paid 2,000 rubles for the dog and joked that he had paid 1,000 rubles per ear [24: 145-146].

Chadwick 1971, stated that “This Borzoi derived from the short-haired and Courland Borzoi, became by the nineteenth century the ideal, old-type which is so frequently referred to and was the type which the Grand Duke Nicholas subsequently strove to reproduce at Perchina.” [24: 12]. This implies that the modern Borzoi was an attempt to “reproduce” the old-type. This is not the case. The modern Borzoi was an attempt to produce a stronger modern Borzoi breed with a wider chest and more endurance than the “ancient type”, while retaining the ears, tail and coat of the “ancient type”.

By the time Thomas visited Russia the Grand Duke Nicholas and Waltzoff had been putting the finishing touches on the modern Borzoi at Perchina and this is the type of Borzoi that Thomas liked. This was the Perchina type of the new Ermolov, Machevarianov breed, the Psovaya Borzoi. Most of the type setting had been done by N.A. Bolderoff, Waltzoff and others before the Grand Duke started the Perchina hunt. The Perchina hunt was still too young and had not been breeding long enough to have set its own type. Semchenkov said in the Winter 1992 Borzoi International, “However, the short time of the Pershino Hunt life and the fact that the Hunt maintained a continuous exchange of males with the first rate breeders (e.g. Boldyreff, Oseroff) make it impossible to classify the Pershino Borzoi as a family breed.” [21: 19]. Semchenkov also said, “The conclusion which inevitably comes to mind is that the Pershino, Boldyreff and Oseroff Borzoi were close relations to one another.” [21:19]. Waltzoff wrote, "I say 'our' referring to a small circle of hunters, who bred jointly and whose breeding ideal was formed on the ancient Russian Borzoi. In this group of hunters in addition to myself, there were N.A. Bolareff, J.P. Sokoloff and S.W. Oseroff,". [24: 146] Here again Waltzoff is talking about his ideal being formed by the ancient Russian Borzoi. The points of the ancient breed he was looking for were the tail, ears and coat but not the body. He did want the width of chest and muscling of the modern Borzoi. When Waltzoff, 1912, calls the Perchina dogs “pure, thoroughbred hounds,” [24: 148], I believe he means the Perchina dogs are pure Ermolov, Machevarianov dogs and as was said earlier they defined the breed by function rather than by pedigree alone. If the dog ran like a Borzoi then it was a “pure” bred Borzoi, no matter what the pedigree. These dogs were regarded as pure on that basis despite being carefully produced blends of the Gustopsovaya Borzoi, Mountain Borzoi and other sighthounds.

Back in the U.S.A.

In 1903 Thomas acquired 3 Borzoi in Russia. One of these 3 was Bistri of Perchina. Bistri was only third generation Perchina but the Waltzoff and N. A. Bolderov dogs go

back at least 6 generations behind Bistri. Bistri's great grand sire on the dam's side was Tcharodyei from Prince Wassiltchikoff and was from Machevarianov, Ermolov lines. As we've shown, many of Bistri's ancestors are a concentration of available dogs from Machevarianov, Ermolov lines, with Mountain Borzoi behind them. Another Borzoi Thomas imported was Sorva of Woronzova, who was also a cross of sighthounds. Aatis Lillstrom in personal correspondence stated that "in Sorva's 3rd generation on the stud's side the father of Boldareff's Molva is given as Tchebichoff's Tchort!" This is a Polish sighthound, Chart Polski. Thomas said that Bistri had a "great coat." The included photo of Bistri shows what was considered a great coat at that time.

Thomas returned to America in 1903 with 5 Borzoi, the 3 from Russia plus 2 from Europe. These combined with the 35 borzoi already owned by Valley Farm, gave the Valley Farm Kennel a total of 40 Borzoi. They began to breed for what they called the "ancient type." In 1904 Thomas went back to Russia. On this visit he hunted with the Grand Duke and Thomas, 1912, said "the finest dogs from a show standpoint are not spared from this work." [63: 22]. Thomas was impressed with the Perchina hounds speed and said, comparing the speed of Borzoi to that of greyhounds and deerhounds "There is little difference between any of them, excepting that, on account of lesser size, the greyhound is usually quicker at turning; but even this is largely a matter of selection in the individual." [1: 71]. Thomas brought back 4 Borzoi from this 1904 trip.

By 1906 Thomas stated that the Valley Farm Kennel had 200 of the "ancient type" Borzoi [2: 4]. In less than 2 1/2 years they went from 40 to 200 with only 7 of those being the Russian imports Thomas refers to as the only "ancient type" stock in the world. Yet, from only 7 of these, he had generated 160 more in only 2 1/2 years? This was not possible without the use of the aforementioned Hanks' and Terra Cotta dogs, to which Thomas ascribes no credit, but who obviously played a large role in producing the 200 "ancient type" dogs. These Hanks' and Terra Cotta dogs do go back to the same ancestors that Thomas' Bistri does. (Refer to the included pedigrees.) As was stated above Thomas said that Bistri was the first Borzoi of the "ancient type" to leave Russia. This leads to the inevitable conclusion that Valley Farm was able to breed 193 "ancient type" Borzoi in less than 2 1/2 years from only 7 "ancient type" Borzoi from Russia. J. F. Crangle, the Superintendent of Valley Farm Kennel, gave a more detailed account of the breeding done at the Valley Farm Kennel. In July 1906 he said "We have up to date according to the American Kennel Club Stud-book registered 304 Russian wolf hounds, all our own breeding." [64]. He also stated that Bistri had sired 213 puppies, in less than 2 1/2 years. According to Mr. Crangle in July 1906 Valley Farm Kennel had 54 females and 7 stud dogs [64]. This means that Valley Farm Kennel had sold well over 200 Borzoi in less than 2 1/2 years. This does not include breedings done to outside bitches. The Valley Farm Kennel was a business, Thomas and the other owners were there for profit, and the goal

was to make money. Valley Farm even sold thoroughbred poultry as well as dogs [3: 20]. They bred so much because they were selling dogs for profit and this is also one of the reasons Thomas promoted the mystique that Valley Farm was the one true source of the pure “ancient type”-- this was a sales tool. Shortly after Thomas’ second visit to Russia the Perchina hunt began to advertise and sell Borzoi. The Perchina dogs were readily available for sale. From the 1908 advertisement that is included, “The famous ‘Pershino’ Borzoi Kennels, belonging to H.I.H. the Grand Duke Nicholas Nicolasovitch, beg to announce that they have always ready for immediate delivery first class Borzois, of the purest ancient Russian type” [65: 465]. They too promoted their stock as the only pure bred “ancient type”, also as part of a sales pitch. Both Thomas and Waltzoff knew the background of these dogs and knew they were not a “pure” breed or an ancient breed. What they were was very wonderful indeed, the culmination of the work of decades, of generations, and of fortunes. The work and fortunes were the Ermolov’s, the writer of the first borzoi standard, beginning in the 1600’s but working on the modern Psovaya Borzoi since the 1840’s, as well as the work of Machevarianov for 60 years, and of N.A. Bolderov (not Artem but his uncle) for 30 years. This was followed by Waltzoff who with the Grand Duke’s resources at his disposal was able to bring all this together and linebred on the Machevarianov / Ermolov dogs from the 1870’s to 1912. What they were is of incalculable value, but it is not a recreation of the narrow, refined, short – distance running “ancient type”. It’s the flowering of the recently created, modern Psovaya Borzoi.

Because Thomas and the Valley Farm Kennel were in Borzoi as a business and made claims which enhanced sales and profit does not mean they didn’t contribute greatly to the Borzoi in the U.S. – they did. Thomas was also a hunter, he preferred the working dog over the show dog and sought hard to breed dogs with working ability and qualities. Thomas brought back from Russia some of the best Borzoi in the world and this added much to the American Borzoi. Thomas did know dogs and he knew a good Borzoi when he saw one. To promote the Borzoi as a working dog Thomas actually started a kennel in Wyoming. A. F. Hochwalt wrote in 1912, “In America this dog has not proved the success in wolf catching that he is reputed to have in Russia, and the few trials that he has been given demonstrate that he either lacked the strength or training that is necessary to successfully cope with the American wolf. Mr. Thomas, however, believes that with proper training the Russian wolfhound can be made a successful wolf hunter in America, and with this end in view he is starting a kennel in Wyoming, where he will ship many of his young dogs to be trained for the purpose. (Up to this date [1912] we have heard very little of what Mr. Thomas accomplished with his Western kennel.) The Thomas Western venture probably procured no direct results, but it was instrumental in introducing the Russian wolfhound to the Northwest country, where in many places, he is answering all purposes as an all-round dog for the ranches in that country. Not only is he to be found in Idaho, Montana, Washington and Oregon, but also in Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia.” [66: 105-106] Here Thomas is credited with introducing the Borzoi to the Western U. S. and Canada, as a working dog, just one of the many things Thomas did for the breed.

Thomas also liked some of the show points of these working dogs and these are the points he attributed to the “ancient type.” These points were the ears, coat, head, chest depth and tail. But as Budiansky, 1999, said “Selecting for one thing (such as looks) doesn’t mean you can’t also select for other things (such as herding behavior and good health) at the same time.” [8: 52]. What Thomas, the Grand Duke Nicholas, Waltzoff and N.A. Bolderov wanted was the working type modern Psovaya Borzoi with the ears, coat, head, chest depth and tail of the “ancient type.” As Thomas, 1912, said the “ancient type” Borzoi characteristics are “depth of brisket, length of coat, lack of stop to the skull.” [1: 34]. There is no mention of the chest width or musculature, characteristics that came from the Mountain borzoi.

Thomas showed his Borzoi extensively (again as a sales tool) but he felt that there were problems with the shows, many of the same problems that we have today. Thomas, 1912, said “You perhaps realize, as do I, that while shows and showing are often amusing and interesting, and while they tend to bring a breed before the public, they are not always advantageous to improvement in working qualities of the breed. Theoretically, of course, judges are supposed to award prizes to animals such as the standards call for, and the standards are usually made with proper regard for the working qualities of any working breed. When a judge has a practical knowledge of such requirements, proper judgment is generally the rule. Unfortunately there are many judges who are quite ignorant of their duties, although they may even be owners and breeders. I have seen not only in America and England; but in Continental Europe as well, quite unsound Borzoi - oftentimes with bad mouths – awarded prizes, and at almost every show hounds that are entirely too fat for any practical purpose are placed in the ribbons. In a word, the shows lay stress on purely superficial appearances; and especially in England stress seems to be laid on points that catch the judge’s eye, rather than on those that prove the efficiency of the animal as a *working animal*. Where great stress is laid on show points, such animals are liable to be bred from, whether or not their dispositions and abilities should be transmitted.” [1: 91-92]. Things are much the same today.

Thomas said about the Borzoi he saw in Europe, “and all showed the need of work in the hunting – field.” [1: 37]. Thomas was looking for the working dog, not just a dog that is in condition but a dog that has been bred to run. These running qualities were being lost because the breeders were not hunting the dogs. You can breed for what looks like a good running dog, without actually testing ability, for only so long. At some point the breeder will lose the qualities that make an actual good running dog. Breeding to a standard or for a look does not breed function. Baron G.D. Rozen, 1891, wrote. “No manuals and no hunts of captured game will improve speed if, apart from them, the dog does not have sufficient practice a field *from generation to generation*” [Emphasis mine, R.M.] [10: 53], and selecting the fastest runners to breed on with is what produced the Borzoi. It’s running that formed the Borzoi, not breeding for any external look. Almost every aspect of the Borzoi comes from its function, the legs, the back, the angles, the coat

and even the shape of the head. As Raymond Coppinger, PhD. and Lorna Coppinger, AB, MS wrote in *Biologic Bases of Behavior of Domestic Dog Breeds*, 1996, "Behavior is the functional component of evolutionary change. How well an animal runs is the selective force, not its legs. Paleontologists study the evolution of hard parts because those are what fossilize. Studying changes in femur lengths, however, leads to the misconception that it is legs that evolved, rather than running or jumping." [54: 9]. Also the Coppinger's in their book *Dogs*, 2001, suggest how the shape of the Borzoi head was developed, by function rather than by esthetics. "The borzoi's nose growth onsets early, and growth is so rapid it forces the palate and teeth forward and down below the axis of the skull, giving the dog that Roman nose appearance. Because the palate gets depressed, it pulls the eyes forward and closer together. Bringing the eyes forward and closer together gives the borzoi more ocular overlap. They should have better depth perception than other breeds. Do they chase rabbits by sight because they are better adapted to seeing three-dimensionally than other breeds? Do they have genes for seeing three-dimensionally? Yes and no! They have a longer nasal-growth period, timed at an earlier age, which puts their eyes in a phylogenetically bizarre position -- one that results in more ocular overlap and better depth perception. If I wanted to select for gazehounds that hunt rabbits using a refined depth perception, I would sort through my dogs and pick those that worked best, and breed the best to the best. I might not realize that all I am really doing is selecting for longer nasal bones. The eyes themselves are no better than in any other breed. They are just in a better position to see forward." [55: 306].

E.G. Walsh, in *Lurchers and Longdogs*, said it very well when he wrote, "Dogs that are bred for show are bred to an arbitrary standard laid down by a breed society. This standard will be written purely from the point of view of what the dog looks like; its height, colour and length of coat, colour of eyes and nose, length of ears, whether the ears are pricked or hang down, the curl or lack of curl in the tail, etc., etc. None of which has the slightest bearing on whether or not the dog can do the work for which it was originally bred." [5: 28]. Breeding for a look that one thinks will then function is "reverse breeding". Breed for the function and the form will follow. The fringe elements and preferred details can be added, but to make a Borzoi you must use as a foundation the form that comes from running. That form will never be effectively derived from a verbal standard, without using the dogs for their essential work. The description came from what work produced, not the other way around. Reverse breeding is what we do. We say "Form follows function" and then we proceed to believe that if we can get the form right somehow, the function will follow. If we can make it look right, it will be right. In reality, if it works right, by definition it is right.

When Thomas was dissatisfied with the show Borzoi of his time he was able to go and find working Borzoi from Russian hunting kennels. We do not have that option today. With so few working Borzoi left we must maintain the working abilities and look of the

working Borzoi in the show Borzoi of today or we will lose those abilities and their consequent look forever.

Thomas helped found the Russian Wolfhound Club of America in 1904 and wrote in the Feb. 27, 1904 *Forest and Stream*, "New York, Feb. 16.—The Russian Wolfhound Club of America was formally organized on Wednesday, February 10. Constitution and standard were adopted, and officers elected as follows: President, Edward L. Krause; Vice-President, John G. Kent; Secretary-Treasurer, Joseph B. Thomas, Jr. Executive Committee—James Mortimer, Dr. J. E. De Mund, E. M. Lockwood, George Ronsse, Jos. B. Thomas, Jr. Dr. J. E. De Mund was elected delegate to A. K. C. The club organized with fifty charter members. Dues were fixed at \$5 per annum, with an initiation fee of \$5. Special prizes will be offered at the various shows, and every effort made to advance the interest of the Russian wolfhound." [67] In 1911 Thomas made one last trip to Russia to obtain Borzoi. He started his first Foxhound kennel in 1911 and in 1915 left the Borzoi breed and went into foxhounds full time, [52: 151] as did Roger D. Williams. Thomas only spent 16 years in the breed. Artem Bolderov had only been in the breed for 7 years when Thomas first visited Russia. Waltzoff had been in the breed much longer and N.A. Bolderov had been in the breed for at least 30 years. The Ermolov family had bred sighthounds for over 200 years, this is back into the 1600's, and Machevarianov had bred Borzoi for at least 60 years. Ermolov, Machevarianov, Waltzoff and N.A. Bolderov were the ones with the breeding experience. Even the Grand Duke Nicholas was new to the breed relative to them, as was Artem Bolderov and certainly Joseph Thomas.

Conclusions

Thomas would have us believe that the Borzoi he imported were somehow special but many of the Borzoi imported to the US before Thomas went to Russia are from the exact same blood lines. Krilutt, Leekhoi, and Argoss all had littermates that were great grand dams or great grand sires of Almas, Bistri's sire (see Almas' pedigree). Many of these early imports came from the same breeders as Thomas' dogs did, mainly Bolderov and Waltzoff. Most of them go back to the Ermolov, Machevarianov lines and therefore are of the modern breed, the Psovaya Borzoi and not of any "ancient" breed as Thomas would have us believe. The only thing that Thomas' imports had over the earlier imports was a few more years of breeding by Waltzoff and N.A Bolderoff.

The modern Borzoi that we know came into existence as a "pure bred" animal in the late 1800's. This was because of dog shows and closed stud books. This was not done because the "pure bred" was a better working animal. Since we are locked into the pure

breed idea, we must be very careful with breeding. As breeding is done more and more for show points, the working points of the Borzoi can be lost. If this happens, because we can not breed out to other breeds of sighthound type as the old Russian breeders did, it will be very hard if not impossible to get lost qualities back. By the same token, flaws, whether they be structural or disease problems, they will be hard to get rid of within the boundaries of our current closed registry system. When the Russian hunters and breeders wanted more spite they bred to the Bearded Borzoi and when they wanted more endurance, ribspring and strength they bred to the Mountain Borzoi. We do not have these options so if we lose these points or any others from the Borzoi gene pool they are gone forever. Also as Budiansky, 1999, said “breeding for the purity of the breed is like hiring a storyteller not on the basis of how well he tells stories but after looking at how many generations of Irishmen he has in his background.” [8: 53]. Breeding the Borzoi for the purity of the breed without considering the running abilities is the same.

The development of the Psovaya Borzoi, from the Gustopsovaya Borzoi, took over 60 years and the resources of some very rich people. It took lifetimes and fortunes. It's not easy to make or improve a breed and it is not easy to maintain a breed. We should in humility be preserving rather than arrogantly improving, or "pushing the envelope" of the breed. As Baron Rozen, 1891, said. “Some young hunters err mainly through their impatience in dog breeding. Maintaining a breed, which anyone would like to do, is hardly so easy an undertaking as many imagine. One needs a great deal of patience, observation, experience, and mainly caution in this endeavor. The breeds that we know were bred and improved for decades. The breeders did their work carefully, sorting their dogs, and never dreaming of improving the breed in 3 or 4 years, but did their work unhurriedly.” [10: 53].

The Borzoi is a hunting breed. The improvement of the hunting abilities is what made the breed that we have today and these points still make the breed what it is. If these hunting abilities are lost then the real Borzoi breed will also be lost. As Baron Rozen, 1891, said “We have rich material, and it is nowise inferior to that which our forebears had. Where one senses a deficiency is in the abundance of hares, the proving ground of any borzoi.” [10: 52]. Understanding where this breed came from and what the old Russian breeders were doing when they produced this breed can help breeders of today understand the standard and what this breed should look like. This is true even if the breeders are unable to hunt their dogs. Breeders must understand what a running dog is and what it looks like if they are to maintain the Borzoi.

Stedman Shumway Hanks, 1960, wrote “We hope that this work, bringing to light the remarkable past of the Borzoi, will bring the public of America and all countries to consider the great superiority presented by the working dog, thanks to its strength, its

speed, and its agility.” [42: 12]. We hope that our work will do the same. If breeding is done just for show points and not working abilities then the history of the breed and all the work done by the Russian breeders and hunters means nothing. The Borzoi breed will become no different than any other show breed, and the wonderful gift we received will be lost. We need to know what Ermolov, Machevarianov, N. A. Bolderov and Waltzoff were doing when they developed this breed so that we can understand the standards of today and also how they differ from the standards in their day. They were producing the modern Borzoi, the Psovaya Borzoi or as Ermolov called them the “Russian Harehound” [22: 4]. By knowing these things we will be better able to breed, as best we can, the proper Borzoi, the Russkaya Psovaya Borzaya, the Russian Greyhound. This may be an impossible task, and Birr, Krakauer and Osiander said in their book, *Dog’s Best Friend*, referring to the effects of the October Revolution in Russia in 1917 on the Borzoi; “Then too the dog breeding practiced by the aristocracy almost died out. The Borzoi, Russia’s greyhound, was kept alive for the dog world only because of the initiative of a few emigrants and enthusiasts abroad. But regardless of how careful the selection and how much love, caring, and knowledge were given, the conditions of the Russian homeland could not be replaced, and the working animals of the steppe turned into idle street dogs.” [7: 127]. We are the beneficiaries of the past, caretakers of the present, and hold the links to the Borzoi’s future, and we must work hard to prove this untrue.

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