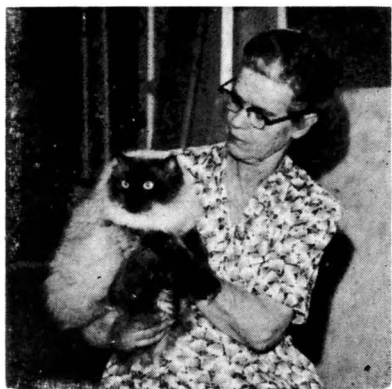


The Himalayan

by Marguerita Goforth*

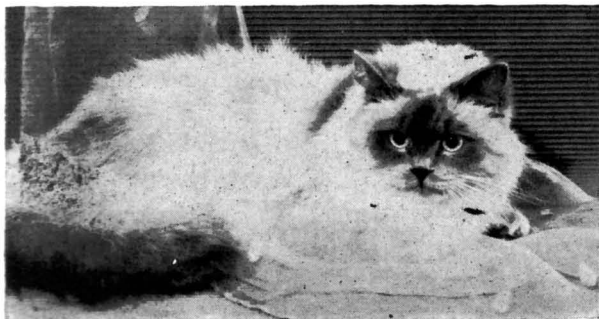


Mrs. Goforth

Going back to the year 1950 an event occurred which, while of no great moment in itself, led to the vision, and eventual development, of the Himalayan cat. This minor event was that I took into my cattery a pet cat belonging to a friend to keep it for her while she and her husband moved and re-located. What I had expected to be a short visit turned out to be a matter of several years, in fact this cat, Princess Himalayan Hope, spent the remainder of her life with me. She was

a mixed Siamese-Persian which had been left at the San Diego Humane Society shelter, where my friend had found her and given her a loving home. She was a Seal Point and what would be called a "long haired Siamese," since she showed more of the elongated conformation and type of the Siamese, but with long hair.

The longer I had this cat, and the more I studied her, the greater became my interest in what might be done toward developing a cat of Persian type but with the striking coloring of the Siamese, so with her owner's consent, I began a breeding program that continues until this day. I first bred Princess Hope to my fine Blue Persian male, Delphi Blue Splendor of Goforth, a very excellent type cat bred by Mrs. Fannie Mood, who was at that time C.F.A. Recorder, and who held that office for fourteen years. Splendor was a son of Imp. Lavender Mischiefmaker,



Quad. Ch. Goforth's Mona Lisa B.P. Female

owned and imported by Miss Elsie Hydon, beloved older leader in C.F.A. Splendor's dam was Rosedere Blue Starlet of Delphi, breeder Miss Emma Payne, also one of C.F.A.'s older breeders.

In other words I bred to the very best available Persian blood in order to break down the extreme Siamese type.

Of course experiments in crossing Persians and Siamese were made prior to this date, but none of them were continued more than a few crosses and never long enough to produce a breed, in fact probably with no intention of doing so. Among these earlier experiments were those done by Mrs. Virginia Cobb of the Newton Cattery, but as previously stated all of these were discontinued and so are not connected with the present Himalayan breed. Simple crosses, whether planned or accidental, do not make breeds. If it were that easy, the cats, left to their own instincts, would produce "new breeds" with every litter. In fact one lady wrote me that she had a cat of unusual color and wished to know how she could establish a breed from him. She had a litter sired by him out of a tortie domestic, some long hair, some short, some without tails but none like the sire. I replied that from that kind of background she might very well never get another kitten like the sire, that if it were that easy to originate a breed, she already had four new breeds in the one litter. No, it takes many years of breeding, many cages and many cats, before animals breed true and begin to show the desired characteristics. Besides this there are many unwanted kittens to be placed in loving homes where they will not be used for breeding. By unwanted, I mean kittens which are the wrong color or incorrect type for further use in producing the envisioned product. These "by-product" kittens are often very attractive and have delightful dispositions which make them very desirable pets. These are sold as pets to be neutered. Sometimes the owner finds them so lovely that he comes back for a pedigree so that the kitten may be entered in a show. This is never given until after neutering is certified by the veterinarian who does the work.

In England, Mr. Brian Stirling-Webb has produced a similar line of cats known there as the Colorpoint. Neither of us was aware that the other was developing such a cat although we have been working at it over about the same period of time. In England the Colorpoint is classified as a Persian and interbred with other Persians without loss of pedigree status. In America the Himalayan is classified as a new breed of longhair since it is not a pure bred Persian. C.F.A. requires that Himalayans be fourth generation Himalayan registry before being eligible to compete in shows. This is a very good rule since it eliminates accidental crosses from being entered.

Many of these first crosses are good in color but very lacking in type, and in the past inexperienced judges have not realized that type must come first. Color is easy to come by, but a cat of poor type, a so-called "long hair Siamese" is not a Himalayan. A "long haired Siamese" would be a cat of Siamese type, long in every feature which is the exact opposite of the Himalayan standard, which calls for Persian type,

cobby body, short legs, head and tail. The "long hair Siamese" type of cat is not only incorrect in the Himalayan, but is also an offense to the Siamese breeder. Since I have been a Siamese breeder for twenty five years, I am keenly aware that long hair on a Siamese is the last thing a breeder would want. The elegant, svelte lines of the Siamese is the most outstanding characteristic of the breed and would be lost under anything other than its requisite close, sleek coat which reveals the ripple of every muscle playing beneath. In short, the Siamese coloring is all that is retained in the Himalayan, all else becoming Persian.

While Himalayans breed true, I have used several lines of Persian blood, and also of the Siamese, in order to avoid too close inbreeding. This makes it possible also to supply pairs not too closely related.



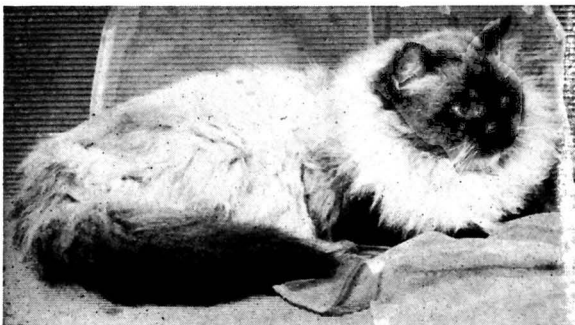
Flame Point
Kitten

All four colors found in the Siamese have been developed in the Himalayan, and this year at the C.F.A. Annual at Las Vegas a fifth color, the Flame Point was recognized. This is a very striking and beautiful cat, having a creamy white body and delicate orange-flame colored points, and of course the blue eyes, requisite in all Himalayans.

In the recent shows Himalayans are frequently found in the finals, which is doing very well considering the brief time they have been recognized, just six years in fact, whereas the Persian has been hundreds of years in the making.

Proper breeding of these cats cannot be stressed too strongly. In these formative years of this new breed, it is essential that the standard be kept in mind and that we must breed with the idea of correcting any weak points either in type or color by proper selection of a mate strong in those same points. Breeding without this careful selection will run the breed down rather than build it up. Accidental gutter-bred cats are not Himalayans and their use will produce poor type for generations if used to breed your good cat. Only the finest of blood has made the Himalayan cat and accidental matings do not carry this quality of blood.

As an artist all my life I feel very sensitive to color and line, and somehow it gives me the same thrill to constantly work toward the perfect Himalayan as it gives the artist to see a canvas or sculpture coming to completion. Just as the artist adds a little color here or



Quad. Ch. Goforth's Chocolate Soldier C P Male
Sians. Color and points of Seal Points, Blue Points, Chocolate Points and Lilac Points, same as for Siamese of that color. Eyes blue, the deeper the better. In judging, stress should be placed on type rather than color alone.

Flame Points: Body a creamy white. Points a delicate orange-flame color, free of barring and uniform as possible in color. Feet are slower to color and allowance should be made for this in young animals. Any shading on the body to be of the same tint as the points. Nose and pads pink. Eyes blue.

Undesirable and incorrect for all Himalayans: Any similarity in type to Siamese. Eyes any color other than blue. Winners to be withheld for kinked tails, crossed eyes, or white toes.

*Mrs. Goforth, who originated the Himalayan in the U. S. operates the Goforth Cattery. She has been a judge and Cat Fancier for many years, having bred Longhairs and Shorthairs of top show quality—Ed.

changes a line there, so the breeder corrects and changes by proper mating, and sees the results in each new litter of babies, constantly improving year by year.

Himalayan Standard

Type and conformation same as for Persians.