

# 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).

Then came the autumn, all in yellow clad,  
As though he joy'd in his plenteous store,  
Laden with fruits that made him laugh full glad  
That he had banished hunger, which to fore  
Had by the belly oft him pinched sore;  
Upon his head a wreath that was enrol'd  
With ears of corn of every sort, he bore,  
And in his hand a sickle did he holde,  
To reap the ripened fruit to which the earth had yold.  
Spenser.

In describing the charm and mystery of the Cat, Lady Margaret Sackville writes: "Cats are the poets' animal. All poets are inclined to love cats. So does Mussolini, who may be a poet in action. Anyhow, cats have always appealed to men of imagination on account of their air of knowing an important secret which will never be revealed. It is no wonder that cats are worshipped in Egypt. All cats, especially Persians, are enchanted princesses who will some day resume their true forms. Their royalty is evident. Watch the way they move—their condescending grace; the elegance and charm with which they acknowledge favours. They are the last word in civilization. If, as Dr. Agnes Muir-Mackenzie asserts, humanity is divided into Shakespeare and Milton men, clearer still is the division between the dog and cat men. Rarely do you find in one nature an equal affection for both. A gulf of temperament and inclination is fixed between the two, and there will always be a point of mutual misunderstanding. Cats are proverbially at home with the shades. Will not a cat rub itself against an invisible presence, and make every demonstration of affection, whilst a dog cowers shivering in a corner? Though cats condescend to mortals, they obviously belong elsewhere. Where? Perhaps we had better not ask. Women who have been compared to roses and angels have also been compared (disparagingly) to cats. But this is a libel on both cats and women. In a sense, it is a pity that women on the whole are not more like cats. If all women possessed the same grace, ease, deportment, and perfect manners, the world, though it might not be a better place, would assuredly be a more attractive one."

Mrs. Allen's lovely queen, Fashion Plate, a daughter of Mrs. Yeates' Waratara and Son o' Flick, and litter sister to the famous Columbine, has just

presented her owner with a litter of six kittens by The Aristocrat, and all are flourishing, and I am told that even at this early stage give promise of unusual beauty. Fashion Plate had a serious illness early in her career, and after her first visit to The Aristocrat had a false conception. She came to him again the next time of calling, and this is the result. Somehow we cannot realise that our little Aristocrat is really the father of six kittens. It seems too wonderful to be true! Perhaps we shall grow accustomed to the idea in time.

Mrs. Gilbert, of Gateshead, who has a very nice family of kittens by Mercury of Pensford, has had rather bad luck, as although she left them in good hands, as she thought, when away on a short holiday, found them in a very sad state on her return. After three weeks of constant care she is now getting them into good condition again, and one, a male, will make his debut at Harrogate. The gem of the litter, a wee pale girlie, with a sweet face, has gone to a nice country home, and her owner promises to show her one day. Mrs. Gilbert finds Dr. Ridge's food for infants excellent for her pets, and they also have a good deal of soft-boiled tripe with which a piece of shin of beef or a cowheel has been cooked. It is nourishing, and should make bone and muscle. Mrs. Gilbert recently visited Mrs. Brunton at Dunesk, and I will give you her letter in her own words:

"While I was away I spent a pleasant afternoon at Dunesk with Mrs. Brunton and her lovely pale pussies. They have the run of many acres of ground, and look a picture of health and beauty. Her stud Puff Ball is a worthy son of Flick-a-Maroo, out of coat just now, but the same exquisite pale colour and broad massive head; his eyebrows shading his eyes give him a gloomy introspective expression. There were about half a dozen big kittens scampering round, and the three ladies, Meadowsweet, a dowager of  $7\frac{1}{2}$  years, still hoping for more babies, Cornflower, and Delphinium, also hopeful. (What gorgeous eyes Delphinium has!) The others have faded a little, but perhaps that may come partly from the season of the year, or the change of coat. I think the eyes of cats change according to their state of health."

From the Culloden Catteries I have the saddest of news to relate, for dear little Souriya passed away

quite suddenly. Her illness was so brief there was barely time to realise there was anything wrong before she had gone. She leaves four babies but eight days old, and who knows but that her dear little spirit may have passed into one of them, and thus bring comfort to her owners. Souriya was just at her best, and one of our most beautiful queens, and her loss will be felt keenly by many who loved her and were following her career with the keenest interest. I am sure all fanciers will unite in sympathy with her owners, who feel her loss very keenly, for Souriya was not only a most lovely queen, but the sweetest pet imaginable, and beloved alike by her owners, her playfellows, and all who came in contact with her.

### GOSSIP OF THE WEEK.

HIGHBRIDGE Fanciers are including a cat section in their show, which is to be held this year on November 13th, and a silver cup is to be presented to the winner of highest points in this section. It is quite possible that West Country breeders who are not going to be at Croydon on that date would like to exhibit at Highbridge, and Mrs. Attfield, the hon. secretary, will very gladly send schedules to all who write for them. Her address is: Monkton House, Highbridge, Somerset. Another interesting West Country event is Bristol Show. There are many classes for cats, who will be present on the first day only—November 6th, and Mrs. Yeates is to judge. At this time of year the smaller shows certainly offer excellent opportunities for novice fanciers to make their debut, and to see how their cats compare with others, before launching out at a Championship Show. The big exhibitors are now concentrating on a series of important shows, leaving the field clear for the novices and the people who own only one or two cats, who are willing enough to show them at a small local show, but shirk the expense and trouble of coming to London with them. The summer agricultural shows, which do not clash with the championship events, are not nearly so helpful for beginners, because a few of the leading exhibitors are making a practice of sending to as many as possible of them, so that the standard of quality is extremely high. We do not consider it sporting to send a cat who has already won well at championship shows to comparatively unimportant shows in the provinces, where he is practically certain to win, and it must often be most discouraging to local fanciers, whose cats are hopelessly outclassed. It is a different matter, of course, when a big exhibitor happens to live in the neighbourhood, and enters as many cats as possible for the good of the show, but there are some people whose sole object seems to be to pile up prizes, and who will send well-known cats many miles, with the knowledge that they will return with a neat little

pack of cards. If they entered young cats, who had not yet proved their quality, we should have no grouse against them, but we certainly think that big winners are out of place at small shows.

We are very sorry indeed to hear that Mrs. Jinks has lost her promising young blue stud, Merry Thought of Blagdon, who was only shown twice, at Lytham and Chester, and was 1st each time. He was taken ill on Monday night, and Mrs. Jinks thought that his illness was caused by a fur ball, and gave him the usual remedies. However, he was very much worse on the following morning, and succumbed that same evening to pneumonia, in spite of skilled care and the most devoted nursing. Merry Thought, a son of Ch. Dion of Allington, was only 17 months old, and so affectionate and loving that his owner will miss his companionship terribly, as well as mourning the loss of a particularly beautiful young cat.

OUR request for accounts of cats with unusual tastes in diet has brought us some amusing letters, and we hope that our readers will enjoy Miss Buckley's story of domestic discipline in her family as much as we did. Her Siamese queen can never have read the innumerable articles on the psychology of the child which we find so extremely boring in the daily papers. It is just as well, perhaps, for it would make things very complicated if our cats insisted on having their naughty babies psycho-analysed, instead of bringing them up on old-fashioned lines. Our Sally would really enjoy being psycho-analysed—she likes attention in any form—but we fear that the result would appal even the most hardened follower of Freud.

ANY incoherency in our remarks this week is due to the fact that Brook Street has been haunted by a series of barrel organs and pianos all the time that we have been writing. It is quite easy to type to the tune of "The flowers that bloom in the spring," but we found it almost impossible to keep time with the undiscovered genius who has just been playing selections from Chopin. We nearly always compose our editorials to music, because Friday is pay day at the Prudential Assurance building, just opposite, and all the street musicians of the neighbourhood assemble here, in the hope of collecting some of the loose change.

A WRITER in "Unsere Katze" says: The Goddess Freya was the protectress of marriage, of the home fires, of the family: she taught spinning and other homely virtues. To those who put out a pan of milk in the cornfields for her favourites, the cats, she was specially favourable, and protected their crops from hail and other injuries. . . . Most people nowadays seem to think that above all things milk is necessary for the Cat. They would be surprised to learn that in practising this age-old custom they unintentionally are paying homage to Freya.



Wild Cats are now almost extinct in Germany. Our House Cat is descended from a mixture of the Wild Cat and the Egyptian Cat. That is why we even to-day find in our cats the slender, long-legged type with rather triangular head, and also the sturdy, shorter legged type with rounder head. How, then, did the Egyptian Cat come to Germany? It is an irony of fate that it was the Christian cloistered women who caused the spread of these cats in Europe. They were reckoned in the Middle Ages as rare and valuable (as the Siamese by us to-day). Crusaders brought them back from the Promised Land. They were given as presents by noble knights to relatives who had taken the veil. . . . It was bound to happen in time that these valued Convent cats fell in with the native Wild Cats in their love travels. So there arose a breed which united the gentleness of the Egyptian with the toughness of the Wild Cat; without this cross the delicate exotics would scarcely have withstood the hard northern climate. But even to this day there exists in the breasts of some humans a fanatical hatred of the feline race. It is a survival of the time when the Christian priesthood waged a bitter war against the Goddess of the hearth for Cats were yoked to Freya's car. [Travel: H. C. B.]

A quaint legend is related by Prof. Klett in "Unser Katze" (but unfortunately he does not state its origin), which dates the fondness of cats for roof-climbing back to the Ark. Having broken with their noisy love-making the continence regulations there laid down, they were relegated to the roof of the Ark, where they could scratch and shout and swear without giving offence.

Mr. H. C. Brooke writes: I notice in a contemporary a lot of references to the "wild-cat" origin of Metu of Invergloy. Without wishing in any way to deny its possibility, I would point out that no scientist in the world would regard it as proven. Although not seen, there may have been a dozen domestic cats run wild, or their progeny, on the estate referred to: and, apart from that, not by any means every reported Wild Cat is a genuine *f. Silvestris*, nor is every Scotch gamekeeper a reliable authority thereon. It is shameful the manner in which Scotch land-owners are exterminating the Wild Cat because of a few head of game—I write as a keen sportsman myself—the more so as examinations made by naturalists on the contents of the stomachs of these animals prove their usual food to be rodents and small birds. Alas, on the Continent they are also being exterminated. Thirty years ago common in German and Austrian forests, they have been so harried that Professor Antonius, of the Vienna Zoo, states that of many so-called Wild Cats he has seen in a number of years he only regards one specimen as genuine. Women, with their fur craze, will shortly have caused the extermination of every fur-bearing animal in the world!

## BLACK SIAMESE.

### MRS. BASNETT BREEDS AN UNUSUAL KITTEN.

In the article on "The Siamese Temple Cat," which is printed at the beginning of the Siamese Cat Register, Mr. H. D. Bassett writes: "My experience, extending over seven years, has proved one very extraordinary thing. In about every fifth generation there will be found a black kitten, and in every case it is a male. I have never known this to fail. Coal black from top to tip, with eyes of a deep golden colour, not yellow, but more of the orange colour. His get are normal, and I believe that this is the reason that the colour remains with the breed in the Temples. (I have seen a great many specimens of the Siamese Temple Cats which have been raised in confinement, and they have all shown decided white tendencies). Only one (black) have I been able to raise, and unfortunately he was killed after fathering two litters of kittens. I have seen two, however, in the Temples, and they were of extraordinary size."

In the same article Mr. Bassett also says: "That the Temple Cat does enter into their religious ceremonies I am quite convinced, and this is especially the case with the black ones. These I have seen on two occasions with incense burning in front of them and with offerings of food placed before their domiciles. . . . I once made an aged bonze an offer for a huge black specimen which was contentedly reposing on a cushion in a very richly ornamented cage, and was very severely shunned by himself and his fellows, besides being an object of suspicion all the time that I remained in the Temple."

This account of the Black Siamese makes Mrs. Basnett's experience particularly interesting, for she writes that she has just bred a black for the second time in ten years, this kitten having imported blood on both sides. We publish her letter in full, as she gives illuminating details of the breeding in both cases: "It is over ten years ago when Yolanda," at six years, was mated to Mrs. Robinson's Bigabois, the result being six kittens, one white as usual and a female, the others, all males, being black. Unaware that Black Siamese could be correct, I destroyed four; the remaining black reached maturity, possessing real golden eyes. Unfortunately the Devonshire village blacksmith for some reason (that part of Devon being noted for its superstitious cranks) decided that another world was a more suitable place for such a cat, and waiting his opportunity shot it. I mated Yolanda again to Bigabois, but no more black ones appeared, either from his siring or other studs. Yolanda came from the Royal Palace, Siam, before the war, and died when 13½ years old. I have her grand-daughter, Goona, now four years old, who has always mated



with Boi Bois until last time, when I thought a change would be interesting, and Vichnou was her mate instead, and I have four kittens as a result, three white, and the fourth, a bigger kit, black, the same as Yolanda's. Vichnou's dam was brought from Siam by the Belgian Consul, so my black boy has imported blood on both sides. I am wondering if there are any other owners or breeders in England who have had any of these precious black Siamese. If all goes well I hope to exhibit the kitten with his mother at Croydon in November. Yolanda and Goona excel in pale body colour and density of points, and have deepest blue eyes, Yolanda winning at nine years a championship at the N.C.C. Show. Mr. Bassett says nothing about the results of his Black Siamese Cat's siring; it would be interesting to know if the kittens were the usual, or not, in colouring."

C. B.

If any other Siamese fanciers have bred black kittens, we should be glad if they would let us have similar details of the breeding, so that their experience may be compared to Mrs. Bassett's.

### BRISTOL SHOW, NOVEMBER 6th.

#### CAT CLASSES.

Judge: Mrs. YEATES, London. Prize Money (guaranteed): 15s., 7s. 6d., 4s. Entry Fee 2s. 6d. Double pens, 8d. extra. Over 30 Specials.

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Shorthair Cats.—Siamese, Male or Female; A.C., adult, except Siamese.

Shorthair Kittens.—Siamese, Male or Female; Any Colour or Sex; Household Pet, Cat or Kitten. Judged on condition.

Longhair Kittens.—Chinchilla, Male or Female; Blue Male; Blue Female; Tabby Kitten. Any Colour or Sex; Novice, A.C., Male or Female; Breeders, A.C., Male or Female. A.O.C., Male or Female.

Schedules from the General Secretary, W. W. STALLARD, 18, Fishponds Road, Eastville, Bristol. Entries Close October 23rd (first post).

### CHANNEL ISLAND HAS MUCH-TRAVELLED CAT.

From an American paper.

Jersey, Channel Island, Aug. 10.—Jersey possesses a much-travelled cat, who, unlike Felix, prefers travelling by steamer to walking. During the past three months the cat has visited Holyhead, Hull, Newhaven, Plymouth, Weymouth, Southampton, and France. He walks aboard a steamer as she leaves, makes himself at home, and always boards the right steamer on the return voyage.

## CAT CALLS.

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

### To the Editor, "Cat Gossip."

Dear Madam.—My Siamese queen is very fond of cheese and raisins. She will accept asparagus, and will play languidly with a "catnip" mouse, but she is the first cat I have known that did not eat asparagus ravenously and go insane with joy over dried "catnip" (*nepeta cataria*).

Sincerely yours,

(Mrs. C.) IRENE FITZGERALD.

Manstone Old House, Sidmouth, Devon, October 8th.

### To the Editor, "Cat Gossip."

Dear Miss Wakeford.—Seeing in to-day's "Cat Gossip" that you ask readers to tell you about their cats with unusual food fads, I am writing about mine. Lord Mac-Alpine of Stand simply loves chocolate in any form, not only to eat, but also to rub his head against; he is also very fond of icecream. Cyrus of Stand is very fond of jam of any sort, but strawberry is his favourite. Christabel will eat a whole plate of boiled vegetable marrow, and nearly all my cats like beetroot, also cheese. I had one queen who was specially fond of bananas, and she would take them out of a bowl, break the skin, and eat them.

At the present time my Siamese queen has a litter (her first) of five kits about seven weeks old. She is a splendid mother, but has such funny ways of punishing them if they are naughty. One male is smaller than the others, and he seems the worst for teasing her, and when she gets really cross with him she picks him up by the back of his neck and carries him to the nearest water or milk bowl, and ducks him, then carries him back to bed. Sometimes she does this two or three times in an evening, and it always seems to be the same kitten. Have you ever heard of a similar case?

Yours truly,

J. BUCKLEY.

The Hawthorns, Stand, Whitefield, near Manchester, October 4th.

### To the Editor, "Cat Gossip."

Topsy, the cat who was my dearest friend for 14 years in the days of my youth, was passionately fond of all kinds of raisins and currants. When the Christmas pudding was being made great care had to be exercised to prevent her annexing the fruit. During the winter months a dish of almonds and raisins was usually kept in one of the cupboards of the sideboard in the dining-room. That cupboard had to be kept locked, or Topsy went in and helped herself. The other cupboard was

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took no interest in, and although the same key unlocked both cupboards, she never failed to distinguish by sound nor sight which cupboard was being unlocked. When she was sound asleep on a chair out of sight it was practically impossible to unlock the raisin cupboard without waking her; the other cupboard could be unlocked with a rattle of keys without Topsy moving an eyelid. The cupboard containing raisins also contained a biscuit tin; Topsy adored biscuits; the sound of opening a tin would always produce her if she was within hearing. I have known her come hurrying across a field when a tin was rattled in the garden.

S. M. K.

## BIRTHS.

September 21st.—Major Woodiwiss's **Woodrooffe Hula**, 3 kittens, by Owner's **Woodrooffe Brutus** (Abyssinian).  
July 1th.—Miss Hill Shaw's **Blackberry**, 2 kittens, by Owner's **Josephus of Cademuir**.

September 23rd.—Miss Hill Shaw's **Andromeda of Cademuir**, 3 lovely kittens, by Mrs. Egerton Free's **Kakushin** (Russian Blue).

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## THE CROYDON CAT CLUB'S CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW

IN

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All Foreign News and Exchanges to be sent to the Foreign News Editor, Mr. H. C. BROOKE, Bishop's Hull, Taunton.

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

Miss WAKEFORD, 30 31, Brooke Street, London, E.C. 1.  
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