

**FIRST PUBLISHED PORTRAITS OF SACRED JAPANESE TEMPLE CAT.**  
**Feline Remains in Prehistoric Lake-Dwellings. :: The Chinese Mystery Solved?**

CAT GOSSIP, October 5th, 1927

# CAT · GOSSIP

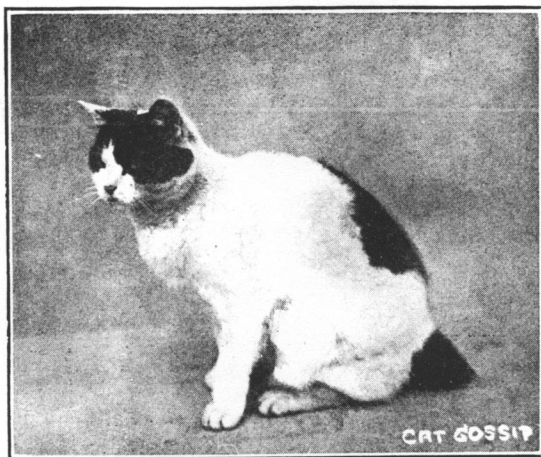
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THE SACRED JAPANESE CAT.

## A SACRED "KIMONO" CAT.

BY LILIAN J. VELEY, D.Sc.

As far as I know, no other "sacred" cat than this one, which I photographed in 1910, has ever been brought out of Japan. I am told that every cat in Japan which is born with a certain marking is considered as sacred—at least by some sects or some portion of the public—it is held to contain the soul of an ancestor, and is sent to a Temple. No such cat would ever be parted with; this one, I was informed, was stolen by a Chinese servant, and carried on board a ship. Here it became the property of an English officer, who would have wished to return it to its temple, but dared not do so on account of the feeling aroused by the theft. It was brought home, and eventually came into the possession of an English family in Putney, who respected its traditions, and with whom it enjoyed a happy home and lived to an honoured old age. It died about 1911, soon after I had photographed it. The cat was black and white in colour, the black patch on the back being the "sacred" mark—which is supposed to resemble a woman in a kimono. Its tail was short, black, very broad, and almost triangular in shape. It was almost uncannily human in its ways, and lived entirely on raw meat, refusing all other foods. I was grateful for the opportunity afforded me of photographing it, and never even showed the photos to anyone, though I gave a copy to its owners, who wrote and informed me when its death took place. I understand that the cat, which was a female, refused all mates, and never had any kittens.



THE SAME, SHOWING "KIMONO."

NOTE BY EDITOR.—An analogous instance of certain markings, occurring in an ordinary species, being held, at least by some sects, to confer sanctity—though very probably in the first place due purely to priestcraft—may be found in that of the Sacred Bull Apis, in Ancient Egypt. Here also black and white were the colours; but white on a black ground. The sacred markings were a white triangle on the forehead, and on the back a half-moon—or, as some have it, a patch in the shape of a bird with outspread wings. At Memphis he was worshipped as being the reincarnated god Phtha; he was kept in great pomp by the priests in the Temple; and the whole land mourned his death; the birth of an Apis calf caused widespread rejoicings. The Persian conqueror, Cambyses, wounded the Apis with his sword, or, as Plutarch relates, killed him and fed dogs on his flesh. The apparent madness of which the monarch afterwards gave signs was, of course, attributed by the Egyptians to this sacrilege. It is, unfortunately, not known whether any particular markings in the cat were endowed with sacred characteristics by the Egyptians; we only know that some of the mummified cats, and those mostly portrayed in tomb and other paintings, were Abyssinian coloured, and also much what we now call "mackerel tabby," also spotted. It is regrettable that more is not known as to these Japanese cats. At any rate, there is no need for us to sneer at these beliefs in a superior manner, for it is barely beyond the memory of living man that black cats in this country were widely held to be the familiars of witches or even to be witches themselves; there is no greater absurdity in the Egyptian or Japanese beliefs than in the English one. As a matter of fact, a case that came before the Courts a couple of years ago showed that belief in witchcraft, in a somewhat watered down form, yet exists in England.

## THE WILD CAT AT THE GLASTONBURY LAKE VILLAGE.

By H. ST. GEORGE GRAY

(Curator of Taunton Museum).

So far the remains of cats have not been identified from the Lake Village at Meare; but several bones have been found at the Glastonbury Lake Village, which was excavated from 1892 to 1907.

Lower jaws of cats were found in one of the dwellings, and a cat's skull was dug up near the margin of the second floor in the same mound. A few limb-bones of this animal were also obtained. The skull is much larger than that of the domestic cat in the Manchester Museum, and appears to come nearer to specimens of the Scotch wild cat (*felis sylvestris grampia*, Miller). The Glastonbury specimen has a condylo-basal length of 87mm., and a zygomatic breadth of 66mm., as against 76.5 and 57.5mm. for the domestic cat. The maxillary tooth-row is also correspondingly longer.

The lower jaws are considerably larger than those of the domestic cat, and agree closely with wild examples from Scotland, according to the observations of Mr. J. Wilfrid Jackson.

Of the limb-bones two tibiae were found, two humeri, and one ulna.

It may be noted that the domestic cat was derived from Egypt, and introduced into Britain in the tenth century A.D. It is first mentioned in the laws of Howel Dda (see "Ancient Laws and Institutes of Wales").

The lake villages of Somerset date from about 250 B.C. to 70 A.D.

### GOSSIP OF THE WEEK.

FOR two hundred years, approximately, naturalists of all nations have perpetuated the story of the Chinese Drop-Eared Cat, even a catalogue of the British Museum referring to it, but it has been impossible to trace anyone having seen a living specimen. We ourselves saw a stuffed one in a Continental Museum some forty years ago, and the well-known novelist, Miss "Joan Conquest," recently related in "Cat Gossip" that she had seen a mural painting of one in a Buddhist Temple in North China. Our inquiries all over the world have proved fruitless, and even the enormous publicity given to an inquiry by "L. G. M." in the columns of the "Daily Mail," at our request, have led to no result. We think it may, therefore, be assumed that the Cat no longer exists. We expressed the opinion that the story of this cat derives from some freak specimens, which may have founded a temporary "strain," or family. This view receives strong confirmation from

#### A WELL-KNOWN AUTHOR,

Miss Oldfield Howey (author of "The Encircled Serpent," "The Horse in Magic and Myth," etc.), who owns a strain of polydactyle cats, and writes: "I

have several times had kittens born with drop ears, which they retained for from six months to three months, and then gradually lost, to my disappointment. The last example I had was a spotted polydactyle S.H. kitten. Unfortunately a dog killed her during my absence from home. (One gets sick of hearing of these acts by ill-bred curs, whose owners are really most to blame! Ed.) Though six months old its ears still had a very distinct forward droop, not backward like those of an angry cat, as described by Mr. Percival in the case of the Worthing cat. Evidently the tendency is there, and no doubt by careful selection such a variety could be produced in a few generations." We think there is little doubt that the century old mystery of the Chinese Cat is thus explained. And when we consider the modifications in the ears of dogs, rabbits, and goats, the wonder is that the cat has been so little affected. **READING SHOW:**—A class for Manx, No. 67, will be given. Mrs. Fosbery would like to hear of a guarantor for this. All Siamese classes are now guaranteed. The Special 11 should read: The Moya Cup, for most typical Siamese, presented to the Club by Miss Busted. Spoon to commemorate win. Championships can only be given in the Open Classes stated in Schedule. Creams only have one championship. Blue Junior is now guaranteed, but guarantors wanted for other starred classes. An extra class, 85a, is provided for members of Newbury Club, neuter cat or kitten; judge, Mr. Western. Special No. 8 will go to winner in this class. Will all correspondents writing Mrs. Fosbery on show matters mark the envelope "Cat Show," so that her assistant can attend to them. The Northway Cup should read as being offered for best pair **blue** kittens bred by exhibitor—**nct** for blacks.

A correspondent asks why her cat is invariably sick after eating a mouse. It is curious that we have referred to this idiosyncrasy on the part of some cats in an article now awaiting space for publication. Whilst mice and rats are certainly a "natural" food for cats, we do not like them to eat these rodents. While rats and mice suffer very frequently from worms, cancerous tumours, and ringworm; there is also the ever-present risk of poison. Why mice cause sickness in some cats we do not know. THE "Cat Courier" mentions a cat which is suckling a litter of baby wolves; and another rearing squirrels; not so uncommon, this latter. Another cat has as its bosom friend a young robin, which, having been injured, had its leg put in splints, and now will not leave the house.

Our subscriber, Mrs. Mattison (Center Moriches, N.Y.), is importing a silver tabby stud from England, with which she hopes to benefit the breed over there. Another "Cat Courier" "news" item:—"Mr. Alley Cat has just returned from the city with a new pair of shoes, a milk bottle, monkey wrench, and a pair of shoe trees, all of which he got for a mere song."

**SIAMESE SHOW** echoes:—Mrs. Wade writes: I am



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sorry to say I made a mistake in awarding Special 43 at the Club Show, the special given by Miss Dixon for deepest blue eyes in female kittens 6—9 months. I awarded this to Mrs. Harvey's Marigold of Petaling, but as this lovely-eyed kitten is under six months the special must go to Miss Stent's beautiful kitten, Herself. Mrs. Ellaby writes that her very infantile litter, shown at the age of 3½ weeks, seem none the worse for their outing.

We were glad to notice the successes of a novice exhibitor, Mrs. Calvert, at the Club Show, her Tai-Long taking several prizes, and we understand that he was admired, and that several breeders contemplate sending queens to him.

Mrs. SOAMES' recent remarks in a contemporary about "Breed only from sound stock" are as good commonsense as we have ever read. We do not believe in rearing sickly weaklings (except in exceptional circumstances), and if eugenic principles were more strictly followed, both in the case of humans and others (for a large percentage of the former should never be permitted to perpetuate their kind), it would be far better for all concerned.

We do not grudge the "Cat Courier" the distinction (?) conferred on it by being invited to send specimen copies to an exhibition held by the Clarkoff Soviet Union!

SALES of L.H. kittens by Mrs. MacWatt, of Siamese by Mrs. Scott-Russell, Mrs. McDonald, and Mrs. Meyric Hughes will be found announced in our

business columns; also of Siamese by Miss Noble and Blues by Mrs. Oglethorpe.

**ELABORATE funeral of a Royal Cat:** Surakarta, Java.—The Susuhunan, who maintains with pomp and magnificence a show of local power under Dutch suzerainty, recently suffered a painful bereavement—his favourite cat died. It was buried with a ceremonial no cat in Java ever had had before. Laid in a costly casket, its remains were borne to the burial place by 24 elaborately accoutered warriors and followed by an escort of laucers on horseback.

Mrs. George W. Dobbin (Maryland) is importing through "Cat Courier" advertising, White Label of Gaybrook, and probably a young female from Miss Eva L'Estrange Walsh, of the Gaybrook Cattery, of England, and Lavender Blue of Runnymede from Mrs. W. F. Reynolds Sams, Egham, England. White Label is a son of Ch. Minley Surprise of Gaybrook; Lavender Blue of Runnymede is by Ch. Colneside Billy Bumpet.

Mrs. CRAN publishes in No. 45 of "Cat Gossip" an important article of great interest to all Siamese breeders. We want Siamese news for **our** column for that number, too, **please**.

REMEMBER the concert on October 10th, arranged by Miss Langston, on behalf of the Croydon Cat Club, whose President, Mrs. Marion Cran, will speak. Tickets, 1s. 2d. to 3s. 6d., can be obtained at the Small Public Hall, Croydon, or from members of the C.C.C. Committee, and all Croydon music-sellers.

## LONG-HAIR LORE.

BY MRS. CAMPBELL-FRASER.

(Phone: Hendon 1019.)

It is always pleasant to welcome a new enthusiast of our fascinating hobby, the beautiful Persian. From Langton House, Yorks, comes the following charming letter: "You have asked me to send you a few notes about my cats, but I am quite a beginner. I bought Carina of Langton from Miss Jacob, of Basingstoke, in February, 1925, when she was just under three months old. One of her kittens, Peter of Langton, aged over three months (by Simeon of Westfield), won me two first prizes, one at Harrogate, the other at Bingley; and as soon as I can find a show not too far away I intend showing him again. He is a beautiful little fellow, and most affectionate. He is, however, frightfully inquisitive, so much so that one day he fell into the 'pig bucket!' I have now purchased a lovely young queen from the same lady, and I hope to breed from her early next year. The queen's sire is Ch. Billy Bumpet. I have ordered

'Cat Gossip,' and I am most interested in it." All good wishes for success to Mrs. Dodgshan, and I hope we shall soon see some of the Langton House pets taking a place at our Southern Shows.

Dropping in to the Siamese Championship Show the other day I was impressed by the progressive attitude of the Fancy. It was a "happy" Show; outside the hall the row of cars bespoke the gathering of the afternoon visitor; the pens, each with their pure white blanket, were fit domiciles for their aristocratic occupants, and one could gaze unimpeded at these spoilt children of fashion, for the prize cards were all placed on racks above the pens, and so the exhibits stood in full view. Most of them appeared to take as their right all the admiration lavished on them, and were utterly unconcerned. The prize cards, I noticed, were of quite a handsome type, larger and thus more impressive than those in ordinary use, and affixing the name of the owner of the exhibit gave an additional interest.

Mrs. Mackenzie, under doctor's orders, is recuperating in the bracing Scotch air. Remembrance and her little daughter's Black Dot have accompanied her, and Mrs. Mackenzie intends, on her return to London, to have a small cat-house erected, benching Black Dot at the Winter Shows, and indulging herself more freely among her favourite blacks.

Mrs. Yeates, with her usual hospitality, entertained members of the Black and White Club at her house, in Pembroke Gardens, on the 28th. The veteran, Ch. Zulanda, was looking in fine form, and an exceedingly pretty tortie and white queen has won the heart of Mrs. Yeates. A large cat-room, which filled me with envy, is a great feature. Mr. Yeates himself has arranged it, with shelves, netted window, sleeping boxes, etc. A delightful item was a tiny room attached, where one discovered a white

china basin, with cold tap, shelves holding brushes, combs, and all necessaries of "milady's toilet"; returning to the cat-room, I saw the two special ladies, for whom all these wonders were prepared. These two beautiful blue queens, June Rose and Winsome Witch, are a most taking pair, each holding her own good points, making it difficult to judge between them. I remember I noted Winsome Witch among my "Coming Cats," and I hope she will fulfil that good augury. It will be remembered they are mother and daughter, the sire of the daughter being Mrs. Wade's stud, John of Bedale. June Rose is one of the two children left of Barry Blue Prince. Mrs. Yeates told me she has purchased Warder, a blue winning male kitten at Sandy, from Miss J. Langton.

Mrs. Cattermole has added that good S.H. white winner, Lady Be Good (property of the late Miss Winder), to her L.H. cattery, and also, I believe, has two very promising white Persian kittens, which, no doubt, we shall hear of later.

The S.C.C.C. will hold a Committee Meeting on October 6th, 2.30 p.m., at 6, The Approach, Hendon. Congratulations to Mrs. Reynolds Sams on the birth of her baby.

I have just received a letter from Miss Hydon (U.S.A.), dated September 20th, telling of the safe arrival of Herd Laddie. She writes as follows: "Well, my new cat came through safely with my sister, and while he was frightened almost to death, and terribly sick for four days, he is coming along splendidly in the few days he has been here. I think his eyes are fine; in fact, when he fills out in body and coats up he will be gorgeous. His frame is very large, but he is gaunt at present; as he is so painfully thin. I must thank you for recommending him. Herd Laddie's mother is full sister to my late Sunny Lad, and with the Mendip cross to help for sounder colour he should do me much good."

## WEEKLY ENQUIRIES.

"Croydon" wishes to know where to purchase a good metal cat comb. I always use those made by Messrs. Spratt, Ltd. They are their own patent, and made in England. Nos. 3 and 0 I find most useful. The latter is the fine tooth comb, No. 3 contains teeth of two sizes.

I am repeatedly asked for the address of a good "animal" photographer. It is a pity that none such advertise in "Cat Gossip."

## CAT CALLS.

### ON CASTOR OIL FOR CATS.

The late Miss Frances Simpson, whose authority few will question, wrote on page 84 of "Cats for Pleasure and Profit": "Some fanciers are under the delusion that castor oil is a universal cure for all things, and dose their cats accordingly. I have known the nasty stuff given for worms. Believe me, the worms thrive on it, and the result is upsetting poor pussy, and causing her great discomfort." On

page 54 cod liver oil is recommended "as a specially good thing during the winter months" mixed with a teaspoonful of fish. Again, page 89, re constipation: "I must say I dislike giving castor oil to cats or kittens—I much prefer sweet oil, some kits will lick this up of their own accord." On page 26 Miss Leatherdale's query is answered: "As the day for the accouchement approaches, it is as well to give a small dose of oil or to feed on sardines." The Editor of "Our Animal Brothers," October, 1918, wrote: "Never fall into the foolish mistake of giving castor oil to your cats. It makes her miserable, weakens her, and in the end does her great and lasting injury."—ADA PARKER (N. Finchley).

**BIRTHS.**

September 22nd.—Miss J. Langton's **Wuffy**, 4 fine kittens by Mrs. Wade's **John of Bedale**.

**READING CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW.**

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25th, 1927.

Entries Close October 14th (Friday).

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