

HISTORY

CREATING A NEW DOG BREED

Most of today's dog breeds are the result of natural selection or man-made selection. Human intervention in dog breeding is not new; by the Middle Ages, specific dogs were bred for a specific type of work like guarding, herding or hunting. The desire of men to create their own breed dates from more recent times. The first breed standards were written in the second half of the 19th century and at the same time there seems to have been a need for some people to create their own breeds based on several types or by mixing two or three already existing breeds. In al-

when they returned home after fighting on European battlefields. Other countries that contributed to the development of Per Schiller's breed were Germany - especially the southern part - Switzerland and the United Kingdom

According to the Swedish dictionary, the translation of the word Stövare is 'gun dog', but taking a closer look at the many Scandinavian Stövares, it is obvious that these type of dogs belong to the scent hound family that consists of more than 80 members in different European countries.

MASTERMIND PER SCHILLER and his SCHILLERSTÖVARE

text and illustrations by RIA HÖRTER

most every case, the new breed had to gratify the personal wishes of its creator. Sometimes the influence of the creator was so important that the name of the creator was fixed on the breed forever. That's the case with the Schillerstövare or Schiller Hound.

GUN DOG – STÖVARE – HOUND

To create a new breed you need the base material. The Swedish farmer/hunter/painter Per Schiller used several types of hounds that were present in Sweden at that time. Maybe farmer is not entirely right, because the Swedish Kennel Club writes 'god-sågare', a large landowner. Per Schiller (1858-1892) was born in Stenungsund, part of the Bohuslän area in the south of the country. Being a real outdoorsman and a passionate hunter, he needed a useful working dog, versatile and a specialist for hunting fox and snow hare.

It is assumed that most of the hounds in Sweden in the middle of the 19th century originated from Austria. Probably soldiers took them back to Sweden,

ENGLISH HARRIERS AND VARIOUS HOUNDS

Although it's been only 100 years ago since Schiller created his breed, it's not easy to find out which bloodlines he used for his first litters. Most authors assume that the bloodlines were 7/16 Swedish-German, 7/16 English (Harriers) and 2/16 Swiss. It is remarkable that Austria is not mentioned as one of the countries of origin.

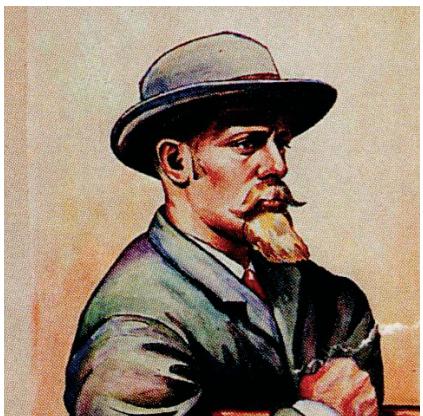
In the same period, Mr. O.B. Rydholm imported an English Harrier called 'Crossy'. This dog mated a Harrier bitch imported by an English civil engineer who also lived in Sweden. Schiller used their offspring to create his Stövare. The hounds that originated from southern Germany were mostly brown and black with white markings and rather small, but in 1870 Mr. H. Carbonnier imported hounds from Switzerland that were a completely different type from the German hounds.

All these various types of hounds from Germany and Switzerland, and English Harriers, form the basis of the Schillerstövare and it's obvious that Schiller

Most dogs were developed after hundreds of years of evolution and lengthy selection by breeders. However, some breeds owe their existence to just one person.

HISTORY

continued from page 190



A self-portrait of Per Schiller (1858-1892), the creator of the Schillerstövare (watercolor)

dog with a lively temperament, strong feet and excellent nose - a versatile dog that could easily work in heavy ground.

The founder of the Swedish Kennel Club, Dr. Adolf Patrick Hamilton, had the same aspiration and therefore he and Per Schiller cooperated. Hamilton's name is connected with the Hamilton-Stövare, also developed thanks to an English breed, the Foxhound. The main difference between the Schillerstövare and the Hamiltonstövare is the color: the Schiller is black and tan with saddle and the Hamilton is tri-color with saddle.

UNIQUE ACHIEVEMENT

In 1886, Sweden's first national dog show was held in Stockholm. Per Schiller entered two of his homebred dogs, 'Tamburini 1' and 'Ralla 1'. They are considered to be the ancestors of the present Schillerstövares. Their grandchildren, 'Polka 1' and 'Vals 1', were entered at the 1891 show in Göteborg. They were portrayed in a painting by Schiller.

In the first generations inbreeding was a must and thanks to inbreeding and strong line breeding Schiller was able to breed a uniform type in a relatively short time. Not only that, the Stövares bred by Schiller were very good working dogs. It was a unique achievement, but was it luck, knowledge or simply that the genetic differences among the various dogs he used were not that great?

The famous Swiss dog writer Dr. Hans Räber writes, "Probably Schiller used German hounds and black-and-red hounds from Switzerland, for example the old 'Aargauer Hound'."

Per Schiller died in 1894. He was only 34 years old. His brother Karl inherited a balanced breed, not only in temperament but in appearance. In honor of its creator, the breed was named Schillerstövare in 1907, 15 years after Schiller's death.

IMPRESSIVE SHOW

In 1903, the Stövare Club of Västergötland organized a dog show. About 50 dogs from the 'Schiller line' were present and

started his breeding with rather different dogs of different heights. It wasn't the easiest way to create a sound type, but a sound and uniform type was Schiller's first aim. He never wanted to create a completely new type of dog, but only a useful variety of Stövare. His ambition was to create an aristocratic

therefore it became possible to talk about an official breed standard. People at the show were amazed and impressed by the fact that the dogs from the 'Schiller line' were of a very uniform type. Unfortunately, Per Schiller did not experience the success of his dogs' official recognition.

In the beginning, the breed was entered in a provisional stud-book, but the Schillerstövare has been a fully recognized Swedish breed since 1913.

At the 1910 Stockholm show, a Schillerstövare called 'Ray' was entered. The dog was bred by Karl Schiller, owned by J. Svedenborg and had extremely good working qualities. The dog was used intensively by hunters and Ray's name appears in a lot of Schillerstövare pedigrees.

RARE BREED

The Schillerstövare is still a rare breed - not in Sweden, but certainly in the rest of Europe. In general, Swedish breeders do not want to sell their dogs abroad and if they do, they want to be sure the puppy will be used for hunting.

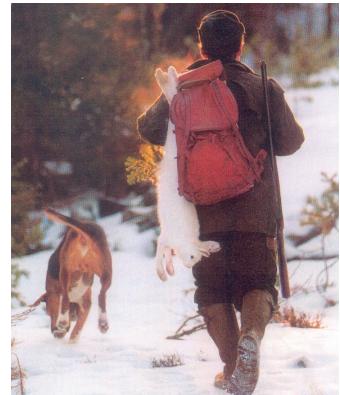
The Schiller loves to drive foxes and is an excellent dog for hare hunting. He works alone with his master not in a pack like the other Stövares. Overall his temperament is good which makes him suitable as a companion dog as well. He needs a firm hand and a lot of exercise. Training is a must, as for any strong-willed hound.

It is not too difficult to recognize the Schiller in a group of Stövares. The coat is always rich brown with a solid black saddle. Being a relatively young breed, they are very uniform. The present breed standard dates from 1997.

The Swedish breed club can be found at <http://www.stövare.se/rasklubbar/schiller/start.asp> (in Swedish).



A 'modern' Hamilton-Stövare bitch, exhibited at a Dutch dog show in 2005.
(Photo by Ria Hörter.)



The hunter and his dog with their catch.
(Photo by Per Klaesson in Stövare och Stövarejakt.)



People at the 1903 show in Västergötland were amazed and impressed. Pictured are 'Hej', 'Kej' and 'Nippa'.