

**DID YOU TRY
TO ENROL ONE NEW MEMBER
DURING 1974?**

THE CAT

THE OLDEST MAGAZINE
DEVOTED ENTIRELY TO
CATS AND THEIR
WELFARE



The Cat is indeed the symbol of the home. Mark Twain summed this up when he wrote in Pudd'nhead Wilson that 'a house without a cat, and a well-fed, well-petted, and properly revered cat, may be a perfect house, perhaps, but how can it prove its title?'

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1974

THE CAT Vol. XLVIII No. 6 NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1974

PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY

CONTENT: Short Stories — Branch and Group News — Members Letters — CAT CHAT dealing with published references to Cat Welfare and the League's activities and appeals.

ILLUSTRATIONS: Selected photos of Members' cats and kittens.
Literary contributions and photos welcome. NO PUBLISHING FEES PAID.

Official Organ of
THE CATS PROTECTION LEAGUE
(Founded 1927)

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ALWAYS WANTED AT HEADQUARTERS

Unwanted birthday and Christmas presents or anything saleable.

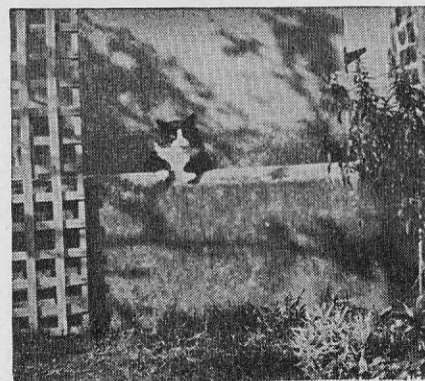
Notification of change of address.

Linen and blanket pieces, for use in the Clinic.

News-cuttings concerning cats, but please make sure that the name of the paper and the date of publication is given.

Used stamps. British Foreign and commemorative.

Names and Addresses of Boarding Catteries.



ROUND AND ABOUT

Report and Comments on "this and that" concerning the welfare of cats and kittens and the work of the League generally by the Editor Secretary.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Once again we are approaching the end of another year, a year that has seen prices and costs soaring to unbelievable levels which, if we understand correctly will rise even further in the days to come. In spite of all the problems that 1974 has produced I feel confident that by the end of the year we shall again be able to show further advances after last years record returns.

The encouraging figure of 468 new H.Q. enrolments in 1973 has already been passed and the record voucher costs of last year were past during the days of September. The increased work has necessitated additional staff at Headquarters and I know only too well how hard pressed our branches in several parts of the country have been in recent months. We are, however, looking forward to 1975 with great hopes of further expansion and it is anticipated that our next issue will contain news of at least one new branch and quite possibly two.

For the time being however, I must take this last opportunity of the year to wish you on behalf of all of us at H.Q., the compliments of the season followed by a peaceful and prosperous New Year. To all our members and helpers thank you for your support, to all our voluntary helpers in branches, groups and those so far not officially named, thank you for your magnificent work and a special thank you from me to all our branch secretaries for the great co-operation given to me during the past year.

ARTHUR E. PARRATT,
General Secretary.

BELFAST

Elsewhere in this magazine members will read of our Chairman's recent visit to Belfast and I feel that the thanks of all of us should be recorded to Mrs. de Clifford for this visit.

On your behalf I would also wish to thank our Belfast friends for her safe return and to wish them all a happy Christmas and if it is possible a peaceful New Year.

ARTHUR E. PARRATT

SEASONAL GREETINGS FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

All my good wishes go out to all our members — to those busy groups who are working so hard in the big cities all over the British Isles and to those of us who are carrying on single-handed in the country — I do wish to one and all a true Christmas full of comfort and joy, and a happy and hopeful New Year.

Most of us during the coming year will have to cope with some personal problems and worries; to judge by what our pundits tell us we are all facing a very rough year economically as a nation, and I am afraid that there seems to be bad news from most parts of the world most days. . . but in our own special field, the protection of a small, defenceless and charming animal we can, I think, feel more than hopeful. The position of the cat, and the care and treatment given to cats have all improved very greatly during the last quarter-century; in the home and when it is employed to destroy vermin on business premises, the cat is now much better treated, better fed, better cared for, and we may, in the C.P.L., take some credit for helping to bring about this state of affairs.

There are still big problems which we have to face, modern problems, brought about by modern conditions of living, the greatest and the worst is certainly the stray cat, and specially in cities all over the kingdom, the gangs or groups of stray cats in empty buildings and on vacant sites. This is a problem which we ought to tackle and which,

in my opinion, we have a duty to remedy. I shall be putting forward several suggestions of ways and means of what we can do. I shall hope for support from all our members. Working together we can accomplish a great deal, and we may look forward in this respect to a truly happy year.

NEREA DE CLIFFORD

POCKET CALENDARS

We are again pleased to include with the last issue of the year a pocket calendar for 1975. For easier reading the essential dates for next year have been produced in larger print and it is hoped that this will help many of our elder members in making good use of them.

Further limited supplies of calendars are now available from H.Q., at a cost of 5p each plus postage. Orders of five or more post free.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

We are pleased to announce the co-opting of two further members to the Executive Committee, namely Messrs. Osborne and Tovey both from the London area. We feel sure that the arrival of two further gentlemen to the Committee will be welcomed by all members and it is hoped that this new male representation will be of great benefit to the League.

ARTHUR E. PARRATT

BOURNEMOUTH BRANCH

Following the news of our Bournemouth branch in our previous issue, I would now like to record our thanks to Miss Sydenham for her many years of work and devotion on behalf of the League and all our feline friends. Miss Sydenham has during recent advancing years suffered greatly from failing sight, but has carried on until she could no longer see to read or write.

Members may rest assured that our new officials and helpers in the Bournemouth area will ensure that she is not forgotten in the future, and that any help she may require will be promptly met.

ARTHUR E. PARRATT

THE ULSTER BRANCH

On the most kind invitation of the Committee of the Ulster branch and enjoying the gracious hospitality of Miss McKee, I have had the privilege of visiting Belfast, and seeing for myself what is happening to cats there. It has been an interesting and an inspiring visit.

We all know that Belfast is a troubled city. Our Ulster branch numbers 150 members—just on 80 people attended the meeting to mark the 25th year of the branch's life, that means a real good turn-out of members by anybody's reckoning. I was delighted to be there and to have the pleasure of meeting

so many people who in the midst of anxiety and dangers are still concerned about the plight of cats, and working to help them.

One happy day I spent at the shelter, I was fascinated to see the cats', sleek and elegant with their playful kittens, all quite unworried by any care, enjoying themselves, a wonderful tribute to the immense work of the Warden and active workers who look after them.

It is an amazing feat to have kept the C.P.L. shelter open in the centre of Belfast through all the distressing events of recent years. But, as one can well understand, and as I found out at a small meeting of all those most active, the committee and workers are wondering how much longer they can continue to take in cats. Homes are not easily found in Ulster just now, everything that untiring work can do is being done. The cats are being cared for. Their numbers are increasing all the time.

I gave our Belfast friends the message which I know you would all send to them, of our admiration and of our support and help in every way possible. I hope that we may soon have news of schemes which will help both the cats and their protectors.

Here in Great Britain where we do not have to listen for gunfire before putting out the milk bottles, where we do not have to pick shot out of our cats, where we can sleep in our beds and drive out in our cars, we must feel we are fortunate and that we would like to help. Looking at the Belfast shelter cats, I did wish that some of them could be transported to safe homes. If fifty of our members living in the country, or having space, would offer to take one cat, the burden would be lightened in Ulster. If anybody will offer a home to a Belfast cat, I am prepared to go across to select a cat according to specification and bring it back and deliver to the new home. Who will offer to take one?

NEREA DE CLIFFORD

GUY FAWKES NIGHT

November, 5th 1974

By the time this magazine is read, yet another "Bonfire Night" will have come and gone and no doubt the usual atrocities affecting cats and other pets will have followed their usual pattern.

There was, however, in conjunction with our P.R. Consultants a press release on this subject sent to newspapers throughout the country and a message by your Secretary recorded and distributed throughout the many local broadcasting stations, and it is hoped that this new venture will have resulted in a safer Bonfire night for cats and kittens everywhere.

ARTHUR E. PARRATT

JANET

We pride ourselves on being a nation of animal lovers—but are we. After talking to Mrs. Janet Eldridge, who frequently handles forlorn victims of man's inhumanity to animals, I have my doubts.

Mrs. Eldridge is superintendent of the Cats' Protection League home in Marlborough Road, Ryde, and on call round the clock to deal with emergencies involving cats and kittens.

Assisted by her staff of three, she cares for a large family of strays besides the boarders who come for short periods while their owners are on holiday.

About 700 cats and kittens pass through Janet's hands annually, and none is put to sleep if there is a chance of saving its life or finding a home for it.

Showing me round the cattery Janet told me lurid tales of how each furry individual came to be there. The cat houses are built around a grassed quadrangle, and each animal has its own living quarters with access to a spacious run.

Everything is beautifully clean, comfortable and warm. Boarders, are housed in a separate building because of possible risk of disease from the strays.

Mrs. Eldridge explained that the boarding side of her work was secondary, but besides providing a needed service for cat owners, it brought in extra money to subsidise the main work which otherwise was entirely dependent on subscriptions, donations and fund-raising efforts.

Janet is secretary of the Island branch of the Cats' Protection League, whose recent jumble sale at the home raised £209. Janet is thrilled by this magnificent result and the way local people responded with offers of help.

Founded in 1927 to help the strays of London, the C.P.L. has 26 homes in various parts of the country, but many more are needed. Janet often gets cries for help on behalf of mainland cats who have been the victims of cruelty.

Horror stories include the tale of two small kittens practically dead when they were fished out of a bath of sump oil at Ryde. They were in a terrible state and had swallowed a lot of oil, but Janet and her staff decided to make an all-out bid to save them.

After treatment by a vet, they were cleaned daily with solvents and fed with a eye dropper. As their blackened coats became clean they appeared in their true colours of attractive tabby and white, and very soon they were off to good homes.

One day a businessman on his way to work appeared at the home with three little kittens sitting prettily on the back seat of his car.

He found them in the gutter along the road through Whitefield Woods, where they had obviously been dumped from a passing car.

Janet has had cats brought to her with their backsides full of lead pellets, apparently having been used as targets for airgun practice.

When they arrive many of the cats need intensive care and are kept in a spare room in Janet's home until they are well enough to be transferred to the cattery. Sickly kittens find comfort in the dog basket in the kitchen nestling against the warm body of Janet's boxer bitch Addie, who appears quite happy to provide this invaluable service.

I held one such fluffy scrap as we talked and was told that this particular kitten was nearly dead when she arrived with her twin and her mother only the previous week.

The had been abandoned along a country lane. The mother cat had been hit by a car, but for several weeks had managed to feed and care for her kittens by dragging herself to a muddy ditch where there was water to drink. Not surprisingly, she was very wild by the time her plight was noticed and brought to the attention of the C.P.L. and Janet had to use a trap to capture her.

When I called she was in the "intensive care unit" slowly recovering and becoming less wild and fearful. Her other kitten had fully recovered and was in the cattery.

Of the mother cat, Janet said, "She deserves to live after all she has been through".

A ginger tom called "Charlie" once had an owner who used him as a football, kicking him from pillar to post, before finally moving away and leaving him.

"He wondered about for months before we finally caught up with him" Janet said. "He was terrified and had to be handled with leather gloves. We kept him in the spare room for about three weeks".

Many such cats, even those who are ugly or deformed, nursed back to life after fearful experiences, become tame again through being loved, and manage to win the heart of someone who comes to the home looking for a pet.

For instance, Nelson lost an eye, and another poor puss had to have her ears amputated because they were diseased; both have made a fresh start in new homes where they are loved and cherished.

Contact is kept with every home where a cat is placed to ensure that it has settled down happily with its new owners and surroundings.

Mrs. Eldridge is very grateful for all the help she receives from local veterinary surgeons and their co-operation in dealing

with emergencies day or night. She was also full of praise for her loyal staff.

"I have three very good girls working for me and they are very hard workers" she said.

Her husband, Des, is also a tower of strength to her. He is a heating engineer but outside working hours is always on hand to help in times of crisis - coping with a wild cat for example.

Janet is the daughter of Mr. Harry Gawn who had a butchery business in Wootton for many years.

The Eldridges have a ten-year-old daughter, Lorraine, and she loves the cats and has an unusually sympathetic and practical approach to her mother's work for one so young.

Neutering is a subject about which Janet feels very strongly, believing it is the answer to the problem of unwanted kittens. All cats and kittens old enough are neutered before they leave the home.

New owners of young kittens are advised when to have the operation performed and given a voucher to cover the cost. Vet's fees are then met by the C.P.L.

"This ensures that we do not see them back because they are pregnant, and we do not see their kittens back. We try to educate people into having their cats neutered.

"It saves money in the long run and saves us a lot of hard work. The cat will be better off and much more affectionate".

It was just as important for toms to be doctored as she-cats, Janet explained. Toms who were not, often wandered miles, were smelly and spread disease. They also fought with other toms and the old cats got the worst of it, often being badly injured.

She said it was a fallacy that doctored cats were less affectionate. Any cat with a good home returned the love it received.

Anyone whose cat needs veterinary treatment, and who cannot afford to pay, can obtain a voucher from the home to take to the vet.

This scheme has existed for many years but some people are too proud to ask for financial help in this way, particularly older folk who are probably the very ones most deserving of help. With them in mind a new scheme has just been introduced in addition to the old voucher system.

"We are starting a club, which anyone acquiring a new kitten from us can join", Mrs. Eldridge explained.

"They pay whatever they like when they can afford it, and this is marked on a card, similar to a Christmas club. We advise them when the kitten should be doctored and when the time comes they apply to have it done and draw out the money. If it is not enough, we make up the difference with one of our

vouchers. Average cost of neutering a female is £4, and a male £1.65.

Janet is reluctant to put healthy animals to sleep and always tries to persuade people who bring in cats for this purpose to let her find homes for them (and for their kittens in the case of a pregnant she).

"We do a lot of outside work as well", Janet said. "Sometimes an old age pensioner is frightened to call in the vet, so we pop along and see if their cat needs treatment. If it does and they have no transport we will take it to the vet and allow it to convalesce here at the home if necessary.

"If an elderly person living alone has to go into hospital or nursing home they can contact us with regard to help or advice about their cat. We do not board indefinitely, but we can look after old age pensioners' cats while they are in hospital if they have no family", she said.

Free advice on feline problems is always available at the home - it's all part of the wonderful service.

I.W. County Press, 24th August, 1974

HIGH KEY

My cat's name, Banjo, was actually arrived at when, at the age of seven weeks, he tried to scratch behind his ear with a back paw, causing my father to remark: "Oh look - he's playing the banjo". But people who know him now are convinced he got his name because he's highly strung!

Mrs. J. I. C., New Barnet, Hertfordshire.

SAILOR THE CAT

Black tomtom Sailor cost an elderly couple a lot of heartbreak when he went adrift from their holiday caravan in Talaere, North Wales.

They spent most of their week's holiday - the first for many years - searching and asking police "Have you seen our cat?"

Last weekend Mr. and Mrs. George Evans returned to their home in Third Avenue, Sandbach - without Sailor.

But last night Sailor piloted himself back to port - 50 miles from Talaere to home with just cat sense for his compass. "It's wonderful. We don't know how he's got here, but it's like a dream come true", said a delighted 68 year-old Mr. Evans.

His disabled wife, Bessie, also 68, said: "He means the world to us. It's lovely to have him back".

Sailor is now settling in after his exhausting journey, described by R.S.P.C.A. inspector Mr. Jeremy Griffiths as "an extraordinary feat".

Manchester Evening News, Thursday, August 8th, 1974

CURRENT EVENTS

What are some members of the medical profession trying to do - scare the living daylight out of pregnant women?

REMEMBER THE great poster campaign about the effects of smoking on the unborn child?

Just imagine the sort of psychological harm that must have done to pregnant women who smoked. Now along comes a Public Health Laboratory Service report warning pregnant mums about the dangers of having a cat around the house. For cats can carry a disease called toxoplasmosis. And a doctor says:-

"There is accumulating evidence that infection in the early months of pregnancy is very liable to do damage to the foetus, causing such conditions as hydrocephalus and mental deficiency".

The result of the original publication in the British Medical Journal was scare headlines.

All right, newspapers are perhaps wrong to publicise such stuff. But is it not also wrong to put forward, in a magazine available to the public such theories without conclusive evidence?

THERE ARE perhaps five million cats in Britain. Upwards of one million babies are born each year. And how many cases of toxoplasmosis were reported last year?

Just ten.

I would have thought that fell a bit short of being a good enough reason to put the fear of God into every pregnant mum who has ever stroked a tabby.

The Sunday Express, September 22nd, 1974

THEY'RE ALL AT SEA WITHOUT FRED!

Lucky Fred of H.M.S. Hecate ended his shore leave today and went aboard for an extra ration of cream.

The black cat with milk-white paws has been banned for life from spending another night on the tiles because his floating home is jinxed if Fred goes absent without leave.

The superstitious sailors of the Royal Navy's 2,800 ton survey ship now in Plymouth, will not put to sea without their lucky Tom.

To make sure that Fred does not go on a last-minute prow for birds in port, his captain has ordered him to quarters a day before a voyage.

To make doubly sure, Marine Engineering Mechanic Bob Shaw has been detailed as lucky Fred's personal body-guard.

Trouble has dogged Hecate - named after the Greek goddess of black magic - whenever she has sailed without Fred.

The last time it happened one of the ship's engines blew up, the computer had a brain-storm and the radar went haywire.

Evening News, July 27th, 1974

GINGER TRAPPED

Ginger the Tom took a trip to a cat's paradise yesterday.

He was transported to the happy hunting ground - or wonderful world where succulent birds fluttered round his head just begging to be caught.

And luck Ginger didn't even have to lose one of his nine lives to get there.

But his night of bliss ended at dawn when a bird fancier of another sort, 53-year-old Vic Rowlinson found him dozing contentedly in his aviary.

Only seven of Mr. Rowlinson's 25 prize-winning show birds lived to fly another day.

And last night police were trying to find the person who deliberately locked Ginger in the aviary in Thurncourt Road, Leicester.

Said Mr. Rowlinson, one of the Midlands top breeders: "I've never seen the cat before.

When I found him, I picked him up and he began to purr. Although I was heart-broken I couldn't do anything to him. I love all animals".

Mr. Rowlinson, who runs a guard dog security firm, added: "Before it happened I had a good chance of winning top prizes at a bird show in Leicester this weekend".

Daily Express, September 27th, 1974

KITTEN'S HOT TRIP

A kitten named Flower Pot has travelled 140 miles in the engine compartment of a Volkswagen car, above the heater box. It was found by Mr. and Mrs. John Briggs after they drove from Norfolk to their home at Long Eaton, Derbyshire.

Daily Telegraph, October 9th, 1974

BOMBER IS BACK

Bomber, the missing pedigree brown Burmese cat, with £100 bounty on his head, has been found.

But the finder, Mrs. W. Bloomfield, of Birdham, does not want the reward - instead she would like a miniature Bomber.

The cat, missing for eight weeks, was found in a thicket by Mrs. Bloomfield, of Kewells Corner, who recognized him.

She immediately got in touch with his owners, Mr. and Mrs. Nick Flowers, of Birdham, who coaxed him out.

"He was so pleased to see us, and recognized our voices when we called to him", said Mrs. Min Flowers.

"We think that he was frightened by a dog, and went off on his own, so far out of his territory that he got lost.

"In the past eight weeks he has grown a lot larger, so the diet of rabbits must have suited him very well. He used to catch rabbits, so he had no problem of surviving", she added.

Mrs. Flowers is the Birdham representative for the Cats' Protection League, and has five other cats of her own, and three which she hopes to foster out.

Mrs. Bloomfield had been in touch with her a few weeks before, because she wanted a kitten; so she is well pleased with the prospects of a mini Bomber.

Meanwhile, Bomber, none the worse for his adventure, is enjoying the luxury of being spoilt for the time being.

Observer,

Friday, October 18th, 1974

UNCLE WHISKERS' COURAGE TAKES SOME LICKING

As the owner of a somewhat superior tabby, I am aware of just how tedious people can be when talking of a pet.

But I have encountered a TRUE animal story to beat them all - the life and times of the incredible cat, Uncle Whiskers.

Naturalist and countryman Philip Brown got him when he was six weeks old - a sharp-featured ginger tom with a thin tail. By the time he was a year old he was a normal, healthy beast enjoying life in the fields and orchards around the Brown's home near Basingstoke, Hants.

Then one September afternoon Uncle Whiskers was knocked down by a van. His front left leg was smashed, the right one injured, and blood trickled from his mouth.

A vet examined Uncle Whiskers and said: "I could amputate the smashed leg, and while the other leg seems a bit gammy it's not broken. The rest of him seems OK. . .

"Do you really want me to put him down?"

Uncle Whiskers came home a week later.

There were eleven stitches in the amputation wound. The remaining front leg seemed limp and lifeless. The foot twisted round grotesquely upon itself and was paralysed.

Uncle Whiskers tried to move forward by shoving with his hind legs - and fell over.

A few days later the cat suddenly raised himself on his hind legs, tail stuck out behind him like a sort of third leg.

He stretched up and up and it was the beginning of one of his most remarkable achievements - the ability to sit upright on his haunches for minutes.

Progress was slow, but the incredible Uncle

Whiskers next taught himself to walk again.

His remaining front leg may have been useless but the muscles of the shoulder and upper "arm" were still intact and as strong as ever.

Uncle Whiskers started to use this limb from the shoulder, first pushing down on it to raise his chest clear of the ground, and then "threw" it forward as far as possible.

He then half-pulled himself forward waddling on his back legs to complete the effort.

Six months after Uncle Whiskers' accident, Mr. Brown decided to allow the cat out of doors. Then one day Uncle disappeared.

He was found in the summerhouse, on a high shelf, and the mystery was solved: he'd developed such power in his hind legs that he could jump, kangaroo-like as high as four feet!

The incredible Uncle Whiskers lived to the age of thirteen, twelve years after the accident and Mr. Brown has now written his biography.

It really is compulsive reading. Uncle Whiskers by Philip Brown is to be published by Andre Deutsch Ltd., on November 7th at £1.95.

Sunday Mirror,

September 22nd, 1974

BOOK REVIEWS THE SIAMESE CAT

Recently published by Batsford "The Siamese Cat" by Phyllis Lauder, is an excellently illustrated volume which should appeal to all lovers of the breed.

Starting with an excellent summary of the Siamese standard, the book includes brief descriptions of the varieties and a most interesting chapter on the qualities of the breed as a pet, concluding with useful advice on showing.

Of nearly 100 photographs in the book, nearly a quarter are in excellent colour and reflect the many moods of the Siamese Cat.

At only £2 this book will surely find its way into many a Christmas stocking!

V.M.R.

BUT WEDNESDAY CRIED

Members who are perhaps more familiar with Miss Yvonne Mitchell as a talented actress, will be intrigued to learn that her love of Cats in this case - kittens! and her humour have combined to produce a delightful childrens book "But Wednesday Cried" (Roger Schlesinger - 85p).

Prettily illustrated in colour with bold type narrative, the only criticism that can possibly be made is that the treat is far too short.

V.M.R.

ONE TAIL BETWEEN TWO

An endearing tale of the unlikely friendship of a Siamese and a Manx cat is told in "One Tail between Two" by Beryl Sandwill (Leslie Frewin of London - £2.95).

The book is delightfully illustrated with black and white line drawings and traces, this unusual association from the initial acquisition of Kelly as a Manx kitten, later to be joined by the unexpected gift of Yow Lee.

The "friendship" starts predictably with open warefare but soon settles to a mutual companionship which is most humourously detailed by the Authoress.

V.M.R.

THE CAT BOOK

"The Cat Book" published by Kaye and Ward at £1.40, and compiled by Richard Shaw is an anthology of poems and tales about Cats. In format and content, emphasised by the style of the illustrations this book has visual appeal for the younger reader. However, it is unlikely that "orisons" and "gralloch" would be readily understood by children, and yet the adult might well find that the book was somewhat "lightweight".

This is not to detract from the excellence of the selection ranging as it does from Chaucer through folklore to Ogden Nash.

V.M.R.

CANTERBURY CAT SOCIETY

Secretary's Report

September 1973-September 1974

As usual a year of great activity and variety.

Under the usual agreement 82 Cats and kittens were placed in good registered homes.

6 lost cats were traced and returned to their owners.

21 females were spayed.

11 males neutered.

4 victims of road accidents were treated.

16 general veterinary cases involved many visits, often prolonged treatments and miles of transport.

4 hopelessly ill cats were destroyed and 2 died during treatment.

Baskets are in continual use, nursing cages, with accessories, are always available.

We continue to board for owners who are sick, elderly, or in temporary difficulties and always have a number of our own cats boarding until homes can be found.

Small grants of food are made to people feeding strays - or acting as foster parents. The Police, Social Workers, owners of boarding establishments and Veterinary Surgeons have all been most kind and helpful.

Newsletters have gone out regularly, also copies of "The Cat" magazine - when printers are not on strike!

We have taken part in many activities during the year. Coffee mornings, tea parties, film shows, a Strawberry Fair, Summer and Christmas Markets, two successful stalls at Herne Bay and Canterbury Charity Markets, and a most outstanding Garden Party at Herne Bay. Jumble and Bargain Sales are always with us.

All letters and 'phone calls are ANSWERED, help or advice given wherever possible. Our representatives at Herne Bay, Whitstable, Thanet, Deal, Dover, Littlebourne and Faversham continue to do a wonderful job visiting in their areas and generally coping with any problems that may arise. Magazines are always on sale, and quite a good income results from Trading Stamps.

I am pleased to say that we have a number of new members, particularly young ones, but unfortunately have lost some of our most valued and devoted friends who will be hard to replace. So many people have been so kind and helped in such a variety of ways that I am grouping them all together and saying one big grateful THANK YOU. Please continue to give your valuable support and get your friends to do likewise so that the coming year may be even better. Thank you.

MARJORIE W. PAINE

C.P.L. CALENDARS —FULL SIZE

Supplies of our own C.P.L. calendars for 1975 are now available from certain of our larger branches or direct from H.Q., at a cost of 60p including postage.

The calendars give most colourful cat portraits, the overall size being 21 ins. x 10 ins. and will make an ideal present for yourself or your friends and at the same time will put the Cats Protection League before them throughout the coming year.

ARTHUR E. PARRATT

Happy Christmas

BRANCH AND GROUP NEWS AND DIRECTORY

Enquiries from anyone wanting a kitten or who would adopt a cat or two are welcomed by C.P.L. Honorary representatives whose names and addresses are starred. *

But please note:— DO NOT CALL AT ANY OF THE ADDRESSES EXCEPT BY APPOINTMENT: MAKE CONTACT BY LETTER OR PHONE FIRST.

SEE INSIDE BACK COVER — FOR BRANCH AND GROUP HONORARY REPRESENTATIVES NAMES AND ADDRESSES

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH

Writing this on a misty, damp day in early Autumn it is difficult to realise that the time of publication will be very near Christmas and the end of yet another year. A year in which we have had many more requests for help as we become better known which has meant a time of increased effort on the part of those few of us who are actively engaged in cat-care. Figures of the total number of homes found and cats neutered are not yet available, but using my own personal totals as a guide and these in this three-quarters of a year period already exceed my complete totals for 1973. It is obvious that there has been a large increase. One aspect of all this activity saddens me — we are so involved with stray cats and kittens that we do not have time and leisure to enjoy our own pets. I cannot remember the last time I was able to sit and nurse my own fat Dandy — even at mealtimes he is pushed off my lap by one of the visiting kittens — uppity creatures with no sense of decent respect for their elders. Total involvement in the work of the League brings tremendous strain in its wake and we are liable to become rather "itchy" and short-tempered as a result. May I offer as my Christmas present to all our members the wise words of Dardina Cushing which have given me a great deal of repose in the past, and with them my thanks to all those who have helped us by their support and encouragement, including the anonymous donors like Sandy, and my best wishes for a joyous and a happier New Year.

Prayer attributed to Cardinal Cushing

Slow me down, Lord. Ease the pounding of my heart by the quieting of my mind.
Steady my hurried pace with a vision of the eternal reach of time.
Break the tensions of my nerves and muscles with the soothing music of the singing streams that live in my memory.
Help me to know the magical restoring power of sleep.
Teach me the art of taking minute vacations — of slowing down to look at a flower, to chat with a friend, to pat a dog, to read a few lines from a good book.

Slow me down, Lord, and inspire me to send my roots deep into the soil of life's enduring values, that I may grow towards the stars of my greater destiny.

F. PRIMETT

CHELMSFORD AND DISTRICT

It is most unfortunate that our report for the September/October issue of the magazine did not reach Mr. Parratt. However, he has kindly printed it in full.

Our latest news is that we still await the legal document upon which our planning permission depends. We have disagreed with a draft copy which arrived saying that we must remove the present Shelter (and Cats!) within 28 days of permission. An impossible situation of course as we know very well that it will be many months before the new Shelter could be built.

Our CHRISTMAS DRAW tickets are now available and Miss P. Woodhouse, Little Tuftes, The Ridge, Little Baddow, Chelmsford, has kindly agreed to be the promoter once again. We hope to have as many handsome prizes as usual, so please write to her for as many books of tickets as you can persuade your friends to buy. They are 10p per book of four tickets.

With three CHRISTMAS FAIRS still to come, and the CHRISTMAS DRAW prizes to find, we would be very, very grateful for anything you can let us have. As always, we depend upon you for our cat-care money.

The dates for the CHRISTMAS FAIRS are as follows:—

November 16th, 10.30 to 4 p.m. Danbury Village Hall, Nr. Chelmsford.

November 30th, 10.30 to 4 p.m. Chelmsford Cathedral Hall.

December 14th, CHRISTMAS MARKET AND DRAW, 10 a.m. to noon, Chelmsford Shire Hall Foyer.

MRS. C. PETERSON (*Chairman*)

CHELMSFORD AND DISTRICT September/October 1974

Good news is that at long last we are in sight of getting the planning permission for the new Shelter at "Catkins", Battlesbridge. And what a battle for the cats it has been,

Chelmsford—cont.

with endless confrontations, and letters to all sorts of Council department. Jean Middlemiss and I have been told we would make good barristers, so carefully have we made our moves and won our case! We now await a legal document — already two months overdue — which is being prepared by the Council for us to sign to say that we will give up the present Shelter at 112, Watchouse Road, and then we *should* get the permission in writing.

It has been quite chaotic for us during the past three months. Somehow we have provided for more than 300 cats and kittens at a time and we also have a list of more than 200 cats and kittens urgently needing homes, and we have managed to persuade their owners to "hang on" for a while. In many of these cases the loving owners will only hang on if we provide food! What insight one gets into human behaviour. I could write a whole chapter of a book every day on people and cats, given time.

During this time, Jean Middlemiss has been in hospital for a major operation, and so out of action. How we missed her, for it is a full-time job coping with the endless telephone calls and the home-finding. Thankfully she is now making very good progress and has taken on the telephone calls once again. I personally cannot find words to express my thanks to Alec Middlemiss, to Mrs. Florence Paterson and to Joan and Bill Richardson at "Catkins" for their efforts during this period. Between us we've just about coped and made (we think!) a very good team. My reward has been losing a stone in weight with all the running around Essex and no time for meals.

It has cost a tremendous amount of money to feed and care for all these cats and kittens and now that at last we can find time to look ahead, we *must* make great efforts to raise money. We are pleased that Mr. Parratt has invited us to have a stall at the ANIMAL FAIR in London on October 18th and 19th, and we look forward very much to meeting our friends there. We know so many of you through writing and it will be a pleasure to meet you personally. Our Summer Fairs have left us with very little to sell and we would be thankful for anything for the Animal Fair and for the AUTUMN FAIR in Chelmsford Cathedral Hall on October 26th. After that we have *three* CHRISTMAS FAIRS and the CHRISTMAS DRAW to come! Goodness knows how we're going to get enough goods and prizes but, as you know, we never stop trying.

We thank all our good friends who have kept us going through our crisis period with

their encouragement, financial support and gifts and good clothes etc. for us to sell. What would all those cats do without you?
MRS. CHRISTINE PETERSON,

EDMONTON BRANCH

As 1974 draws to a close we wonder if next year will bring as many kittens.

During 1974 many members visited the Sanctuary to see Madame Fluffy and her Pals; we are sure they all felt highly honoured.

We have quite a number of Cats waiting for good homes including Nobby who is very intelligent and askful, Beauty who is a beautiful tortie, but rather nervous with strangers; and Feena who had a very rough life until we took her in; to name but a few of our many "home seekers".

A recent visitor from Scotland was absolutely delighted to see so many healthy and contented Cats and Kittens.

Recently four teenagers found two kittens who had been thrown over a bridge. The Ginger and White one had its paws tightly bound with elastic bands, and couldn't stand; and despite intensive Veterinary treatment it had to be put to sleep as gangrene had set in.

I have received numerous phone calls from friends enquiring why they hadn't seen me at the Animals Fair and Cat Shows etc. The shop, of course, keeps me very busy, but I would like to thank everyone who left gifts for me at these events.

A big "Thank You" also to the many kind members and friends who have donated money and gifts throughout the year.

To Headquarters and Committee members thank you for all your help during 1974; and a very Merry Christmas to everyone.
MRS. C. WALLEGE.

GLOSSOP BRANCH

Winter again, and all the cabins and runs for our strays have moved back from my garden into the sheds. But this should be their last move, when Spring comes we hope to have our own cattery. What a great day this will be for Glossop Branch, we are working hard to be ready for it.

We took our stand at Romily Young Farmers Show last month in the worst weather ever known for this event. Water up to our ankles, rain coming down in torrents, and the marquee threatening to collapse at any moment. However we did get some publicity and raised £10 so perhaps all was not lost.

We stand at the Animal Charities Fair at Wilmslow, selling toys and Christmas gifts, in Stockport Market on December 13th and on December 8th at Community House, Glossop.

Have you a gift we could sell? Soap, Talc,

Glossop—cont.

or the perfume you had last Christmas and never liked, or the odd piece of jewellery. Please search for just a little to send to us.

Two kind friends have sent parcels of material for toymaking, and we have received two anonymous donations of 50p and 25p, thank you all.

Finally A Happy Christmas, and may 1975 be a good year for all our friends both human and furry.

D. E. HOOPER (*Chairman*)

NORTH LONDON BRANCH

May we take this opportunity to wish all members of the League a very Merry Christmas and a joyful New Year. As this is the last issue of "The Cat" to appear in 1974, may we also express our very sincere thanks to all those members who have helped us in so many different ways. Their efforts have kept the Shelter running smoothly without financial crises during the year.

In our last report, we mentioned the impending compulsory acquisition of our premises by the local authority and our finding of suitable alternative accommodation. Alas, our hopes of new premises were short lived. The local council took so long to consider our planning application for change of use that the vendor got tired of waiting and sold elsewhere; and so the hunt goes on. What is certain is that the North London Branch must continue. Its work grows year by year and there is a very real need for a Shelter in this poor area of North London. We must be sure that the Branch continues in its present form and does not become a Sanctuary or a boarding cattery. In our area the need is for a place where poor strays can be brought, given the chance of a good home and, if unsuccessful humanely put to sleep; where people can bring their very old or injured cats for humane destruction; where sick strays can be nursed back to health.

At any one time, we have some 40 or more beautiful cats awaiting homes, all of them former strays. Occasionally we are asked to keep a particular stray indefinitely, but, although our wills are weak, we must refuse. One stray in permanent residence can deprive 12 or more strays of a place during the year.

If we are to continue as a branch in new premises, we shall need the help of every member.

We recently took in a stray siamese kitten of about seven weeks. One of her eyes was badly damaged, probably from a kick or blow. A visit to the vet, told us that the eye was very badly injured but that the kitten was too young to undergo anaesthetics and surgery.

The kitten was taken into the home of a member for careful nursing and antibiotic treatment in the hope that the condition would not worsen before the kitten was old enough for surgery. In spite of the nursing and treatment, the eye worsened until it seemed that it would surely burst.

Back to the vet went the kitten for a "do or die" operation through which it came valiantly but minus one eye. It has now gone to an adoring home with the name of Emma, through some association with Nelson!

We still have some of our beautiful Christmas cards for sale, all showing our erstwhile strays. The price is 80 pence per dozen including packing and postage to you. Please order from North London Branch to avoid any delay.

Our last event of the year is our Christmas Bazaar on the 14th December at the Upper Holloway Hall, 602A, Holloway Road, London N.19. It starts at 11 a.m. and continues while customers are willing to buy. Do try to come and buy something. If you cannot, perhaps you have some unwanted gift to send us for sale.

If you can come, the nearest bus stop is Nag's Head, Holloway.

M. DAVIES

SOUTH LONDON COMMITTEE NOTES

With Christmas wishes to all our helpers, I would like to add thanks, most grateful thanks, for the work done during the past year. It is rather wonderful that so many people will give up days to preparing and precious Saturdays to working at our Sales; I hope that the knowledge that so many cats are given a much better life gives them the pleasure that it gives me.

Our New Year opens on January 18th with a

BIG RAG FAIR

at St. Phillip's Hall,

Earls Court Road, W.8.

starting at 2 p.m.

we hope that as many of our friends as can get there will come, and that we may have another really good day.

As I write this, we are living through the interesting period when the post is important, our Christmas Doubles appeal has opened. We hope that we may have a good result this year. Every gift of £10 given us before the 1st January, 1975, will be doubled, so will any kind person who is thinking of giving us a Christmas present, please send it off.

At the Rescue Centre, there is great joy. Little Petronella has found a new home, and she has settled there as a member of the

South London—cont.

family. We are so glad, because she was a shy creature and needed a very kind home. Her place has been taken, just two days after she left us, by Prunella, another quiet, shy and gentle little cat who needs extra care. If anyone will send her a special gift, that will be greatly appreciated. Here Perfidia jumped lightly into the typewriter, an evident reminder that the wicked are still with us. I doubt if Perfidia will ever get a home, but she has no doubts and always runs to meet new friends. She would also like special treats, though she does not deserve them! She really is a dreadful little cat, she frightens the big cats away from their food dishes, she offers to fight anyone who wants a scrap, and she thinks kittens are soft toys for her amusement - whenever we hear a squawk, we have to run to rescue someone from Perfidia.

It is a good idea to start the New Year by turning out a few drawers and cupboards, and an even better one to send us any little treasures which you may happen to find when you do so! Please have a quick look round and find us some pretty things for our sales. We always need stock, and anything, old or new, whole or broken, large or small, is welcome. We have some special requests: we need elephants, not actually live ones, not life size, but ivory ones or ebony or wooden, two collectors have asked us for them. Also for elephant-hair ornaments. If you can spare us anything of this kind, we will be grateful.

Thank you.

NEREA DE CLIFFORD

SUSSEX BRANCH

At last the rush season for unwanted kittens is over for another year. It makes one wonder what would happen if we did not issue Vouchers, though we have been very lucky with new homes lately. Two youngsters born this Summer are still with us, and as far as can be seen have no intention of going! Each time people come to see them and try to pick them up they act panic stricken and rush and hide, but afterwards come out and gambol about as if to say that's got rid of them, saved again, we are staying, and they probably will.

Recently we have had two Open Days, the First at Cat Heaven, Pett Level arranged by Mrs. Banks who looks after the Cats there. It was a beast of a day, wet and windy, and we had so much wanted to have tea in the garden, Mrs. Banks had worked so hard too, but she got us all inside her house with a gift stall, food stall, Raffle and in the hall,

a stall of beautiful vegetables grown in their garden. Tea was served and it was a very pleasant and successful afternoon for which we thank her very much. Our thanks go also to Mrs. Eldridge who invited us to her garden on a gorgeous hot sunny afternoon, so we were lucky that time. We had stalls, a Raffle, competitions, and tea and enjoyed the sight of her beautiful Siamese and Havana Cats. Wet or fine on each occasion we made over £22.

Now the season of Christmas Sales is upon us, and we are doing all we can to make it a bumper result on November 9th.

A Happy Christmas to all at H.Q. and to all our fellow members and purrs from our cats to yours.

P. MARK

ULSTER BRANCH

A very Happy Christmas to all our friends and members, here there and everywhere. As another year draws to a close with still no sign of peace in our war-weary little Province may I extend warmest thanks to those of you who have made it possible for us to carry on our work and our very special gratitude to the Executive Committee at Headquarters whose generosity is so deeply appreciated by the Ulster Branch.

The Bangor Coffee Party, held on a sunny August day, was well attended but the financial result was a wee bit disappointing. We made £123 as against £172 last year. However the really big event of the year was our 25th Birthday Celebration on 9th September when we were delighted to welcome Mrs. de Clifford, the new Chairman of the Cats Protection League. We had an excellent attendance at our Birthday meeting and Mrs. de Clifford spoke briefly, bringing the good wishes of the folk in Slough and telling us a bit about ideas for fund-raising. One point she made I want to pass on in the hope that her suggestion may be taken up. The idea is that if anyone has a bit of garden to spare and would be prepared to take care temporarily of a few cats, Headquarters would supply them with a portable cat-shelter with wire run. This would help to ease the congestion at the cattery, where we are constantly over-crowded. Please think about it. Following her little talk, Mrs. de Clifford kindly drew the winning numbers in connection with the ballot which was once again organized by Mrs. K. Y. McBride, to whom we express our thanks for all the work and expense it entailed. Mr. Williamson then showed us his film about the Shelter but unfortunately this excellent film was not seen to advantage as we were unable to black-out the hall. After a nice tea we went

Ulster—cont.

our various ways. Unfortunately I can't get hold of exact figures as our Treasurer is on holiday, but my own estimation is that between ballot, birthday collection and stalls we raised around £350. At this point I would like to thank those people who wrote to Mrs McBride, asking us not to send them ballot tickets. (Most of them sent a donation instead I must haste to point out). We have noted accordingly and if there are others who would prefer not to have ballot tickets sent them in future, please let me know.

With the festive season almost upon us and in our 25th Birthday year it's a pity to have to break bad news, but very bad news it is that our Shelter Superintendent, Mrs. Tredrea, has asked us to release her early in 1975. For five years she has done a magnificent job for the Branch, caring so lovingly for the cats and kittens and always putting their welfare and happiness before her own. Unfortunately the strain has been too much for her, both physically and emotionally, and she feels the time has come to call a halt. This is a body-blow we could well have done without, for the chances that we will be able to entice anyone to live in the midst of "the troubles" and undertake such an exhausting and heart-breaking job are slim indeed. Added to this is the knowledge that with the rapidly escalating cost of everything we just can't hope to carry on as at present. Thus we have a double crisis on our hands. At an informal meeting with Mrs. de Clifford the Committee discussed the matter and following her advice we are considering a certain course of action. As soon as any definite decision is made members will be informed.

Annual Subscriptions. As you know these are now due in March, but in our first year we are being fairly lenient until members get used to the idea. However I'm afraid we must draw the line somewhere so the deadline is 31st December. Magazines will not be sent to anyone who has not paid by that date. Here I'd like to remind you that if you pay Income Tax and are willing to covenant your subscription it will be a great help to the Branch. Mr. S. Hill, 19, Bawnmore Road, Belfast 9, will be happy to give further information about this.

Mrs. Tredrea has asked me to mention that she would love a wall clock for the cattery kitchen so if you have one you can spare do let us know. A clock that sits around is no use for there seems just nowhere to put it where the cats don't knock it over. We've lost several that way!

Then there's Mrs. Frederick who tells me that items to sell on the stalls at our many

functions are urgently needed. Maybe you'll have a few extra things at Christmas which you can let us have. You will most certainly have masses of used stamps for Mr. Liken - his address in case you have not a note of it is 61, Cherryhill Road, Dundonald.

Last but most certainly not least, is the matter of homes for our cats and kittens. It's been a bad year for homes and unless there is a vast improvement, our numbers in this Birthday year look like being an all-time low. Can you help - do you try? Could YOU take just one more? The situation is desperate and we must try to involve you all. If every member could find just ONE good home in the last few weeks of '74 what a difference it would make. Please try.

Winning numbers in Draw.

2022, 2160, 4425, 3196, 6428, 3048, 5436, 112, 7285, 7026, 5921, 4616, 5580, 3783, 3128, 6058, 6322, 1187.

MISS E. R. MCKEE

WEST CORNWALL

The wild cat problem is mounting fast again and authorities try to turn a blind eye to the complaints about colonies of cats living rough in most of the towns and villages. We trap as many as we can, but for this we have to enlist the help of people who are feeding the cats and they won't always involve themselves, so it is a frustrating task. Perhaps it is nature's way of keeping the rat population down, which is another source of worry in country districts.

Christmas is approaching as I write this and we have already discussed the possibility of a bazaar; we have a lot of nice things to sell as the summer has been too wet and windy to attract visitors on Saturday afternoons, and we have been too busy to entertain visitors who have called casually on other days when we are not open. I have felt very sorry to have been unable to invite these good souls in for tea and chat, but with rising costs and shortage of helpers, extra work must be done in order to keep going.

Which brings me to my "begging bit". It is a long time since we asked bare faced for donations, in the past we have successfully managed to earn enough in other ways to keep the stray catteries ticking over very well, but now our funds are rapidly disappearing and donations have not been forthcoming. We are still delighted with the goods to sell, and the donations we receive from our "regulars" but we could do with some more money, so please dear Cornish readers and any of our friends of Cornwall, spare a thought and a few pennies for the twenty-five unwanted cats always in the

West Cornwall—cont.

catteries. Cost of food has gone up and so has light, heat, petrol, food for helpers, insurance and all the other necessities to make a smooth running cattery. Remember too that we foot the vets bills for a large number of neuterings for the cats of people in poor financial states, this all comes out of our personal Branch funds and then there is the constant advertising, for homes for cats, for lost cats, and warnings to cat owners and even these prices have increased. It would be a pity if we have to decrease our activities in cat rescue through lack of money.

Christmas should be a happy day for the cats. We always have a large number of unwanted, and our paying guests roll in for the festivities and we try to make everything as jolly and nice for them as possible. Delicious food, extra warmth and perhaps a new ball or toy if we can manage it. By the way did I ever tell you that cats enjoy music. So we usually have a transistor going when we are cleaning, and it is interesting to note the cats who are used to pop and the ones who prefer the third programme.

Cats and humans at Cathlowena wish cats and cat lovers everywhere a Very Happy Christmas, and we hope you will enjoy it as much as we shall.

K. BEESLEY

THE STUDIO RESCUE CENTRE

We thought we were quite full - but, of course, we have had to admit just a few more. Now we have the most charming family of little tabby kittens, who will be ready for homes just as these notes appear in print. Please remember us if you should know of a happy home.

We have the good fortune here to be well away from traffic and noise; on the rare occasions when a man does come to lop a tree or put up a shelf in our shed, the excitement among the cats is remarkable. Some of the newer-arrivals are horrified and rush off to hide, but the majority are delighted, and all work is done with rows of furry faces pressed close to watch the mouse-holes in the banks are deserted and I swear I have seen a small cat carefully climb our apple tree to fetch his big brother so that no one should miss the spectacle. Some workmen don't much like the feeling of being watched by some sixty pairs of round eyes, but most are interested. One man said "I wouldn't have thought there were so many cats in the world". They do make an impressive parade

when they are all lined up. I think we have at present every kind of colour and marking that a cat's coat can show, and the same with white paws too! Nearly all our cats are smooth-coated. I don't know whether it is that fluffy kittens and cats get homes more quickly or else perhaps long-haired cats are not so hardy, but it is the short coats which come here, and very lovely they are. I think the smooth coat shows off the true beauty of cats better than any fluffy or even the great long-haired Persian coats.

We have been involved in animated discussion about whether certain characteristics go with the colour of the coat. In general I do think that Torties are inclined to be clever and affectionate but troublesome, Gingers are sometimes a bit short-tempered, all-blacks are sweet most of the time, but will sometimes bite, Tabbies are nice-natured and nice-mannered, but often a bit shy and black-and-whites are bossy. Pure whites and all shades of silver and blues are generally very intelligent, and wonderfully affectionate to their chosen friends, but snooty to the general public. White with tabby or black patches are by nature extroverts and like attention and will talk to strangers. Now tell me how far I am wrong!

NEREA DE CLIFFORD



MEMBERS' CORNER

THE CAT'S CHRISTMAS STORY

Of course I realise it *WAS* difficult for the Inn-Keeper, what with me being a cat, and he being an orthodox Jew who hated cats because they were the gods of his ancient enemies the Egyptians. Not to mention that filthy old underground stable beneath the bar, which no-one would clean out, over-run as it was with rats and mice. So when I, a bedraggled stray appeared and offered my services, he was quite reasonable, really. His wife was kind too, and gave me saucers of milk when she had any to spare.

But that night before the Census was truly dreadful. The Bar was crowded and noisy, people shouted at me, threw bottles at me, and even kicked me. Finally, the Inn-Keeper picked me up, pushed me downstairs into the stable, and shut the door. Well it wasn't so bad below, really. My old friends were there. Peter the Donkey, as obstinate as they come and John the Ox, gentle and loving as always. Of course the smell was pretty appalling, because Peter and John never cleared up afterwards with their paws, as I did. But all the same it *WAS* cosy. I wondered where Saul the dog, had gone. Probably outside somewhere, gazing at the Big Star. On with the Shepherds on the hillside, where they said it was as bright as day. Always seeing lights everywhere Saul was.

So I found a reasonably clean spot and curled up. And then, to my astonishment, I saw something *MOST* unusual. A baby was lying, carefully wrapped up, in that dirty broken-down old manger, and sitting close beside the baby was a most beautiful young girl.

I approached cautiously, tail erect and twitching. At once I noticed that the baby's toes were sticking out, uncovered, and blue with cold. So I jumped up gently, lay down, and covered his toes with my warm soft fur.

At that moment, I realised instantly that I had met this baby somewhere before. Millions of years ago. Although previously he was different. Different yet The Same. "Let there be *PURRS*" he said. And there *WERE* purrs. Everywhere.

The beautiful girl stroked my head, and I slept.

When I awoke, they had gone. Somehow the stable seemed cold and bleak. Peter and John were asleep, and Saul was barking noisily outside.

And do you know, they tell me that ever since, we Tabbies have the letter M on our foreheads! Look well, and you will see.

The whole thing was utterly mysterious and I just don't understand it at all. . . .

EILEEN M. SINKER

PRUDENCE

My friends letters brought the distressing news that her cat Prudence was suffering from a severe chest infection.

A vet was consulted, I was told and my friend ended her letter "Please pray for Prudence". I knew how much these two meant to each other.

My friends next letter which arrived about a week later was quite unusual.

I read, "Prudence was so ill that I decided to sit up all night with her, she had been semi-conscious for most of the previous day".

"Suddenly her eyes opened and she seemed to be watching something on the other side of the room. After a few seconds Prudence seemed to relax, layed down and fell asleep, the first restful sleep she had enjoyed for several days".

The letter continued. The next morning the improvement was still obvious, Prudence had taken the first step towards recovery.

I know there is a theory that cats are psychic, was this the case here I wondered?

MRS. M. FOSTER

WHEN I'M NOT WELL

She comes and sits upon my knee,
And does her best to comfort me.
I feel that I shall never find
A friend so gentle and so kind
As my beloved pussy-cat,
The one I'm always smiling at.
And yet, when I am feeling well,
She understands - how can she tell?
No friendship then, no fond caress,
Just proud disdain, and naughtiness.
If I pretend, she won't believe,
I can't pretend, I can't deceive.

E. WALTON

OLD BILL

William Rufus reigns supreme,
They say he's more than seventeen.
His whiskers now are white as snow
And when he walks, his paws are slow.
He seldom purrs or says miaow,
His appetite is smaller now
But as a loved and loving friend
My thoughts of him will never end.

SALLY LUNN

TO JOKER - A KITTEN CAT

The delicate uncertainty of a kitten
Becomes too soon a grown sophisticat.
Archng spine, curvetting and cavorting
Around, on top or underneath the mat.
He takes our love for granted just because
He knows that we are putty in his paws.

SALLY LUNN

THE CHRISTMAS KITTENS

St. Francis sighed and bent down to speak to little angel Simeon, who stood respectfully before him with wings folded.

"Simeon", St. Francis said, "It is now four weeks since Christmas, and you have your usual job to do on earth at this time of year. It is particularly cold and frosty this year, and the icy winds are whistling and the snow is falling fast, and many of the Good Lord's little ones are suffering cruelly. Tears stood in little angel Simeon's blue eyes and his wings dropped sadly, as he replied, "Yes, Big Brother Francis, I know". "Well, then", said St. Francis, "you must start at once; take baby angel Benjamin with you. He is the youngest, and has not been to earth before, so you must take care of him. Be sure you have plenty of wings packed, as more little ones than ever will need them this year. Little angel David and his brother Timothy have already started to fetch the refugee babies; little angels Joseph and James have gone for the puppies, but the kittens are your concern. Little angels Rebecca and Rachel already have the beds ready and the fires lighted. Run along now". St. Francis smiled and patted the small golden head.

Simeon bowed low and sped away quickly to find Benjamin who - as usual - was playing ball with the white Persian kitten Miniver. "Come Benjamin", Simeon called; "you must stop playing now - we have work to do. We must go down to earth and bring home all the Christmas kittens". "Christmas kittens?" Benjamin said. "Yes, the ones people give to their children for Christmas and then turn out into the cold to starve when the children get tired of them". Little Benjamin's eyes grew round with horror. "Are there people like that on earth, Simeon?" "Yes, indeed - many of them, I'm afraid. So here is your bag of wings. Let me help you to fasten it on and I will take the basket. Now we are off; take my hand". They both stepped on a star and, unfurling their wings, floated gently to earth.

Little Benjamin looked wonderingly at the street slippery with frozen snow, and the long line of tall houses with twinkling lights. Simeon led the way down a dark court to where, in a corner, a small grey object lay shivering in the snow; the hair stood up on the emaciated body in grey matter wisps, and the breath came in short uneven gasps. Tenderly Simeon lifted the kitten to his breast and gently stroked its head until it lay still and peaceful. Benjamin gazed at it. "Why, but Simeon, this kitten is white and has a beautiful coat! I thought". He looked down to where the little grey corpse still lay in the snow. "That is only his earthly body;

he doesn't need that now", Simeon said. "When he was given to little Timothy Anderson he was a beautiful white kitten with golden eyes and a lovely bushy tail. Timothy was delighted with him - for a while - then he got other toys and did not want his kitten any more. So it was thrown out and wandered about looking for food and affection, but no one would take pity. We will let him sleep in the basket now, for we have many more little ones to find".

They went up and down streets and lane-ways picking up many pitiful little non-descript bundles, and always when Simeon held them to his breast and stroked them they regained their beautiful coats. Ginger, tabby, black, tortoiseshell, grey and white; he laid them all, still sleeping, in his basket. One black kitten Simeon held to his breast longer than the others, stroking its head tenderly. "This one," he said to Benjamin, "was such a brave and clever kitten. One day its little owner went too near the fire. Her clothes caught, and only that this kitten ran to the little girl's mother and cried and cried to her to come, the child would have been burnt to death. Even this little girl grew tired of her kitten, and it was thrown out too!"

And so the two little angels flew all over earth picking up all the abandoned Christmas kittens, and the strange thing was that Simeon's basket was large enough for every one of them. "Now", said Simeon, "let us sit down on this bank and fasten on their wings". He opened the bag Benjamin was carrying and took out wings in all the colours of the rainbow. Pale blue for white, soft green for black and ginger; cherry for black-and-white - and grey - and the littlest kittens of course all had snow-white wings. As he attached a pair of wings to each kitten, it opened its eyes, sat up, and purred. Benjamin peered into the bag. "Simeon", he said, "there is just one pair of golden wings. Which kitten is to have these?" "Why", replied Simeon, "the clever, brave one who saved the little girl from burning. Big Brother Francis picked them out especially for him.

All the kittens were sitting round purring and blinking their beautiful green and golden eyes. "Now", said Simeon, "we are ready". And he flapped his wings, and Benjamin and all the kittens flapped their wings also. Simeon, leading the way, they all flew up into the starry sky. When they reached Heaven, they did not go in by the Golden Gate, but through a little silver postern gate at the side with spring flowers - daffodils, primroses, cowslips and buttercups growing all round. Simeon knocked at the silver gate, and St. Francis, who had been waiting for them, opened it. The kittens, all purring loudly and joyfully, flew home.

And inside the silver gate stood a Child surrounded by a bright and beautiful light, and the light was so bright that all the kittens hid their faces in their paws. Then the littlest kitten of all took courage and looked up. The Child was holding out his arms and smiling at the kittens, and His smile held all the love and tenderness and compassion that has ever been known or will ever be known. And when the littlest kitten of all saw the Child holding out His arms and smiling, he took courage and began to run towards Him. Then all the other kittens, when they heard the littlest kitten of all running looked up too and began to run, and they ran and ran and when they came to the Child they nestled at His feet.

ODE - TO A WELL-BRED CAT

Oh little lost cat how far have you come?
How have you wandered so far from your home?
Your Mistress has lost you and now is alone,
And you little cat, are out on your own.

Grey, sleek, friendly little cat,
We know that you are a real aristocrat,
Little grey head, held truly high,
You came to our Park, I wonder why.

The men here are your friends, every one,
There's usually food and some milk for you,
You seem so contented and always have fun,
Yet there must be somebody grieving for you!

We'll put in advert, yes that's what we'll do,
And hope there's a new kind owner for you,
But I'm sure we'll all miss our little cat,
Who's truly a real Aristocrat!

JOYCE B. DYE

This cat re-united with its owner now.

THE FAMILY

Three eager faces look up expectantly,
Three eager faces, saying, "What's for Tea?"
One is Tabby, the other two are black,
They all turn up, they just have the knack.

Two are mine, and one comes to see
What the others are having for tea,
His cute little face uplifted to mine,
How can I refuse him, I let him dine.

My Blackie and Moggie and Tibby so fair,
Oh dear how sometimes you get "in my hair",
Turning and twisting, there on the stair,
Yet life without you, I just could not bear.

Though Tib has an owner, its plain to see,
He just like to come avisting me,
It is his friends he's longing to see?
Or is he perhaps only after his tea!

JOYCE B. DYER

VICKY

I found her huddled behind the railings of a city-centre Gospel Hall, a small, bomb-shocked, abby bundle of misery, caked with brick-dust and reeking of smoke. She was too feeble to resist as I eased her through the bars and wedged her under my arm between dufflebag and umbrella. Nobody looked twice. It had been another day of explosions, after five savage years pity is numbed in Belfast. Only a young soldier on guard in an alley further along reached out to stroke her, and mumbled "Poor Puss".

I cadged a lift from an office colleague and held the kitten (she was nothing more) on my knee. Now that I had a chance to examine her, I discovered that one hind paw was twisted and crippled from an old neglected injury, and that her stomach was ominously pear-shaped. As we snailed for half-an-hour in the car-queue at an Army checkpoint, she stared into my face with anxious, rheumy eyes. I mustn't have looked too sinister, because she yawned, and fell trustingly asleep, waking with a startled "burrp" when I carried her into the house.

Mother, long resigned to the unheralded appearance of animal flotsam, produced a plate of mince. The little refugee was starving. Mince and a chaser of milk vanished in gulps. After the meal, she did a cautious circuit of the kitchen, watched goggle-eyed and bushy-tailed from the doorway by Khaki, Coffee, Tristin and Jalna, my 4 resident felines, whose behaviour grew so inhospitable that they had to be closed in the dining-room, from which thereafter issued outraged wails and hisses.

It was plain that our visitors' immediate priorities were warmth and rest. I switched on the electric stove in the box-room, prepared a snug blanket-lined bed and a toilet tray, and introduced the exhausted tabby to her boudoir. She was terribly nervous. Any sudden sound set her cowering and trembling, and I didn't dare imagine what horrors she had been through. Nevertheless, she made a brave show of washing, used her tray, then crept into the bed and tucked her nose under her tail with a sigh of satisfaction.

It was time, I felt, that she had a name, and one neatly presented itself. The building where she had taken refuge was known as "Victoria Hall", so why not "Victoria" - "Vicky" for short? Somehow it suited her, with her peaky, intelligent, white-masked face and air of dogged courage.

That evening I talked over Vicky's future with my friend Audrey, who had triggered off my search by spotting the little creature limping distractedly among the traffic. As keen members of the Cats Protection

League we knew that, with almost 130 unwanted strays crammed into the Belfast shelter already, there would be no hope of a home for lame (and probably pregnant) Vicky. It therefore boiled down to which of us would take her.

"You've got four cats and we've only got one", Audrey pointed out, "She'd better come to us".

And so it was arranged.

But next morning Vicky was a very sick cat. Despite a carefully-rationed diet, she developed severe dysentery over which, to her distress, she had no control, and by the wheeze in her chest there appeared to be some infection there also. After tea, Audrey and I took her to the vet, who confirmed that she was 5 weeks gone in kitten.

"She's barely six months old" he said, "Far too young and undernourished to carry kittens, and that's what's playing havoc with her system. I'm afraid it's got to be a removal job rather than letting her run her term. It's the lesser of two evils".

Our hearts sank. She seemed so frail to withstand what we were grimly aware would be a critical operation. However, for her own sake there was no alternative. The vet gave her an antibiotic injection and booked her in for Thursday.

I drove Vicky to the surgery before work on Thursday morning. She sat beside me on the front seat of the car, crying through the wire of the cat-basket as if to say "What's going to happen to me next?" When I handed her over the reception counter and met her puzzled, frightened eyes, I felt like a murderer.

I phoned from the office at lunchtime. The girl in the surgery said "Just a minute, please" and disappeared. The minute passed. Four minutes passed. I had ghastly visions of poor little Vicky stiff and cold in a cage while the girl nerved herself to tell me. She came back eventually.

"You cat's on the operating table now. Could you ring again about teatime?"

That afternoon, I kept reading documents and putting them down with scant idea of what was in them. I was sure the hands of the clock had arthritis.

At 5 p.m. I could endure it no longer, and dialled the vet's number.

"Oh-er-yes - just a minute, please" said the same girl, in what I fancied was a cagey tone.

I died a few thousand deaths before she came back on the line.

"Your cat's safely through the operation, and the vet spayed her at the same time. You can collect her tomorrow after 9 a.m."

Vicky looked well, considering her ordeal. Reduced to her normal dimensions, she was

pitifully tiny, scarecrow thin, but bright and alert. I kept her for a week, until she was stronger, and then we transferred her to Audrey's place, where she soon asserted her authority by biting one ear and the tail off an ornamental cow, the pride of Audrey's sister's mantleshef display!

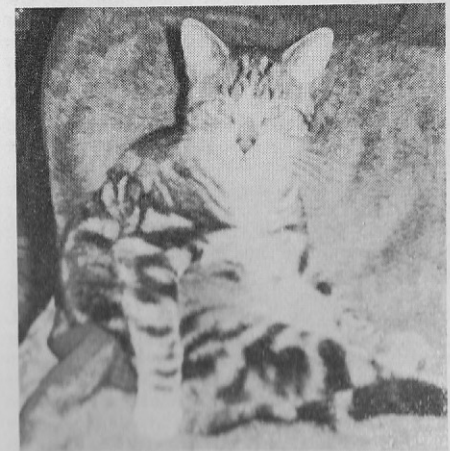
Now the bedraggled feline waif has become a glossy, affectionate charmer, who hurls herself onto shoulders and uses necks as a footstool. Her favourite toy is an artificial rose which, Carmen-like, she carries about with a raffish expression, inviting someone to throw it for her to retrieve. Between games, it is hidden in a secret cache, then dragged forth and dumped at the feet of whatever patient human will co-operate.

Because of the poor mangled paw, which buckles beneath her when too sorely taxed, Vicky can never be given her freedom like other cats, but in five minutes flat she adapted to a smart blue puppy-harness and lead, which enables her to stroll in the garden, gibbering at the birds, who hop across the lawn just out of reach, teasing her shamefully. The grand finale is an evening "three times round the block", with one lackey ahead to keep dogs at bay and the other being tugged obediently in milady's wake.

For Vicky, sad little victim of man's inhumanity to man *and* beast in Ulster, a new and, we like to think, happier life has begun.

LORNA GULSTON,

"Wyncroft",
25, King's Drive,
Belfast, BT5 6PS,
Northern Ireland.



VICKY

JUST CAT

Twib the white cat has wandered into these columns several times lately, and duly received fan mail from readers hooked in the snowy curvaceous paws peeping from her pictures.

At home her admirers are equally numerous. All have their own names for this bundle, clothed in furry raiment white enough to make a Biblical cherub feel like a housewife caught using detergent Brand X instead of Brand Y: Snow White; Little Lamb, My Darling; My Little Angel; Baby-cat.

Greatest of all her fans is the smallest in size, and from her Twib acquired her briefest name of endearment: Cat. Just Cat.

This passionate love affair began one spring evening when a tiny mite of a child spotted Twib from the vantage point of her sister's arms. "Cat"! she cried, stretching out her hands as the white cat was carried out to meet her.

Instead of bolting for safety like any average feline faced with a small child likely to tweak her tail. Twib lay still while two minute hands touched her back as gently as a butterfly alighting on a rose.

Next evening little Marina appeared again, "come to see Cat". Within a week the nightly walk from the other end of the avenue had become her equivalent of a bedtime story. Into the garden she came every fine evening to carefully touch Cat and up went Cat's white head, purring with ecstasy. Down went Marina, arms around Twib's neck, murmuring "Cat".

Next the child attempted picking her up, an operation guaranteed to send any normal minded cat into retreat. Placidly Twib allowed herself to be dragged half off the ground before the little girl gave up under her solid weight. New tactics seemed called for; if the whole cat was too heavy for tiny hands, Marina would be content with just one piece, fitting her hands better. Carefully, she therefore placed one hand each side of Cat's face, and set about detaching just her head.

Instead of biting, the animal merely purred and rubbed herself as lovingly as ever round the girl. Even when Marina, abandoning hope of removing the head, attempted to take an ear instead, she purred.

Next Marina started bringing presents for Cat; first one marigold, then a begonia head. No animal in the district relishes her fodder more than Twib, but even she drew the line at marigolds and begonias. On the other hand, the appearance of a whiter than white cherub demands manners to match, so politely Cat declined but purred louder than ever, rubbing so hard against the visitor that she tottered backwards, still clutching Cat.

Duly big sister, big brother and their friends invaded the garden, brought to see Marina's wonderful Cat, who obligingly displayed herself on a higher step than usual as if taking the throne at an audience of ambassadors. At least Marina could properly reach her and fully investigate the charms of Cat; first the ears, enquiringly pulled, then the tail, white Cat went on purring as usual. Failing to remove any appendage from either end, Marina gave up and settled for laying her head on the cat's back, squeezing her middle tightly and murmuring over and over "I do love you, Cat". And "Cat" she remains, to all her best friends.

Two morals emerge from this story - less little anecdote: cats and children are not incompatible if the child's adoration is strong enough to be sensed, so that even having the tail pulled is a pleasure, and that, though child and animal photography both demand unlimited patience, a combination of the two sometimes produces the picture of a lifetime - such as big-eyed Marina touching her beloved Cat even more gently than a butterfly touches a rose.

MURIEL V. SEARLE



MARINA—WITH "CAT"

IN MEMORIAM

In ever loving memory of my best beloved babies NELL, BOY and CHARLIE. Forever in my heart.
AUNTIE AVERIL.

In loving memory of "Mr. Hetty" (ONE YOUNG MR. HETT) Put to sleep on the 11th November, 1970.
J. COHN.

In memory of Lucy, my treasured first cat, and companion for 16 years, who was badly put to sleep by an incompetent Vet. 25th November, 1973. Dearly loved and deeply mourned.

Remembering also dear Sweetheart, Tine and The Big Cat
All sadly missed.
H. HORNSBY.

In ever loving memory of our beloved Tinker Tar, Tailwaver No. 4768 who left us on October 18th 1970, aged 17½ years. Still sadly missed.
LILIAN SEAR.

BEE-BEE 1950-1965. Things are just the same between us, my very dear: nine years have made no difference. Yours MUM.
MARGARET AND ARTHUR DODD.

In memory of Grem Wroughton a dear neighbour, and of his sister Littlepuss. Also of our own dear ones who have given us so many happy memories.
E. & H. TURNER.

TWIB, darling snow white Baby-cat, In thanksgiving for over fifteen years of your companionship; for your gentleness, takativeness and uncanny intelligence; and for your characterful little ways, many of them shared through print with readers of The Cat.

We believe your soul lives on From the three humans who loved you so much: Master, Missie and Gel.

Twib - June 1959-September, 1974.

In ever loving memory of our darling little tortie-point Siamese cat. ASUNI YINTSUL-MOOTLE, who died very suddenly on August 22nd 1974 aged 1 year of a tumour.

This little cat held a very special place in our hearts. She was such a sweet pet, and we are mourning her very much.

You will never be forgotten "Moot".

MARGARET AND ARTHUR DODD.

BEYOND

What does he think of all day long Behind the iron bars so strong? This monarch from the jungle lies With resignation in his eyes.

With regal arrogance he'll stare Beyond the people standing there, Beyond the confines of the zoo To where the skies were always blue, To where his freedom first began Beyond the grasp and greed of Man.

SALLY LUNN

SOOTY

Kitten of morning Stretching and yawning Sniffs at the roses On velvet paws poses Then in the sunshine Peacefully sleeps. Soul of the moonlight Melts into softest night Eyes large and glowing Soft shadow flowing Spirit of wildness The tiger awakes.

HEATHER BARKER

GIRLIE

My dear little puss, once a lonely stray, Is now so happy with me to stay, She preens herself and seems to say, I will love you 'till my very last day.

Once a bit wild, for her life had been sad, Now always climbing, romping and glad, She purrs and is pleased for life is not bad, For a home before, she NEVER had.

In the garden she plays with a favourite ball, I am sure that now she feels ten feet tall, Rushing to me whenever I call, Jumping a fence, a roof, or a wall.

It's lovely to see what one can do, In answer to a lonely kit's me-ew. Each day an adventure, something new, I really don't think she ever feels blue.

MRS. E. McDONALD

NEXT ISSUE—
JANUARY/FEBRUARY
1975

THE PLEA OF A DEAF KITTEN

Living a life in a world of my own
In silence that nothing can break
With never the sound of a note or a tone
Whether sleeping or lying awake.

Yet I know that they love me, these people
of mine
I can tell by the touch of the hand,
With a certain compassion I cannot define
But I feel that they all understand.

If I ever feel cold or alone in the night
I have only to creep up the bed
Then I've no doubt at all that everythings
right
As he tenderly fondles my head.

I eat up my food and play with my toy,
The furniture covers I rend;
But if only just once I could savour the joy
Of hearing the voice of My Friend.

E.S.W.

Shop Window

Water colour portraits of pets or children - from clear snaps with description - price 60 pence. All money for C.P.L. also

Wanted - Dolls to dress for sales in aid of C.P.L. Mrs. D. Hall, 78, Hill Road, Watlington, Oxford.

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Wanted: by cat lover/writer: unusual cat stories for eventual publication; part of proceeds to go to the Cats Protection League. Epton, 58 Vale Road, Seaford, Sx.

Toy Mice - home-made and a source of enjoyment to your pets for only 12½p including postage. All proceeds to the C.P.L., - orders please to Miss R. Schefer, 1, Castle Court, Pollard Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 6EJ.

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by Hilda Lunn

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