1895 Crufts

First exhibition of Basenjis in Great Britain is believed to be in 1895. They were exhibited as “Lagos Bush Dogs.” Quoting from VTW: “Mr Garrow wrote in Our Dogs: ‘It may not be generally known that this variety of dog (the Basenji) was exhibited at Crufts’ Show in 1895, and afterwards purchased by the late Mr. W. R. Temple who, along with Mr. H. C. Brooke, was the greatest authority on foreign dogs at that time. They were exhibited as African Bush Dogs or Congo Terriers. Unfortunately soon after the show they contracted distemper and died. At the same time, there were two in the Jadin d’Acclimatation in Paris, but they were not so good-looking as Mr. Temple’s brace.’

In 2019 Glen Dymock writes: It was widely reported at the time that ‘Congo Terriers’ were exhibited at Crufts in 1895, which in all likelihood were Basenjis. The catalogue from the show is not much help as it does not list the individual breeds in the Foreign Dog classes, rather frustratingly. I have now come across the list of prize winners from the show and among them are Yewa Lille and Lagos Boy who were not listed in the catalogue! Could these be our elusive Congo Terriers, I wonder, given that Yewa and Lagos are both places in Africa? I guess we’ll never know for sure but this is the nearest I have come to solving this particular doggy mystery.