

Biographical Sketches

MRS. BESS MORSE

By Ellen Dickie



The California Cat Club must be unique. For the thirty-five years since its first meeting it has had but one president — our beloved Bess Morse. It was she who, in March 1932, gathered together a group of cat lovers with the idea of forming a cat club to be devoted to the improvement of the Cat Fancy in and around Los Angeles. At her suggestion the California Cat Club was born and became affiliated with the Cat Fanciers' Association. Under her guidance the club has put on twenty-eight shows and has expended thousands of dollars on rescue and welfare work.

Mrs. Morse was the first Regional Vice President for the Southwest Region and held that office until 1964 serving actively on the Board and on its committees. She was always available with advice and suggestions not only to CFA clubs and their members but also to other associations..

In her private life Mrs. Morse was a truly remarkable woman. She studied voice and piano in Italy, later serving with the Rainbow Di-

vision as Soldier Talent Coach in Germany after World War I. She taught in Berlin and at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music and was music critic in Minneapolis for three years. She was an accompanist of note.

After moving to California in 1923 she interested herself in musical affairs in Los Angeles and was instrumental in bringing opera singers from the East to coach opera here. She continued to coach until 1947.

The name of Bess Morse will not ever be forgotten by the Cat Fancy in California and as a legend in her own time she will be an inspiration to those who may attempt to follow in her footsteps.