

A VERY MERRIE CHRISTMAS TO YOU AND YOURS!

Cats

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SOLID RED PERSIAN FEMALE
UNDEFEATED CHAMPION ROSEBANK MARIGOLD

OWNED BY

LUCILLE A. PURNELL

ROSEBANK CATTERY • SPRING HILL ROAD, SALISBURY, MARYLAND

THUMBNAIL HISTORY OF THE ABYSSINIAN IN AMERICA

By HELEN G. FAIRCHILD



A "huge" litter of four Abys. raised by the Robert Richardsons of Tucson, Arizona

While checking over some old files I came across a very interesting newspaper pictorial page which Mrs. Virginia Cobb of Newton, Mass., sent to me about 8 years ago when I purchased my first Abyssinian cats. This was an entire page of prize winning cats of all breeds. Of course, she mailed me the paper because of the pictures of two Abyssinians. "Woodroffe Ena," captions *The Boston Post* of January 5, 1936, "imported last year, mother of the kitty at right, one of the only pair in America, belongs to Mrs. Cobb. The other, 'Woodroffe Anthony,' is owned by Mrs. Fiske of Boston. The Abyssinian is very friendly, gentle, mild and interesting. It has a voice that is a tiny chirp like a bird; ideal for apartment where catawauling is tabu."

That does sum up an "Aby" in a newspaper-like nutshell! The kitty at right in the Boston paper is named "Addis Ababa" and the paper states, "Young Lady Cat born July 7, 1935 first Abyssinian kitten ever born in the United States. This 'good will ambassador,' owned by Mrs. Gardiner Fisk, will undoubtedly be the foundation of the cat Abyssinian dynasty in America. She has two brothers, 'Hailie' and 'Selassie.'"

This newspaper story should be interesting to the Abyssinian fancy because this lovable breed is becoming so popular and many are writing me to obtain more of its history. "Addis Ababa died as a kitten, but her mother, 'Woodroffe Ena,' indeed, did begin the Abyssinian dynasty in America. Soon after these Boston pictures were published, Mrs. Metcalf and Miss Mary Hantzmon, saw Woodroffe Ena (or "Judy" as they called her) at a cat show. Enamoured with her, they persuaded Mrs. Cobb to sell. Then they imported a fine male, "Woodroffe Ras Seyum" for her mate. Thus, the Abyssinian department of "Djer-Mer" cattery was born.

They imported several other outstanding Abys before selling the cattery complete with name to Mr. Charles Johnson of Philadelphia.

Miss Lillian Goodwin, secretary of C.F.A., and Mrs. Stanley Gibson, secretary of the A.C.A., are owners and great admirers of the breed. They acquired their first Abys about the time Miss Hantzmon sold her cats.

About this same time I purchased my first pair. Dbl. Ch. Djer-Mer's Croham Isana was my first queen, imported by Miss Hantzmon. Ch. Djer-Mer's Deru ("Rudy" to his friends) was bred by Miss Hantzmon to become Isana's mate. Mr. Johnson imported three Abys from England just before we entered the War, and, as far as I know, those are the last to arrive in the United States. They were "Ch. Croham Menelick," "Woodroffe Moya," and "Woodroffe Mira."

The two largest Abyssinian catteries in England practically discontinued due to the war and the deaths of Major Woodiwiss and Mrs. Clare Basnett. They were untiring workers in the Abyssinian Cat Club and did much to improve the breed. It is my belief that our "American Abyssinians" are from either the Croham cattery, owned by Mrs. Basnett, or from the Woodroffe cattery owned by Major Woodiwiss. We received many interesting letters from Mrs. Basnett during the war. In one, she wrote that it was perfectly amazing how the Abyssinians took the terrific noise and bombings. She stated the cats were calmer than their owners and took everything in stride.

According to H. C. Brook in his book, *The Abyssinian Cat*, these "Bunny Cats" as they were sometimes called because of the likeness of their coat to that of the English wild hare, were first brought to England about 1882. As their name implies, they originated in Abyssinia and many zoologists believe them to be more closely related to the "sacred" Egyptian cat than any other modern breed.

It was stated by C. H. Ross in his *Book of Cats* (1867), "In Abyssinia cats are so valuable that a marriageable girl who is likely to come in for a cat is looked upon as quite an heiress."

The same, possibly, could be said of an American girl—if her boy friend happened to like cats—because Abys are very rare. They are slow to mature and when kittens arrive we are happy if it is a large litter of three, and wild with joy if a "huge" litter of four appears. One or two to the litter is usual. Occasionally, a kitten will throw back to its jungle ancestors, resulting in either a mackerel tabby or a perfectly marked brown tabby. These can only be sold as pets without pedigree or given to good homes.

The show-type Aby must have the characteristic "ticked" coat. Eight years ago I totaled about 15 Abyssinians in the United States. Today there may be 50 specimens, including kittens.

We love these cats so much we want others to know and enjoy them as we do. So we try to sell kittens as pairs in order to increase the Abyssinian population although it usually takes two years to complete the order. And then almost without exception the buyer writes and wants to be placed on our list for another female!

Now, since that long ago day in 1935 when there was only one breeding pair in Boston there are Abys spotted in all parts of the United States. Miss Winifred Porter has some fine ones in New Orleans, as has Mr. Johnson, who saved our breeding schedule by letting us have a vigorous breeding male (which was an outcross to our stock) when we needed him most; otherwise, there would not be as many Abys as there are now.

Mrs. Gibson has three. I hope Mrs. Mock's Ch. Zennobe is still living, but she would be well up in years now. The Robert Richardsons of Tucson, Ariz., have a pair, and have successfully raised several nice litters. Mr. G. A. Comhaire of Buda, Texas, is a new Abyssinian enthusiast as is Mr. Charles A. Knight of Oswego, Oregon. Of course, there are others who have bought one kitten for a pet and much of my interesting mail is from those
(Continued on Page 20)



Silver Moth's Sunshine Serenade, sensational red female, a serious contender for All-America Cattery honors this year in her color class



Silver Moth's Bit O' Personality, another exquisite red female, that has won in the East and South, now a West Coast resident

KEMMER: (From Page 14)

Future plans for Silver Moth include a small Animal Hospital where we hope to specialize in the diseases of the cat. We hope to make it a home for the "Tourist Cat" visiting in the state and whose owners wish to make trips on which their pets would be unhappy.

To one who has just purchased a cat Mrs. Kemmer has this to offer:

"Make a pal of your cat. Cats are naturally clean animals and we should do our part to help them keep clean. Brush and comb your cat at least once a day if possible. Feed your cat at regular intervals. Never leave food around between meals. Never give small bones such as found with chicken, as they splinter and cause bowel trouble. When

washing your cat be sure to dry it thoroughly. Watch your cat's ears and teeth. Keep them clean. Provide a place for your cat to sharpen her claws. A log of wood or a piece of carpet fastened on a piece of board will save your furniture. Never let your valuable cat run at large. Provide a wired-in run, and you will not have to worry about dogs, automobiles or undesirable tomcats."

To those planning to enter the cattery business, the following advice is presented:

"Cats may be raised anywhere, provided due regard is paid to the particular restrictions imposed on the individual owner. Some of the best show specimens are reared in apartments. The main requirement under housing problems are sunshine, fresh air, shelter

against draughts and dampness, and provisions for exercise. In order to start right, buy the best stock you can afford for two reasons: (1) It costs no more to feed a good cat than a poor one, and (2) good stock always finds a ready market. Breed to the best stud available. Attend every show you can. Shows are your best advertising. Advertise in a good magazine. People cannot purchase your stock if they do not know what you have. To make a success of our hobby, we must make our cats happy. The cynic will smile, but no cynic is ever a true lover of animals. If you don't LOVE cats, DON'T go into the business of raising them for the money there is in it! It is an expensive hobby and takes a lot of work!"

HAWAII: (From Page 7)

the interest of cats in Hawaii to the high plane it now has achieved by their advent in 1924, the first known personality to introduce fancy breeds was Mrs. Samuel Carter, who brought a white Persian in 1887. The first known professional breeder appeared in Manoa in 1890. She was Mrs. R. I. Lillie, who imported, raised and sold white Persians. In 1900 Mrs. Edward M. Quinn established a cattery of tortoiseshells, blues and smokes and carried on for 12 years. Later a pair of blue Persians was brought by Mrs. Charles J. McDonald from Seattle, Wash., in 1920.

In August 1933, the first cat club was organized with Mrs. Joseph as president. It affiliated with ACA and transferred to CFA in January 1938. The Hawaii Cat Association was formed in 1937 and affiliated with the then active United Cat Clubs Association. In September 1938, the Honolulu Cat Fanciers Club affiliated with ACA.

First show in Hawaii was staged February 1934 and had, in addition to 50 entries representing 32 owners, "special features, including a baby mountain lion, bob-tailed Manx, cross-eyed cat, and freak cat with eight paws." Mr. Julius Joseph was the manager of the exhibition.

First sanctioned show was held in January 1935 under ACA rules. Judge was Mrs. Arthur E. Hale, Handsome,

CREAMS: (From Page 9)

novice fancier should take care in selecting foundation stock. This applies not only with creams but all classes in the solid color division.

It is encouraging to observe the interest that is now being shown in creams and blue-creams, but there is room for more at our shows. We have come a long way during the past decade improving our creams. As classes improve in quality and near the desired standard, judges allow less latitude in making awards.

Therefore, to the exhibitor who shows a good cream that loses to a better one, I would offer her the encouragement in the knowledge that basically, she is, as well as the winner, the foundation of the Fancy.

Mrs. Robertson's Siamese male import was judged Best Cat.

First known cats in Hawaii are recorded by Don Manuel Quimper Benitez del Pino, a Spanish naval officer, who wrote:

"The commandant of the brig made them a present of a — tom cat and two females."

As the vessel called a brig was by other records, the sloop, *Princess Royal*, seized from the British, the first cats in Hawaii may have been either British or Spanish.

ABYS: (From Page 12)

who have a single Aby and make it "one of the family." We have 14 Abyssinians at the present time and as long as I have cats I shall continue to strive for better specimens.

The show standard for the Abyssinian follows:

COLOR AND TYPE: Ruddy brown, ticked with black or dark brown, double or treble ticking — i. e., two or three bands of color on each hair preferably to single ticking; no bars or other markings except that a dark spine line will not militate against an otherwise good specimen. Inside of fore-legs and belly should be of a tint to harmonize well with the main color, the preference being given to orange-brown; no white markings permissible.

ABSENCE OF MARKINGS: — i. e., bars on head, tail, face and chest — is a very important property in this breed. These places are just where, if a cat or other fine animal shows markings at all, they will hold their ground to the last with remarkable pertinacity. The less markings visible the better; at the same time the judge must not attach such undue importance to this property that he fails to give due importance to others. For instance, it does not follow that an absolutely unmarked cat, but of "cobby" build, failing in ticking and color, is, on account of absence of marking, better than a cat of slender build, well ticked, and of nice color, but handicapped by a certain amount of "barring" on legs and tail.

HEAD AND EARS: Head long and pointed, ears sharp, comparatively large and broad at base.

EYES: Large, bright or expressive. Color: Green, yellow or hazel.

TAIL: Fairly long and tapering.

FEET: Small, pads black; this color also extending up the back of hind legs.

COAT: Short, fine and close.

SIZE: Never large or coarse.