   The whippet is a relatively young breed, originating in England in the 1800s. Most commonly listed as its ancestors are the Greyhound, the Italian Greyhound, and the Bedlington, Manchester, and English White Terriers. Whippets were once called Snapdogs, because of their ability to snap up and kill rats and hares. They were also referred to as the "poor man's Greyhound," as they were often kept by coal miners who raced them for sport. These early whippets were often the most valuable thing the working man owned, and they lived in their owners' houses, sleeping by the fire or curled up in bed with their people. Many were said to be fed better than the miners' own families.