

CAT · GOSSIP

VOL. 1

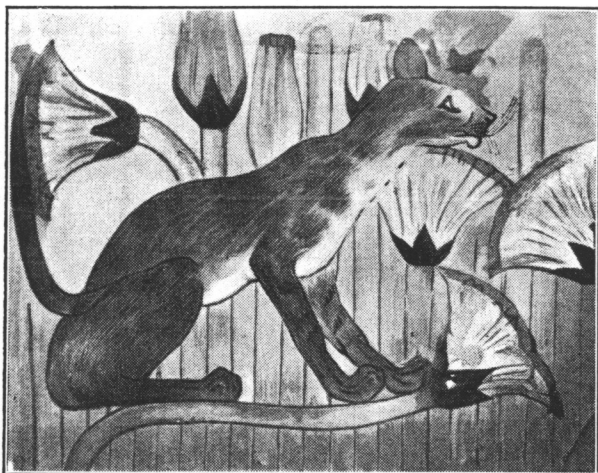
Phone : Battersea 4358

Edited by H. C. BROOKE

No 24

MAY 18th, 1927

Price 3d., post free



Ancient Egyptian Painting of nearly Unmarked Brown Cat
(Abyssinian type) sitting on Papyrus stem.

Block by courtesy of "Animals." Photo : Natural History Museum.

TEMPORA MUTANTUR.

When Nile was young; when Britain's savage hordes
Woad-stained, lurked beastlike in their woods and
caves,

Whilst daily battling with the wolf and bear
And mighty Urus: then, wast Thou divine!
'Fore thee a priesthood, wise in ancient lore
Spread offerings rich and rare, and humbly bowed,
Whilst Temple girls paced in the votive dance,
With Uchat-Amulet of gold adorned,
Thou didst recline on Pharaoh's golden throne;
And when Thy time upon this earth was o'er
—And mighty Pharaoh, too, must pass away,
Ptah-Seker-Asar having called ye hence—
Then cunning workmen wrapped Thy slender form
In choicest swaddling-cloths, with spices rare,
And, jewel-decked, Thou shared'st the Pharaoh's
tomb.

Egypt fell

On evil days: the Roman Eagles waved
Their threatening pinions o'er Nile's yellow sand—
'Gainst Thee the Roman raised an impious hand—
Not yet, not yet, was Egypt's spirit dead!

"The Roman slew a Cat!"—Athirst for blood—
Forgotten dread of Rome—the swarthy mob
Poured, howling vengeance, from each alley-way—
And the proud Roman knew the taste of death—
For he had slain a Cat! . . . Far, far away
Are now those Pagan days! O'er all our heads
Civilisation's blessing freely pour;
O, Bast, look downward through the centuries,
And see Thy children! timorous through the streets
Some crouch, the sport of every ruffian lad:
Cold-blooded torturers wrench their tender limbs
In name of Science: others meet their end
Choking and struggling in the deadly gas,
Whilst white-clad savants, smiling, book their throes,
And khaki soldiers, shuddering, stand aghast—
Yet scarce a soul lifts a protesting voice!
We are not pagans, as those sons of Nile!
Let us give thanks we are not such as they!

H. C. Brooke (Lines to an Abyssinian Cat), 1925.

Gossip of the Week.

AT THE suggestion of our readers, we repeat the above lines, which we wrote a couple of years ago for another periodical, but which many of our subscribers may not have seen. The reference in the last lines is to the poison-gas hell at Porton, Hants, where cats, amongst other animals, meet agonising deaths. Apologists for these infernal practices admit that one of the hardest obstacles they have to contend with is the contempt which the soldiers, forced to witness these horrors, freely show for the persons perpetrating them.

MISS LEATHERDALE writes that she hears from Toronto that her Siamese, Isma, sent out last year, there being no Siamese stud obtainable, was mated to a winning white S.H.; the resulting progeny being three blacks and a silver tabby! Isma's owner, Mrs. Stroud, writes she has now spent a thousand dollars on Siamese, and has only the one cat to show for it, so feels somewhat disheartened.

CHASSE ET PECHE publishes an article by the Editor of "Cat Gossip" on the subject of wild cats, illustrated with a portrait of his Egyptian Cat shown at Croydon a couple of years ago.

WE ARE glad to hear that Mrs. Oglethorpe has recovered from a bad attack of 'flu, which she suffered from after her return from Bournemouth.

MRS. BROUGHTON-HAWLEY has some kittens which are very intriguing to read about. They are now five weeks old, and by Ben of Lo-Kie, ex Indian Dawn. The ground colour is pale silver, and the markings blue. Mr. Yeates calls them silver-blue tabbies, and thinks, if reared, they will be quite sensational.

MISS JOAN CONQUEST has some more interesting remarks on Chinese Cats in another column. It seems a pity that travellers rarely take any interest in cats when abroad. What about the Bristly-coated Mombassa Cat, for instance, referred to by old writers. Did it ever exist? Nothing seems known of it nowadays. Miss Conquest's remarks as to the eye colour in some of these cats are very interesting.

MESSRS. SHERLEY, feeling interested in our reference to our use of their **Lactol** in rearing a baby hyena, write:—"From time to time Lactol has been used successfully for most mammals, including lions, tigers, silver foxes, rabbits, ferrets, etc. It is used regularly at the London Zoological Gardens, and at several Zoos in Germany." This shows how suitable the preparation must be for kittens, for which we have ourselves used it with success, as also for many kinds of dogs, from Mexican Hairless Dogs to Bulldogs; for wolf cubs, for "Rhinceros" mice, and other varied stock. We have also known a litter of leopards weaned most successfully on Lactol, of the use of which we have a quarter-of-a-century's practical experience.

MRS. STEVENS, who hopes soon to publish the portrait of her coming stud, Merlin o' Mendip, in our pages, is feeling very satisfied with the reports she hears of the litters sired by Magnus, who as yet has sired strong kittens from every queen he has been mated to, with the exception of one which has not bred for three years.

WE THINK that Jennings, in his book published some forty odd years ago, came far nearer to a correct definition of the true and desirable coloration in Abyssinians than any more recent description we have seen, when he compared it to that of a Belgian Hare Rabbit. No grey or silvery tints there! but where can we find such a pelage nowadays? We imagine the richest coloured and far the best ticked existing specimen to be our own pet queen, but she is too much barred on legs; but the Belgian Hare coloration we have not seen since the days of Sedgemere Bottle.

WE ARE told that the Cats' Home, for which Mrs. Eyres Simmons appeals, was supported a great deal by the late Mrs. Grove-Grady, and is now in danger of being closed for want of funds.

MRS. BROUGHTON-HAWLEY touches on a very moot point when she writes that a certain cat has had kittens, the fatherS of which are so and so and so and so. It is held by some that conception from two sires is not possible; others think it can take place.

It would be very difficult to determine it in ordinary cases, considering that the Tabby pattern is latent in all our cats, and that so many colour crosses have been made. To obtain scientific certainty, one would have to mate a perfectly pure-bred female to two perfectly pure-bred males of quite different varieties. We were going to suggest, for instance, mating a line-bred white L.H. to a line-bred Manx and a line-bred Siamese. But that would not answer, because of the caudal peculiarities of some Siamese, which would render the test unreliable. Perhaps a mating of a white L.H. with a Siamese (short-tailed for choice) and an Abyssinian might do; if kittens showed Siamese characteristics of any kind, and a certain amount of "bunny" coat, we might take it as proven that both sires were represented. But, of course, if this test did not prove successful it would be no proof that dual conception cannot occur—one swallow does not make a summer.

M. ARMAND STEENS has had the ill-luck to have his young Siamese, Ami of Dulverton, bred by Miss Leatherdale, killed by his adult male, Vishnou, who, enraged at the sight of the Persians, placed for warmth in an adjoining enclosure, flew at Ami, and killed him with a bite in the throat.

QUITE IN keeping with our Egyptian pictures comes the news of the beautiful facsimile paintings just added to the Egyptian Gallery at the British Museum. One of these, dated 3,400 years ago, is from the tomb of Harbour Master Ma'y, of Thebes, and represents a cat tied to the leg of a table. The other is from the tomb of the Astronomer Nakht, and shows us a cat eating a fish under a table just as to-day. The two cats are quite alike, both "mackerel," or lightly tiger-striped—the marking of felis caffra, the striped form of the African Wild Cat of to-day.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

I WANT to ask all friends of the paper to help to keep the paper going during my absence from home for the next two weeks. I am feeling the strain of running this paper single-handed (combining the functions of Editor, Business Manager, Advertisement Manager, and Office Boy) very much, and must have a rest. I shall be away from the 24th May to June 7th. I am leaving plenty of matter with the printers, and as regards items of the moment, I ask you kindly to send all possible news items to Mrs. Campbell-Fraser, who will incorporate them for the two issues with her regular Long-Hair Lore column. Please send her your news early, in any case so that they reach her **at latest** by first post on the Saturdays, May 28 and June 4th. As regards advertisements and Births and Visits (items essential to the successful running of the paper!), please send these by the same dates to Mrs. Sheridan-Jones, 11, Tunley-road, London, S.W. 17. You will be doing me a personal kindness by helping in this matter.

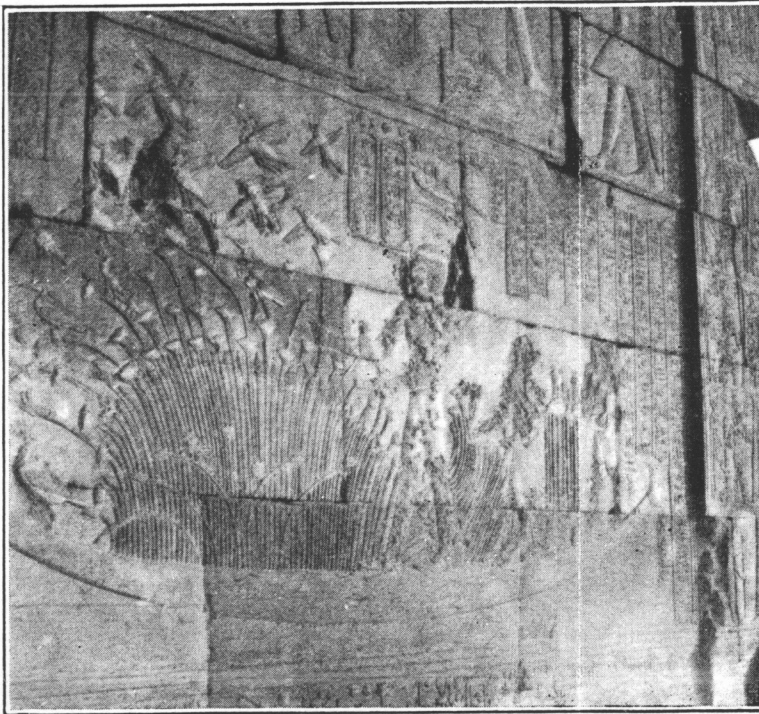
H. C. BROOKE.

THE CAT AS THE SPORTSMAN'S COMPANION THIRTY CENTURIES AGO.

BY THE EDITOR.

REFERENCE has time and again been made to the manner in which the ancient Egyptians made use of the Cat in sport, and proved thereby that there must have been something in the mentality of this ancient people which is lacking in human beings of to-day, who have lost the knowledge of how to properly understand and develop the feline character. The cat is so frequently represented in ancient Egyptian painting and sculptured as the companion and assis-

members of his family; on the prow of the boat stands the tame decoy duck or goose; but whereas in the painting the cat is leaping in the air from the boat, and seizing birds, in the sculpture the very small cat is climbing up the papyrus, and driving out a swarm of birds for the hunter to aim at. In her book, "Bird Notes from the Nile," Lady William Cecil observes:—The old Egyptians must have thoroughly enjoyed sport, and we see many pictures which portray some Pharaoh (as in this case, Ed.) or great man in his light canoe, made of papyrus stems, his wife and sometimes his children with him, bird hunting among the tall reeds of the lakes and marshes, the hunter dexterously hurling his throwing



A PHARAOH HUNTING WILD-FOWL, USING CAT TO DRIVE BIRDS OUT OF THE REEDS.

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN BAS-RELIEF.

Photo: Miss Elsie Wilkinson.



tant of the wild fowler, that it must be assumed that he was constantly used in this manner.

LE ROI S' AMUSE.

We are greatly indebted to Miss Elsie Fitzwilliam for the photograph she took of a beautifully executed bas-relief in stone, at Kom Ombos, on the Nile, representing the Pharaoh duck-hunting. Those who have seen the celebrated mural painting from the tomb of the Court scribe of Thebes, now in the British Museum, will at once note the conventional similarity.

RETRIEVER AND SPANIEL COMBINED.

In both painting and sculpture, we see the sportsman in his canoe or punt; behind him sit female

stick, like a boomerang, with one hand, while with the other he grasps a handful of birds already caught. The bag, no doubt, was varied, as ibis, geese, and ducks, besides many small birds, are depicted rising "en masse" from the covert. Tame geese served as decoy birds. Cats must have been regularly used as retrievers, as they are not infrequently portrayed thus on the Monuments." None of the cats thus depicted, as far as we know, in any way bear out the idea of M. Armand Steens that the Ancient Egyptian Cat was identical with the Siamese, whose coloration does not appear. The British Museum painting represents a tiger-striped cat. A papyrus painting represents a brown cat with bars on legs and tail—obviously the "Abyssinian" type.

UNALTERED THROUGH THIRTY CENTURIES.

There seems no doubt the Abyssinian is the most ancient type of domestic cat. From the fact that the cat is sometimes represented climbing the papyrus stems, it is obvious that the breed of cat then used was a small and light one, such as the Abyssinian, and in this connection it is of interest to note that the first described type specimen of the African Wild Cat, taken in Nubia by the German naturalist, Ruppell, is distinctly described as being of the size of a **Small** domestic cat, also it was sandy in colour. The select few who fancy the charming Abyssinian breed may doubtless congratulate themselves on fostering the most blue-blooded cat in existence.

ON THE SHAPE OF PERSIAN CATS.

By MRS. BAZELEY.

I SOMETIMES think too much attention is paid to the head, and too little to the shape of our Persian Cats, the broadly built, cobby cat, with short neck and tail, being so much more attractive than the elongated flat type. There have been some opinions expressed lately by Mr. House and Mr. Yeates as to the better type of queen for breeding purposes. It would be interesting if some of our breeders would give their experiences.

SHORTNESS NO DISADVANTAGE.

I, for one, over a long period of breeding, have found the short bodied, cobby cat very satisfactory indeed. My queens are all cobby, and thick set, and on the small side, but their breeding record is excellent, hardly ever needing a second mating, having good litters of strong kittens and bringing them all up. I very seldom lose a kitten, and I have never a queen who would not bring up her kittens. My little Bubble is an example, just ten years old, a small cobby cat, but with good bone, she has just reared a litter of three kittens, who at not quite six weeks old weigh a good $1\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. each. Last year she reared six in the Spring and three in the Autumn; she has hardly ever failed me, I think only once needing a second mating, and certainly never a foster. Could a long bodied queen have done better?

BUT BUILD MUST BE PROPORTIONATE.

I would vote every time for the short-bodied queen, but remember she **must have** bone. The cobby cat being the more beautiful, we stand more chance of reproducing it from cobby parents, but the shortness must be balanced by width, wide shoulders, **thick** short legs, **thick** short tail, etc., and I think my own variety, the Blues, and the Chinchillas score most points in this direction.

MORE ABOUT CHINESE CATS.

By "JOAN CONQUEST."

IN THE hope of obtaining further information for you as to these cats, I have inquired of Dr. Giles, at the British Museum, and he has turned up every reference book in the Museum, but without result. He suggests the Natural History Museum, but that, of course, you have tried. A Buddhist priest took me round the Temple where I saw the Drop-eared feline as a mural painting. The painting was in a room behind the high altar. A dusty place, with an enormous Buddha at the end. The cat was life-size, and lying on a branch snarling. I forget the exact place, but I believe it was up Kalgan way, towards Mongolia. I have seen so many Temples, so many mural paintings, especially of felines, notably in Japan. In my travels I have only come across the ordinary felines.

BLUE-EYED REDS AND TABBIES.

About the Long-haired Chinese Cat. It originated, I was told, in the Province of Hou-an, and has been domesticated from the wild cat. A friend of mine had one, a perfect beauty. Red. A tremendous ruff and a colossal tail, which it carried straight up after the manner of all Chinese Cats. Blue eyes, and the most devilish temper. The eyes were long and slightly slanting at the outside corner. They are greatly prized because of their beauty, and very difficult to get. I had a common Chinese White Cat, as a kitten. She presented me with four kittens. Father unknown, but I thought probably a big ugly black creature which used to roam my roofs. Two of the kittens were common black and white cats; the other two, my "Boy" said, were "Hou-an" Cats. A light and dark tabby. One with blue eyes, which remained blue; and the most tremendous coats and tails. A "throw-back," I suppose? I wish I could help you further. Let me know if I can. I will do all I can to help your paper. I think it is splendid to turn it out, so beautifully got up, and all by yourself. It ought to be supported. Almost everybody loves cats. How would it be to have a crossword puzzle, one on felines, and a well bred kitten as prize?

BIRTHS.

April 27th.—Miss Langhorne's **Vanity Fair**, four kittens by Mrs. Stevenson's **Budge of Hanley**.

April 28th.—Miss Langhorne's **Princess Prettikins**, four kittens by Owner's **Champion Shere Khan**.

Henri Rochefort possessed an African cat, Kroumir, who died of grief ten days after the death of his master.—"Nos Chats."

LONG-HAIR LORE.

By MRS. CAMPBELL FRASER.

TORONTO sends the sad news of the sudden death of the young black L.H. imported stud, "Heathside Cavalier." It was only recently that he crossed the Atlantic, after a creditable if brief show career. "Heathside Cavalier" was a grandson of Champion "Heathside Flanark," being black bred on both sides. His purchaser is broken-hearted over his loss, for his disposition was of the sweetest.

Miss Hilda Cleary is rejoicing in the advent of a most promising litter by "Idol of Hadley." The blue mother was one of Miss Currie's breeding.

Mrs. Cattermole has embarked on a sumptuous new cat house, to honour her beautiful white cats.

The handsome black female belonging to Mrs. Mackenzie is to visit Mrs. Kidd's Ch. "Tarzan of the Cottage." This ought to produce some nice Smokes, for whom there is plenty of room.

We are sorry to hear that Mrs. Lockhart is at present retiring from the Fancy, "Karim" having returned to her breeder, Lady Eardley-Wilmot.

"A Race for a Life": Miss Winifred French writes me the following—"It has always been my ambition to breed Brown Tabby Persians, and when my little Tortie, 'Stella Mount,' gave birth to five nice kittens, by 'Billy Brown Deer,' last Tuesday, I thought there was a chance of this hope being fulfilled. But, alas! they died one by one, till only one was left. I was told my only chance of saving it was to find a foster-mother, and the only queen I knew to have kitted recently was Miss Longley's 'Ebonette,' who lives at Bookham, in Surrey. It is a three hours' journey from house to house, but I thought anything was better than watching another poor atom squeak itself to death. So I put a hot-water bottle in a basket, wrapped the kitten in cotton-wool, and laid it in a cardboard box beside the bottle. Every time it squeaked on the journey I thought 'there is still hope,' but on arriving at Bookham disaster awaited me, for I tripped over some wire on the rough country road, and fell headlong, dropping the basket, and jerking the poor kitten out of its box. However, it was not dead, and I hurried on. I had another shock when 'Ebonette's' kittens were shown to me, for they were at least three times the size of mine, but I put the Tabby mite amongst them, and 'Ebonette' 'mothered' it at once. When I came away a few hours later the kitten was still alive, and I felt that there was at least a possibility, even though a remote one, of its survival."

Mr. Cyril Yeates, whose new address will be 15, Pembroke Gardens, W. 8, hopes to have the house in order for Mrs. Yeates' convalescence.

A CHARITABLE CAT.**A STORY OF CAT LIFE.**

By MISS PELTZER.

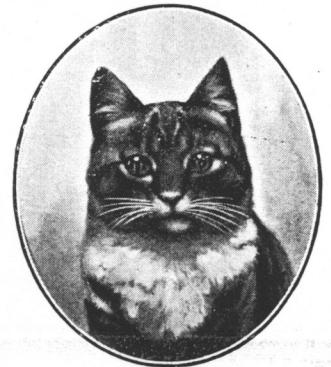
IN a Lincolnshire village—Ewerley, near Sleaford—two cats had kittens within 24 hours. The respective owners lived about 100 yards from each other.

The cat, whose family was first born, was bereft of her young by the usual method of drowning them.

The owners of the cat whose kittens were born later in the day were just then in the hurry of removal, it being the 6th of April, the day in Lincolnshire when farm labourers and others engaged in agriculture change quarters for the year. They took the mother cat with them and left the kittens behind, whether purposely or accidentally is not known.

How the bereaved cat knew of the existence of the other kittens is a mystery. The fact remains, that she fetched them away one by one—four, I think—and adopted them. Her owners considered it such a remarkable thing that they allowed her to keep them.

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Own a
Cat . .



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BOOKS REVIEWED.

By M. SHERIDAN-JONES.

NEARLY HUMAN!

This most important study of animal psychology has now run into two editions. An admirable work, it will be of the greatest interest to the specialist, while the lay reader will find it most entertaining. Mankind has always been interested in the ape, probably because it is nearer to the human than any other species, its brain development placing it above the normal. Professor Köhler has conducted his observations with patience and understanding, and he presents his conclusions in such simple, direct language that we get a new insight into the mentality of this fascinating subject. "Koko," for instance, has "a pretty face, with his hair parted in the middle." But he has a grudge against life, and exists always "in a state of moral indignation, either because there is not enough to eat, or because the children come too near him," or for a dozen various reasons. He does not complain, he is merely indignant. There is an amusing account of a dance performed by all the creatures. If I refrain from describing it it is because I do not want to introduce a serious rival to the Black Bottom and the Charleston. The Chimpanzee is a clever surgeon, and the Professor himself has been "doctored" by

one of his pets. "I had a splinter in my hand, and went to the Chimpanzee; he examined the wound at once, and drew out the splinter by a capable, but somewhat painful, squeeze of his finger nails. He then examined my hand more closely, and let it fall, satisfied with his work." I could quote from this fascinating book for hours, but space forbids.

THE MENTALITY OF APES, by Professor Köhler.
(Kegan Paul, 10/6 net.)

OLD STYLE AMERICAN HUMOUR.**THE MELODIUS CAT.**

THE CAT hath been called a domestik animile, but I never could tell whyfore. All thare is domestik about a cat iz, you kant loze one; they are as tuff to loze az a bad reputashun iz. Yu may send one out of the State done up neatly in a meal-bag, and the next mornin' yu will find him alongside ov the kitchen stove, reddy tu be stepped on. Thare iz only one thing about a cat that I like, and that is, that they are very reasonable: a little money,* well put, will go a great way in cats. Cats are very plenty in this world just now. I counted 18 from my boarding-house windo one moon-lite nite last summer, and it warnt the best kind of a nite for cats neither.—Josh Billing's Animal Lore.

(* Of course, this was written long before the Cat Show era.—ED).

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SPRATT'S

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THE poet, Emile Goudeau, author of "La Revanche des Bêtes," attempted one day to "meow" to see if he would be understood by his cat, Mouchi-Moucha. The cat, however, regarded him with such an air of contempt that he felt quite small, and perceived that the cat may make fools of us, but not we of the cat. —"Nos Chats."

LIKE Mahomet, Richelieu, and others, M. Georges Clemenceau loves cats. When he attended the conference of the Allies in London, in 1919, he took back with him a little black cat which he christened Prudence. Doubtless M. Clemenceau called to mind the epigram of Taine:—"I have studied many philosophers and many cats; the wisdom of the cats is infinitely the superior."—"Nos Chats."

M. Raymond Poincaré has humorously described the ways of his Siamese, Gri-Gri:—"In fact, he is witty, full of verve and à-propos, humorous and facetious; he knows the value of a well-timed piece of pleasantry, and how, with a pirouette, to extricate himself from the most awkward situations."—"Nos Chats."

Anatole France owned a cat which every night at the same hour, considering his master had worked long enough, would knock the pen from his hand with a pat of his paw, judging it time for them to go to bed. —"Nos Chats."

A DELIGHTFUL study of Cat-life is the story "Une Vie," in the collection of stories by Claude Farrère, entitled "Bêtes et gens qui s'aimèrent."

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AT STUD.

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