

Fifty Years Ago in the Fancy

Researched by Dorothy Mason

A CHAPTER ON BLUE PERSIANS *

WRITTEN BY MISS LOUISE SPINK OF MEDFORD, OREGON

Twenty years ago some blue Persians were entered at Crystal Palace in the A.O.C. class and created a wild enthusiasm, although most of the cats exhibited were in reality blue tabbies. Today, barring the popular whites and silvers, this colour is the most widely bred of any, and generally more sought after by the novice. The colour varies in tone from a dark slate to a pale lilac-blue. In any case the shade shall be even from tip to root of each hair over the entire surface. The nose is a few shades darker than the fur and the toe-pads yet darker. Many of the early winners carried a bright green eye, but today, that is a disqualification. The perfect eye shall be true golden like the gold coin or, preferably, a rich orange with a dash of red in it.



From the CAT REVIEW 1914 P. 2. Three beautiful Blue Persians, owned by Mrs. James L. Mead, Pasadena, Ca.

In selecting your purchase emphasize soundness of colour first of all, then type and proper form, and be careful not to sacrifice these points to eye colour. Formerly a white spot on the throat or sprinklings of white hair throughout the coat did not bar the cat from being shown. Today such cats are practically hopeless. One of the loveliest blue males I've ever seen lost out to an inferior specimen in head and type because the former had perhaps a dozen white hairs on his back. It seemed a cruel award to me, but was in accordance with the blue standard. The ideal cat is supposed to be very light, but the wise fancier gives preference to a medium shade for breeders, as it is sounder in colour. If your cat shows a light undercoat it is really a blue-smoke and shows silver blood in its ancestry.

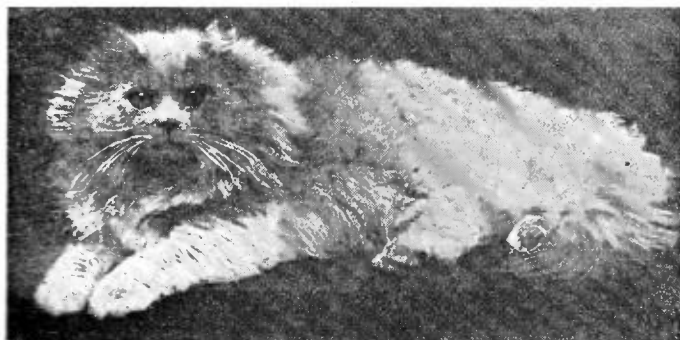
Today the best blues are noted for exquisite type, profuse coats, phenomenal heads — such great breadth being between the ears —

but very few have the desirable tiny, rounded ear. If you are out to produce exhibition blues, your queen may choose either a blue or black stud; other colour crosses will spoil your chances to breed the best blues. It's true the blues and oranges are crossed, but the plan is to get fawn cream cats and if any blue or orange kits result they are apt to be defective. When the little ones are out of the basket do not condemn them too soon. One may have a white undercoat, a light ruff, be full of scattered white hairs, or show tabby marks. Many a breeder has sold the ugly duckling for a nominal sum and with the moulting of the second coat has learned to her sorrow that this poorest baby was the exhibition cat of the entire litter. The changing cat eye colour sometimes prolongs itself until maturity. If true gold or orange is your luck you will generally see a brownish hue mingle with the baby blue we all know. It pays to study pedigrees carefully and note down all one can learn of each ancestor therein.

Among the early blue celebrities in England we will find Miss Simpson's Beauty Boy, Mr. Clark's Turco, and Miss Bray's Glaucus. Later on Mrs. Hawkins showed a wonderful male, Woolloomooloo, and his progeny are also famous. Miss Jay's exquisite female, The Mighty Atom, has never been excelled in type and size of head. Wherever shown she swept the boards and twice carried off best cat at the Crystal Palace Show. And she lacked the orange eye. Two of her kennel mates, Trixie and Doris, were nearly as fine.

Mrs. Wells' female, My Honey, had superb orange eyes and fine type. Mrs. Ransome's two studs, Darius and Darius III, have been big winners and sired some wonderful kittens, among them Orange Blossom of Thorpe and Canada's Albert Edward.

Mrs. Paul Hardy owned Juliet, whose first litters were a disappointment. She chose her own mate one day and, while the resulting family were disposed of, ever afterward her kits came true to colour. This fact is worthy of notation by all those extremists who



Sir Archie II of Arrandale the great Blue Stud. Owner Mrs. George Wilson—Russell (Photographers to the King) From OUR CATS, December 24, 1910 p. 183

assert that one incorrect mating spoils a queen for the rest of her career. Mrs. Hardy's two studs were both famous sires, Wooshoo and Mark Anthony.

Other early English blue males were: Blue Boy II, Ronald. Ch. Monarch, Goliath, Royal Bobs, and King David. Today England boasts of many superb stud cats in this attractive colour, Blue Cap, Neila Billi of Thorpe, Sir Archie II of Arrandale, Big Ben, Moccassin and Kew Blue San Toy II.

The early American blues were, of course, imported. Mrs. Locke brought over Lupin from the Romaldkirk Cattery and his kennel mate, Melrose Lassie, of the Big Ben and Darius families. Lupin and Melrose Lassie were consistent winners at the Beresford shows, and their descendants continue this record. Dr. Ottolengui's two queens, Lady Lola and Isis, were daughters of Lupin and Lassie. Another imported stud was the Beadle, sire of many beautiful kittens. Blue Flash was another Beresford winner in 1902, a gentlewoman, forsooth!

Today Dr. Ottolengui of New York owns the magnificent Saratoga Osiris, and until recently the unbeaten blue queen, Kew Iris, an imported daughter of Blue San Toy II. Mrs. McCoun of Long Island imported Ch. Shiraz, a grandson of Orange Blossom of Thorpe, and Hebe, his mate. Miss Pollard of New Jersey owns Scotland Yet, imported from the Mark Anthony-Wooshoo family, and two beautiful blue queens, Honoria of Highgate and Regal Androvna. Miss Barnes of Michigan owns Lora Christopher, a son of Skellingthorpe Patrick; Vermont owns Don O'Dreams, a son of the famous Albert Edward; Chicago (Mrs. Baker) owns Englewood Bela, and Canada, Minoru.

In the west we are well supplied with good ones: Mrs. Hiller of Seattle owns Sir Koko; San Francisco has Mrs. Weaver's Blue Coat Delaware and Miss Seymour's Neila Billi II, and Los Angeles, Mrs. Kidwell's Barbe Bleue. — From the Western Cat Review.

* (From *Our Cats*, July 11, 1910, pp. 572, 573)

Miss Mason, for whose many, early cat-literature contributions we are truly appreciative, lives alone in an interesting old house with her numerous Persian cats. They are her family and her companions; each one to her is endowed with a unique personality and an especially charming characteristic behavior; she understands each quirk and whim, crochet and design.

The shelves, tables and even beds and floors are groaning under the weight of Dorothy's fabulous collection of cat literature and lore. Fact and fiction are equally fascinating to her if a feline is involved. On the wall of her study one observes a lovely painting, a portrait of Dorothy in her college days, which adds its own luster to a very personal environment. Her interests include art and crafts of many forms, writing and correspondence with fanciers all over the U.S. who seek her help in locating early pedigrees, cats and catteries. Although she is most interested in breeding, fancy cats and knowing who's who in the cat world, she does not show her cats; it seems she has no interest in this field for her own cats. Miss Mason lives at 1504 Goddard, Louisville, Kentucky.