

CAT · GOSSIP

VOL. 4

First Edited by H. C. BROOKE

Edited by E. K. WAKEFORD

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LONG-HAIR LORE.

By Mrs. M. ESTELLE OGLETHORPE (Tel.: Wimbledon 2889).

“ And what is so rare as a day in June?
Then, if ever come perfect days,
Then Heaven tries earth if it be in tune,
And over it softly her warm ear lays.”

James Russell Lowell.

“ In Watson's Annals we read of Elizabeth Hurd and her husband who came to Philadelphia with Penn's early Colonists. They worked hard side by side to build their first rude home, living meantime, like so many of the poorer emigrants, in a cave by the river's bank. One day, whilst Elizabeth was carrying water and mixing the mortar for their chimney, her husband said to her with some asperity: ‘Thou had'st better think of dinner!’—an essentially masculine remark when there was nothing but bread and cheese in the larder! Elizabeth walked back soberly to the cave, thinking very hard, but quite unable to translate her thought into provisions. On the way she met her cat, holding in his mouth a fine large rabbit, which she thankfully received, and dressed as an English hare. When her husband came into dinner, plainly expecting to be well fed, he was informed of the facts, whereupon they both wept with reverential joy, and ate their meal which was thus seasonably provided for them, in singleness of heart. The help afforded in this emergency was never ungratefully forgotten, for when Elizabeth Hurd died after many years of prosperity, she bequeathed to her grand-niece, Mrs. Deborah Morris, a silver tureen, on which was engraved a cat bearing a rabbit in its mouth.”—Agnes Repplier.

Prince Karl August von Thurn und Taxis of Bavaria is to have Una's Fairy, a daughter of Princess Una of The Court and Son o' Flick, and she is to go by aeroplane to Nuremburg, and there to be met by car in August. She is Princess Una's only daughter by Son o' Flick, and is a lovely little thing, with eyes that promise to be unusually fine, and she is as pale as any kitten I have had, and of a most charming disposition. There are two lovely males in this litter, and I hope great things of them. The Colneside Cattery is in full swing, and kittens of this ilk are arriving in many homes.

Miss Roberts owns a fine little queen, who last year had eight kittens by Colneside Carol, and brought up seven; and this year she has seven, and

is bringing them all up. The name of this wonderful little mother is Letta.

Miss Bignold's blue-cream queen, called Blulette, has produced three fine kittens by Ch. Colneside Cream Bunne, and Mrs. Anne Shenton's blue queen, one blue cream and four creams by the same sire.

The latest arrivals by the late Ch. Colneside Billy Bumpet are from a red queen belonging to Miss Lichfield, and the litter consists of three red, one cream, and two tortoiseshell kittens.

From the Misses Langton, of Raymead, Tenterden Grove, Hendon, comes all good news of their pets. Weemena, a daughter of Woggs, has five kittens by Hendon Eastbury Bogleie, and there are two black males and two black females, and one very pale blue female. Wuffy has five month-old kittens by Capt. Guy St. Barbe's Blessing of Culloden, and Willow Wand is nursing a lovely little family of four by Son o' Flick. These pets are not kept in a cattery, but each has its own room in the house, and its own appointed place, and is very particular to keep to it. There is also a most lovely garden, in which they enjoy much liberty.

At the R.S.P.C.A. Show, on Whit-Monday, held at Hampton Court, Mrs. Sharman, whose fine cat, Puck of Coryton, carried off many prizes, including the Gold Cup for Best Cat in Show, generously waived her claim to many of her wins, and the prizes were therefore awarded to the next best.

It is good news to hear that Betty of Coryton has three “Pucklets,” two males and one female, whilst Jess has three males, also by the famous Puck, and all are fine healthy kittens, and their owner is delighted with them. Pamela expects a litter by Peter of Aldwych any moment, and Amber, the lovely little cream, is four weeks in kitten to Son o' Flick.

From Mrs. Jack Smith, who is the owner of Billy Buster of Teddington, a son of the late Ch. Colneside Billy Bumpet, and also Lord Dingness of Gresty, a cream son of Ch. Endymion of The Balcony, comes the news that Dainty Dulcie has presented her owner with four fine kittens by her blue stud, the aforementioned Billy Buster. Two of these were sold before they arrived, and two are still available. Fumiclus, a smoke queen by Dragon of The Cottage, has produced four babies by Lord Dingness, and of these two are blue and two black. Mrs. Smith has recently started boarding kennels, and undertakes the care of delicate cats, always providing they have not any

contagious illness. They all receive personal care and attention, and have absolute freedom in house and garden.

We are going up to the English Lakes from June 12th, for about ten days. Letters sent to The Waterhead Hotel, Coniston, will reach me. During that time I shall be unable to take any queens to The Aristocrat. I had a delightful visit yesterday from Mrs. and Mr. Yeates, who very kindly came over to see my cats, and it was a great pleasure to be able to show them Son o' Flick's kittens. In a few days Dainty Lady's family will be here, and then Jasmine's by Ch. Hercules of Mayfield, so we shall be very busy for a time.

GOSSIP OF THE WEEK.

WE have very little news from fanciers this week, probably because everyone has been absorbed by the Election, and has had little time to spare for letter-writing. We ourselves have been so completely occupied with all the minor and major details of moving that we have taken very little notice of anything else, but we hope that we have settled down now for five years.

ALTHOUGH we have only moved about half-a-mile from our old abode, we seemed to have crossed a borderline in the cat world. All round Gray's Inn, the majority of the cats are either black or black and white—some very fine specimens are always to be seen on sunny days in the Inn gardens, lying full length on the grass. But here the prevailing colour is tabby, and we have not seen a single black cat in the neighbourhood. A most attractive tabby is usually sitting outside the porch of St. Alban's, and is presumably the resident church cat, while less respectable tabbies haunt the cat's meat shop round the corner. We have little hope of discovering a show specimen among them, as all of them have expansive white shirt fronts, kept more or less clean, according to their station. We are always sorry for London cats with white trimmings, as if they are really conscientious with their ablutions they must swallow an enormous amount of real grime in the course of their lives.

IF any of our readers have copies of the Anti-Vivisection of Cats Petition, will they kindly forward them to us? So many have been distributed that it is impossible to write individually to everyone, so we have been asked to collect them here.

FANCIERS would certainly do well to send for a sample copy of our American contemporary, "The Cat Courier," of which the address will be found in our advertisement columns. American breeders certainly understand the value of publicity, and some most charming portraits of cats illustrate their cat-tery advertisements. We are trying to devise some method of using these pictures, and those which we

have of famous English cats, as a decorative dado for the "Cat Gossip" Office, but most of them are too small to be effective. When the sunny days come, and amateur photographers are busy again, we hope to acquire many snapshots of cats and kits to add to our picture gallery.

ACCORDING to the "Star," some anxiety is felt in the Isle of Man at the large number of Manx cats taken away by visitors. Americans especially, it is stated, frequently take kittens as gifts for friends. (We find no reference to Manx importations in the American cat papers.) "If we go on at this rate, there will soon be no Manx cats left in the Isle," so Mr. S. Norris, a Member of the House of Keys, is reported as saying.

How some make a "song and dance" about nothing (whilst others pass blindly by really wonderful matters) is exemplified in a cutting from an American paper sent by Major Woodiwiss. It is entitled "A Problem for Zoologists; Half Cat, Half Rabbit. It purrs like a cat, has a short tail, will not chase mice, and hates all other cats, also it hops." Alas, the picture shows but a very obvious cat—can in every way, with deformed front legs, apparently "bandy." A very similar specimen, English, was portrayed a while back in "Country Life," this one was reported to eat lettuces in the garden. Many cats will not chase mice, possibly its deformed legs make this useless: possibly also its peculiar appearance have caused other cats to be unkind and made it hate them. The deformed front legs might also cause it to hop. The suggestion that the animal is a "half rabbit" is as far-fetched as if one were to publish the picture of a hunchback as being "half man, half camel."

"MOIRA MEIGH" (Mrs. Twigg) sends us this amusing anecdote, reminding us of the early Manx kits which were sometimes in all good faith announced as cat-rabbit hybrids. In this instance the young animals—what a misfortune they were not preserved—how stupid people can be!—must have been a malformation of some kind:—"During the war I went in for breeding rabbits, and gained a reputation amongst the 'Soldiers and Sailors Families' wives as an authority on 'Rabbitry.' One day a very small and stuttering boy arrived to ask me: 'Please, M'm, our Susan's had kittens, and mum says what about it? Is it our George's fault, because it can't be anyone else's.' Susan was a Belgian hare that the boy's mother had bought with a view to mating her with my buck as soon as she was old enough, and George was their young Tom cat who had become such friends with Susan that he always insisted on being hatched in with her at night. Unfortunately I was not able to go round and inspect the kit-rabbits that day, and two days later they were dead and buried. The woman vowed they were quite different to the solitary offspring that inherited rabbit looks and lived several days, and that there

was not the slightest possibility of Susan's having mated with another rabbit. From her description the youngsters were short-eared, long-tailed kittens with rabbity legs." After the "cat with wings," illustrated in "Cat Gossip," nothing in the way of "freaks" would surprise us from the cat, but in this place the dam was a rabbit, and a long-tailed rabbit is surely something quite new.

WE note that the Cats' Protection League officially states it has no connection with a pamphlet being circulated urging taxation for cats, and states that it disagrees with some of the matter therein.

Miss Grayton has just sent a silver tabby to Germany, ultimate destination Nuremberg. This lady has now sold quite a number of cats to Germany through "Cat Gossip."

THE Editor of "Cat Review" writes, in an article on Brown Tabbies, approving of our late Editor's remarks in "Cat Gossip" as to too much stress being placed in **some varieties** on eye colour. She then makes similar remarks as to the making a fetish of **brown chins**. Surely a well coloured and marked, but light chinned cat is a better tabby than a dull coloured poorly marked one with a brown chin? "Cat Review" remarks further: "No breeder will show or breed cats that cannot hope to win at shows, and if our judges take the extreme stand that no light chinned cat shall have a championship, it will mean that breeders will discard their bright tabbies because of their light chins which seem so stubbornly linked with rich ground colour, and breeding consistently to these darker cats, the brownies will grow darker and darker." This attaching too much importance to our really unessential point leads to absurdities, as in the classic case when one of our best all round judges put the great champion Manx Katzenjammer behind a bad and untypical cat merely because Katzenjammer had a light chin.

CAT CALLS.

(Publication of letters does not necessarily indicate that they represent our views.)

EXPERIMENTS ON CATS.

To the Editor, "Cat Gossip."

I had not meant to return to this matter, but Mrs. Jarvis should surely see how injurious it is to our cause when a friend of animals, as I take her to be, seems to go out of her way to belittle the horrors of these experiments? Her medical friends' comments, as may be expected, are absurdly one-sided. What comparison can there be between an operation performed of necessity on a person, who would afterwards receive all possible care and attention, and the same operation performed out of curiosity on animals, which are then left to suffer in agony for days or weeks, that their slow deaths may be observed? Because some people have had their arms amputated, does that make it any the less terrible that dogs should have their forelegs twisted off by main force, as is done? There are in every civilised country increasingly numerous medical men, possessing the highest qualifications, who regard these horrors perpetrated on animals as **absolutely use-**

less: yet curiously we find here a professed cat-lover apparently anxious to put forward the views of a pro-vivisectionist! As long as Fear and Selfishness remain two of the most powerful ingredients in human nature I suppose these horrors will continue, and if the vivisectionists are right, and they are necessary for human welfare, all I can say is this world must be divcreated.

H. C. BROOKE.

To the Editor, "Cat Gossip."

Madam,—As a cat-lover may I protest against the cat tax scheme? This scheme, I understand, intends to solve the stray cat problem. In spite of the dog tax an enormous number of stray dogs are collected yearly. Under the cat tax scheme anyone may keep a kitten until it is four months, when tax is due. This would result in thousands of cats who had passed kitten stage being turned adrift. The only solution of the stray cat problem is the neutering of all except stud males, and the destruction of all unwanted females. The pernicious habit of giving away kittens haphazard should be discouraged. I was surprised to read in your issue of May 15 that Mrs. Dudley Ward advised the destruction of all unwanted kittens as they emerged from the mother. Cats should be allowed to have their litter undisturbed, and unwanted kittens should be removed singly at intervals when the mother is feeding, or otherwise engaged. She should always be allowed to keep one, which can be destroyed later if not wanted. We learn by experience. On one occasion I chloroformed the first kitten at birth. The mother was terribly distressed, and the second kitten, which normally should have arrived in a few minutes, was not born till ten hours later, and was eaten by the distracted mother. I was surprised, too, at Mrs. Ward's statement that female cats have a tendency to "abuse" each other. We are constantly being told by feline haters that cats are "insanitary," disease carriers, etc., etc., but it is strange that it has remained for Mrs. Ward, who "adores" females, to bring this new charge against them. I know that females, if not allowed to mate, will caress other cats, and even dogs, but I can assure Mrs. Ward that this innocent form of relief is quite harmless, and should not cause annoyance to any cat lover.

Yours truly,

KATHLYN OLIVER.

Mead Cottage, West Drayton, Middlesex.

THE ABYSSINIAN CAT.

BY H. C. BROOKE

(Vice-President, Abyssinian Cat Club).

(Continued from Page 131.)

Probably the best Abyssinians ever seen in this country were Sedgemere Bottle and Sedgemere Peaty, the property of Mr. Sam Woodiwiss. They were, as far as I know, not related, and if this be the case it is really remarkable how two such specimens were obtained. They were very much the colour of a hare. Peaty ended her days in my possession, and I have always regretted not having preserved her skin, to at least retain her glorious colour, though her beautiful sinuous form and delicate limbs can hardly be imagined by those who have not seen her.

About thirty years ago some very good Abyssinians were shown by the late Mr. Heslop, of Darlington; Mrs. Alice Pitkin also exhibited some fair specimens, many of hers, however being too dark and "British

Ticks" in type. Later Mrs. Clark, of Bath, possessed many excellent specimens.

I bred quite a number at that period, perhaps the best being Chelsworth Peaty, who greatly interested Queen Alexandra, then Princess of Wales, when I exhibited her, suckling a ferret, at a Botanic Gardens Show. I sent quite a number to Continental menageries and fanciers; early in the century, however, I gave up all dog and cat breeding, and left London for the West Country to devote myself entirely to hunting. Had not Mrs. Carew-Cox about this time devoted herself to the breed I very much fear it would, ere now, have become extinct. Neglected—Heaven knows why—by the Fancy at large in an inconceivable manner, this beautiful and interesting breed certainly owes its existence to-day mainly to the devoted care and affection bestowed upon it by Mrs. Carew-Cox, who for a quarter-of-a-century has fostered it in the face of discouragements which I verily believe would have "choked off" any other person in the Fancy. Not for her the "big business" in stud fees, the "queued-up" queens, the cups and specials galore, which fall to the lot of many L.H. breeders; no, in the face of rotten judging, lack of recognition, poor prizes, lack of market, and a heart-breaking mortality in kittens, this plucky lady has carried the Abyssinian flag triumphantly through. She cannot (or modestly will not?) tell me how many champions she has bred since some thirty odd years ago she fell in love with the first specimen she saw at an hotel at Winscombe, Somerset, where they were said to have been left by one who had been a traveller in "furrin parts."

Incidentally, I may mention that a good many years back Mrs. Carew-Cox published a couple of letters from a gentleman who had been shooting in Abyssinia, and who stated that he had there shot a pair of wild cats, whose skins he brought to England, and which seemed from the description to correspond in every way with our present-day exhibition specimens.

To conclude, I will now give a description of the characteristics of this lovely breed.

The general appearance of the Abyssinian is that of a rather small and very elegantly built cat, with graceful slender limbs, elegant head, with rather large ears and lustrous eyes. What is commonly called in the Fancy the "British type" is here out of place; we do not want round short head, small ears, cobby build, powerful limbs. Of course, to those who can see no beauty in a cat which has not a head like a Pekinese the Abyssinian will not appeal, and I have read descriptions by such people referring to the Abyssinian as "gaunt" and "half-starved looking." As a matter of fact, any person capable of appreciating truly graceful lines and sinuous and elegant shape in the Cat, will admit that in this respect the Abyssinian has but one rival, to wit, the Siamese. The most usual colour of the Abyssinian very strikingly resembles that of a wild rabbit, in

fact I have known many whose fur could not be distinguished from that of the rabbit, when placed side by side, until carefully examined, when it is seen that the fur of the rabbit is grey near the skin (under colour), whilst that of the cat is, or should be, rufous. The "ticking" is a most essential property in the Abyssinian, and is caused by blackish, or dark brown, tips to the hair. Some—the best ticked—have about threequarters of the length of each hair rufous, then two, or three, bands of brown or orange shades, the darkest being at the tip. Others have merely the rufous base and the dark tip. The under-colour should always be as bright and clear as possible, not a dull lifeless brown, which much detracts from the beauty of the cat.

Some years ago there were a number of so-called "Silver Abyssinians" in existence. I regard silver as an absolutely alien colour to the breed, and though there would have been no harm done if these silvers had been kept to themselves, I cannot but think that they did an infinity of harm to the breed, by introducing a grey tinge into the coat, with the result that the beautiful ruddy tinge which we used to see in the cats of long ago, is now apparently lost to us. How they originated, or whether any cross was made use of to obtain them, I do not know. I am not aware if any Silvers exist now; personally I hope not, though some may not agree with me in this matter. Brown of a warm tint is evidently recognised by the older

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writers as the real Abyssinian colour, and I think Harrison Weir, writing in 1882, is the first to mention "Silvers," which he does as a sort of after-thought, referring to them as a new variety. For a while, some judges seemed to go crazy about them. Some Abyssinians are far more grey in general appearance, and in others the predominating tint is rufous. We find the same difference in the Wild Rabbit, whose coat so closely resembles that of these cats. Some greyish looking cats have yet a lovely ruddy undercoat. But to give a general impression of the colour we should strive for in these cats—though it seems non-existent nowadays—it is hard to improve upon the comparison with the Hare or Belgian Hare, dear to the older writers.

(To be continued.)

MOTHER CAT DROWNS "SIAMESE-TWIN" KITTENS.

Rather than see two of her kittens living as "Siamese Twins," a large grey cat owned by Frank Frick, of Florin, Pa., drowned the two remaining members of her brood. The cat gave birth to four kittens all joined together, two died soon after birth, and Mr. Frick severed these in an effort to save the other two. The kittens were apparently normal, but the mother-cat thought otherwise, and the two kits were found dead in a cask of water, where she had carried and dropped them.—"Cat Courier."

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All other correspondence re "Cat Gossip" to the Editor and Proprietor,

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