

Biographical Sketches . . .

DECADES OF DELIGHT

Lillias Bloem

1908

A dry wind blew over the Colorado prairie and a hot sun beat against a homesteader's lonely cabin. In the tall buffalo grass surrounding the temporary home a



LILLIAS BLOEM

tiny girl busied herself with her little red wagon and her only playmate, Inky, a fuzzy black kitten. Coyotes howled, prairie dogs barked and antelope ran over the foothills of the Rockies. Across the nation cats were finally becoming important and in the east The Cat Fanciers' Association, newly formed, was starting its rise to fame.

1918

Joy reigned for the war was over and our boys were coming home from "Over There." Joy reigned back home on the Iowa farm for a new boy had arrived from the east. He was an Odd-Eyed White Persian ordered by the girl's father for a birthday surprise. That weekend she arrived home from school to find Tweedy sitting by

the fire. He was freshly bathed and sported a blue satin bow. He was long and rangey with a long nose to match his body but no Grand Champion has ever been more admired or cherished.

1928

Just because a girl finds a city slicker and leaves the farm to help establish a new home is no reason for a staid old cat to leave the ancestral home. So Tweedy stayed on and continued to roam over the land the girl's grandfather had bought from the "Government" some fifty years before. Of course the new home had to have a cat so a little red Daffodil was purchased. She made herself right at home with the new-layeds and guarded the place with all her might and main. No dog was allowed in the yard or in the alley behind the house. When Daffodil was not busy raising kittens she helped her mistress with her two little girls. Once one of them was about to crawl down the porch steps when the wise cat stood in the way until help arrived. Alas, in spite of her loyalty to the family, she was not popular with the neighbors. She loved to call on them, the difficulty was she was never ready to leave and no one dared touch her so it took a broom to get her out the door. Yes, this lady in red with a white chin and a whiter tip on her tail was a determined and catty cat.

1938

Inky, Tweedy and Daffodil had gone on. Now it was another little girl's birthday and time for another kitten to be decked out in a satin

bow. Judy, another red Persian became the darling of the family. What she lacked in pedigree she made up for in personality. If she wasn't perched on the rooftop she might be found crawling down the clothes shoot. Summer nights she chased bugs under the street light and fireflies over the grass while the entire family chased her. Even if tempers ran hot all was forgiven when she was caught and promptly purred herself to sleep in the arms of the littlest girl. Somehow she survived all this love and excitement for fourteen wonderful years.

1948

The house was empty and the days were long now that the daughters had left the home in the city. It was plain to see that a new interest was needed and believing that there's no interest like (cat) show business a new regime began. This time it was the real thing, devoted, serious cat breeding and showing. Cats arrived from North Dakota, Ohio, New Jersey and Missouri to become a part of Bloemhill. Soon the house runneth over with cats and their kittens and a cattery was built. The show calendar became THE calendar and cat carriers became the most popular luggage. Now a dream was dusted off and a new life was in full swing.

1958

Devoted cat fanciers from all parts of the nation met in San Francisco for the annual meeting of the world's largest cat association, The Cat Fanciers' Association. Strange as it may seem, one of this group was the selfsame girl, now fifty years older and somewhat wiser. Her love of cats had grown as she had grown and Persian cats had become her main interest in life. Cat people had become her nearest and dearest friends. Somehow the delegates saw fit to elect this Iowa woman, the very one who homesteaded in Colorado, their President.

1966

To Jean Rose, who first thought of publishing the Year Book,
To Joan VanZeLe, who first edited the Year Book,
To Ellen Dickie, who carried on with the Year Book,
To Christine Streetman, who now edits the Year Book

My Sincere thanks for a task well done,

Lillias Bloem