

# CAT • GOSSIP

VOL. 1

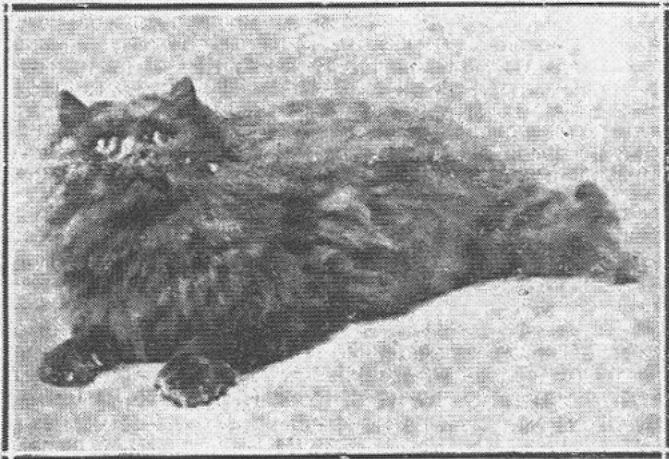
Phone: Battersca 4358

Edited by H. C. BROOKE

No 13.

MARCH 2nd, 1927

Price 3d., post free



Mrs. Kidd's John of Downside.

A CITY CAT (at St. Botolph's, Bishopsgate).

She is the cat of the old caretaker,  
 Living beside a Churchyard grey;  
 Once it was green, but the men who made it  
 Centuries since have passed away.  
 Under the arch with a rusty lantern  
 Pussy sits musing, or roams at night;  
 Or, curled up safe by the little window,  
 Goes to sleep in the warm sunlight.

Long, long ago, when the bells were tolling  
 And the dead-carts going their ghastly  
 round,

The sweep of the fiery purge that followed  
 Left uninjured the holy ground.  
 But the Cat knows only the twentieth century,  
 Purring to see her kittens at play,  
 Leaving to us the long recollections  
 That clothe the ancient historic way.

F. E. LEANING.

**NEXT WEEK:**

**MRS. NEATE on RED  
 TABBY PERSIAN CATS.**

## GOSSIP OF THE WEEK

WITH THIS issue, dear readers, CAT GOSSIP enters upon a new lease of life. Thanks to the many encouraging letters I have received, expressing the greatest goodwill to, and appreciation of, England's only ALL-CAT paper, I have determined to carry on, and I appeal to every lover of a cat to help me to do so, for our mutual benefit. The paper is now entirely my property, and I want to run it on lines to suit you all, which, be assured, is no easy task. I am glad to say I still retain the valued assistance of my friend and colleague, that well-known journalist, Mrs. Sheridan-Jones, whose contributions to *The Outlook*, *G.K.'s Weekly*, &c., many of you must have enjoyed. Those of you who are glad that their little paper is to continue, must not forget the meed of gratitude due to those ladies and gentlemen who, on the suggestion of Mr. A. Percival, so generously came forward to guarantee me against further loss on the working of the paper:—Miss Busteed in particular has worked very hard in our interests—Miss Adams, Mrs. Allen-Maturin, Anon (Durston), Miss Benthall, Miss Busteed, Mr. Brooke, Mrs. Campbell-Fraser, Miss Dixon, Mrs. Duncan-Hindley, Miss J. M. Fisher (Hon. Sec. B.P.C. Society), Mrs. Fitzgerald, Mrs. E. B. Gould, Mr. and Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Percival, Mrs. Sheridan-Jones, Miss Sanger, Miss Nancy Richardson, Miss Timms, Mrs. Veley, Major Woodiwiss. Sincere Thanks!

MRS. CAREW-COX has two beautiful Abyssinian kittens by her old stud, Ras Djibuti. May she be successful in rearing them, which is, for some unexplained reason, no easy task.

OUR NEXT issue will contain an article on "The Cat in Europe Two Thousand Years ago," with rare and interesting illustrations, which go to prove that, contrary to the opinions of some authorities, the domestic

cat was known in Europe at that distant period.

MY *confrère*, Mr. Watmough, of *Fur and Feather*, appears anxious lest a remark anent "journalistic decency" in "A Straight Talk" should be taken to mean that our contemporary had acted incorrectly in its attitude towards this paper. I therefore hasten to say that I have seen nothing in print of which I could complain; and that I have met with the greatest personal courtesy from those on *F. and F.* with whom I am acquainted. What I particularly referred to was an incident at a recent show, when a certain lady cat-journalist, standing about two feet from my colleague and myself, declaimed in a loud and piercing voice her very poor opinion of this paper! Bystanders commented scathingly to me upon such rude tactics, which remind one of the rival editors in *Pickwick*. Let us endeavour to observe the decencies!

NOW I WANT to ask all those concerned to kindly facilitate the task of settling up between my colleague and myself by sending to 11, Tunley Road, S.W. 17, any amounts due for *subscriptions* or *advertisements* up to and including this number; and to *me*, at the address given in our **Rates'** announcement, for future subscriptions and advertisements! This will be a great help to both of us.

MRS. CAMPBELL-FRASER'S well-known team of L.H. studs enter our columns this week, and their announcement may be studied with advantage.

MISS BENTHALL, the well-known Exeter Siamese breeder, writes:—"It would be interesting to start a discussion about the memory of a cat as compared to that of horse or dog. I can vouch for one returning after two years' complete absence. Can anyone cite a longer period? I hope that CAT GOSSIP will continue and flourish after making such a good start."

AN EXPLANATION is due about the error in naming the portrait of the cat on page 3 last week, which, of course, is that of Miss Adye's cream Ch. Endymion of the Balcony. All editorial matters, photos, &c., should be sent to *me*. It so happens that these were sent to my colleague, the late proprietor of the paper, who at the time was ill in bed. Thence they were sent to the printer, and I never saw them until too late. I am, with this number, having the paper printed in Taunton, so that I shall be able personally without loss of time to supervise all printing operations and such errors will not occur.

IT IS always pleasant when experienced people agree with what one says, and I am pleased that when I say that powders of any kind, placed in a cat's ear, are likely to do harm, I am corroborated by Mrs. Veley, who writes:—"You are quite right. Powders are fatal, and may cause suppuration and deafness. If you clean a cat's ears out with a swab of cotton wool dipped in peroxide, one part in four of warm water, on the end of a paint-brush handle, using a fresh swab for each ear, you'll never be bothered with canker."

THE QUESTION of Siamese tails and Siamese origins is becoming a burning one on the Continent. M. Armand Steens still holds to his opinion that the Siamese is identical with the ancient Egyptian, whereby he continues to ignore the Abyssinian—the cat on the spot, so to speak—and seems to lay too much stress on the wildness of the African wild cat, as if that should prove that the sacred cat of Egypt could not have been bred from the local wild feline. And—also in *Chasse et Pêche*—Mr. Guy R. Sutherland Menzies ranges himself very decidedly on the side of the admirers of the Kink, observing: "During my stay at Bangkok, in the reign of Phra Paramindr Maha Chulalongkorn—I only give a few of his twenty-seven names—I saw many pure-bred Siamese cats, notably those of the Royal Palace, where I did not meet a *single one* with a long tail. All were 'breedy' cats (*chats de race*), with short tails and kink." I OBSERVE in *The Cat Courier* that a new Cat Club for the breeding of good Brown Tabbies is being formed in New Jersey, under the title of the Primitive Cat Society. An important question "over there" at the present time is "Shall the blue tortoiseshell be admitted to the championship classification?"

IN THE same paper we read that at the Philadelphia Cat Show a Miss Lewis left her cats for a time in the charge of a non-catty friend, who wandered about the Show-room, and "hearing remarks about some cats' tails being too long or too short and all that sort of thing, took a look at the Lewis' cats' tails, and decided to clip them a bit and trim them up to her own fancy!"—whereby good cats were put out for the rest of the show season. Dear, dear!

MRS. HARVEY writes that it was not in our columns but in those of a contemporary that the mistake about Simplekit, referred to by Mrs. Hindley, occurred.



## IS THE SIAMESE A TRUE CAT ?

BY LILIAN J. VELEY, D.Sc.

I WAS very glad that my suggestion as to a possible origin of the Siamese has brought about so much discussion. But, lest I be thought to make wild statements unsupported by evidence, I may say that I *saw*, some years ago, in a Zoological Gardens—I do not remember which, but probably on the Continent—a litter of alleged hybrids between Civet and Cat. The father (?) was a Civet, the mother a large mackerel tabby. The two were certainly on good terms, and the alleged results most resembled the cat, but had longer faces, more bushy tails, and more blotchy markings. I have no knowledge whether they survived, or whether the facts were as stated to me by their keeper.

I think, after fifty years spent in the study of biology, we should not be too cocksure that things *cannot* happen because they are rare and seem unlikely. . . . Sir Harry Johnstone thinks *all* the Asiatic species he enumerates had a share in the ancestry of the cats of Siam. Professor Moseley thought the Siamese were a distinct species, not a domestic variety, and *not true cats*: hence his "prehensile tail" idea; incidentally, there are Viverrines with prehensile tails, also. [Which? Neither in *Viverra* nor *Genetta*.—ED.] I did not labour the point, but the Siamese have one character at least which is slightly Viverrine—the claws of the two middle toes of hind feet are seldom fully retruded.

My brother, Mr. O. Gould, corrects me on one point: Mr. E. B. Gould gave him four Siamese in Ceylon in 1889, and "of them was all Ceylon overspread," and it is *there* that they are called "Gould's cats." It would be interesting to know about that "kink" in Ceylon, where no Malay cats are. Of course, I knew the Malay cat, but what if they got it from the Siamese, which are probably much older? There is also the Korat cat, a blue variant of the Siamese, to which our "blue-pointed" freaks are due.

NOTE BY EDITOR.—The foregoing remarks are of very great interest, and it is but fair to mention that at the Vienna Cat Show last summer a litter of kittens was exhibited, said to be sired by a Civet. With almost criminal carelessness (need I say I was not there, worse luck!), no one seems to have noticed them, and later enquiries have failed

to elicit anything beyond the fact that the exhibitor certainly did possess a male Civet. Now, let us for the sake of argument admit the possibility of such a cross, and also that the resulting hybrids would be fertile. The arguments against any breed being derived from such a cross are, to my thinking, these: If such a cross had been made and perpetuated in captivity, surely there would be some record or tradition? or people would from time to time have recourse to one of the original varieties (as some "Alsatian" breeders certainly have, at times, to the wolf!). But if such a cross took place in the wild state, are we to assume that the cubs or kittens carefully kept on breeding *inter se* until they fixed a breed? Because if they happened to mate mostly with Viverrines, the *cat* type would soon be bred out; and to obtain the present feline type we must assume that they carefully bred with feline animals so as to lose the Viverrine type. Otherwise, with haphazard breeding, there should be a number of animals which should show Viverrine characters quite as strongly as others show the feline. Further, retractile claws are not purely a *feline* character, being found also in the Genets. Ask Dr. Alder, he "can a tale unfold" about Genet's claws!

## VISITS.

Feb. 22nd.—Mrs. Harvey's **Morina** to Mrs. Duncan Hindley's **Simzo**.

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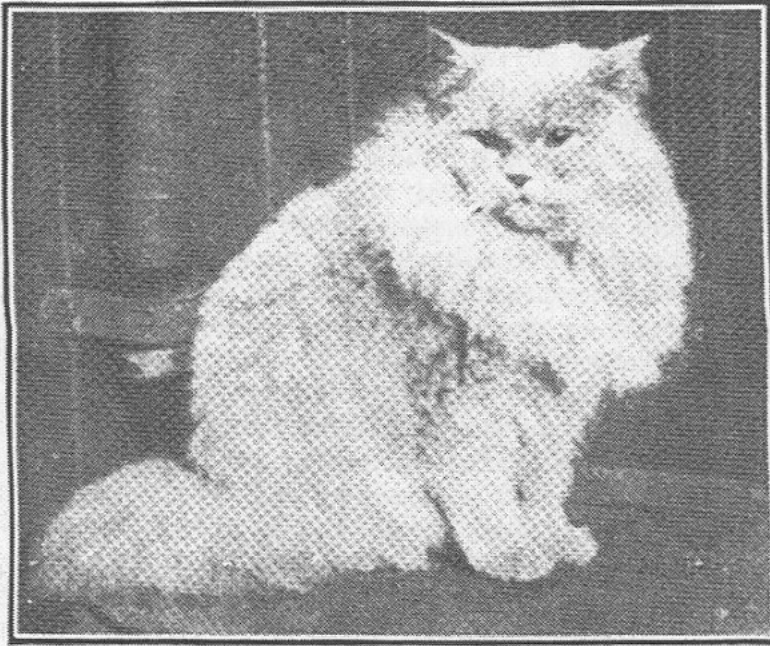
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Miss Adye's Ch. Endymion of the Balcony.

## OUR CAT BURGLAR.

By MISS NANCY RICHARDSON.

AWAKENED one night, or rather, one lovely summer's morning, by the feeling that something was wrong, I sat up in bed, looked at the clock—three o'clock! lay down again as I heard nothing. Ah! whatever was that! A muffled knock, then another, a long pause, . . . Several dull thuds, like someone trying to knock something open very quietly.

The mysterious noise went on! Everything else in the house was silent; not another soul stirred. At last I pulled myself together. I *must* see what it is. I crept to the stairs. Still the knocking went on softly. On the next landing I met another dressing-gowned figure—my mother. "Oh, what can it be?" she said. That, of course, sent me up to heroine point. "I'm going to see," I said. "Not alone! I shall come with you." "No, you stay here!" "I shall bring the poker," said mother.

So, armed with the poker, we bravely descended to the place where the sound was—the kitchen. Cautiously and very quietly—at least, as quietly as bolts will let you be—we undid two doors and stole into the kitchen, to see nothing. Our two large cats were gazing fixedly into the scullery at somebody, something, we couldn't see. The dull knocking had stopped. We crept on a few more cautious steps, and there, *there* was the criminal. A thief, indeed!

A small Tabby Cat with her head firmly fixed in a milk jug! As she tried to free herself, the jug thud-thudded on the floor.

I took her into the garden and tried to pull the jug off, but it was too firmly fixed. I had to put the jug on a tile, holding poor puss firmly the while, and a sharp crack with the poker did it. Off Tabby ran with the rim of the milk jug round her neck! I have often wondered how she explained that queer collar to her friends. And, you see, the poker was very necessary after all!

## THEOPHILE GAUTIER AND HIS CATS.

ONE of Gautier's peculiarities was his love for cats. As soon as he could conveniently do so, he afforded himself the luxury of twelve of the handsomest felines that money could purchase. It was an interesting sight to behold this Hercules in his writing room playing with his regiment of cats, whom he had taught to love one another as they did himself. When some of them broke a valuable work of art—his study, by the way, was a curiosity shop—he seriously deliberated upon getting rid of them; but when the man he had engaged came to remove the obnoxious pets, he relented and sent him away. He named each one of them after some well-known person to whom he fancied it bore some resemblance, physical or otherwise. He seldom wrote anything without a cat or two in his lap.

A PRETTY STORY from an eye-witness at Salisbury tells of the attachment of a large cat to a forlorn little kitten which had been brought into his house, and for which he had conceived a great affection. Owing to complaints of the kitten's mischievous tricks, it was given away to a cottager just opposite, on the further bank of the Avon. A few days later the large cat was seen swimming across—carrying the kitten in his mouth—until, drenched and shivering, the pair landed below the house which had been their joint abode.

WE are told that the great French animal painter, Rosa Bonheur, loved cats, and had several, yet did not care to paint them. Her biographer, Hippolyte Peyrol, says: "I do not think she painted any after 1850."



**BOOK REVIEWS.**

By MARION SHERIDAN-JONES.

**THE SOUL OF A DOG.**

Dog owners will delight in Mr. Sewell Collin's parody of Fitzgerald's "Omar," revealing the soul of a Scotch Terrier. The stanza in which the little dog explains his sorrow when left at home, while his adored master takes his walks abroad, and longs to be very much on his dignity on that master's return; but, overcome by his affection, cannot help "showing a gladness with my tail" is delightful and pathetic, and might well be emulated by some humans.

**A DELIGHTFUL BIRD BOOK.**

There is an almost unbelievable mass of information collated through the ages about birds. To gather only the fringe of this bird lore is a task beyond the time and patience of most. Mr. Lewis Loyd has done it for us, gathering together the quaint notions and legends relating to our feathered friends. Practically every bird which visits our isles is included in this entertaining volume, even the domestic fowl finding a place in its pages. There is an enormous collection of old saws devoted to birds, and those included are taken from the Koran right down to those invented by the humblest tiller of the soil. This is an invaluable book for students and lovers of bird life.

*The Rubaiyat of a Scotch Terrier*, illustrated by SEWELL COLLINS.

(The Richards Press, 3s. 6d. net.)

*Bird Facts and Fallacies*, by LEWIS R. W. LOYD. (Hutchinson, 10s. 6d. net.)

**WHAT OUR READERS SAY.**

"I AM very willing to add my name to list of guarantors. I lived for some years in America where there are several journals devoted solely to Cat Fancy, but I must say none with which I am acquainted are so informing and interesting as *Cat Gossip*."

IRENE FITZGERALD.

"CERTAINLY, put me down: I should hate to see a good paper stop because the very people who should support it don't, or go out of their way to crab it!"

E. SYDNEY WOODIWISS.

"I FIND *Cat Gossip* most interesting!"

S. A. HOLT (Lady Holt).

"I WILL do my best to help *Cat Gossip*."

M. ESTELLE OGLETHORPE.

"I WISH you every success in your plucky effort. We certainly ought to have a *Cat Paper* without rabbits!"

GRETA HINDLEY.

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**ADVERTISEMENTS.** Displayed Adverts., Stud or others, 3/6 per inch, cash, up to 4 insertions; 4 to 13 insertions 3/4 inch; 13 and upwards 2/9 inch. Standing Advs. of Cat Clubs, 5s words, 2/6. Sales, Wants, &c., 1d. per word, minimum 1/6.

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All Correspondence to be sent to the Editor, H. C. BROOKE, BISHOP'S HULL, TAUNTON.

Asst. Editor, London Agency and Book Reviews: M. Sheridan-Jones, 11, Tunley Road, London, S.W. 17.

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