

# 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).

The cat she walks on padded claws,  
The wolf on the hills lays stealthy paws,  
Feathered birds, in the rain-sweet sky,  
At their ease in the air, flit low, flit high.

The oak's blind tender roots pierce deep,  
His green crest towers, dimmed in sleep  
Under the stars, whose thrones are set  
Where never prince hath journeyed yet.

"Earth Folk," Walter de la Mare.

A few years ago Sir Claud Alexander, Bart., when writing of his pets, alludes to his little queen, Mum Bunch, in the following words: "And now for the last, or at any rate the latest, of the loved ones. When I was sitting one day in Mrs. Yeates' drawing-room there rolled into the room and into my heart 'a daughter of the gods' (Champions Gentleman of Henley and Misty Morning to wit), divinely round and most divinely blue, and, seeing that it would be cruelty to cats and men to part us, Mrs. Yeates kindly gave her to me. She stays with me alike when I am working out of doors and when I am writing. In the latter case she crosses her hands on mine and sits in silence, which is broken only by her constant purring. She has many names—to show goers she is Mayfair, to Mrs. Yeates Marik, and to me Mum Bunch—a name I had never hoped to use again."

I was always interested in Mum Bunch, because at the time I also possessed a little queen, Perdita bred, in a similar way, who suffered from the same disability. In her case we tried to keep her from having a family, but she could not be persuaded, and developed a species of St. Vitus dance. We were advised to let her have her own way, and thus lost our little pet. I was, therefore, most interested to hear from Lady Alexander, who writes: "We still have little Mayfair, who here rejoices in the name of Mother Bunch. She is wonderfully well, but because of her delicacy when young we have never allowed her to have kittens."

Whilst the days have been so hot the early mornings and evenings have been the most enjoyable time for our pets to have their liberty.

Each evening The Aristocrat has had an hour's play in the dusk, and it seems to have been the time he has enjoyed most of all, for he gambols like a

young kitten, chasing moths and shadows and all kinds of insects invisible to the human eye.

From Mrs. Allen I hear that Soame Rock Rose, a beautiful little tortoiseshell female she bought recently, has four lovely kittens by Soame Desert Man, a tortoiseshell, two creams and a black.

Mrs. Yeates is to have Princess Una as a little wife for Son o' Flick. I have seldom seen a lovelier litter than the one produced by these two, and I sincerely hope Mrs. Yeates will have many litters just as lovely as the first.

Pierrot is to remain with me. He is a magnificent creature, with his sire's splendid build and a strong look of his dear little mother. He is a most affectionate and loving pet, and follows me everywhere, often jumping into my arms from the ground and putting his paws round my neck in the sweetest manner possible. He seems over-burdened with affection. Miss Wakeford is to have his litter brother, Picture, who has not yet appeared on the show bench, but whom we hope to see at Thame. At the moment he carries a lovelier coat than Pierrot, who has lost most of his, otherwise they are much alike, of the same build, and both possess the same charming disposition. I think everyone is looking forward to Thame Show, where I expect Mrs. Yeates will have her work cut out, and I trust the weather will be as lovely then as it is as I write these notes.

Mrs. Yeates has two lovely female smoke kittens, and may part with one. Good smoke females are so rare, it is a great chance for breeders who are looking for something good in this variety. There is also a good black kitten, in this case a male, by Hendon Eastbury Boglie, and a blue male, by Son o' Flick, both ready to go to new homes, and both are exceptionally nice kittens.

## COMPETITION.

We offer a "Cat Gossip" special to the subscriber scoring the greatest number of points at the S.C.C. Show, on September 25th. Every 1st prize counts as 7 points; 2nd prize, 6 points; 3rd prize, 5 points; reserve, 4 points; v h c, 3 points; h c, 2 points; c, 1 point. Entries for this competition should be made as soon after the Show as possible, and should give full details of wins.

## GOSSIP OF THE WEEK.

FROM Miss Morant comes most interesting news of the "Drumblair" Cattery. She writes: "I have been very busy with kittens lately, having had about 30, but I lost five of them, which was most unfortunate. Some have gone to new homes, and I have still a lot left, both long and shorthairs, including some lovely whites. My tortoiseshell queen, Anne Goodcot, has just had her first litter—only two, worse luck, but I hope she will rear them well. One blue queen had 7 (6 alive), 5 weeks old now. My red stud, Dragonfly, has been proving himself a good boy so far having thrown me 13 strong kits in three litters. I crossed one of my Abyssinian queens with my S.H. tabby, and the result was two most typical Abyssinians (females), which I sold very quickly. They had no tabby markings at all, but one was rather heavily marked and dark. I also crossed my S.H. white with my white Manx stud—result, 2 very good Manx and 2 with tails. My rabbits and cavies have also done well this season, and have three lovely white Angora babies to dispose of cheap for pets as well as others. Have also had several cat boarders, and was kept busy with them. All have returned home now."

WE read in the "Observer": In an effort to prevent the recent "alarming decrease" in the number of "rumpy," or tailless cats, the Manx Board of Agriculture has announced officially that it will hold shows and give prizes for "Pure bred Manx rumpy cats," and provide every facility for development of the breed. Inter-breeding with long-tailed cats and exportation—particularly to America—are the reasons for the present scarcity of genuine Manx tailless cats. THE "Daily Express" mentions a case which illustrates the cat's strange instinct for returning to an old home, even at the risk of starvation: "The curious practice of buttering a cat's feet to keep it at home was mentioned at Kingston Police Court yesterday, when Mr. Frederick Ernest Finch, of Molesey Road, Hersham, was summoned in respect of his cat, which it was stated was found in a starving condition by an R.S.P.C.A. inspector. Mr. Finch said that some time ago he moved to another house, taking the cat with the family, but it continually went back to its old home. Mrs. Finch said that she tried to keep the cat in the new house by buttering its feet, but it would not stay there. Colonel Hepworth, the chairman, said that it was a difficult thing to keep a cat under control, and the summons would be dismissed on payment of costs."

IN a Suffolk village a kitten fell into a farm well. The farmer immediately let himself down the well by an old rope, badly twisting his hands, and called out for someone to haul him up again with the kitten. His chief care on reached terra firma was to get a hot bottle for the kitten, and see that it did not get a chill. The well was deep, the rope old, and the kitten "common."

## SIAMESE AND THEIR OWNERS.

WE hear that there is a record entry for the Siamese Cat Club Show, at Philbeach Hall on September 25th, and it is to be hoped that the Show will be a tremendous success from every point of view. Mr. Compton Mackenzie and Miss Constance Collier are amongst the distinguished visitors who are coming if they possibly can.

The membership of the S.C.C. is now more than 200. We have no statistics about the membership of the S.C.S.O.T.B.E.

Mrs. Ellaby is kept busy just now with eleven Siamese kittens, who hope to be at the Show, and to keep up the reputation of their illustrious parents. Mrs. Ellaby writes: "People have been writing such depressing accounts of the terrible troubles of kitten birth—it might interest your readers to hear how easily it **can** be done. My Bello had her 5 kits while we played a game of patience. Her box was in a cupboard very near the card table—and my partner never knew anything was happening till she heard a small Siamese mew, and we found all 5 had arrived—all perfect, too. Cleo, being 9 years old, took rather longer to produce her 6 lively youngsters, but was no worse, as she carried them upstairs almost at once, and put them into Bello's cupboard, where they have lived as one family ever since. A truly beautiful sight for any Siamese lover."

Miss Hobbs has sold practically all her young stock, and is left with just the two queens, Spring Daffodil and Fuffie. The former may be thinking of Croham Boi-Bois kittens, but the latter is thinking of nothing except the present beautiful weather. One tightly kinked youngster does remain, and his owner cannot imagine how he thinks of all the wicked things which he does, and which she fears would shock those of our readers who own angelic Siamese (are there any angelic Siamese?). Just now he is spending all his time in raiding people's gardens for socks and stockings, which he neatly takes off their washing lines and brings home. It is quite a puzzle to remember the sizes of all the neighbours' feet, so that the socks may be returned to the right address.

Miss Leatherdale sends us a delightful snap of Lulu, the five-months-old son of Croham Boi-Bois and Little Puma, who is another competitor at the Club Show, where we hope to make his acquaintance. His brother has gone to live at Streatham Park, where he is being thoroughly spoilt, and his former owner hears that "he is much admired by all, everyone thinks him very clever, and he spends his time stalking the Yorkshire terrier and the big Sandy cat." Little Puma is due to have another litter by Croham Boi-Bois the day after the Show. Her brother, Rama, who was sold by Miss Leatherdale to Mrs. Peto 3½ years ago, is the family idol, and has had many adventures, including a fight with an Alsatian. After three years of perfect health he got run down, and



the vet. gave him a tonic, after which he seemed all right, until his owner went away. Rama pined for her, and refused all food for a week, and the vet. wrote to her that she must return at once if she wanted to see him alive. He was in a state of collapse when she reached home, but they shared a chicken together, and he recovered rapidly, and is now as fat and mischievous as ever.

### FROM THE "CITY OF ENTICEMENT."

Herr Lesti has a number of Siamese of very nice type, both dark and light specimens, but they lack depths of eye colour.

The Manx inhabit a very large run, perhaps 100 feet long, in which the wonderful rabbit-like action of Mankie Spots, the Crystal Palace Championship winner two years ago, can be seen to advantage. Unhappily this cat, owning the roundest rumps and longest hind-legs I have ever seen, absolutely refuses to show when handled or caged, but squats in a heap. The day after my visit, I was sorry to hear that the attendants noticed the two Manx holding something at bay in a corner of the run. I found it to be a young Pine Marten, which they killed. I was so sorry, as I love Martens, and had I been there might have caught it. There seems little doubt it must have escaped from confinement, for if a pair of adult Martens had nested and reared a family anywhere in the neighbourhood there is no doubt they would have made their presence felt amongst the dozens of young pheasants and hundreds of young chickens which my friend possesses.

Amongst the other interesting specimens owned by Herr Lesti is a gigantic Russian Sheepdog (Owcharka), somewhat of the Bobtail type; he came from America, where he used to perform with an elephant.

I did not trouble to go to see the "Jungle Cats," which are owned and exhibited by a Viennese lady, because when I learnt that they were long-coated and run loose about the house I knew they were not Jungle Cats at all, and did not want the thankless task of disillusioning their proud owner.

Herr Dr. Otto Koller, of the Natural History Museum, was most kind, and spent a lot of time going over the skins of the various African wild cats with me. This Museum does not possess so many specimens of the striped forms of African Wild Cat (*f. caffra*) as does the London Museum, but has a better and more instructive selection of skins of the smaller variety, *f. ocreata*, which I referred to in my recent study of the Abyssinian, and what I saw amply bears out my views as therein stated. Most of the striped (*caffra*) skins very greatly resemble those of the European Wild Cat, but do not show the short thick tail of the latter. Even here I found a specimen whose markings were practically absent, and which much resembled a dark

Abyssinian with bars on legs and tail. Examining the skins of the smaller form, *ocreata*, which is doubtless identical with Rüppel's *maniculata*, the first recorded specimens (see my Abyssinian article), I found further proof that this is our Abyssinian Cat; several of the specimens were of a ruddy tinge, which is undoubtedly the correct tinge for the Abyssinian; we seem—I believe entirely owing to out-crossing to obtain that blemish to the breed, "Silver"—to have lost this red colour. Red Rust, had he come into my hands—it was the merest chance that he did not, for he was offered to me, and only refused because Sir William Cooke had just given me a lovely young male, which, O irony of Fate, died a week later! Red Rust, I say, apparently the only ruddy specimen we have had for a long time, had he come into my hands, might have been of great service in bringing back the good red colour. As it is, the only red ones I know of are in Vienna, and how we shall ever regain the colour here I know not, unless perchance the single kitten my own Abyssinian has by my self-red male lives and works to this end. Its mother, though heavily leg-barred, is the best ticked Abyssinian I have ever seen, with quadruple ticking and orange under-colour, and is of the strain which has produced the red Abyssinians for Herr Lesti, for I cannot attribute their redness to Ras Tafari.

(To be Continued.)

### WITH OUR CATS.

BY F. M. BALLINGALL.

DAVID AND JONATHAN.

(Continued from Page 191.)

Corry, in his very youthful days, was not overfond of his food, and took scarcely any milk. When, in the early morning, I boiled the day's provision, I poured a little into his saucer, so that he had it warm. This he would always drink, and, if not beside me—as usually he was—would come for it when called. I myself put but a small quantity into my tea, finding a tiny cream-jug, holding a quarter of a pint, held more than sufficient for my need. One morning I was just sitting down to breakfast, when I perceived that the jug was empty. This greatly surprised me, as I could not understand why I should set an empty jug upon the table! However, accepting it as a mystery, I filled it, and proceeded with my meal.

Every evening, after making tea about five o'clock, I carried my cup to the table beside my sofa, and settled myself for several hours of reading or writing. Corry watched this eagerly, and scarcely was I seated before he sprang on to the head of the sofa, thence on to the table, and so into my lap—regardless of cup and, in winter, my lamp. Once, indeed, in his scrambling haste, he knocked over the cup (a



"breakfast" one), emptying the contents over the cloth and my dress. This in no way deterred him, but by the same devious and precarious route he reached my lap night after night. Yet there arrived a time when he allowed me to drink at least a portion of the tea before he came upon the scene—delaying his arrival, as I supposed, out of consideration for me.

I remember well one winter's evening, when Corry was six months old. For hours he had, as usual, been playing wildly with his ball, racing after it through the folding doors—making a tour of his world—after which he had sprung upon the armchair and gone to sleep until my tea preparations began. These he always watched with interest, regarding the tea-pot warming before the fire with an air almost proprietorial. So fond did he seem of the ritual that if, as rarely happened, I went to take tea with an old friend, I always first drew the curtains, lighted the lamp, made up the fire, and placed the tea-pot on the hearth. With a parting kiss I assured him, "I shan't be long, Corry!" And how happy I was, when I returned, to see my little companion still on his chair, waiting for me. And then we had tea together—though he would never take any milk, and I had long ceased to offer it to him.

On this particular evening, therefore, I was writing busily by the light of my little lamp. The fire was burning brightly—its glow so pleasant that I had not yet lighted the table lamp. Gradually upon my consciousness came a curious sound, soft and faint, that I could not identify. I looked round the dimly lighted room for a moment, then resumed my writing. Yet always I was aware of this sound, and it drew my attention in spite of myself. I looked again, and this time I noticed Corry was sitting in the tray upon the table—his figure indistinct in the fire-light. What was he doing there? I wondered, and once more took up my pen.

Still persisted that soft, liquid sound, and I took another survey of the room. As my glance lingered on Corry, a thought suddenly struck me. Rising, I moved quietly to the table. Corry lifted his large eyes to mine for a moment—but only for a moment. Dipping a small right hand into the tiny jug, as he withdrew it he bent his head, and carefully licked it all over. Then he dipped it in again. Now and then he glanced at me—his expression serious and absorbed. "I am coming presently—when I have finished." As the milk became low in the jug his hand was dipped in faster and faster, for he had less and less upon it, and I was interested to note the accuracy of his judgment—in spite of the tiny opening of the jug, and the rapidity of his movements, he did not stir the jug, or lose a drop. He curled his hand to hold the liquid as in a palm, and bent anxiously to lick up any drop that seemed about to fall. When he ceased dipping, and began to wash his face, I took away the jug. It was quite

empty—and the mystery of the breakfast milk was explained.

Corry was entirely unconscious of any wrongdoing, and I delighted to see his performance, which he repeated every evening. Thereafter, if I wanted a second cup, I drank the first hastily, before he arrived, and replenished the jug after my second cup was ready. Also he made a point of assisting at breakfast as well. I had to arrange things so that he sat beside instead of in the tray, which at first perplexed him, though he agreed to it. I dared not place the jug on it until I was ready, but kept it on the mantelpiece. It was amusing to see the look of annoyance on his face if I moved the jug out of his reach while I poured my tea, and he would stretch his hand to catch it and pull it towards him, his brows bent frowningly at this action on my part. Looking up at me, he clearly showed his impatience at the delay. However, as soon as possible I replaced it, and he dipped out his milk very delicately—always with an absorption that greatly diverted me. It was a serious function with little Corry.

After he found Pixie he made this one exception in his own favour. His milk, as I gave it warm, and as he took it cold, he did not share—certainly Pixie never showed any desire for it!

They made a pretty contrast as they went about together—the silver and red. Pixie was always smaller than Corry. His eyes, though not so large as Corry's, were of that lovely bright tint known as "copper." Not naturally of so eager and fervid a temperament, he was infected by Corry's enthusiasm. Though others have played with a ping-pong ball before Corry and Pixie—and others since—none have done so with their complete abandon to the game. The two rooms, with folding-doors, often seemed not large enough for their ventures, as they flung hassocks right and left, crashed against tables and chairs, invaded the very hearth, and even bounded over each other to be first to drive the ball further on its tireless journey. And thus they would play

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for hours together—as Corry once had played by himself. Pixie very soon learned from so ardent a teacher—more than doubling Corry's pleasure by his participation. Yet always Corry began the game—Pixie took the ball from him, and joyously they sped forth together.

(To be continued.)

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

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