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A SHORT HISTORY OF THE MANX

Bob Wilson

Much mystery and many folklore tales have been written about various species of the feline, but the Manx probably has had more than its share of them as to "why they have no tail."

A logical and almost certain explanation of why they have no appendage has never been published before so far as I know. This theory was developed after looking through an Encyclopedia and consulting with an "expert" in the person of Manx enthusiast W. C. Curphy, M. D., whose forefathers were native Manxmen, and who recently vacationed on the Isle of Man, and brought back one of the best specimens it has been our privilege to see.

We sat one entire evening, and the good doctor told us of customs and superstitions and a lot of history about "Mona's Isle," the olden-day name for the Isle of Man. He explained (this can be confirmed by history books) that centuries ago the Norsemen used the tiny isle as the jumping-off place for the North American Continent, and on the return voyage brought back pets and curios from the New World. One of the most popular of these pets was the Lynx, which has a VERY short stubby tail, generally with tufts of hair sticking from the cars, high hind legs and definitely with a DOUBLE COAT, the top coat generally light brown in color, and the undercoat soft and long.

These "cats" were easily domesticated, and nature taking its course, soon interbred with the native or rather domesticated cats of the isle, and as the taillessness was a dominant factor, it was LIPPINCOTT natural that the most of the of these matings were tailless. natural that the most of the offspring



Minus—four-month old male Manx kitten owned by Rita and Bob Wilson of Stockton. California. Breeder, Teresa Brooks. "He has no tail at all. but just a tuft of hair."

Today, the Manx, and there are a lot of them on the Isle of Man, are very common, and the majority are of the brown ticked tabby and mackerel tabby variety. The most sought after and popular color other than the above mentioned, is solid black

The Manxman, after centuries of seafaring, are naturally very superstitious, and, differing from the "natives" of our land, prize highly the blacks as being very lucky, so it is practically impossible to get them to give one up for love or money.

In England, the Manx has long been a favorite at the shows; the Manx generally going best British short hair, and many times best short hair in show.

Probably the oldest Manx breeder in the world, and certainly in England, is Miss G. K. Sladen, who, as nearly as we can find out from old magazines and articles, has been breeding and showing Manx since 1902, a half century. The kitten that Dr. Curphy brought back with him came from Miss Sladen, after having gone best British shorthair kitten in the Crystal Palace show.

Here at home, the Manx has been treated as "poor relations" by many. Owners of just one, at a loss to find another Manx for a mating, have crossed them with long tailed short hairs. The taillessness being dominant, many tailless specimens have resulted, and have been entered into competitions as Manx. Some judges, through carelessness or being indifferent, have passed them as good speci-

These can easily be spotted by a careful judge, as they are generally lacking in the double coat, or high hind legs and short back, as the show standards call

The true Manx must be high in the (Continued on page 23)

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MANX

(Continued from page 10)

hindquarters, short back, round rump, double coat, and hop with a rabbity gait.

Here in the States we have several Manx breeders who have had outstanding Manx. To mention a few, the Misses Ruth and Ellen Carlson, of Illinois, who, as far as we know, have the only grand champion Manx, Guthred of Manx of Glen Orry: Mrs. Maude Barney, of Florida, All-American Dbl. Ch. Floridanus Tangerine; Mrs. Betty Youngman, Ch. Jurby of Ellan Vannin; Mrs. Carl Hahn. of St. Louis, Mo.; Mrs. S. L. Lovett, Mr. Price Cross, Mrs. Fred Hoyt, all Texans: Mrs. Harry Lyndes, Colorado; Lee and Bertie Williams, Colleen Clancy, Dr. and Mrs. W. C. Curphey, Ri-Bo Cattery, California, and many many more.

Last year two of the Associations passed new show rules dumping the Manx into one class, with only the best male and best female given the winners ribbons and points towards championships. Immediately from all points of the compass came protests, and concerted action was taken to have this discriminatory rule rescinded. Although the outcome is still in doubt, it is hoped they will void it at their annual meetings this

On the bright side of this unjust legislation, it brought the Manx breeders together, and a new society, The National Manx Club, is being organized. Requests for membership have come in from all points, and the first meeting is being held April 6, 1952.

Anyone interested in this organization can get complete information by writing Rita Wilson, Sec. pro-tem, 409 East Harding Way, Stockton, Calif. The aims of the organization are to put the Manx back in the front line of the Foreign Shorthair class, hold Manx specialty shows, enforce ethical breeding, standardize stud fees and sales of stock, and establish a common ground for an exchange of ideas and methods.

The Manx are not only outstanding show cats, but are very lovable and intelligent pets, and it is hoped that in the next few years they enjoy the popularity they are entitled to.