



*This is "very brief history" provides a background to some of the "retrospective" pieces covering British cat care from the 1930s through to the 1970s. It is not intended to be a definitive history of cat shows or cat fancies. Cat fancies will be able to provide far more detailed information on their own history, right down to "which cat won which prize in which year, and who were his parents?". For definitive information or for information on the cat fancy outside of the UK, you are advised to visit the official sites of the registries whose history interests you.*

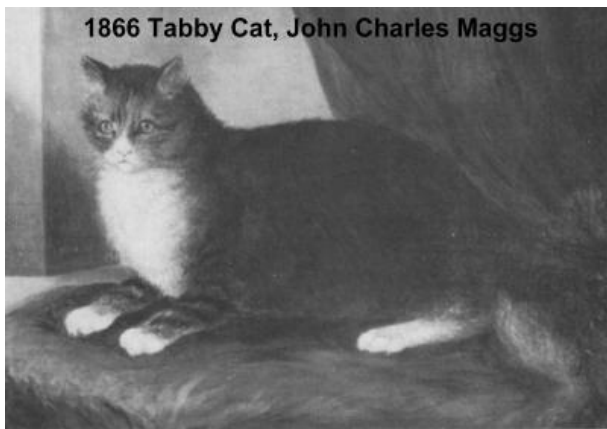
In "Animals, Their Nature and Their Uses" (1850s), Charles Baker wrote, "The Cat must be considered as a faithless friend, brought to oppose a still more insidious enemy. The domestic cat is the only animal of the tribe to which it belongs, whose services can more than recompense the trouble of its education." To Baker, cats were useful for controlling vermin, rather than being valued for their appearance.

Not all cat lovers would have agreed with this view. Some were already trying to perpetuate certain looks though there seemed to be no co-ordinated efforts and the habit of letting cats wander freely undermined their attempts. In "Origin of Species" (1859), though Charles Darwin acknowledged the attempts and the difficulties, he was dismissive of the selective breeding of cats, "...cats from their nocturnal habits, cannot be so easily matched [bred] and although so much valued by women and children, we rarely see a distinct breed long kept up."

Nevertheless, owners were breeding cats for their appearance and trueness to type. It was natural that they should want to compare their efforts against those of other breeders.

The earliest recorded cat show took place in England at the St Giles Fair, Winchester, in 1598 though we have no details of the exhibits or how they were judged. A cat show was held at a London house in 1861. During the 1860s, the first cat shows in North America took place in New England, being county fairs featuring farmers' cats: the local Maine Coon breed. Official Cat Shows with rules and breed standards began in 1870s Britain as part of a general public enthusiasm for seeing exhibitions of objects and of animals.

## THE VERY FIRST BRITISH CAT SHOWS



Barely twenty years after Darwin had been so dismissive of selective cat breeding, the world's first official cat show was staged at London's Crystal Palace on Thursday 13th July 1871 (some sources quote 12th or even 16th July, press reports support the date of 13th July). It was the brainchild of writer, artist, and noted cat lover, Harrison Weir who wrote breed standards against which the entries would be judged and he was one of the three judges. The Crystal Palace was one of London's leading venues at the time, so this really was a high profile event!

Weir grouped the cats in different classes according to length of fur, colour, shape and build. He drew up guides for judging and called these "Standards of Excellence" or "Standards of Points". For the first time the number of marks awarded for the colour of coat or the shape of the body were laid down. Weir's work was later incorporated into a standard manual for cat

show organisers, "Our Cats" and he is recognised as the father of the cat fancy.

He later wrote that he had "conceived the idea that it would be well to hold 'Cat Shows' so that the different breeds, colours, markings etc. might be more carefully attended to and the domestic cat sitting in front of the fire would then possess a beauty and an attractiveness to its owner unobserved and unknown because uncultivated before". He had been distressed by the long ages of neglect, ill-treatment and absolute cruelty towards domestic cats had suffered, and his main objective in organising the first show was promoting their welfare rather than providing an arena for competitive cat owners.

"The first cat show led up to the observation and kindly feeling for the domestic cat. Since then, throughout the length and breadth of the land, there have been Cat Shows, and much interest in them is taken by all classes of the community. Having before my mind many instances to show that Shows generate a love for cats I have never regretted planning the first Cat Show at the Crystal Palace."



The Victorian public at that time had a great appetite for exhibitions. The Crystal Palace had housed industry exhibitions showcasing inventions from around the Empire. Other fancy animals were bred and exhibited and cat lovers were not to be outdone. Many exhibits were Longhairs, though these were shorter-coated and longer-nosed than modern Persian Longhairs. Weir himself he preferred the shorthairs and it would be some years before the Angoras and Persians came to dominate the shows. It attracted thousands of cat lovers, many of whom went on to organise local cat shows on similar lines.

The show manager was one Mr Wilson and the judges were Harrison Weir, his brother John Weir and the Rev J McDonald. The cat show was advertised in The Times of 10<sup>th</sup> July 1871, "The Cat Show is to be held on Thursday next", but no-one was certain of what to expect. Weir, the show's organiser, had some concerns en route to the show - he had no idea how many exhibits he would find there, nor how they would behave. It was feared they would sulk or be distressed. The official show advertisements stated 25 classes comprising nearly all the known species of Eastern (i.e. Angora and Persian) and other foreign (Russian, Siamese) cats, as well as the British varieties (Shorthairs, Manx). The show attracted 170 exhibits and awarded 54 prizes; the large number of prizes being an incentive for future shows. The prizes were awarded to 32 gentlemen, 15 married ladies and only 4 spinsters - apparently dispelling the myth that cats were pets for spinsters. The Daily Telegraph urged its readers to "Hurry down as soon as they had finished reading these lines" and there were such vast numbers that it was sometimes impossible to see the cats. The cats themselves were penned in cages borrowed from the Pigeon Society and most were quiet and well behaved.

There were novelty classes which would not be permitted today including a prize for the fattest cat (won by a huge 20 lb cat belonging to a Mr Nash) and also for the biggest cat. Some of the more unusual exhibits included an Algerian Cat, listed as a French African cat. The Duke of Sutherland exhibited a British (i.e. Scottish) Wild Cat which had lost its right front paw and behaved like a mad devil, no doubt through terror. The two Siamese cats brought varying opinions. One writer described them as 'an unnatural kind of cat', whilst another thought that they were 'singular and elegant in their smooth skins'. The Daily Telegraph, which had earlier urged its readers to go to the show, described the Siamese cats as curious, unprepossessing and their colours completed "the resemblance of the little brutes to a pair of pug puppies".

According to the following day's *Morning Post*: "The greatest novelty of the day in the way of shows is the show of cats at Crystal Palace. We have had cattle shows, horse shows, dog shows and shows of various other animals more or less domesticated. hut this is the first cat show of an extensive and thoroughly organised character the world has ever seen." After the event, several journals reported Weir's cat show. Prior to the show there had been concern over how the cats would behave and *Harpers Weekly* of 19<sup>th</sup> August 1871 described the problems of caging one cat on the day of the show. It also seemed that one day was not enough for some people as *The Illustrated London News* of 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1871 reported "The show was only open one day." So successful was the show that later in 1871, a second show was held at the Crystal Palace, this time a three day show running from Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> to Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December according to a report in The Times on the 4<sup>th</sup> December.



The legend on the 1871 illustration of prize-winning exhibits reads:- Top left-to-right: Persian rare colour Violet; Hybrid Wildcats; Silver Tabby. Middle left-to-right: Best Litters of Kittens; Mouse Colour English. Bottom left-to-right: Tortoiseshell Tom; Persian; Abyssinian.

Cat breeding and showing had mainly interested middle and upper class women, with several aristocrats participating, so how did the "working men's" classes begin? One version (which corresponds to Weir's original aims) is that those upper classes (who were always keen on educating the masses) wanted to promote better cat care among the lower classes. Hence the earliest shows had classes for "Cats Belonging to Working Men". Another version of the story goes that

**CRYSTAL PALACE 1871**

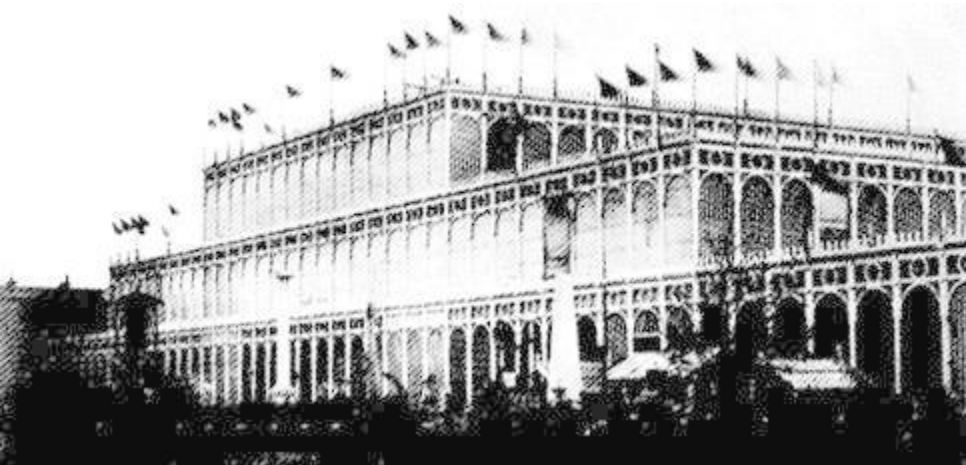


CRYSTAL PALACE 1871

The World's Largest Genetic Registry of Pedigreed Cats

## A Very Brief History of Cat Shows

(2003 Sarah Hartwell)



when that first show was held at Crystal Palace, not enough cats could be found as exhibits. The cellars at the Crystal Palace were full of stray cats, so workmen were told to round them up. The generous prizes on offer prompted the workmen to enter their own pet cats for the show as well, leading to working men's classes.

In 1873, a cat show was held at the Alexandra Palace, north London and another was held in Birmingham. The 1875 show in Edinburgh attracted 570 exhibits while the Crystal Palace show of the same year had 325 exhibition pens and included a special class for "Wild or Hybrid between Wild and Domestic Cats". The wildcats class was won by an ocelot. Bengals, Chausies

and Savannahs may seem like modern fads, but hybrids have been shown right from the early days and the 1871 illustration depicts Hybrid Wildcats (top row centre).

The prizes on offer would certainly have encouraged the working class to enter. First prize might be as much as 30 shillings. Entry fees and prizes in the Working Men's classes were lower than in the other classes. This also made show cats, particularly winning cats, very valuable and hopefully better cared for. At this time, an exhibition quality longhaired cat might cost the equivalent of a housemaid's annual wages, with some Champion cats being worth twice or more that amount. Exhibitors were soon less interested in cat welfare than in promoting their own breeds and, most importantly, in winning prizes. They were, to use a term from the world of horse events, pot-hunters.

The Cat Fancy's early beginnings in Britain were also described by a ship's doctor, who was also a veterinary surgeon, writing circa 1872. Doctor Gordon Stables listed the classes at what he refers to as 'pussy shows' taking place at the Crystal Palace and at Birmingham. In his list of the classes at the Crystal Palace and Birmingham shows, Dr Stables discussed the points to be looked for in the exhibits. Regarding shorthairs he wrote "*Class 1. And first on the list comes Tortoiseshell Tom*" Stables found Tortoiseshell Tom an ugly cat and expressed surprise that he only seen one tortie tomcat, and that one died at three months old. In many of the classes listed, the exhibits were to be judged by 'size', and Stables observed that the Black and White "*...is a large, handsome, gentlemanlike fellow*". Stables gave unusual advice to exhibitors in the matter of preparing an exhibit's coat for the show: little dabs of fresh cream here and there over the cat's fur so that the prospective contender will wash his coat so thoroughly and so extensively as to produce a beautiful, shining pelage. Stables, writing in the 1870s and before the era of genetics, would not have understand the scarcity of tortie tomcats. Stables' book suggested there was no class for the Blue cat, however he does mention the "Blue or Silver Tabby" while "Unusual Colour" there is a "Maltese" which was describes as all of one colour, "*a strange sort of slate colour or blue: even the whiskers were of the same hue.*"

By 1887, cat shows were regular events and the National Cat Club was founded in London. The National Cat Club aimed to promote the breeding of pedigree cats (and the proper keeping of pedigrees) and organise shows. The first National Cat Club Show was held at the Crystal Palace, London, in July 1887. The Show Manager was Mr F Wilson and 323 cats were entered. It was judged by Mr and Mrs Harrison Weir and Dr Gorden. The Entrance fee was 3 shillings and sixpence with an additional 2 shillings for Miscellaneous Club classes. The National Cat Club's first President was Harrison Weir, but he resigned because he felt that members were more interested in winning prizes than in promoting the welfare of cats (the reason he has organised the 1871 show). He was succeeded by the artist Louis Wain.

Until 1910 the National Cat Club was also, the Governing Body of the Cat Fancy. In 1910 the Governing Council of the Cat Fancy (GCCF) was formed. The National Cat Club Show was held at Crystal Palace until December 1936 when the venue was destroyed by fire on the eve of the National Show. Fortunately for the NCC, they had not taken their trophies there on the day before the show as was the usual practice! In the following years, the show was held at a number of different venues: Paddington Bakers Hall, Kentish Town Baths, Paddington Baths, Seymour Hall, the Royal Horticultural Hall, Olympia and Earls Court. The current venue is Olympia, although it is often uncomfortably crowded for visitors (especially in comparison with the Supreme which is held in the more spacious surroundings of Birmingham National Exhibition Centre).



The following words were written by Harrison Weir in 1903 for the preface of Simpson's "Book of the Cat". Thirty years had elapsed since his Crystal Palace cat show and his words make it evident that he was disenchanted with the course the cat fancy had taken:

*"Thirty years ago it was apparent to me that cats were not valued at their true worth, and then I suggested a show of cats! Let anyone try to start anything new, though novelty is said to charm! Many were the gibes, jokes, and jeers that were thrown at me then. But nothing succeeds like success. Now, if I may without offence say a few words as to present day shows, it is that they have not answered my expectations. Why? Because particular breeds are catered for and run after. Why such breathless talk about long-haired cats, be they blues or silvers? This is not cat breeding. I want, I wish, and, if I live, I hope to see far more of the 'harmless necessary cat' at our shows; for a high-class short-haired cat is one of the most perfect animals ever created. [...] Far more I might, and perhaps am expected to add; but my life's work is well-nigh done. He who fights honourable the good fight sinks at last."*

While Weir preferred shorthairs, Frances Simpson and others championed the Persian. The weekly "Fur and Feather" magazine first appeared in 1890 and Persian cats were offered for sale in its columns. It also contained letters and one cat exhibitor wrote to Fur and Feather complaining that "The last time I showed my Russian was in a class supposedly for Russians only. She was, however, beaten by a round-headed British Blue."



RICHMOND CAT SHOW: ARRANGEMENT OF TENTS.

In 1898, an aristocratic breeder, Lady Marcus Beresford, founded a rival organisation called The Cat Club. Its members included some of the most important people in the land. However, The Cat Club foundered in 1903. It was replaced by yet another group, the Cat Fanciers Association.

The Victorian cat shows were undoubtedly popular. Most judges were all-rounders who judged not only all breeds of cat but also birds, dogs, flowers and so on. At the beginning of 20th century at a London cat show, there were five different breeds of cat



competing. There were two longhaired varieties, the Angora and the Persian, and three shorthairs, the Siamese, the Manx and the "shorthair" (domestic shorthair) though the shorthair came in nine colour varieties.

Breeder, judge and persian enthusiast Frances Simpson wrote "The commonest of all cats are Shorthaired Tabbies and Whites or Black and Whites. The markings are sometimes quite grotesque in their distribution. It seems almost a pity to so far encourage these cats as to give classes for them at our Shows." The longhairs were not the snubby-nosed Persians we are used to seeing today. Miss Simpson also stated "Apart from the length and texture of fur, the points of the animals are practically the same, whether long- or short-haired. They should be cobby in build and short on the legs, the head should be round and broad, eyes large and full, nose short, ears small and wide apart."

When the Governing Council of the Cat Fancy was founded in 1910 there were 16 cat clubs represented. Most were regional clubs or for certain varieties, excepting the short-lived "Wilson's Ltd Cat Club" which appears to have been a business venture. The first cat registers had already been set up by the Cat Club and the National Cat Club. Rivalry meant that cats registered with one club could not be registered with the other. When the GCCF became the sole registry, it inherited those early registers to set up a combined registry. In 1910, the register had four sections: Longhairs, Shorthairs, Abyssinians and Siamese. A pedigree cat was defined as one with registered parents, grandparents and great-grandparents (i.e. three generations) and this definition is the one still recognised by modern Trading Standards Officers. In order to have a place on the Full Register, cats must not only have the three generations of registered ancestors, those ancestors must be of cats within their own section of the register. Apart from information surviving in the Stud Books, which go back to 1910, those early registry records have been lost. Some enthusiasts have put together partial records based on fragmented information in books such as Frances Simpson's 3 books published between 1901 and 1924 and from the Stud Books listing those cats that were "placed" (won their class) at Championship cat shows, along with those cats' parents.

Even into the 1930s cat breeding was considered to be a cheap hobby that could be turned into a money-making career. However, after the Second World War, shortages meant reduced cash prizes at shows and kitten prices dropped, although pedigree kittens could still cost the equivalent of several week's wages for a working man.

## THE FIRST AMERICAN CAT SHOWS



Though cat shows were featured at county fairs in 1860s New England, America, most people date the beginning of the American cat fancy from a show organised in 1895. Enthused by a cat show at Crystal Palace, Englishman James Hyde, organised the show at the Madison Square Garden, New York. It promoted sufficient interest in cats to lead to the formation of many cat clubs. The 1899 show in Chicago led to the founding of the Chicago Cat Club and then the more powerful Beresford Cat Club, named in honour of Lady Marcus Beresford, founder of the short-lived The Cat Club in Britain.

Around 1890, the year "Fur and Feather" appeared in England, Mr C H Jones launched the American monthly "Cat Journal", probably the first magazine devoted exclusively to cats. American Helen M Winslow, was the author of "Concerning Cats" (1900), a book on cats and the cat fancy in America. At that time, the American cat fancy lagged behind the British scene hence her description of English shows written for the benefit of American cat fanciers! You can find more details on the British cat fancy in excerpts from Frances Simpson's book (published 1903) later on. This is the chapter entitled "Concerning Cats and Cat Shows" from her book. "High-bred" meant cats of recognised breeds and known ancestry, what would now be called purebreds and pedigrees. Winslow wrote:

The annual cat shows in England, which have been held successively for more than a quarter of a century, led to the establishment in 1887 of a National Cat Club, which has steadily grown in membership and interest, and by the establishment of the National Stud Book and Register has greatly raised the standard of felines in the mother country. It has many well-known people as members, life members, or associates; and from time to time people distinguished in the cat world have been added as honorary members. The officers of the National Cat Club of England, since its reconstruction in March, 1898, are as follows:-

*Presidents:-* Her Grace the Duchess of Bedford; Lord Marcus Beresford.

*Vice-presidents:-* Lily, Duchess of Marlborough, now Lady Wm. Beresford; the Countess of Warwick; Lady Granville Gordon; Hon. Mrs. McL. Morrison; Madame Ronner; Mr. Isaac Woodiwiss; the Countess of Sefton; Lady Hothfield; the Hon. Mrs. Brett; Mr. Sam



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Woodiwiss; Mr. H. W. Bullock.

*President of Committee:-* Mr. Louis Wain.

*Committee:-* Lady Marcus Beresford; Mrs. Balding; Mr. Sidney Woodiwiss; Mr. Hawkins; Mrs. Blair Maconochie; Mrs. Valiance; Mr. Brackett; Mr. F. Gresham.

*Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer:-* Mrs. Stennard Robinson.

This club has a seal and a motto: "Beauty lives by kindness." It publishes a stud book in which are registered pedigrees and championship wins which are eligible for it. Only wins obtained from shows held under N. C. C. rules are recorded free of charge. The fee for ordinary registration is one shilling per cat, and the stud book is published annually. There are over two thousand cats now entered in this National Cat Club Stud Book, the form of entry being as follows (L. F. means long-haired female; C. P., Crystal Palace):-

*No. 1593, Mimdatzi, L. F. Silver Tabby.*

*Miss Anna F. Gardner, Hamswell House, near Bath, shown as Mimi.*

*Bred by Miss How, Bridgegate, near Bristol. Born April, 1893. Alive.*

*Sire, Blue Boy the Great of Islington, 1090 (Mrs H. B. Thompson).*

*Dam, Boots of Bridgegate, 1225 (Miss How).*

*Prizes won— 1st Bilton, 2nd, C. P. 1893, Kitten Class.*

*No. 1225, Boots of Bridgegate. L. F. Silver Tabby.*

*Miss E. How, Bridgegate House, Warmly, Bristol.*

*Former owner, Mrs. Foote, 43 Palace Gardens, Kensington.*

*Born March, 1892. Alive.*

Some of the cats entered have records of prizes covering nearly half a page of the book. The advantage of such a book to cat owners can be readily seen. A cat once entered never changes its number, no matter how many owners he may have, and his name cannot be changed after December 31 of the year in which he is registered. The more important rules of the English National Cat Club are given in condensed form as follows:-

The name is "The National Cat Club."

**Objects:** To promote honesty in the breeding of cats, so as to insure purity in each distinct breed or variety; to determine the classification required, and to insure the adoption of such classification by breeders, exhibitors, judges, and the committees of all cat shows; to encourage showing and breeding by giving championship and other prizes, and otherwise doing all in its power to protect and advance the interest of cats and their owners. The National Cat Club shall frame a separate set of rules for cat shows to be called "National Cat Club Rules," and the committees of those cat shows to which the rules are given, shall be called upon to sign a guarantee to the National Cat Club binding them to provide good penning and effectual sanitation, also to the punctual payment of prize money and to the proper adjudication of prizes.

**Stud Book:** The National Cat Club shall keep a stud book.

The club shall consist of (1) patrons, (2) life members, (3) president, (4) vice-presidents, (5) exhibiting members and (6) non-exhibiting members, an unlimited number whose names and addresses shall be kept by the honorable secretary. Each candidate for election shall be proposed by one member and seconded by another, and the election shall be vested absolutely in the committee.

The fee for each member shall be one guinea. Life members may be elected on the cash payment of eight guineas. No member whose subscription is unpaid shall be entitled to compete for any special prize, vote at any meeting, or enjoy any of the privileges of membership, until his or her subscription be paid. Every member shall strive to promote honorable dealing in feline matters by bringing to the notice of the club committee any apparent dishonesty at cat shows, etc. Every member to report the carelessness of the club attendant, etc., and to use his or her best endeavors to promote the success of the club by keeping "accuracy in pedigree and statements, and good faith in all his or her transactions." The committee shall endeavor to found a Library of Kennel Reference for the National Cat Club, and all members are invited to contribute gifts of books relating to cats, etc.

The cat-show rules, under which all shows connected with the N. C. C. are given, provide that no cats shall be shown, except in "Local Classes" or for litters of kittens, except such as have been previously registered at the Cat Club offices. Neuter (gelded) or



spayed cats are allowed to compete for prizes, but are not eligible for entry on the stud book. A duly qualified veterinary surgeon is appointed at every show to act as inspector, who examines every cat before it is benched, and rejects any that exhibit any sign of disease.

The N. C. C. keeps a "black list." People eligible for this have been guilty, as members or otherwise, of fraudulent or discreditable conduct in regard to cats and cat shows, and are not countenanced by the N. C. C. in any capacity. All prizes won are recorded in the stud book. The other rules do not differ materially from the rules of cat shows in this country.

The offices of the National Cat Club are at 5 Great James Street, Bedford Row, London, W. C., and the annual and championship shows have so far been held at the Crystal Palace. There is also a Ladies' Kennel Association, which holds shows of great interest, many of its members being connected with the N. C. C. The definition of classes, both in England and America, is as follows:-

*Open Classes.* - Open to cats, prize winners or novices.

*Novice Classes.* - Open to cats of any age that have never won a prize.

*Neuter Classes.* - For gelded cats.

*Kitten Classes.* - Single entries over three and under eight months.

*Kitten Brace.* - Kittens of any age.

*Brace.* - For two cats of any age.

*Team.* - For three or more cats, any age.

In Paris, although cats have not been commonly appreciated as in England, there is an increasing interest in them, and cat shows are now a regular feature of the Jardin d'Acclimation. This suggests the subject of the cat's social position in France. Since the Revolution the animal has conquered in this country "toutes les liberties," excepting that of wearing an entire tail, for in many districts it is the fashion to cut the caudal appendage short. In Paris cats are much cherished wherever they can be without causing too much unpleasantness with the landlord. The system of living in flats is not favorable to cat culture, for the animal, not having access either to the tiles above or to the gutter below, is apt to pine for fresh air, and the society of its congeners. Probably in no other city do these creatures lie in shop windows and on counters with such an arrogant air of proprietorship. In restaurants, a very large and fat cat is kept as an advertisement of the good feeding to be obtained on the premises. There is invariably a cat in a charbonnier's shop, and the animal is generally one that was originally white, but long ago came to the conclusion that all attempts to keep itself clean were hopeless. Its only consolation is that it is never blacker than its master.

It is well known that the Persians and Angoras are much esteemed in Paris and are, to some extent, bred for sale. In the provinces, French cats are usually low-bred animals, with plebeian heads and tails, the stringlike appearance of the latter not being improved by cropping. Although not generally esteemed as an article of food in France, there are still many people scattered throughout the country who maintain that a *civet de chat* is as good, or better, than a *civet de lièvre*. M. François Coppée's fondness for cats as pets is so well known that there was great fitness in placing his name first upon the jury of awards at the 1896 cat show in Paris. Such other well-known men as Emile Zola, André Theuriet, and Catulle Mendès, also figured on the list. There is now an annual "Exposition Feline Internationale."

In this country the first cat show of general interest was held at Madison Square Garden, New York, in May, 1895. Some years before, there had been a cat show under the auspices of private parties in Boston, and several minor shows had been held at Newburgh, N. Y., and other places. But the New York shows were the first to attract general attention. One hundred and seventy-six cats were exhibited by one hundred and twenty-five owners, besides several ocelots, wild cats, and civets. For some reason the show at Madison Square Garden in March, 1896, catalogued only one hundred and thirty-two cats and eighty-two owners. Since that time there have been no large cat shows in New York.

There have been several cat shows in Boston since 1896, but these are so far only adjuncts to poultry and pigeon shows. Great interest has been manifest in them, however, and the entries have each year run above a hundred. Some magnificent cats are exhibited, although as a rule the animals shown are somewhat small, many kittens being placed there for sale by breeders.

Several attempts to start successful cat clubs in this country have been made. At the close of the New York show in 1896, an American Cat Club was organized for the purpose "of investigating, ascertaining, and keeping a record of the pedigrees of cats, and of instituting, maintaining, controlling, and publishing a stud book, or book of registry of such kind of domestic animals in the United States of America and Canada, and of promoting and holding exhibitions of such animals, and generally for the purpose of improving the breed thereof, and educating the public in its knowledge of the various breeds and varieties of cats." The officers were as follows:-



*President:- Rush S. Huidekoper, 154 E. 57th St., New York City.*

*Vice-Presidents:- W. D. Mann, 208 Fifth Ave., New York City; Mrs. E. N. Barker, Newburgh, N. Y.*

*Secretary-treasurer:- James T. Hyde, 16 E. 23d St., New York City.*

*Executive Committee:- T. Farrar Rackham, E. Orange, N. J.; Miss Edith Newbold, Southampton, L. I.; Mrs. Harriet C. Clarke, 154 W. 82d St., New York City; Charles R. Pratt, St. James Hotel, New York City; Joseph W. Stray, 229 Division St., Brooklyn, N. Y.*

More successful than this club, however, is the Beresford Cat Club formed in Chicago in the winter of 1899. The president is Mrs. Clinton Locke, who is a member of the English cat clubs, and whose kennel in Chicago contains some of the finest cats in America. The Beresford Cat Club has the sanction of John G. Shortall, of the American Humane Society, and on its honorary list are Miss Agnes Repplier, Madame Ronner, Lady Marcus Beresford, Miss Helen Winslow, and Mr. Louis Wain.

At their cat shows, which are held annually, prizes are offered for all classes of cats, from the common feline of the back alley up to the aristocratic resident of milady's boudoir. The Beresford Club Cat shows are the most successful of any yet given in America. One hundred and seventy-eight prizes were awarded in the show of January, 1900, and some magnificent cats were shown. It is said by those who are in a position to know that there are no better cats shown in England now than can be seen at the Beresford Show in Chicago. The exhibits cover short and long haired cats of all colors, sizes, and ages, with Siamese cats, Manx cats, and Russian cats. At the show in January, 1900, Mrs. Clinton Locke exhibited fourteen cats of one color, and Mrs. Josiah Cratty five white cats. This club numbers one hundred and seventy members and has a social position and consequent strength second to none in America. It is a fine, honorable club, which has for its objects the protection of the Humane Society and the caring for all cats reported as homeless or in distress. It aims also to establish straightforward and honest dealings among the catteries and to do away with the humbuggery which prevails in some quarters about the sales and valuation of high-bred cats. This club cannot fail to be of great benefit to such as want to carry on an honest industry by the raising and sale of fine cats. It will also improve the breeding of cats in this country, and thereby raise the standard and promote a more general intelligence among the people with regard to cats. Some of the best people in the United States belong to the Beresford Club, the membership of which is by no means confined to Chicago; on the contrary, the club is a national one and the officers and board of directors are:-

*President:- Mrs. Clinton Locke.*

*1st Vice-president:- Mrs. W. F. Ames Colburn.*

*2nd Vice-President:- Mrs. F. A. Howe.*

*Corresponding Secretary:- Mrs. Henry C. Clark.*

*Recording Secretary. — Miss Lucy Claire Johnstone.*

*Treasurer. — Mrs. Charles Hampton Lane.*

*Mrs. Elwood H. Tolman.*

*Mrs. J. H. Pratt.*

*Mrs. Mattie Fisk Green.*

*Mrs. F. A. Story.*

*Miss Louise L. Fergus.*

The club is anxious to have members all over the United States, just as the English cat clubs do. The non-resident annual fees are only one dollar, and a member has to be proposed by one and endorsed by two other members. The register cats for the stud book are entered at one dollar each, and it is proposed to give shows once a year. The main objects of the club are to improve the breeds of fancy cats in America, to awaken a more general interest in them, and to secure better treatment for the ordinary common cat. The shows will be given for the benefit of the Humane Society.

The Chicago Cat Club has done excellent work also, having established a cat home, or refuge, for stray, homeless, or diseased cats, with a department for boarding pet cats during the absence of their owners. It is under the personal care and direction of Dr. C. A. White, 78 E. 26th Street. The first cat to be admitted there was one from Cleveland, Ohio, which was to be boarded for three months during the absence of its owner in Europe and also to be treated for disease. This club was incorporated under the state laws of Illinois, on January 26, 1899. In connection with it is a children's cat club, which has for its primary object the teaching of kindness to animals by awakening in the young people an appreciative love for cats. At the show of the Chicago Cat Club, small dogs and covies are exhibited also, the Cavy Club and the Pet Dog Club having affiliated with the Chicago Cat Club.

The president of the Chicago Cat Club is Mrs. Leland Norton, of the Drexel Kennels, at 4011 Drexel Boulevard, Chicago. The corresponding secretary is Mrs. Laura Daunty Pelham, 315 Interocean Building, and the other officers are: Vice-president, Miss Gertrude Estabrooks; recording secretary, Miss Jennie Van Allen; and treasurer, Mrs. Ella B. Shepard. Membership is only one dollar a year, and the registration fee in the Chicago stud book fifty cents for each cat.



The cat shows already held and the flourishing state of our cat clubs have proved that America has as fine, if not finer, cats than can be found in England, and that interest in finely bred cats is on the increase in this country. The effect of the successful cat clubs and cat shows must be to train intelligent judges and to raise the standard of cats in this country. It will also tend to make the cat shows of such a character that kind-hearted owners need not hesitate to enter their choicest cats. As yet, however, the judging at cat shows is not so well managed as in England. It should be a rule that the judges of cats should not only understand their fine points, but should be in sympathy with the little pets.

Cat dealers who have a number of cats entered for competition, should not be allowed on the board of judges. In England, the cats to be judged are taken by classes into a tent for the purpose, and the door is fastened against all but the judges; whereas over here the cats are too often taken out of their cages in the presence of a crowd of spectators and judged on a table or some public place, thereby frightening the timid ones and bringing annoyance to the owners.

Again, there should be several judges. In England there are seven, including two or three women, and these are assigned to different classes: Mr. Harrison Weir, F.R.H.S., the well-known authority on cats, and Louis Wain, the well-known cat artist, are among them. In this country there are a number of women who are not dealers, but who are fully posted in the necessary qualifications for a high-bred cat. American cat shows should have at least three judges, one of whom, at least, should be a woman. A cat should be handled gently and kept as calm as possible during the judging. Women are naturally more gentle in their methods, and more tenderhearted. When my pets are entered for competition, may some wise, kind woman have the judging of them!

In judging a cat the quality and quantity of its fur is the first thing considered. In a long-haired cat this includes the "lord mayor's chain," or frill, the tail, and, most important of all, the ear-tufts. The tufts between the toes and the flexibility of the tail are other important points. The shape of head, eyes, and body are also carefully noted. A short-haired cat is judged first for color, then for eyes, head, symmetry, and ears.

In all cats the head should show breadth between the eyes. The eyes should be round and open. White cats to be really valuable should have blue eyes (without deafness); black cats should have yellow eyes; other cats should have pea-green eyes, or in some cases, as in the brown, self-colored eyes. The nose should be short and tapering. The teeth should be good, and the claws flat. The lower leg should be straight, and the upper hind leg lie at closed angles. The foot should be small and round (in the maltese, pointed). A good cat has a light frame, but a deep chest; a slim, graceful, and fine neck; medium-sized ears with rounded tips. The croup should be square and high; the tail of a short-haired cat long and tapering, and of a long-haired cat broad and bent over at the end.

The good results of a cat show are best told in a few words by one who has acted as judge at an American exhibition. *"One year,"* he said, *"people have to learn that there is such a thing as a cat; the next they come to the show and learn to tell the different breeds; another year they learn the difference between a good cat and a poor one; and the next year they become exhibitors, and tell the judges how to award the premiums."*

A 1936 American essay on cat shows noted that the show season opened in November and "Among the first shows in New York City are those held by the Cat Fanciers' Association, Inc., and the United Cat Clubs of America, Inc. Each of these organizations has many member clubs in the United States and Canada. There are other large societies, such as the Cat Fanciers' Federation and the American Cat Association, and all of these, and their member clubs, have shows through the autumn and winter. There are cat shows from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from Maine to Florida." Each claimed to be the biggest and best of its kind. Persian cat clubs continued to outnumber all other breed clubs and long-hairs continued to dominate the multi-breed shows.

Shows were considered necessary to the cat fancy, but an "ordeal for most home cats". Despite the many precautions taken by show manager, there was always the danger of infection where numbers of cats were gathered together. To be eligible for exhibition, the cat had to be registered with one of the recognized cat clubs and the owner had to be familiar with that club's standards, classifications and rules: "Select the club that is sponsoring the show you mean to enter, for rules differ". If the cats were well cared for, special conditioning was not necessary, but a neglected cat would have to be conditioned and groomed or would be rejected when it arrived.

## SENDING A CAT OFF TO A SHOW

A good cat which was shown regularly might win £20 a year for 5 or 6 years. It was considered to be in its prime at the age of 5 or 6 years, after which it was thought its spine would begin to drop and it would die between the age of 8 or 9 years old. Exhibiting



cats was a paying hobby, breeding from Champion cats could also be lucrative. Though the cats were considered valuable, the way in which they were packed off to shows would horrify the modern exhibitor.

Early British cat shows were two-day events, rather than the one-day shows held nowadays. Many owners did not trouble to attend in person, but sent their cats off by train and hoped the cats would arrive safely, be fed on arrival and be sent back without mishap after the show. Such an attitude clearly demonstrates that the emphasis was on winning, not on welfare!

The more fortunate cats were put on the train in wicker cat baskets or hampers draught-proofed with brown paper wrapped around it. Padlocking the container was considered wise; the key would be posted to the Secretary of the club holding the show. If the basket went astray or was delayed, the cat spent several uncomfortable days trapped in its container until it was found. No doubt some cats died before being found and released.

Not all owners had cat baskets. The cat might be sent to the show in a wooden crate, which was nailed down, or a margarine basket, which was strapped shut. These containers were cramped, there was no provision for food or toilet facilities and the journeys were sometimes extremely long. If the journey involved changing trains, the cat might also have to endure sitting on a station platform for several hours. Unaccompanied cats could be insured with the railways for threepence in the pound. Owners would spend threepence on insurance, in the hope that it ensured better treatment for their cats in transit, whatever the cat's actual worth.

Some cats had the bad habit (born of parasites) of scratching, particularly at their neck ruffs. To avoid the cat arriving with its fur ruined, owners might use wash leather to tie the cat's hind legs tied together. Some owners sent their cats to shows in sacks tied around the neck so that only the cat's head protruded. After having endured such journeys, it is surprising that cats were in any condition to be exhibited.

Some cats never arrived at the show, having escaped or been lost in transit, perhaps loaded onto the wrong train. Some reached the show but went missing on the equally fraught journey home. Some owners got the wrong cats back. One exhibitor sent a female cat to a show and failed to notice that the cat returned to her was a male. She put the male in with her cattery, only discovering the error when her other females produced kittens a few months later. She had noticed that the cat returned to her was heavier than when she had sent it, but had attributed this to it being well-fed at the show. Perhaps she had also lacked a sense of smell since tomcats have a very distinctive odour, even to humans.

Experts suggested that cats should not be fed before their journey to avoid them soiling themselves while travelling. At a two-day show there was "hope and trust" that the cats would be fed when penned. Some criticism was voiced about Show Officials feeding the cats milk instead of water, resulting in "accidents" (diarrhoea) on the day of the show or on the return journey.



During her lifetime, Frances Simpson was Honorary Secretary of most of the early clubs, including the Blue Persian Society and the National Cat Club. Sometimes she served on four committees at once. In her role as Secretary, she was responsible for receiving the cats when they arrived at the show, unpacking them, caring for them during the show (shows were mainly 2 day events) and returning the cats - and any awards they had won - to their owners after the show. This gave her plenty of experience of the lack of care some owners put into transporting their cats, something she wrote on at length in "The Book of the Cat". Some were nailed into wooden boxes for transportation, unaccompanied, by train and she wrote of cats which arrived dead or dying at the venue. Those that survived the journey and the rigours of the show were packed up and returned in the same way. Some exhibitors failed to enclose return labels with their cats (if the cat and the class it was entered for were properly marked on the outward label, the owner could usually be traced through the show schedule). Some arrived in padlocked containers, but without a key (it was supposed to be sent on ahead in an

envelope).

In 1927, there were complaints about the packing of large cats in tiny boxes to travel to shows with the result that cats had arrived suffocated or nearly so. Show organisers warned that cases of "cruel packing" would be noted by Show officials. They would advise the Governing Council (GCCF) who would warn the novice or punish the old hand (as applicable) and possibly ban some individuals from entering their cats at GCCF shows. Perpetrators of cruel packing would be warned that the Inspectors of the



RSPCA would take action against them. The Hon Secretary at one show condemned the owners who sent a big white longhaired male in an unsuitably small carrier ("would have to sit hunched up all the way to its destination, unable to move an inch, and would get home thoroughly cramped"). Another exhibitor was seen to stuff a huge cat into a basket that was only large enough for a three month old kitten. She called for the SPCA to be involved.

During the show, it was the Secretary's job to feed the cats and keep the cats and their cages sanitary, not just for the cats' comfort, but in an attempt to prevent "Show Fever" which not even the pills and potions of the day could prevent, despite their "guaranteed" efficaciousness. Many of the disinfectants then in use were highly toxic to cats. After the show, the Secretary had to pack the cat, along with any prize cards and awards it had one (should the cards be damaged or destroyed on the homeward journey, the Secretary had to replace them). Finally, she would have had to arrange transport for each unaccompanied cat, an amazing feat of logistics (and one which sometimes resulted in the wrong cat being sent).

Mindful of the hard work of the show Secretary, Simpson often reminded exhibitors that a note of thanks for the safe return of their cat would be appreciated! She replied personally to all the thank you notes she received. In one reply, she mentioned to the exhibitor that she had personally packed and despatched 150 cats after the show in question, and asked the exhibitor to thank her publicly in Fur & Feather. This exhibitor showed Simpson's note to another exhibitor, who straightaway wrote to Fur & Feather, complaining of Miss Simpson's self-seeking ways, especially as there were only 118 exhibits at that show!

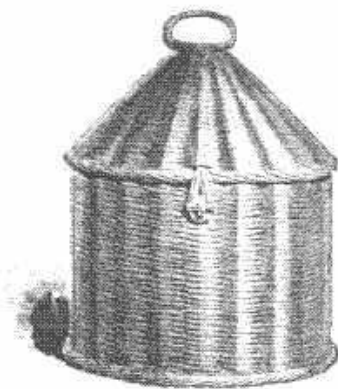
Having witnessed the horrors and fatalities caused by unsuitable travelling crates, Frances Simpson, in her 1903 "The Book of the Cat", tried to educate cat lovers in the proper way to transport cats. She wrote "*How heterogeneous is the collection of hampers, boxes, baskets - I had almost added bundles - one sees brought in by the officials during the receiving hours before a big show! Every variety of package, very many of which are exactly what they ought not to be. Some unnecessarily elaborate, polished wooden cases with brass fittings - handsome and durable no doubt, but far too cumbersome, and by their very weight inflicting much jar on the occupant when moved about; while others are a disgrace to anyone pretending to care about a cat or even to know what a cat is, many deserving to be straightway brought under the notice of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.*

*I have seen big heavy cats jammed into margarine hampers, a thin wicker receptacle whose sides slope inwards like a flower-pot, where the animal must have suffered agonies of cramp in a veritable chamber of "little ease." Others are sent weary distances in shallow, rough grocery boxes with a few holes bored for ventilation, subject to be thrown about in transit, first on one side then on the other, the lid perchance nailed on, giving thereby much extra trouble to the penning officials. Little wonder if the cat arrives bruised, shaken, frightened nearly to death, and very probably wild and savage."*

Unlucky cats - no doubt the bundles referred to by Simpson - might be transported fastened up to their neck in a sack. Simpson went on to say that such unsuitable carriers were due to lack of thought, lack of common sense and sometimes simple lack of care for the cats being transported. Cats on longer journeys e.g. to America by ship, sometimes did not survive the voyage and if they did, many did not survive long after arrival. Simpson illustrated two "excellent travelling baskets, which fulfil pretty nearly all requirements for cats travelling singly."



SPRATT'S TRAVELLING BASKET.



A USEFUL CAT BASKET.

The first was Spratt's Travelling Basket: a rectangular hamper with top handle, leather closure straps and an inner skeleton lid. Apart from the skeleton lid, this is still a familiar type of carrier and is probably an adaptation of a pigeon fancier's basket. Simpson wrote "*[It is] made by Messrs Spratt and has an inner skeleton lid, which is much to be recommended when sending a vicious or very timid cat that is likely to make a bolt on the basket being opened.*" The second basket was a conical-lidded basket ("*bee-hive shaped*") designed by Mrs Paul Hardy, of Chobham specifically for carrying cats. It was made of strong white wicker, the lid fastened with a rim of about two inches deep over the body of the basket, apertures in the rim allowed the wicker loops of the fastenings to project and when the cane stick was thrust through the fastenings the basket was absolutely secure, or a Simpson wrote "*not a paw can get out*".



Simpson wrote *"This beehive shape has several advantages. The cat can stand up and stretch itself at ease, when tired of lying down the handle being at the apex, it is carried - even by porters - without the cat being tilted off its legs; whilst the dome top prevents any other package being piled upon it - a disadvantage the flat-typed hamper always has. I line my baskets outside with brown paper or oil baize up to the rim, and inside with curtain serge, leaving the lid free for ventilation. Then with plenty of hay at the bottom of the basket, the cat will travel from one end of England to the other in comfort and safety, with no danger of taking cold even if left about draughty platforms or in parcel offices. This basket is made by Messrs Bull of Guildford, at a very moderate cost, and lasts for years."*

In the early days of the cat fancy, there were classes for pairs of cats ("brace") and also mother and kitten classes where a mother with her pretty litter of young kittens was displayed (an idea horrific to modern cat fanciers and one which resulted in the death of considerable numbers of kittens due to infection or injury). Simpson continued:

*"These baskets are, of course, intended for one cat only, or a pair of kittens. A really safe and capable travelling arrangement for a litter with the mother has yet, I think, to be devised. I have seen none I think good. The double compartment hamper I much dislike. The handles are perforce at each end, necessitating two carriers - who never do it - so the hamper is dragged by the porter or official with one end tilted (the other cat being nearly upside down), is leant up against other luggage, or dropped flat with a bang. With young kittens inside this leads to fatalities."*

Many exhibitors and breeders, it seems, overlooked the obvious - the need for a good label which would not become detached from the basket. Frances Simpson recommended a first-rate label available from the Aerefair Engineering Works, near Ruabon. *"It is a stout linen label, printed 'Valuable Live Cat' in big block letters; below is 'Urgent' in red - a good idea, red being more likely to attract the casual eye of the railway official. Spaces are left below for line of travel, via, etc, and date and time of despatch. It is reversible, so the sender can fill up with the return address if necessary. I always prefer to fasten the label down at both ends, flat to the basket: it is less likely to be torn away than when left hanging loose from one eyelet. It is by due attention to the details that cat fanciers can to some extent mitigate the dangers and risks that must necessarily attend the transit of live stock by rail."*

The distances in the USA were (and still are) even longer than in the UK. Travelling could take several days and accounts suggest they fared even worse than cats transported by train in Britain. According to an American cat writer in 1936: "Cats should not be fed before a journey, even a short one by automobile. At shows there is a feeding committee, and chopped beef is taken to the cages at regular times, but you may take your own food if you prefer. It is wise to stay by your pet during the show, in order to give it confidence and guard it against any possible harm at the hands of some ill-advised visitor. There are special carriers and crates to be had if one is sending a cat to a distant show, but if you ship a cat by railway you risk a tragedy. Once a cat and two kittens were sent from California to New York, and when the crate was opened the kittens were dead and the mother so near death that she had to be killed. Somehow the trainmen had overlooked the instructions about food and water. Even on short journeys accidents may happen. I knew of a Persian kitten whose cage was crushed, with the kitten inside, by the fall of express packages insecurely piled above."

## EXHIBITING, CHEATING, "SHOW FEVER" AND SABOTAGE

Although people enjoyed exhibiting their cats, it was risky - lacking modern veterinary care or vaccines, many cats succumbed to disease. Cats were not "vetted in" as they are today (unwell cats not being allowed to compete). One ailment, mentioned in cat breeding books right up into the 1950s, was named "show fever". Show fever could wipe out entire catteries within a day or two of a cat returning from a show. It was probably distemper (Feline Infectious Enteritis), but many owners thought their cats had been poisoned by jealous competitors or given tainted food by a show official. Until the October 1892 Crystal Palace show, no veterinary surgeon had previously been appointed to inspect the cats when they arrived (known today as "vetting in"). On that occasion Mr Harold Leeney rejected some twenty exhibits suffering from well-defined infectious disease. Previously many of the exhibited cats, especially kittens, went home to die.

Frances Simpson, in her 1903 work "The Book of the Cat", contained a first hand account from breeder of Blue Persians, Mrs Hardy who had to fight her way against disease and death after her cats became infected at a cat show. Simpson wrote "Her own account is so vivid that I quote it, so that fanciers in a like evil condition may fight for the lives of their pets to the last." And went on to reproduce Mrs Hardy's account:

*"I was singularly free from illness of any kind amongst them, and I lived for some time happy in the belief that the Persian puss was in no wise different from her short-coated sister in the robust possession of nine lives; so I added cat unto cat, and bred for show; when swiftly Nemesis overtook me. I showed five full-grown cats at the first Westminster show, and twenty-four hours after*



# The World's Largest Genetic Registry of Pedigreed Cats

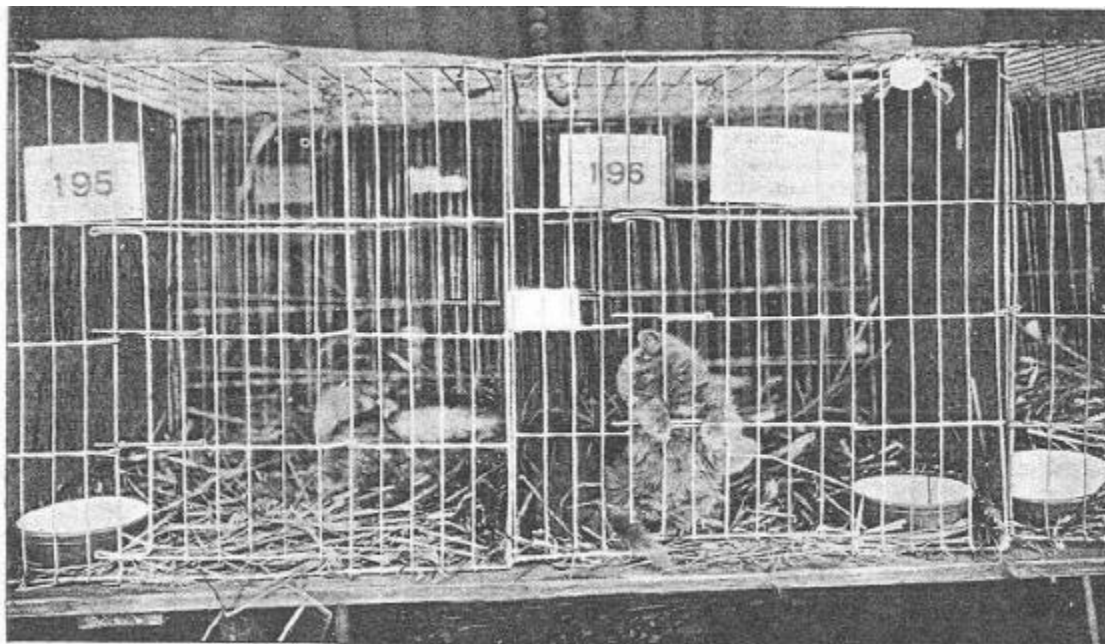
## A Very Brief History of Cat Shows

(2003 Sarah Hartwell)



*the show was over my best blue queen, a young beauty whose proud owner I had been for one brief month, died of acute pneumonia. A few days later influenza showed itself amongst the others and all four were down with it.*

*I pulled them through, all but one young kittens of four months, in whom acute laryngitis developed, and so she had to be put to sleep. 'Wooshoo' was given up by the vet, as he piled so many complications into his system one after the other, developing bronchitis, gastritis, and jaundice on the top of the original complaint. Poor fellow, for twenty-four hours he lay unconscious, but I kept his heart going by does of pure alcohol every two hours, while I fought the disease with hot fomentation, medicated steamings, and other proper remedies." For a month afterwards, Wooshoo had to be hand fed on tempting morsels, including minced oyster, before he began to eat voluntarily.*



TYPE OF CAGE AT THE RICHMOND CAT SHOW.

Petty jealousies among cat breeders has led to cats having bleach poured into their drinking water, hatpins stuck into their bodies or noxious substances sprinkled on their fur. Despite Weir's aims of promoting cat welfare, some breeders were (and still are) so obsessed with prizes that they will poison or otherwise harm other people's cats. Most cats were exhibited in straw-lined pens. Some pens were decorated with silken drapes and the cats had velvet cushions to sit on. Visitors were often kept a few feet away from the cages by ropes so that they couldn't interfere with the exhibits.

Cheating was not uncommon. An ordinary cat could be turned into a Manx if operated on at a young age. Attention had to be paid to see that the absent tail looked natural and that there was no scar as evidence of operative interference. In dog shows, this was known as "faking" and astoundingly it has been found to go in modern times (such as the cosmetic reduction of an otherwise show-quality Chinchilla Persian's over-large ears).

Cats of nondescript colours could be dyed to create the then popular Maltese (blue) cats. According to an issue of "Our Cats" magazine in 1900, the blue dye dried almost instantly but did not produce the desired solid effect; it had to be supplemented with dye combed into the fur. The cat's muzzle would be dyed using a sponge. Within an hour, the owner could have a Maltese cat and if done well, the judges would be none the wiser. Producing a fake tortoiseshell cat took around three hours, because dyes had to be applied in patches using a comb. Some of the dyes were no doubt toxic.

As well as longhair and shorthair classes divided up into colour categories, there were many extra classes at those late 1800s/early 1900s shows. In "litter classes", young kittens were dispatched to shows along with their mother. Many kittens did not survive the experience. There were classes for pairs of kittens, for the heaviest cat, and even for deportment. Cats were paraded around the show ring on ribbons and awarded extra points if they and their owner looked attractive together and the cat appeared happy to walk on its lead. There were often special classes at shows for stud cats; they were not judged themselves but their progeny was. This allowed people to see whether an excellent stud passed on his characteristics to kittens.



# The World's Largest Genetic Registry of Pedigreed Cats

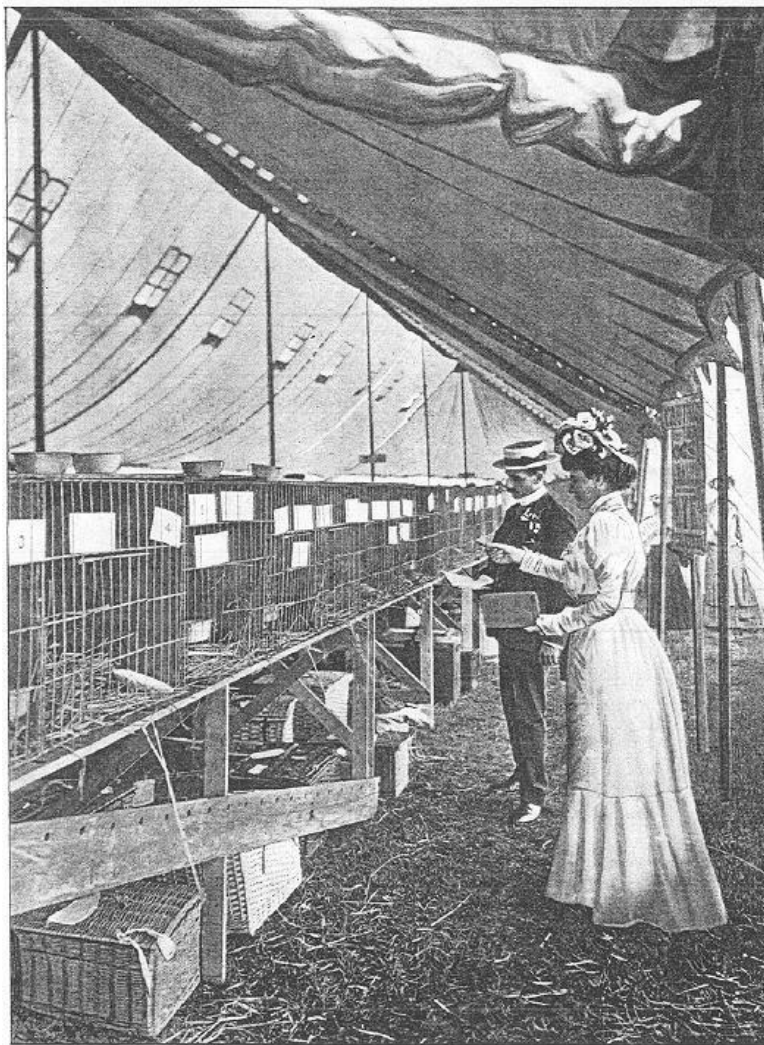
## A Very Brief History of Cat Shows

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In Simpson's day, grievances were often aired publicly in the pages of *Fur & Feather* (something which would attract libel cases today). Simpson herself became embroiled in a long correspondence when she did not place a Tabby Persian, which had previously beaten every other cat in competition, and which later went on to become Best Exhibit. She was publicly accused of misappropriating money donated for a Special at a one of the big shows ("Specials" were passed onto the winner in the form in which they were donated) when instead of passing on the 15 shillings cash, she converted the donation into a 9 shillings and sixpence button-hook. Since it was normal for the winner to write a letter of thanks to the donor of the Special, the matter was soon found out.

The button-hook row went on in public and private for months. The Committee of the Blue Persian Society (of which she was Secretary) backed her and held private meetings which excluded those members who opposed Simpson's behaviour. The excluded members resigned and there followed a very public flurry of complaints about Simpson's behaviour, both past and present and even some of those she had helped in the past turned on her. The button-hook row was overtaken by more serious matters - a stud cat had savagely mauled a valuable queen - into which Simpson was dragged. In *Fur & Feather* she had supported the idea, unthinkable by today's standards, that it was acceptable to leave two calling queens unsupervised with a stud.



RICHMOND CAT SHOW: JUDGES AT WORK.

In 1934, British cat fans called for a French innovation to be introduced into British shows. French cat shows held classes for "rattling cats" from shops and stores. The cats were judged entirely on condition, not on looks, and many people wanted to see similar classes in British shows. A 1934 British cat show was therefore heralded as the first featuring special classes for non-pedigree domestic cats. The sole standard was to be good condition and the show was promoted by "*The People*" newspaper. Sixty domestic cats were entered.



## THE CAT FANCY

In 1887, the National Cat Club was founded in London. Its first President was Harrison Weir, who later resigned and was succeeded by the artist Louis Wain. In 1898, an aristocratic breeder, Lady Marcus Beresford, founded a rival organisation called The Cat Club. Its members included some of the most important people in the land. However, The Cat Club foundered in 1903 and replaced by yet another group, the Cat Fanciers Association. In 1910 these two Cat Clubs combined to become the Governing Council of the Cat Fancy (GCCF). The GCCF is Britain's largest cat fancy and remained its only cat fancy for many years. There are also numerous smaller cat clubs, some being regional and some being breed-specific, which operate cat shows but which are affiliated to the GCCF.

As long ago as the 1890s, cat shows were also held at the Jardin d'Acclimation in Paris. However, it was not until after World War II that the Cat Club de Paris was formed.. A number of other clubs were formed throughout Europe and operated independently. The Cat Club de Paris and many of the principal clubs in other countries united to form the Fédération Internationale Feline d'Europe (FIFe), though the member clubs maintains their own registers. There was great competition between European clubs to attract members. This was exacerbated by the fact that FIFe did not allow exhibitors from "dissident", non-member clubs at its shows and breeding females belonging to dissident club members were not allowed to be sent to FIFe members' stud cats! This is when human politics gets in the way of what is best for cat breeds.

In the 1860s, the USA was the first country to hold private cat shows. Interest in pedigree cats did not really take off until the 1895 show in Madison Square Gardens in 1895. The 1899 show in Chicago led to the founding of the Chicago Cat Club and then the more powerful Beresford Cat Club. In 1906, the American Cat Association became the main registry, becoming the Cat Fanciers' Association Inc in 1908. Unlike FIFe, the Cat Fanciers Association allowed members of America's many independent cat clubs to exhibit at their shows providing the cats were registered with the Cat Fanciers Association (many cats were registered with more than one registry).

Though America acquired their original standards and breeding stock from Britain, American cat registries are more open to the development of new breeds and have a more flexible registration system. Breeds which begin as mutations of an existing breed can be registered as an entirely new breed, unlike the GCCF system where it could only be an "Any Other Colour" of an already recognised breed - not a useful system when the new variety has a physical mutation such as curled ears or curled fur!

Unlike cat clubs in Europe and America, the GCCF was the only body allowed to keep a register of cats in Britain. In 1983, the Cat Association of Britain (CA) was founded. The CA maintains a separate registry from the GCCF and is more closely linked with the FIFe. What with the CA, FIFe and with the American organisation TICA (The International Cat Association) striving to be the dominant international cat fancy, the GCCF was in for some turbulent times. For one thing, the other registries had far simplified breed classifications!

At the time of writing there has been dissent among breeders and GCCF members and calls for a radical overhaul of its archaic registration system, review of breed standards and some breed names, alignment of these with those of other registries and generally dragging it kicking and screaming into the 21st century. In 2002, "Our Cats" (the modern GCCF journal) wrote that this dissent was not a sudden thing, but had been brewing for many years. Rather than being viewed as throwing away tradition, it should be regarded as an exciting opportunity to make long-overdue changes which would see it into the technological age.

## JUDGING SYSTEMS

In Britain, all cat shows are one-day events, but in continental Europe and North America two-day shows are also common, partly because of the long travelling distances involved for many exhibitors. (In Europe, particularly, many exhibitors travel to other countries for important shows.) Nowadays, the financial rewards are nominal, most breeders being content to compete for ribbons or cups and for titles such Champion, Grand Champion etc (Premier for a neutered cat)

Another major difference is the judging system. With "ring judging" (as seen in America and much of mainland Europe) the cats are taken to the judge. With "pen judging" (seen in Britain), the judge comes to the pens. One effect of this is that cats exhibited under ring-judging systems have their nameboards displayed with them and can have decorated cages - in fact there is often a side-competition for the best decorated pen! With pen-judging, however, the pens must be spartan, there is no decoration of the cages allowed, the blanket and litter tray must be white and there are no name boards, only pen numbers.

## CAT BREEDING THROUGH THE DECADES



In "Origin of Species" Charles Darwin had been dismissive of attempts to perpetuated different strains of cats and evidently viewed the hobby of cat breeding as one women and children, with breeds never kept up for long. The public cat shows had given breeders an opportunity to meet and compete and gave them more incentive to breed cats in a controlled way, selecting the best cats from each generation to be the parents of the next generation.

Most breeding cats were housed in outdoor catteries with beds made out of barrels or wooden chests and filled with hay in winter and paper in summer. Most people did not heat the outdoor enclosures in case it made the cats weak and susceptible to illness. Feeding was not an exact science, hence pedigree cats were considered prone to dyspepsia - which would have been due to their diet rather than any weakness in the breed!

Pedigree mothers were not to raise litters larger than four kittens. For larger litters, a foster mother was obtained. If the pedigree females had poor maternal skills, their kittens would be raised by a foster mother. Foster mothers were not hard to find as it was the practice to destroy all-but-one kitten of litters born to household pets. Kittens would be sent on approval to prospective new owners. If the owner didn't like the kitten, it would be sent back. This was an excellent way to spread serious infections through households and catteries.

Early on, the idea of Paternal Impression held sway. It was believed that a female's first mate will affect all of her subsequent litters, regardless of who fathered the later litters. If she was mated to an outstanding stud for her first litter, his characteristics were believed to turn up in later litters sired by other studs. Conversely, if she was mis-mated to a poor quality or moggy male she would always bear poor quality half-breed offspring, tainted by that earlier mating. One Persian female who had "strayed from the path of virtue" apparently had only poor quality kittens from a good sire, "what might be called half-breeds". She was "ruined for life".

The following excerpt from "Anomalies and Curiosities of Medicine" by George M Gould and Walter L Pyle (1896), illustrates the theory of paternal impression, or "telegony", with the following case: *Hon. Henry Scott says: "Dog-breeders know this theory well; and if a pure-bred bitch happens to breed to a dog of another breed, she is of little use for breeding pure-bred puppies afterward. Animals which produce large litters and go a short time pregnant show this throwing back to previous sires far more distinctly than others - I fancy dogs and pigs most of all, and probably horses least. The influence of previous sires may be carried into the second generation or further, as I have a cat now which appears to be half Persian (long hair). His dam has very long hair and every appearance of being a half Persian, whereas neither have really any Persian blood, as far as I know, but the grand-dam (a very smooth-haired cat) had several litters by a half-Persian tom-cat, and all her produce since have showed the influence retained. The Persian tom-cat died many years ago, and was the only one in the district, so, although I cannot be absolutely positive, I think this case is really as stated."*

Another belief was Maternal Impression - the mother's surroundings supposedly influenced the quality of her kittens. If the pregnant cat was housed in close proximity to outstanding examples of her own breed, she would somehow impress their characteristics on the unborn kittens, even if she was mated to a mediocre stud. Conversely, if she was surrounded by moggies, this lack of quality would be impressed onto the kittens even if she had been mated to a top notch stud.

A female would be mated towards the end of her season if male kittens were wanted. And if the stud was fed well, rested and strong before mating, females would predominate in his bride's litter. Before cars were common, the female was often sent to the stud by train and unaccompanied, in similar way to the sending of cats to cat shows. Stud owners were trusted to mate the female with the chosen male and not with another substandard male. Children who asked why the cats were sent away regularly and returned looking perhaps a little smug were told that they cats went away "to learn manners" and would come back "better behaved"!

Some queens were entirely put off by the whole business of being packed off on a train and, quite understandably, lost the urge to mate. If this happened regularly, the stud might be sent to the owner of the female instead. The fee for the stud's services would include one of the kittens from the resulting litter. Again, it was entirely down to trust that the kitten sent to the stud's owner really was one of his progeny.

It was also believed that if the stud did not have a regular supply of visiting females, he would lose his fertility and produce dead sperm. According to A C Jude in "Cats and Kittens" "Long periods of disuse are injurious, as an undue accumulation of semen in the generative passages will result in back pressure, which will adversely affect the spermatogenic capacity of the testes and possibly also interfere with the functional activity of the accessory sexual glands." In some cases, the stud would be mated to non-pedigree females, just to keep him active! Breeders did not realise they were risking his life due to "distemper" and little thought was given to the kittens (though the mothers could, of course, be used to foster more valuable kittens!).



"Cats and All About Them" was an earlier work by Simpson and was published in 1902 and costing two shillings. It contained twenty-four illustrations, including a photograph of Miss Simpson herself with Campyses, her spectacular silver cat and a photograph of Champion Wankee, the one of the early Siamese cats. Interestingly from a breeding history viewpoint, it also contained a number of stud advertisements: the services of Champion Wankee, winner of thirty prizes, cost one guinea; those of Muchacho, a blue Russian (a breed whose existence Simpson debated in her later book) cost 12s. 6d.

## PEDIGREE CATS OF THE 1880s and 1890s

The earliest cats shows had paid particular attention to shorthaired cats such as the Archangel (Maltese or Russian Blue) and Manx. In 1889, Harrison Weir wrote and illustrated "Our Cats". Weir had arranged the first formal cat show in England in 1871 and produced the first breed standards. Excerpts from "Our Cats" illustrate cat types during the 1870s and 1880s. Weir preferred the shorthairs over the longhairs.



In contrast, Frances Simpson was a champion of the longhairs. This is reflected in her 1903 work "The Book of the Cat" (she was editor rather than author). The extracts from "The Book of the Cat" describes the British longhair (the Persian) and its American equivalent, the Maine Cat. The excerpts follow the progress of Simpson's beloved White Persians (one of the most popular varieties) and the much newer Cream Persian which looked set to become fashionable after having been overlooked previously.

As well as describing the then common breeds, these two authors, and the contemporaries whose letters and comments also appear in their works, give some insight into how cats were cared for, how they were bred, how they were prepared for a show and some now quaint ideas about inheritance! It also provides some comparison between Britain and America.

Classes were generally "longhairs" and "shorthairs" with no distinction between different breeds within those groupings. For example, Persians competed against Angoras with the result that the less extreme Angora type was lost. Two interesting sections from Frances Simpson's work are on the White Persian (which was shifting from yellow-eyed to blue-eyed) and Cream Persians (a new development). In 1926, Cat Gossip editor H C Brooke noted that at a cat show in Lille there were classes for "Short-hair Persians" (chats persans a poil ras) as well as the normal Long-hair classes! Brooke wondered how "Short-hair Persians" were distinguished from ordinary Short-hairs. In those days, the Persian had not yet become the flat-faced creature we see today and might have been termed a "British Longhair".

In 1903, Frances Simpson wrote in "The Book of the Cat" *"In classing all long-haired cats as Persians I may be wrong, but the distinctions, apparently with hardly any difference, between Angoras and Persians are of so fine a nature that I must be pardoned if I ignore the class of cat commonly called Angora, which seems gradually to have disappeared from our midst. Certainly there is no special classification given for Angoras, and in response to many inquiries from animal fanciers I have never been able to obtain any definite information as to the difference between a Persian and an Angora cat. Mr Harrison Weir, in his book on cats,*



states that the Angora differs somewhat from the Persian in that the head is rather smaller and ears larger, fur more silky with a tendency to woolliness."

Simpson championed the cause of the long-hairs which were, by then, outnumbering short-hairs at cat shows by about four long-hairs to every short-hair shown (this probably did not include Foreign short-hairs such as Siamese or blue Russian). "The Book of The Cat" has relatively few photos of short-hairs and Simpson wrote that she had included so few pictures of short-haired cats in her book because the long-hairs were so much more attractive that more photographs existed of them than of short-hairs. Because short-hairs were both cheaper and less pretty, fewer people bothered to take good photos of them.

From that point onwards, her comments were applicable to the cat we now know as the Persian. She considered the Persian to be less amiable and less reliable in temperament than the short-haired (British) cat, but considered them more intelligent and as keen when hunting prey as were short-hairs. However, they were less healthy than short-hairs and the longest haired kittens were the most difficult to rear. She attributed this to in-breeding.

## Cat Show, London circa 1948



Because cat shows were traditionally held in the summer months, Persians were rarely shown in their full glory and often presented an unkempt and moth-eaten appearance because they were moulting. On the other hand, the summer coat made it harder to disguise poor conformation or "a multitude of sins". Illness and skin problems also caused loss of coat, in those days before vaccinations and when enteritis and cat flu and various parasites were more common, Persians were considered at a disadvantage - so much so, that some breeders turned their attention to short-hairs instead.

According to John Jennings book "Domestic or Fancy Cats", "*Of the many varieties or breeds of the cat with which we are now familiar, it must be remembered that, however crossed, selected, re-crossed, domesticated, or what not, we have but two breeds on which the super-structure of what is known today as the 'classification of varieties' has been reared - viz, the long-hair or Eastern cat, and the short-hair or European. The term 'breed' is even here used advisedly, for whatever the outer covering or coat, colour, or length of fur, the contour of each and all is practically the same. Nor is this confined to mere outline. Take the skull, for example, which*

*measured in the usual manner with shot, making due allowance for difference in size, is not only similar in the different varieties of either long- or short-hair, but even in the wild cat the anatomy is similar, the slight variation being in a great measure explained by its different conditions of life and diet, and is in unison with the fact of how even the ordinary domestic cat will undergo a change in taking up a semi-wild, outdoor existence.*"

For details of the different breeds, see [Retrospective Index 1880s to early 1900s section](#)

## EXHIBITING CATS CIRCA 1900

(From "The Book of the Cat", 1903, Frances Simpson)

Amongst cat fanciers there is a laudable ambition not only to breed good stock but to exhibit it. Certainly there is vastly more gratification and satisfaction in obtaining high honours for cats and kittens that we have bred ourselves, rather than for those specimens which money has purchased.

If we consider that our cats have sufficiently good points to merit their being entered for a show, we must bear in mind that all the beauty and form and features will be thrown away unless our pussies are in good show condition. For exhibition purposes condition means everything, and this is more especially the case with the long-haired breeds. A first-class specimen whose coat is ragged and matted cannot fail to suffer in the judges' estimation when compared with another cat, of inferior quality perhaps as regards points, but yet in the pink of condition, with its coat well groomed, its eye bright, its fur soft and silky. In the present day many of the specimens penned are so close together in point of breed merit that a very little turns the scale one way or the other. I have often said to myself, when judging a class of cats, "This exhibit would be a winner but for its condition," and I have had to put it down in the list.



There is no doubt that with long-haired cats a fine full coat will cover a multitude of sins, but it cannot alter a long nose or poor shape and bad-coloured eye; and in urging the importance of condition, I at the same time deprecate the awarding of prizes to cats that have nothing to recommend them *but* their pelage. Seeing, therefore, that a handsome specimen may go to the wall for the lack of attention on the part of the owner, it behoves all cat fanciers and would-be exhibitors to do everything in their power to make their cats look their very best, so that their pets may be things of beauty in the show pen. In the dog, rabbit, and pigeon fancy a great deal more attention is given to condition than amongst cat fanciers, who need waking up to the fact that nothing goes so far to propitiate a judge as superb show form and general appearance.

There may be standards of points for the guidance of the awards, but assuredly a common-sense judge will look with disfavour on a specimen with excellence of breed and correct colour of eye if his coat is draggled and matted, his tail dirty, and his fur soiled. We have only to run our minds back to the various exhibits of well-known fanciers at our large shows, and we shall find that the most persistently successful exhibitors have been those who have sent their cats to the shows in the best condition. Some fanciers. Wishing to help on entries at a show, will exhibit their Persian cats when quite out of coat. This is a mistake; send your money if you like to the secretary, but keep your coatless cats at home.



JUDGING IN THE RING AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE.

As regards the short-haired breeds, these cats should have coats with a gloss and brilliancy like that of a well-groomed horse, shining like satin; a spiky appearance in the fur denotes poor condition in both long and short breeds.

In getting cat ready for exhibition owners should look to their comforts in every way. Their houses and beds should be kept clean, their coats combed and brushed daily. Attention should be paid to their ears, for if these are neglected a cat will continually scratch them, and thus injure its appearance by tearing out its fur. Some fanciers are in favour of washing their cats, but when we take into consideration the usually delicate constitutions of Persian cats, and the restless, impatient nature of these animals, it behoves us to try to find some other effectual means of cleansing their coats, which in the case of white and silver cats are easily soiled. Experience has taught me that very good results can be obtained by damping the coats with a soft cloth dipped in a weak solution of ammonia and water. Follow this up by rubbing some white powder into the fur and well fingering the parts that are at all greasy. Pears' white precipitated fuller's earth is the best preparation, and is perfectly harmless. To clean away the powder use a fairly soft brush, and after this process has been gone through several times your cat will be fit for show. Another method of cleaning long-haired cats is to heat a quantity of bran in the oven. Put it into a large bowl or footbath, and stand the puss in it. Rub the hot bran well amongst the fur for some minutes, and afterwards carefully brush it out. This treatment will give a soft and silky appearance to the coat, but for light-coloured cats the powder is more cleansing.



Cats require to be educated to the show pen, and it is very necessary in some cases to give a course of training. For this purpose it is well to obtain a similar pen to those used at shows, and to place your puss in this for an hour or two daily. In time he will learn to come and site and look out of his temporary prison, and when he makes his *debut* he will not spoil his chances by crouching at the back of the show pen, or vex his would-be admirers, who may have recourse to the use of an umbrella or stick to make the exhibit move into a more convenient and conspicuous position [*note: modern exhibitors may be appalled that show visitors could interfere with a cat in this way*].

Taking it for granted you have decided to send your cat to a show, the first step is to register it in the club under whose rules the show is to be held. At present the National Cat Club and the Cat Club both require separate registration, the charge being one shilling. It is, however, to be hoped that the earnest wish of all cat fanciers and exhibitors will ere long be fulfilled, and that one register will be kept by an independent person, so that pedigrees can be verified and mistakes rectified, and the confusion caused by a double registration will cease to worry and perplex the cat-loving community. Registration forms are supplied by the secretaries of the respective clubs, and you must fill in the particulars of your cats as set forth on the forms, a sample of which is here given, together with the registration rules of the national Cat Club:-

## REGISTRATION

The registration rules of the National Cat Club are as follows:-

*1. Every Cat exhibited at a show under National Cat Club Rules must (except such as are exhibited exclusively in Local Classes, or exhibited in Classes exclusively for litters of kittens), previous to the time of entry for such shows, have been entered in a registry kept by the National Cat Club at their offices. A charge of 1 shilling each shall be made for registration. In such registry shall be inserted the name and breed of the cat, and its breeder's name, the date of birth, names of the sire and dam, and of grand-sires and grand-dams, and if the dam was served by two or more cats their several names must be stated. If the age, pedigree, or breeder's name be not known the cat must be registered as breeder, age or pedigree "unknown," any or all, as the case may be. If the name of a cat be changed, or an old name re-assumed, such cat must be again registered and identified before exhibition in its altered name.*

*2. A name which has been duly registered in accordance with Rule 1 cannot be again accepted for registration of a cat of the same breed, without the addition of a distinguishing number, prefix, or affix, for a period of five years, calculated from the first day of the year after the one in which the name was last registered; but the name of a cat after publication in "Our Cats" and the Stud Book, or which has become eligible for free entry therein, cannot again be assumed.*

*N.B. - The name of a cat that has become eligible for free entry in the Stud Book in any year shall not be changed after 31st December of that year.*

*Cats do not receive a number on registration. Numbers are only assigned to Prize Winners or cats entered in the Stud Book on its publication, on payment of a fee of Five Shillings, in addition to One Shilling for registration.*

The application for registration must be made on a form as follows.



The World's Largest Genetic Registry of Pedigreed Cats  
**A Very Brief History of Cat Shows**  
 (2003 Sarah Hartwell)



NUMBER OF BREED AS PER LIST IN MARGIN \_\_\_ COLOUR \_\_\_

I wish to register the following \_\_\_ (Sex) by the name of \_\_\_

Previously registered by the name of \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Owner \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Mr., Mrs. or Miss)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

LATE OWNER (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

SIRE \_\_\_\_\_ | G SIRE \_\_\_\_\_  
 OWNER OF SIRE \_\_\_\_\_ | G DAM \_\_\_\_\_

DAM \_\_\_\_\_ | G SIRE \_\_\_\_\_  
 OWNER OF DAM \_\_\_\_\_ | G DAM \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_

NAME & ADDRESS OF BREEDER \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE.—If this name cannot be registered, I select one of the following, and name them in the order named: (:)

(2) \_\_\_\_\_ (3) \_\_\_\_\_

Only one cat must be entered on one form, which must be forwarded with a remittance of one shilling to Mrs A Stennard Robinson, Hon Sec at 5, Great James Street, Bedford Row, London, W.C. The various varieties as recognised by the Club are as follows:-

**SHORT-HAIRED CATS**

1. SIAMESE
2. BLUE
3. MANX
4. FOREIGN
5. TABBY
6. SPOTTED
7. BICOLOUR
8. TRICOLOUR
9. TORTOISESHELL
10. BLACK
11. WHITE
12. SABLE
13. TICKS
14. ABYSSINIAN

**LONG-HAIRED CATS**

15. BLACK
16. WHITE
17. BLUE
18. ORANGE
19. CREAM
20. SABLE
21. SMOKE
22. TABBY
23. SPOTTED
24. CHINCHILLA
25. TORTOISESHELL
26. BICOLOUR
27. TRICOLOUR



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It will be seen that you are requested to give more than one name, and it is very desirable in the first instance to select an uncommon one, which may be considered your cat's exhibition title, but you will doubtless have some short pet name for home use. A prefix, probably the name of the town or village in which you live, can be used to specially identify your cat. For this an extra charge is made. It is well to fill in the pedigree as far as possible, and every exhibitor should strive to obtain correct particulars of date of birth and name of breeder of the cat to be exhibited. It is a pity to label your cat "unknown," if with a small amount of trouble exact details can be obtained. At any rate, it is important to state the names of the two parents. The age of kittens should be counted by months - that is, say, from the 20th to the 20th. Having registered your cat, you receive a notification of such registration, and whether you are intending to exhibit or not it is very necessary and advisable that your cat should be duly registered in at least one of the parent clubs.

A separate fee is charged for each cat or kitten in each class, and the amount must be forwarded at the same time as the entry is made. The following is a copy of the entry form used at the Cat Club's show at Brighton in 1901, and I may mention that the fee for registration has since been raised from 6d (sixpence) to 1s (one shilling):-

ENTRIES CLOSE MONDAY, NOVEMBER 12th, 1901.

**BRIGHTON CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW OF THE CAT CLUB,**  
 TO BE HELD AT  
 MELLISON'S HALL, WEST STREET, BRIGHTON,  
 ON WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13th AND 14th, 1901,  
 Under the Exhibition Rules of The Cat Club.

**RULES AS TO REGISTRATION OF NAMES OF CATS AND KITTENS.**  
 Every Cat or Kitten exhibited at a Show under The Cat Club Exhibition Rules must be Registered at the Cat Club. Fee 6d.  
 Every Cat or Kitten which may have changed ownership since Registration must, before Exhibition, be Transferred to its new owner in the books of The Cat Club. Fee One Shilling.  
 To change the name of a Cat or Kitten, when allowable, the fee is One Shilling.  
 See The Cat Club Exhibition Rules, Nos. 1 to 6, or the Schedule.

**CERTIFICATE OF ENTRY.**  
 I hereby Certify that the Cat or Kitten to be exhibited by me as below is mine and my property, and I enter it at my own risk, subject to the Exhibition Rules of The Cat Club, and the Regulations of this Exhibition as arranged by the Committee.

Has this Cat been Registered at The Cat Club? *(see note above)* \_\_\_\_\_  
 Has this Cat been Transferred (or purchased) to yourself as owner in the books of The Cat Club *(see note above)* \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of Exhibitor (in full) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Title: Rev., Mr., Mrs., or Miss. *(See Rule 3)*)  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of Cat or Kitten (as registered at The Cat Club) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (If in Stud Book, add number.)  
 Breed \_\_\_\_\_ Colour \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Male, Female or Neuter.)  
 Breeder \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sire \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dam \_\_\_\_\_  
 Price won \_\_\_\_\_  
 Price of \_\_\_\_\_ 1 : \_\_\_\_\_ (*1/6 per Sale*) Date \_\_\_\_\_ 1901.

Fee Exhibitions Rules 1 to 5 of The Cat Club in the Schedule. Particulars must be given as indicated in The Cat Club.

N.B. - No MILK will be given to any Cat or Kitten unless specially requested here. Water will be provided otherwise.

ONE POUND IS SUFFICIENT FOR ONE CAT OR KITTEN IN ANY NUMBER OF CLASSES.

Class as per Schedule No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Also Entered in Classes numbered as per Schedule Nos. \_\_\_\_\_

Please not to write in this space

Kindly fill in the amount enclosed for Fees, &c., as under:-  
 Cheque... £ s. d.  
 Post Office Order  
 Postal Order...  
 Cash ..  
 Total £

No Entries will be accepted without Fees. Postage Stamps taken Thirteen to the Shilling. Exhibitors are particularly requested to write distinctly, and also to be careful to name correctly the Class in which they intend to exhibit their Cat or Cats.  
 All Correspondence and Entries to be addressed to Miss P. STRAON, Durdans House, St. Margaret's-on-Thames.

The exhibiting rules should be carefully studied, and intending exhibitors must pay great attention to the classification set forth in the schedule so as to determine the correct class in which to enter their cats. If there



remains any doubt in the mind of the novice, then it is best to consult some reliable and well-known breeder, giving a full description of the cat you wish to show. It is a grievous disappointment if through ignorance of carelessness a good specimen is labelled "wrong class."

It is always stated in the schedules that the entries close on a particular date, and that after this none can or will be received. Experience proves, however, that this is often not a law of the Medes and Persians, for the date is frequently of an elastic nature, and therefore it is always worth while for an intending exhibitor to write requesting that, if possible, his entry may be received, although it is forwarded after the advertised time of closing. Many exhibitors are not aware that by paying an extra shilling they can generally secure a double pen for their cats. It is not usual for the secretary of a show to send a receipt for entries and fees, as the tallies and labels which are forwarded later serve as an acknowledgment for these. When by chance labels etc are not received in time to be used by exhibitors, or they are lost or mislaid, then the hampers [cat carriers] should be addressed to the secretary of the show, and a note of explanation enclosed. The entry can then be looked up, and the pen number discovered. If cats are entered in joint names, then it is desirable that the owners should let the secretary know to whom to send the labels and tallies, as if these are only forwarded a day or two before the show to the partner who does *not* keep the cat, complications may arise. If litter classes are provided at a show, it is well for the intending exhibitor to send the whole litter, as the number of the family is taken into consideration in judging, and perhaps a large litter of six may take over a smaller litter of three, even though the quality of the trio is in advance of the larger family. As regards pairs of kittens, I would say select two kittens as near alike as possible in colour, size, and quality; they need not be of the same litter, but it is as a "pair" they will be judged, so if one exhibit is much inferior to its fellow then the value of the pair is seriously diminished. A defective eye or damaged tail will tell against a cat or kitten in the show pen, therefore it is useless to throw away entry fees upon these blemished, though perchance dearly loved, creatures.



The question of ribbons to suite the colours of the various cats is one deserving of consideration. Many exhibitors make the mistake of using broad ribbons and making very big bows, but both long and short haired cats present a neater appearance with narrow ribbons, and the bow should be stitched in the centre, so that it cannot come undone and thus give a dishevelled appearance to the puss. The metal tallies will hang more gracefully round the neck if a slip ring is run through the hole of the tally and then the ribbon is put through the ring. Cushions and hangings for the pen are not at all desirable, even if they are permitted. They collect germs and become offensive, and moreover it is much better that all exhibits should be placed on the same footing - namely, a bed of hay or straw.

If owners are unable to accompany their exhibits to the show, it is more than ever necessary that secure, comfortable, and safe travelling boxes or hampers should be used for the transit of the cats. It is not advisable, nor is it generally allowable, for more than one cat to be sent in a hamper to a show.

The question of hampers and travelling appliances has been dealt with in a previous chapter, but I would earnestly impress upon exhibitors not to send their cats away on journeys, long or short, in tumble-down hampers and unsafe packing cases. Whether hampers or boxes, I would here suggest that whichever is used let the fasteners be secure and yet easy to manipulate. Straps should be attached to the box or hamper as in the confusion or hurry of show work these, if left loose, may get mislaid. The labels should be so arranged that they may be conveniently turned over for the return journey, where, on the reverse side, ought to be the owner's name and full address. It is most important that these should be distinctly written. I recommend all exhibitors to insure their cats when sending the to a show. The charge is 3d (3 pennies) for every £1, and having paid our money we take our chance, which is perhaps a less hazardous one than if this precaution had been neglected.



CRYSTAL PALACE 1871



The arrangements, or rather want of arrangements, as regards the transit of live stock on our railways leaves much to be desired, and, therefore, it behoves fanciers and exhibitors who value their cats for their own sakes and for their intrinsic worth, to do all in their power to mitigate the discomforts of a journey and the risks that must necessarily attend the conveyance of live stock by rail. Some fanciers make it a rule never to exhibit unless they themselves can take and bring back their cats, and though this necessarily entails a great deal of trouble and some expense, yet there is an immense satisfaction in feeling our pets are under our own supervision. There is also an advantage in penning your own cats, and if you arm yourself with a brush and comb you are able to give some finishing touches to pussy's toilet previous to the judges' inspection and awards. Let me recommend a metal comb, and a brush such as is used for Yorkshire terriers, which has long penetrating bristles, but is neither too hard nor too soft.



Disqualification of cats or kittens at shows may arise from various causes. First, if the cat has not been registered, or if it can be proved that the animal has not been in the possession of the exhibitor for fourteen days before the show, or if a wrong pedigree has been given, or the date of birth of a kitten is incorrect. Any attempt at "faking" will disqualify an exhibit, and in some cases the too free use of powder on white and silver cats is a disqualification in the eyes of some judges. Exhibitors have been known to dye the chins of tabby cats and treat white spots on self-coloured cats in the same manner. Such "faking," as it is popularly called, is always risky, as well as a most undesirable operation, and if resorted to ought not to be passed over by a judge who might detect the artifice and yet lack the moral courage to expose the offender. Let me warn exhibitors against the evil practice of over feeding their cats at shows. It is so much better for a cat to starve for two days than to overload its stomach with the plentiful supplies brought by an over-anxious exhibitor. The sanitary arrangements at present existing at cat shows do not allow of such a course, and if one meal of raw meat and plenty of fresh water is supplied by the show authorities pussy will fare much better than being stuffed with a variety of dainties brought in paper bags.



Whilst the inmates of your cattery are attending shows it is a good opportunity to give an extra cleansing and airing to their houses, and on their return be careful to destroy the hay or straw contained in the hampers or boxes, and thoroughly disinfect these, leaving them out in the open air for a day or two before packing them away. It is generally advisable to give a slight aperient [laxative] to grown cats after they come back from a show, for it often happens that these cleanly creatures refuse to make use of the scanty accommodation provided for them in the show pens, and thus complications may arise unless attention is paid to their wants on their return. If many cats are kept, and some are sent to a show, on no account allow these to mix with your other animals on their return. It is a wise precaution to keep them apart for a few days, more especially if you have young kittens to consider.

The prize cards should be returned in the hampers when sent back to exhibitors. If these are soiled or broken on their arrival, a request to the secretary asking for fresh ones will probably be attended to.

Every member of a cat club and exhibitor at a show has a right to lodge a complaint with the secretary and committee of the club under whose rules the show is held, if an injustice has been done to an exhibit in the opinion of the exhibitor. According to the rules a deposit has to be paid and can be reclaimed unless the complaint is considered "frivolous."

Show promoters cannot afford to give their money away without some return or provisional stipulation, and therefore fanciers must not complain if when a class does not fill it is either amalgamated or only half the advertised prize money is given. This latter plan is by far the most satisfactory. There has probably never been a show of any live stock held where complete satisfaction has been given; but, generally speaking, "grumbling" is a most mistaken and pernicious habit, and exhibitors should strive to become good losers. If they cannot learn this lesson, then the remedy remains in their own hands, and they had better keep their cats at home rather than run the risk of being disappointed themselves and of causing unpleasantness to others. If a judgment is obviously wrong, then the triumph is with the best cat, and we should take our defeat in a sportsmanlike manner.

In July, 1902, a cat section in connection with the annual dog show was held in the Old Deer Park, Richmond. This proved a great success, and entries numbered over three hundred. A few words in description of this show may be appropriate here, especially in view of the photographs (specially taken) which illustrate this chapter.



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RICHMOND CAT SHOW - THE KING CLASS

Its chief features were the twenty-five entries in the litter classes and the ring class for neuters only. Objection is often made to litter classes, and yet these are certainly the most attractive. I think that double pens should be provided, and special food ought to be supplied for the little ones. It stands to reason that very young kittens cannot be fed like the grown cats, and it is only natural that if big pieces of meat are thrust into the pen for the mother the hungry little creatures will make a rush for it. They bolt down the hard lumps, and these remain undigested in their tender little stomachs. It is not to be wondered at if gastritis, inflammation, and other distressing ailments supervene. It is much better to let the mother do without her usual meat rations and content herself with good, nourishing baby food, such as Mellin's or Ridge's, rather than run the risk of providing her with such which will injure her little kittens. With ordinary supervision no evil consequences should ensue from the introduction of litter classes, especially at a one day show. It is not, however, advisable to have litter classes at shows held during the winter months. But in perfect, warm weather no fatalities will be reported. Certainly the mothers with their families prove a great attraction, and as woollen balls, attached from the top of the pens, are provided for the amusement of the kittens, they delight themselves and their audience with their playful frolics.

The ring class for neuters *only* was an innovation and proved very successful, and although some of these pet pussies declined to show themselves off to the best advantage, yet they did not "go" for each other as is sometimes the case when the males are within measurable distance of each other. The illustration given is from a photo specially taken for this work, and shows the judges deliberating on the respective merits of the neuter cats. On this occasion a famous Blue Persian owned by Madame Portier carried off the honours. He behaved very well on the lead, and his grand shape and wonderful coat made him an easy first.

Another illustration shows the judges at work awarding the special prizes, which in many cases have to be decided conjointly. Miss Frances Simpson and Mr C A House are comparing notes and determining which of the first prize kittens is deserving of the special for the best in show. On this occasion Mrs Bennet, a well-known breeder of Blue Persians, was awarded the coveted prize.



A general view of one of the rows is given, but on this particular occasion no covering was supplied for the benching, and, therefore, the aspect of the show pens leaves much to be desired. The travelling baskets being placed under the pens, these should be hidden from the public gaze in order to give a neat and tidy appearance to the show. The best material for this purpose is red baize. The custom of allowing exhibitors to pen their own cats enables them to give their pussies a final brush up before they are subjected to the critical examination of the judge. Our illustration represents Mrs Peter Brown, a well known breeder of Blue Persians, attending to the toilet of her beautiful "Bunch," who on this occasion repeated her successes at the Botanic Gardens and carried off the highest honours in the Blue Female Persian class. And now to pass on to another portion of our subject.

## JUDGING

A standard of points for all long and short haired cats was drawn up by a sub-committee of the Cat Club, of which I was a member; but since specialist clubs have come into existence, having their own list of points, nothing much has been seen or heard of the Cat Club's standard. It is just as well to have some definite lines upon which fanciers and exhibitors may base their ideas, and so aim at, if they cannot attain to, the height of perfection set forth in these standards. They are really not meant for judges, because I venture to assert that a judge is no judge if he requires anything besides his own personal conviction, experience, and common sense when called upon to decide the various points in the different breeds. A good judge of old china will not search for the mark to know whether the specimen is Chelsea or Worcester. He will tell you "it is marked all over" - that is, he knows a good bit of stuff, even if it should not have the gold anchor of Chelsea or the square mark of Worcester ware. It appeals at once to the eye of the connoisseur, just as a worthless specimen is at once put out of the ranks of winners.



It is the greatest error not to have thorough confidence in oneself when undertaking to judge cats or, in fact, in judging any animal, or any thing. No one should undertake to judge if they wish to seek the counsel of others. They must have the courage of their own convictions, and, although some amount of training may be required, I think that judges are born, not made; and people who have not a keen power of observation and a faculty of coming rapidly to a fixed conclusion can never hope to become satisfactory or competent judges. There are many cat fanciers on whose judgment of a cat I should implicitly rely, and who know a good specimen when they see it, but if placed before a row of twenty or thirty cats of a breed they seem to lose their heads and get hopelessly confused, and then the reporter says, "We could not follow the awards." There is no doubt that judges of cats are severely handicapped. Firstly cats are such terribly timid, shrinking animals that when dragged out

of their pens with great difficulty - for the doors are most inconveniently small - they often struggle so violently that, for fear of hurting the animal or of it escaping, the judge will swiftly restore it to its resting place without having obtained much satisfaction from his cursory examination. Unless judging pens are provided, there is really no chance of making fair comparisons between two cats which may appear of almost equal merit. How is a judge to decide on the form of limbs and general build of a cat when holding it in his arms or seeing it huddled up at the back of its pen?

An agitation is now on foot for having cats judged in a ring, and no doubt, in time this will be the order of the day at our shows; but fanciers will have to train up their cats in the way they should go - namely, when quite young they must be accustomed to a lead and also be constantly brought out amongst strangers. As an example, I would refer to the starting gate recently introduced into this country on the racecourse. It was no use to attempt it for the old stagers, but trainers soon accustomed the two-year-olds to the innovation, and I believe many, if not all, the objectors are now converted to the new system of starting racehorses.



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In judging a class, I first go round and mark the absent cats; then I note down those that could not under any circumstances take a prize. If there is a large class - say, of twenty to thirty specimens - I mark off all poor and seedy-looking cats until the number is reduced to about eight or ten; then I begin to search for the winners. At this point I take out each specimen, and, if no judging pen is provided, I get someone to assist me, and by bringing out two cats at a time I can make comparisons and note down any remarks in my book for further reference. It often happens that one particular cat will stand out prominently from all the rest in a class, and then there is no difficulty about the first award. It is always well to give a "reserve" and to distribute - but not too freely - the VHC, HC and C cards [*Very Highly Commended, Highly Commended and Commended*]. It does not do to make these too cheap, and scatter them all over the class. VHC might be awarded to a cat in splendid coat, but which failed in head and eyes; HC to another specimen with hardly any coat and poor head, but correct in eye; and C to a promising youngster without any serious fault, only with no striking point of merit. A good judge must thus weigh the pros and cons and have a reason to give himself or anyone else for each degree of merit, from first prize to the humble C.

And here I would mention that there is a nice and a very nasty way for an exhibitor to question a judge's award. To be attacked suddenly with the query, "Why have you not given my cat a prize?" is quite enough to make any judge retire into his shell and refuse any explanation; but if asked to kindly give an reason why a certain animal has failed to win, and to explain why one specimen, apparently a fine cat, should be lower than another, I am sure any judge would gladly give the inquirer the benefit of his larger experience and the reason for the awards. It is a mistake for a judge to distribute the full complement of prizes in a class when and where the exhibits are not possessing of sufficient merit. A first prize cat should be a good specimen of its kind, and it is much better to withhold this award than to give it to a poor representative of his breed. It also reflects discredit on a judge, for an exhibitor wishing to boast of his honours may publish that his "Tommy Atkins" took first under so-and-so, when perhaps there were only two cats in the class.

It is quite legitimate for a judge to ask permission of the show authorities to award an extra prize in a large class with several fine specimens; and if he has withheld others in a poor and badly filled class then there is no extra burden put on to the funds of the club. A great deal should be left to the discretion of the judge, and in the matter of special prizes, if one is offered for, say, the best long-haired white cat, and only one or two specimens are on show, and these are neither of them good types of this breed, then the judge should be empowered to withhold the prize. Such a course may be an unpopular one, but I am sure it is the correct and fairest one, for it is a farce to award first prize and specials to an inferior animal just because he happens to be without other competitors. Anyone who has judged the large classes of blues and silvers which now appear at our principal shows will bear me out in my suggestion that such classes, numbering perhaps thirty and more exhibits, should be subdivided according to age. Such an arrangement would be welcomed by judge and exhibitor alike. At the Crystal Palace Show in 1901 the blue kittens numbered thirty-nine in the class, male and female, the age limit being three to eight months. How could a judge be expected to satisfactorily award three prizes in such a huge class? And I know that many superb specimens on this occasion had to be content with a VHC card, which it would have gone to my heart as a judge to place on their pen.

If there is a prize offered for the best cat in the show, the judge or judges have not to consider which is their favourite breed or which is the most fashionable colour, but just which cat is the best possible type, which specimen is the nearest perfection, and which is exhibited in the best all-round show condition. In long-haired classes the length and quality of coat and fullness of ruff go a long way towards a high place in the awards, and, as I have before remarked, condition is a most important factor in the judges' estimation. In the self-coloured classes of blues and blacks a judge should make diligent search for white spots on throat or stomach. Formerly cats thus blemished were relegated to the "any other" class, but it has been wisely decided by both clubs that cats with white spots should be judged in their own classes, and that this defect should count as a point or points against them. This is as it should be, for to place self-coloured cats in an any "other colour class" seems absurd. They are black and blue cats in spite of a few white hairs, and should be judged as such. They may never aspire to a first prize, at any rate at a large show; but surely a really fine black or blue cat, with correct eyes, grand head, and good shape, even with the unfortunate spot, should and ought to score over a poor specimen with green eyes and long nose. In the tabby classes a judge will first consider the groundwork and markings, and to these premier points special attention should be given, as there is a tendency to breed tabby cats which are barred only on heads and legs, the body markings being blurred and indistinct.



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It is not unlikely that in due time the "any other colour" class will no longer form part of the classification at our large shows. Formerly this used to be the largest class of any, but nowadays the entries are becoming small and beautifully less. It is not worth while for a fancier to keep these specimens - they do not fetch any price, they are not valuable as breeders, and it is quite a toss up whether they can win in such a mixed company. I remember the time when blues were entered in the "any other colour" class, and when blue tabbies were more numerous than silvers or blues. It is really a most difficult task for a judge to give his awards at a local show where all sorts and conditions of cats are placed in the one class. Such an arrangement is good for neither man nor beast.

And then, again, at our large shows it behoves a judge to be very level-headed to cope with the numerous brace, team, and novice classes, for one cat may be entered in all these, besides being in the open cat and kitten class; and woe betide the unfortunate judge who makes a slip, for the wrath of the exhibitor and the sarcasm of the reporter will be poured out upon him. No doubt it is a grave mistake to reverse one's own awards, and yet judges are but mortal, and "to err is human." It is hard when cat fanciers take to judging the judges and their judgments. A judge may be absolutely ignorant of the owners of the cats and thus utterly unbiased; yet there will not be wanting those who will pick holes in their characters, and see in their awards clear proof of personal spite and party favour. The intense suspiciousness of some fanciers and the readiness with which they impute low motives to others is greatly to be deplored.



MR C A HOUSE  
Editor of "Fur & Feather"



MR T B MASON

I will here quote from an article by Mr C A House, the well-known editor and judge of live stock. Under the heading of "The Judging of Cats," Mr house says:- *"All my awards are based on the idea that each breed possesses a distinctive feature, and that distinctive feature must be the one to which most consideration is given. After the chief feature come others, such as shape. Coat, colour, etc, and the premier awards should be given to cats possessing the best all-round properties ... Selfs, above all things, should be pure in colour. For instance, a blue should be blue, and a black, black. Yet a little rustiness of colour should not be allowed to outweigh a host of other good properties. Colour, however, is hard to breed rich and pure, and should at all times be more highly valued than size, or even coat. Only those who have tried to breed markings know how difficult it is to get them anything approaching perfection. Nothing is more fleeting than marking, and nothing more tantalising to the breeder. Summing up the matter, my own opinion is, and has been for years, that the cat fancy has been hindered and hampered by judges judging the exhibits because they belong to so-and-so ... I was much amused at one incident at Westminster where a big champion had suffered defeat. The fair owner was heckling the judge, and he in reply to her remarks made this answer: 'It makes no difference to me had the cat belonged to the Queen [Victoria] herself; I should then have done the same. I don't judge cats on what they have previously won or because they belong to any particular person. I judge them on their form at the time, and it makes no*



*difference to me if a cat has won fifty firsts or none at all.' This reply was more than the exhibitor had bargained for, but all honest-minded fanciers must acknowledge the judge was right. What is sadly needed in the cat fancy today is more of this sturdy, unflinching determination to judge cats and not their owners. Cat exhibitors have much to learn yet, and the sooner the morale of the judging arena is raised the more healthy will the fancy become and the more quickly will it advance."*



Another of our well-known judges, Mr T B Mason, writing on the same subject, says:- *"In my judging engagements I have very often come across exhibits with good coloured eyes, but not the correct shape. A small eye, however good the colour may be, will give the cat a disagreeable, sour expression. With this shape of eye we generally see a narrow, long face, which should keep any exhibit out of the prize list in good competitions. Let it, however, be clearly understood, I do not want eyes to have undue weight in the general conditions of cat judging; but they are important, and as such ought to have due and careful attention at the hands of breeders and judges alike. Two things in the judging of short-hairs weigh heavily with me, namely, pale colours*

*and light-marked heads and white lips. These defects, in my opinion, ought to put out of the money those that possess them in good competition. I perfectly agree with Mr House about the standards. They are useful both to the breeder and judge; but for the judge to take the standards and try to judge by them at any show would be foolish indeed. All judges are expected to know the varieties they are called upon to judge, and to have the faculty to weigh up the good points and defects of the specimens before them, and place them accordingly."*

Judges did not always get it right and the cat magazines were sometimes full of complaints (though this was considered very bad form). In "Our Cats" in 1900, H C Brooke wrote of a "recent farce" when a cat won in succession as a Manx and as a Japanese cat. Originally, stated to be of Manx parentage, it was later shown as a Japanese because some 'connoisseurs of foreign cats' declared it must be a Jap because it had a kink in its tail. The classification of cats was also hit-or-miss in 1900, because around the same time, a Ringtailed Lemur (a primate) had won the Foreign breed class at Crystal Palace. The matter was widely discussed in the general press and in animal fancier publications and the owner defended his win because sailors often brought home lemurs which they termed "Madagascar Cats". The judge, allegedly Miss H Cochran, defended the award by saying "A lemur is a lemur, and a Madagascar cat is a Madagascar cat." This was not the only time Miss Cochran's decision was contested. "Our Cats" in 1902 contained a letter regarding Miss H Cochran's conduct at the Victoria Hall Cat Show: *"There was a very good young black kitten, called Nig, exhibited in the Novice Manx class. It did not get a card, Miss H Cochran (the judge) saying it had a stump. It had no stump on the Thursday, and there being no sore place it cannot be assumed it had been nibbled off during the night! On Thursday it was examined by Miss Frances Simpson, Miss Dresser, Mr Louis Wain, and others, who all pronounced it absolutely tailless!"* Great injustice was done to its owner, Miss Goddard, by such careless judging and Miss Cochran refused to look at Nig again, saying that it had possessed a stump when examined the previous day. In fact Nig went on to become Champion King Clinkie and must, therefore, have been tailless!

## MANAGEMENT OF SHOWS

Now to turn our attention to the management of shows, and upon this question I feel I am fairly competent to give an opinion, as I have acted as show manager and as show secretary to some of our largest exhibitions in London and at Brighton. The office is indeed no sinecure, and very few fanciers, exhibitors, or visitors have any idea of the enormous amount of forethought required, to say nothing of physical and secretarial labours, to make a big show run smoothly. The responsibility also is great, for a conscientious manager feels he has valuable live stock in his temporary possession, of which he has, so to speak, to render up account. There are many mixed shows held throughout the country where a cat section is given, and it is to be regretted that in most, if not all



cases the poor pussies are badly provided for and generally go to the wall. At a dog and cat show everything goes to the dogs! Secretaries wishing to promote successful cat sections at their mixed shows should secure some well-qualified person to have entire control of this department. It is certainly true that, of all live stock, cats require the most consideration and supervision, and yet to the masculine mind of a show secretary it would appear that the cats can look after themselves. There is no doubt that the first step towards making a show successful is to engage the services of a competent, energetic, and painstaking manager and secretary. It is also very desirable to appoint a really good working show committee, the members of which should each undertake some particular duty in connection with the show. For instance, one member might superintend the feeding, another could be responsible for obtaining promises of special prizes, another devote himself - or herself to verifying the prize tickets placed on the pens, and so on. A system of advertising a show must be decided upon by the show committee, and notices sent to the various journals which are circulated amongst fanciers. The class and prize tickets must be ordered in good time either by the secretary of the club or the manager of the show.

The best time of the year for a show as regards the appearance of Persian cats is in December or January. Then, if ever, these particular cats should be in their best show condition. As regards kittens, the early summer or autumn is the best period, as spring kittens will then be ready to make their bow to the public. It is much to be regretted that the two principal shows of the National Cat Club - namely the Botanic Gardens and the Crystal Palace Shows - should be held respectively in June and October, when Persian cats are in poor coat.

Quite three months before the date of the show a managing secretary will start work. Catalogues of previous shows must be collected together, in order to ascertain the names and addresses of likely exhibitors.

Special prizes are now a great feature at all cat shows, and a good deal of extra work is entailed by writing to obtain promises of these for the various breeds. If possible, it is well to appoint someone who is in touch with those who are likely to become donors, and to hand over this department. I would advise anyone undertaking this branch of the show to have a book, and to head each page with the respective classes of long and short haired breeds, and then when a special is received - say, for the best black Persian cat - to place this on the page set apart for specials for this particular breed. Keep a separate list for kittens, and decline to accept specials given in the form of stud visits or for cats bred from such-and-such a sire; these savour too much of self-advertisement. There are so many specialist societies nowadays, and as these provide their own specials the show executive is considerably relieved of obtaining prizes.

Of course, there are always a certain number of challenge cups, medals, and specials given by the club holding the show, and care should be taken to distribute these fairly amongst the various classes. It is usual and advisable to limit the competition of the majority of these special prizes to the members of the club. I do not approve of a special prize being offered for the best cat in the show, as it is almost impossible for the judges to arrive at a satisfactory decision, and considerable heartburnings are generally the result of such a competition. A very useful mode of assisting a show is by guaranteeing classes; and I would suggest yet another plan, namely, to subscribe so much toward the expenses of the show. These are necessarily heavy, and it has been stated that no cat show can ever be made a paying affair.

As regards the specialist societies, I think it seems the correct thing that the club intending to hold the show should instruct its secretary to write to the secretary of each specialist society to ask if he is willing to support the show by prizes or by guaranteeing classes, and to name the latest date for receiving particulars of the support to be given. The specialist societies have their own judges, and it is only natural when they are offering handsome prizes that a claim should be made for first-class judging in the interests of the breed. It is therefore essential, as matters at present stand, for one of the judges from the list of the specialist club to be selected to give awards in the classes connected with the society. It is important to obtain as full a list as possible of special prizes from societies and outside donors in good time for insertion in the schedule, as a tempting list will ensure a better entry. In the schedule the exhibition rules of the club should be printed, and in addition there should be a list of arrangements in a prominent position setting forth details as to the opening and closing of the show, the time up to which exhibits are received, the earliest hour at which they may be removed, and the prices of admission. The names of the judges, with their respective classes, should be clearly set forth, and it should be mentioned whether classes will or will not be amalgamated or cancelled. A few advertisements of stud cats and trade notices



should be obtained, as this means grist to the mill and helps to pay for the printing of the schedules and catalogues.

The question of classification is an all-important one, and needs the consideration of a careful show committee, well versed in the ways of cats and of cat fanciers. A list of the classification used by one or two big cat clubs has been given. Of course, at smaller shows it is often impossible to give separate classes for several breeds or to divide the sexes; but my remarks in this chapter will refer to the customs and arrangements of large shows, such as those held by the national Cat Club at the Crystal Palace, and the Cat Club at Westminster. I do not think it is good policy on the part of a show committee or management to amalgamate classes. It is much better to advertise in schedules that when entries are fewer than, say, four or five, then the judges are empowered to withhold any of the prizes; or, again, in the case of a very small class, half prize money might be awarded.

Having decided on the classification, and given as liberal and attractive a one as is possible and practicable, it is well to consider the number of schedules likely to be required, and then start addressing the wrappers. In each schedule must be inserted two or three entry and registration forms. The entry forms, with fees, are returned to the secretary, and the registration forms to the person who keeps the register of the club holding the show. And here I would remark on the mistake it is to have two registers for cats. It is very confusing for exhibitors, and a double expense, as the National Cat Club and the Cat Club each charge a shilling. Then, again, as the National Cat Club has recently passed a rule disqualifying all cats exhibited at Cat Club shows, the confusion is worse confounded.

Some fanciers having large catteries divide their exhibits and send to both National Cat Club and Cat Club shows; but this new registration rule falls heavily on cat fanciers who are keen to exhibit their specimens and anxious for the pleasure of obtaining prizes, and desire to profit by showing their stud cats or having an opportunity of disposing of their stock. The National Cat Club shows since the passing of this rule have suffered considerably, both from lack of entries and by the absence of some of the fine champion cats that, having been exhibited at the Cat Club show in January, were thus debarred from appearing at the Botanic Gardens and Crystal Palace shows. How much simpler and better it would be if both clubs could and would agree to have one register kept by an independent person, not necessarily a catty individual, and that the fees should form the salary of such a person. A small fee might be charged when reference was desired by fanciers as to the pedigree of any cats. If the secretary of a show happens to be acquainted with members of the cat fancy, he will use his discretion as to the number of entry and registration forms needed. In some cases, where he is sending to a well-known breeder and possessor of a large cattery, more numerous forms will be required.

Schedules should be sent out quite a clear month in advance, and the entries should close about ten days before the date of the show. The secretary will have a book in which he will note down each entry as it is received, placing it under the correct class heading, and, of course, these can only be numbered up when entries close. The entry forms should be filed and kept for reference. Then comes the work of arranging and writing the labels, and placing these with the tallies, entrance tickets, and removal orders in envelopes and addressing them to the exhibitors. These should be posted four clear days before the show.

During this time the secretary will be able to compile the catalogue for the printer, and arrange to have an instalment of copies the night before the show, also to draw up the judges' books. Letters should be written to the judges and veterinary surgeons acquainting them with the hour at which they are desired to present themselves at the hall, and a complimentary pass ticket should be enclosed. A pass should also be sent to the representative of the Press, to the veterinary surgeon, and to those who may be giving their services as stewards. Distant exhibitors will write requesting catalogues to be forwarded to them, and a list should be kept. A secretary will do well to provide himself with strong cord, scissors, brown paper, writing materials, labels, telegraph forms, stamps, and other useful articles.

In these days of specialist clubs it is necessary for the secretary to have a list of members of each society supporting the show, as the prizes being confined to members the judge will have to refer to the secretary's office for information before making his awards.



The day before the show will be fully occupied in superintending the arrangement and putting up of the benching and pens. A conveniently sized glass case should be ordered for the special prizes, and this must be placed in a prominent position. The prizes should all be distinctly labelled with the donor's name and the breed of cat for which each is offered. The case should be one which locks up, and then it is not necessary to have any supervision of the contents. It is best for some two members of the show committee to undertake the arrangement in the case of the special prizes. Two men should be engaged to take the tickets and money at the entrance gate, and in the sales office a clerk will be required to receive purchase money and give receipts. At a large show it is necessary to employ four or six stewards to collect the judges' slips as they complete each class, and take them to those in the office appointed to write out the tickets. These same stewards should also undertake to place them on the pens. And here let me say how much better it would be if some arrangement could be made for the prize tickets to be fixed in a rack at the top of the pen, instead of being thrust between the wires, where a large number almost hide the cat, and frequently they are torn down by the inmates of the pen.

A good manager will have all in order well before the hour when the cats are received, and if the veterinary surgeon engaged is in attendance the cats can be examined and, when passed, placed at once in their proper pens. It is very important to entrust the work of penning to those who are used to handling cats, and no better men can be found than those employed by Messrs Spratt, who, as everyone knows, are the universal providers at cat shows, as at every other live-stock exhibition. It is a question whether hay or straw is best for bedding. I incline towards the latter if it is the fine wheaten straw, as hay, if it becomes at all damp, will stick to the long-coated cats. I also prefer dry earth at the back of the pens to sawdust, for the same reason. I trust we may ere long be able to provide something better in the way of a cat pen than those at present in use. The doors should open the full height of the cage and two-thirds of the width, so that the cat can more easily be taken out.

There is no doubt that, considering the peculiar nature of cats, some more adequate arrangement should be made in the sanitary accommodation. The earth scattered at the back of the pen amongst the bedding is not all that could be desired. What we want is a false bottom, and an earth pan or tray sunk in it about two inches down on the plan of the bird cage, so that it can be drawn out and fresh earth supplied, and replaced. Greater care should be paid as regards the security of the fastenings of the pens, and the wires of some of them are too wide apart, so that young kittens can easily make an exit. It is well known that cats have extraordinary powers of escaping whenever and wherever escape is possible.

I disapprove as strongly as do the cats of any disinfectant being sprinkled or placed *inside* the pens. Each pen must, of course, bear a number; but instead of the different classes being numbered, it is much better to have them named, and the large placards fixed high about the pens by means of split sticks of Japanese bamboo. Thus anyone seeking the blue or the brown tabby class will have no difficulty in locating it, even without a catalogue.

It is very important that all exhibits be examined by a qualified veterinary surgeon before being penned, and if a cat is seriously ill the owner should be at once communicated with and the specimen returned. If it is a doubtful case, perhaps a running eye or a high temperature, then the cat should be placed apart in a properly arranged, and if possible warmed, hospital room to be again examined. Remember it is always better to disappoint one exhibitor by refusing his cat, than to disgust everybody by bringing their carefully trained and dearly loved pets into contact with disease. It is necessary to appoint an official to check off each exhibit as it is passed, and in the event of pronounced illness or some other objectionable feature to make a note of this for future reference.

As regards the feeding of exhibits, I am in favour of raw beef or cooked meat cut into small pieces or else put through a mincing machine, and water to drink. For many reasons it is not desirable to provide milk; it is apt to turn sour, and it certainly more easily collects germs of disease, and so may prove a fruitful source of evil.

The Cat Club started the idea of having china saucers instead of the usual tins, and these are decidedly better in every way. A one-day show is no doubt best for the cats, but for the exhibitors and the executive a two-days show is really preferable. If the exhibits are allowed to be penned up till eleven o'clock on the morning of the show. The judging ought to be got through and the tickets placed on the pens in two hours with a competent staff, and the show opened at one or 1.30.



A smart secretary will arrange with his printer to have a list of awards printed with the utmost speed after the class judging is finished. This can either be given in the catalogues themselves or a separate sheet inserted in the catalogues. A large board out to be hung in a conspicuous and convenient position, and the list of class winners and the winners of special prizes entered on it. This is better than having the slips pinned upon a board. They are often very indistinctly written, and are apt to get torn down. Let the closing hour on the first night be eight or nine o'clock, when the hall should be cleared and the pens covered over. I consider one good feed of raw meat ought to suffice during the day, with fresh water continually supplied. The hour for opening on the second day may be ten o'clock, and before then the pens ought to be cleaned out, fresh straw given where needed, and disinfectant sprinkled up and down the passages between the rows of pens - not in them. Careful attention to these points will ensure the show being free from disagreeable odours by the time the public are admitted. It is a wise plan to arrange and announce that the show closes, say, at five p.m. on the second day, so that exhibitors can, in many cases, get home with their cats the same night. It is unreasonable to expect to be allowed to depart before the time fixed, even though in some cases half an hour would save a train.

As regards a one-day show, it is almost impossible for a secretary and manager to get through the necessary work and to open it in anything like time. There must be a scramble, and for the exhibitors to be obliged to present themselves and their cats at some unearthly hour in the morning is very trying and most inconvenient. Then a two-days show is, of course, an advantage as regards the entrance money. The Cat Club used to have a stringent rule against exhibitors penning their own cats, but at the Westminster Show this rule was amended, and cats could be penned by the owners or representatives on the night before the show, but not in the morning. No evil result followed this concession on the part of the authorities, and therefore I trust this very natural desire on the part of the exhibitors to see their precious pussies safely into their temporary quarters may always be permitted at Cat Club shows.

In order to facilitate the work of the judges, it is well to have their books carefully and clearly arranged, and this especially applies to the list of special awards. I instituted a plan at Westminster Show, in 1901, which gave great satisfaction, but which entailed a lot of extra work for the secretary. I am sure however, this special arrangement lightened the labours of the judges, and hastened the appearance of the special prize cards on the pens. I had separate books for the special awards, and carefully cut out of the schedules the prizes pertaining to each judge. Thus if Mr A had black, white and blue long-haired classes, every challenge medal and special offered for these cats I arranged in order on one side of the page, with the numbering as it appeared with them in the schedule. So in the left-hand page would be, say, "Special No 10, for best long-haired black," and on the right-hand page "Awarded to No ...," leaving a blank for the judge to fill in the number of the winner. Any prizes that had to be awarded in conjunction with other judges, such as for best long-haired cat in the show, I made a note of to this effect. Let me add that I gummed the printed portions relating to the prizes, cut from the schedule, into the judging books, so the judges needed neither schedule not catalogue to refer to.

In preparing judges' books it is very helpful to place male and female (M and F) after each catalogue number in the mixed kitten classes, to avoid reference for the special awards; and this should also be done in the catalogue itself, as very often the name of the kitten does not indicate the sex, and would be purchasers are obliged to make inquiries.

I am always an advocate of having selling classes for cats and kittens at shows, where the price should be limited to £5 5s [five pounds and five shillings] in the long-haired classed as £3 3s [three pounds and three shillings] in the short-haired classes. It would be an assistance if someone who understood cats, and was also a good salesman or saleswoman, undertook to preside over the selling classes. The 10 per cent commission deducted by the show authorities is a material help, and often a little pressure and persuasion, combined with useful information, will decide a wavering purchaser.

A class I should like to see introduced into our shows is one for kittens bred by exhibitors. I am of opinion that more encouragement should be given to fanciers to keep the best of their litters for exhibition. Lady Marcus Beresford had the happy inspiration of starting breeders' cups for competition at Cat Club shows, and special prizes are often given for the best kitten bred by exhibitors. But these are tiresome awards for a judge to make; he is obliged to make inquiries from someone with a catalogue, and even this reference will not always suffice. It



is always pleasant to win prizes, but an additional pride would naturally be felt if, in a large class of kittens bred by well-known exhibitors, the son or daughter of our own breeding should be awarded first and special.

With respect to a ring class, which is often held at some of the National Cat Club shows, I cannot say that it is very interesting to see a collection of toms, females, and neuters, long- and short-haired, being dragged along by their anxious owners, whilst the puzzled judges try hard to decide which of the motley and mixed assembly is most worthy of honours. I think that for a ring class neuters alone should be eligible, or at any rate until we have trained our young cats to behave properly on a lead. There need be no necessity for the neuters to be entered and penned in the show, but they could be charged a higher fee for the ring class; and I believe that many owners of neuters would not object to their precious pets being on exhibition for ten or twenty minutes, led by themselves into the ring, but who will not let them be cramped up in a pen for two days.

Neuters are always at a disadvantage in the show pen - they are generally too large and too lazy to be properly seen, and a ring class for these specimens would be a very attractive feature at our cat shows. A row of chairs should be placed round, and sixpence a seat charged. It is quite absurd to mix up the sexes, and dangerous to allow tom cats to come within fighting distance of each other. At a recent show great excitement was caused in the ring by the sudden attack of one famous stud cat on another, and it was lucky that nothing worse than a torn and bleeding ear was the result of this onslaught.

Another class I should like to see at some of our large shows, and certainly at the summer NCC Show, is a class for stud cats, which should be judged quite irrespective of coat, and special attention directed to form of limb, size of head, and massive build in awarding the prizes. This might not be an attractive class, but it would be an instructive one, and give the veterans a chance of proving of what stuff they are made. A young untried male will often take all honours in his class, and the stud cat of a busy season is forced to take a back place, probably on account of services rendered. Anyhow, this idea might be carried out as regards the two largest classes - namely those for silver and blue Persians. In former days there used to be classes at some of the shows in which the cats were judged by weight, but these have wisely been done away with [*note: weight classes are found in farm livestock shows on which early cat shows were modelled*].

The question of open judging at cat shows has frequently been discussed in catty circles, and several fanciers have given their opinions on this subject. Mrs Neat, a well-known fancier, writes thus in *Fur and Feather*: "*It would indeed be a step in the right direction if cat shows were run on (as far as possible) the same lines as dog shows. Much of the absurd mystery that at present envelops our cat shows would vanish if exhibitors were permitted to be present during the judging, and I feel sure that the majority of cat fanciers would not be so wanting in etiquette and good taste as to hinder the judges or any of the officials in discharge of their onerous duties.*" No doubt there is much truth in these remarks; but, at the same time, I do not think fanciers take sufficiently into consideration the very timid, shrinking nature of the cat when they advocate open judging. It is often most difficult for a judge to properly examine a cat, even when he or she is quietly going round giving the awards; it would be still more trying to man and beast if a collection of strangers were pressing forward on all sides.

What I consider is more practical than open judging for cats is that some arrangement should be made so that judges may be enabled to compare the points of the various exhibits, and for this purpose I consider that judging pens on movable tables should be provided at all shows, as were adopted by the Cat Club at Westminster. By these means the work of the judges would be much simplified, and the cats more satisfactorily and quickly judged.

Supposing a special prize or medal is offered for the best cat in the show, then I think it is interesting and instructive to have the first prize winning cats placed, if possible, in pens, and to arrange for the award to be given in public during the show by the judges in conjunction with each other. Such a plan was adopted at the last Manchester Cat Show, and much satisfaction was expressed at this innovation.

Having given some suggestions as to the classification, I would again refer to points of management in shows. At the closing hour on the second day the hall should be cleared, and only exhibitors or their representatives



allowed to remain. An efficient staff of attendants should at once set to work to assist in packing up the cats belonging to those exhibitors who intend taking them away. After these have all left, then the manager should direct his attention towards those exhibits that should be started by the night mails [late night trains]. The catalogue must be consulted, and a good way is to mark with a cross on the pen tickets those cats that must be packed up; and, having previously ordered the railway vans at a certain time, the precious packages should be sent off as speedily as possible. Those exhibits left over till the following morning should be fed again and started at daybreak.

There is a sense of immense relief when the last hamper has been fastened down and seen off the premises. And here let me say how much exhibitors can contribute towards the speedy and safe despatch of their pets, if only they will provide substantial and well appointed travelling baskets or boxes. Amidst all the hurry and confusion of packing up an immense amount of extra trouble is given by having to lace up a hamper with string, or nail down a box that has no other means of being made secure! I speak from experience, and therefore I plead for more consideration to be extended to the show manager and his assistants, and, above all, to the poor pussies themselves.

At every show that is held there are a number of exhibitors who try the patience and courtesy of the manager or secretary, or both, by requesting to be allowed to remove their cats before the advertised time. Of course it is only natural that those fanciers residing at a distance should wish to make tracks home and catch early trains for their own comfort and convenience and the welfare of their pussies. But, looking at the matter from a secretary's and a visitor's point of view, it is certainly hard that perhaps some of the best prize cats should be absent from their pen whilst the public are paying their money at the gate; but, having made a rule, it is best to stick to it, and no cat should be taken away till the fixed hour under any pretext whatever, unless a veterinary certificate of illness is obtained.

It is always open to the management to advertise an earlier hour for the removal of exhibits on payment of a certain sum, but this should be made a substantial fine, especially in the case of a prize-winner. A lower figure might be named for other exhibits. As regards cats or kittens purchased at the show, it is certainly an inducement and incentive to buyers if there is a rule that these exhibits may be removed at any time.

According to the rules of the two leading clubs, a certain fixed time must elapse before the prizes are sent out. In some cases this is a most uncertain and unfixed time, and many complaints have been made through the cat papers of the long drawn-out period between the prize being won and the prize being received. No doubt, immediate distribution of prizes after the show would lead to complications, for objections might be lodged within the given time allowed by the rules, and such objections would have to be brought before the committee of the club; therefore it is obvious that successful competitors must allow, say, a month to elapse before showing signs of impatience. It is then the manager's business to send the money awards, and the secretary of the club is generally accountable for the distribution of the "specials," which certainly call for a special acknowledgment from the recipient to the donor of these prizes.

As regards the financial aspect of a cat show, the first important point is to make the entries pay for themselves - that is, supposing your prize money in each class is £1, 10s, [one pound and ten shillings] and 5s, [five shillings] then you need twelve entries at 3s [three shillings] to carry you through. And here let me remark that, considering the character of our first-class shows and the value of the special prizes offered, I am inclined to think that entry fees are too low, and that they should be more in accordance with the fees charged at dog shows. It is always advisable to make a difference between members of the club holding the show and outsiders. Thus is 5s [five shillings] is the entry fee for members, the 6s [six shillings] or 7s 6d [seven shillings and sixpence] might be charged to non-members. New recruits to a club are often gained by this arrangement. The usual commission on sales is 10 per cent, and then there is the gate money, which somehow is generally disappointing, for truly the outside public are not partial to cats, nor attracted to exhibitions of the feline race. I have always contended that exhibitors themselves ought to be charged an entrance fee - say, half-price admission on presentation of their exhibitor's pass, which in many cases would only be sixpence, yet one or two hundred of these small coins would materially assist the exchequer; and sure no cat fancier would grumble at this tax on their resources when they consider how much trouble and expense is entailed in providing them with a



favourable opportunity of exhibiting their pets, and with a possibility of winning golden guineas and silver trophies.

Another plan is to advertise in schedules that exhibitors of more than, say, two entries would be allowed a free pass. Fanciers will be tempted to send additional cats, and thus swell the entries, in order to secure their free admission ticket. I do not think it would be a bad plan to have a "Contribution Column" on the entry forms for members' and exhibitors' voluntary donations towards the expenses of a show, if well managed, is worthy of the utmost support from the cat-loving community.

"Every mickle makes a muckle," [*"small things all add up"*] and it should be the earnest desire of each individual member of a club to do something, however small, towards keeping a balance on the right side of their treasurer's accounts.

## BUYING AND SELLING

I believe that a Bow Street magistrate once asserted that anyone owning a stud dog or selling a dog was, in the point of law, a dealer. I do not know if the same decision would apply in the cat world. Anyhow, there are few fanciers who do not desire at some time or other to dispose of their cats and kits; and again, there are many who keep stud cats, yet cannot be considered dealers in that sense of the term. The best way to set about trying to sell our surplus stock is to advertise in the cat paper, in which case it is advisable to fully and fairly describe our animals and to name the price required. If profit is to be considered, it is not advisable to keep kittens more than eight weeks. Very soon after this period they begin to lose their fluffiness and grow leggy in appearance. There is also the risk of illness and death. It is better, therefore, to be willing to accept a moderate sum for kittens at eight weeks old than to keep them to see how they turn out. It is a clear case of "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush."

I have always thought that there is a good opening for any enterprising person well versed in cat lore and cat fanciers to start an agency in London, where cats and kittens might be sent on approval, for would-be purchasers to call and interview them. There might be a system of messengers who would meet cats and see them off at London stations. In connection with such a cat agency a register might be kept of cats for sale or cats wanted and arrangements made as at the Army and Navy Stores for having a certain number of animals on view. These could be boarded at so much per week, and commission charged on the sale.

A list of names and addresses of those willing to receive cats as boarders would be very useful and many ladies who do not choose to advertise could and would, I am sure, avail themselves of the means of letting fanciers know they could undertake the charge of pets during their owners' absence from home. Many and frequent are the letters I receive on this subject, especially as the summer vacation approaches.

A day and an hour for the visit of an experienced veterinary might be arranged, so that country fanciers could send or bring their sick cats for advice. All sorts of cat appliances might be on sale. It would be convenient to have a writing-room for the use of fanciers, where correspondence on catty matters could be carried on. Perhaps a tea-room could be added, and bedrooms, if space was available, for fanciers coming up to attend London shows. Anyhow, a list of suitable rooms might be kept which could be personally recommended.

In these days, when competition is so keen and occupation so difficult to obtain, the idea of starting a cat agency should commend itself to some who, being in touch with members of the cat fancy, and wishing for lucrative employment, might embark on this novel undertaking. Needless to say, it would be most desirable to have the cat agency in a central part of London, and in close proximity, if possible, to some of the main railway stations. I think that, if only as a means of assisting fanciers in the purchase and disposal of their cats and kittens, this idea of an agency might be successfully worked. Many breeder become very disheartened at the inability to find purchasers for their kittens. A complaint was recently made by a lady living in the Isle of Wight. She writes: "No one seems to care for breeding in this island, and people are not willing to give more than about five shillings for pedigree kittens." No doubt fanciers living in the country and away from any catty centre have but little opportunity of finding a sale for their surplus stock. I would suggest photography as one means of making known



# A Very Brief History of Cat Shows

(2003 Sarah Hartwell)



the perfections of their pussies. A start in the right direction has been made by Mr Landor of Ealing, whose clever pictures of kittens are so well known. He is willing to take portraits of pretty, fluffy kits and good cats on special terms, provided he retains the copyright of such photographs. It is always handy to have a good photograph to send by post when endeavouring to dispose of our pets, and by such means fanciers may be spared the trouble and risk of sending their valuable kittens on approval.

Naturally, for unknown cat fanciers it is more difficult to effect sales through advertisement, and in their case it is necessary to offer to send on approval at buyer's risk and cost; and if an application is made from an entire stranger, then the purchase money should be deposited in the hands of some reliable independent third person. Some fanciers entirely decline to send their cats on approval, and then it is very requisite to enter fully into particulars, and, if possible, to send a photograph. It is best to give the faults and failings as well as the good points, so that disappointment and disagreement may not follow between the purchaser and seller. Buyers should endeavour to learn something about the person from whom they purchase their cats; and it is as well to ask not only for age and full pedigree, but whether the cat has been exhibited, and if it has taken any honours, and, at which shows. It sometimes happens that valuable animals may be picked up for low prices at shows; but there is always a risk, and this is especially the case with young kittens, who more easily contract any disease any disease. In buying a cat or kitten it is always advisable to make inquiries as to the way in which it has been fed, so as to continue the same regimen for at least a few days.

**THE BLUE PERSIAN CAT SOCIETY PEDIGREE FORM**

Breed and Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Breeder: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Colour: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of Cat: \_\_\_\_\_

PARENTS	GRAND-PARENTS	GREAT GRAND-PARENTS	GREAT GREAT GRAND-PARENTS
500			50
			50
			50
			50
			50
1000			50
			50
			50
			50
			50

Prizes Won, Remarks, &c. \_\_\_\_\_

These Forms, at 1d. per copy, can be obtained on application to 3048 P. Stinson, Hon. Sec., 9, Lennox Place, Arlington, W.

The pedigree of a cat or kitten should be sent at the time of purchase, and it is much easier to fill this in on a properly drawn out form, and certainly it is pleasanter to receive the particulars thus intelligently written out. I give a copy of the forms I drew out for the use of blue Persian members, but these can, of course, be used for cats of any breed.

Here let me quote from an article in that excellent American paper, *The Cat Journal*, headed "Unreasonable Buyers." The writer says:- "One of the most difficult things with which the cat seller has to contend is the unreasonable buyer. There are buyers who, finding a cat to suit them, pay the price and are satisfied. There is, however, another class that it is best to let alone. They are never satisfied, and blame the seller for everything that happens either on the road or after the kitten is received, and many of them also think if they are sharp they will be able to buy a \$100 for \$10 or \$15, and when they get such a kitten and they discover that it is not worth



*\$100, they are disgusted, and have a lot to say about unfair dealing, etc. If a kitten that has been a pet is taken from its surroundings, and sent on a long journey, the rattle and the unusual conditions of such a trip places her in a state of nervous terror, so that she very rarely shows off to good advantage in her new home. The purchaser, if a true cat lover, will appreciate all the trouble of poor little pussy, and give her the tenderest treatment and coax her to make the best of her new surroundings. It is a very rare thing for a kitten to come from the box after a long journey looking just as the new owner expected. Tired, homesick, and frightened, she will not eat, and is altogether a pitiable looking object. It is always advisable to put a new arrival in a room by herself, with a comfortable bed and conveniences, entirely away from the rest of the cats and kittens, and allow her to become acquainted with the members of the family gradually. Do not allow other cats to come bothering around till the new member of the family is entirely acquainted with its surroundings. Especially be very cautious in introducing two male cats.*

*Sellers must be very cautious in sending out their stock, and buyers must not expect too much. Give the new member of the family a little time to know things before you write your letter of complaint. Be sure you are not expecting too much for the price you paid."*

The question has often been asked, "Can cats be made to pay? And naturally, novices in the fancy wish to know the best way in which to start. [Twenty years later, Simpson wrote a book on the topic of cats for pleasure and profit].

Here I would say how much may be done by well-known and influential members of any fancy if they will give themselves a little trouble in helping the novice, who, after all, is the backbone, so to speak, of every fancy, and hence it is very essential that beginners should start on the right lines and with reliable, and therefore profitable, stock. Speaking from experience in the cat fancy, I can say that several persons have come into the ranks and gone out of it again, in many cases through sheer disgust because of the deceptions practised, and of which they, as novices, have been made the victims. I hold that if beginners are to be retained as members of a fancy, they should be treated kindly and liberally by the experienced fancier, especially when it is a question of purchasing stock. It is much to be lamented that novices are frequently treated in a reverse manner, and fanciers (so-called) seize upon an opportunity of getting rid of superfluous and often inferior specimens to those who are unable to discover good from bad in the cats offered to them.

At the same time, it is a pleasing fact that there are many true fanciers in the feline world who, having made their names as breeders, prize-winners, and perhaps judges, put themselves out to give valuable advice, and often spare no pains in endeavouring to obtain good stock for the novice at reasonable prices.

Another question often asked is, "Does showing pay?" In answer to this query, I give an extract from the pen of the clever weekly correspondent of Fur and Feather, "Zaida," who says: - *"To those who keep their cats for pleasure, who really love them and can afford to despise the small 'takings' available, keep your cats at home and do not show. Expense does not count with this class of exhibitor, but risk to the welfare of their best-beloved pussies undoubtedly does. To those who are trying to make money by their cats, we would urge: harden your hearts, learn how to show, where to show, and when to show; and recognise the expense, risk, and trouble involved as part of the unavoidable outlay which is to bring in a certain return. Undoubtedly, a show is a heavy expense, and will always leave you out of pocket. Even if you conduct it on the most selfish terms - the 'give nothing' and 'take-all-you-can' system - you will be exceptionally lucky if you clear your expenses. You cannot expect to sell your kittens well if you do not exhibit.*

*If you possess a stud cat, he must be seen and known before you can hope to have a demand for his services. Your own eye must be continually trained by comparison of your own stock with the prize specimens of others. In short, if you wish to make money, you must spend money. On the other hand, never exhibit except at first-rate shows, and never be tempted to show an animal out of condition. If you can afford to buy animals already well known in the show world, cats of renown, for whose offspring there will always be a keen demand, you may possibly abstain from exhibition. This plan, however, involves a very large initial outlay. Then, again, the happy people who have won their laurels, whose names are always associated with first-rate animals of a particular breed, they, indeed, can afford to rest in peace, and show no more. Other people will buy their kittens, and do*



*their exhibiting for them, and also do that mournful nursing and burying that too often follows a show. Undoubtedly, it is fascinating to show successfully; but, on the whole, we think the most enjoyable shows are those where one goes to look at other people's exhibits and leave one's own at home."*

A few words as to the stud fees and arrangements for visiting queens will not here be out of place. The usual fee for the services of a stud cat is fixed at £1 1s, [one pound and one shilling] but some fanciers are willing to accept less, especially if there cat is not a well-known prize-winner. A higher charge is often made if the railway journey has to be followed by a cab fare, or if the owner, having a valuable stud cat, does not wish to encourage many visitors. The carriage of the queen should always be defrayed by the sender, and if a telegram and return insurance is desired, then these sums should be refunded to the owner of the stud cat. It is desirable to announce the despatch or intended despatch of a queen, as it may not be convenient to receive her. The usual time to keep a visitor is from three to six days, and then the owner of the stud cat should give notice of the return. In case the first visit proves unsuccessful a second visit is usually allowed by courtesy without any extra payment, but this must not be taken as a matter of course, and it is best for the owner of the queen to ask permission to send again. If through a mistake in the time of sending a cat apparently fails to mate during two visits, it can only be by the kindness of the stud cat's owner that a third visit is permitted for the one fee. If, however, the queen has been known to have mated on each occasion, a third visit gratis cannot be expect even if there is no result. A fee once paid for a visit is not returnable. It is sometimes a matter of arrangement between two fanciers to have the choice of a kitten instead of the mating fee, but this transaction does not commend itself unless the parties are on very friendly terms. A clear understanding should be arrived at on all occasions between the sender and the receiver, and thus any unpleasantness may be avoided. It is catty etiquette to forward the fee when sending the queen, or, at latest, immediately on her return. A label for the return journey should be fixed inside the lid of the hamper. This is a saving of trouble to the owner of the stud, and is also a means of identification.

In selecting a young kitten for purchase out of a litter, take note of the size of head and width between the ears. In self coloured kits look out for white spots, and avoid those with long tails. Fanciers should strive to resist the temptation of buying too many cats and kittens of different breeds. To the novice and the beginner I would say, Buy two or three good specimens, carefully selected; these will be worth quantities of doubtful ones, which as a matter of fact, have, as a rule, no value at all. Seize every opportunity which comes across your path of seeing and examining well-bred prize winning cats, and attending shows. The cleverest fancier and most successful breeder can improve himself by observation and education.

Do not be offended if you are told by those who have had a larger and longer experience in the fancy, and who are really experts, that you have made a mistake in any purchase. If you resent their criticisms, you may, and probably will, accumulate much rubbish as a monument of your own conceit. A great deal may be learnt from books, but more from observation. Above all, do not, when you have acquired some knowledge, form too high an estimate of your own powers and of your own cats; a true fancier is always ready - nay, anxious - to learn, well recognising that ignorance alone claims to be omniscient.

## ENDNOTE

Modern readers may look back in horror at the "ignorance" of past ages. However, Baker and Darwin could not have imagined the metamorphosis of the humble mouser into the many breeds of modern show cat, nor the razzamatazz of cat shows. Those breeders and exhibitors who sent their cats off in the goods van of a train and who were resigned to the loss of whole breeding lines through "show fever" could not have imagined the arrangements necessary to accomplish the same aims today. In fifty or a hundred years' time, cat lovers may also look back on the 1990s and early 2000s with horror, or (depending on how the world changes) may wonder why on earth people of our era were interested in showing and breeding cats.

## LOCAL SHOWS

As an example of the ever-increasing interest shown in cat sections at local shows, the following account, kindly supplied to me by Mr FD W Western the secretary, will be of interest: -



"Sandy Show has long since outgrown in size and importance the title it bears, viz, 'The Exhibition of the Sandy and District Floral and Horticultural Society.' The first schedule, issued in 1869, catered for plants, flowers, fruit, vegetables, poultry, and cage birds. In 1880 pigeons were introduced, and in 1883 rabbits were added. Later in 1899, dogs put in an appearance with four classes. It was not, however, until 1894 that our friend 'pussey,' in whom we are especially interested made her *debut* at Sandy, and as we look at the schedule for that year we are driven to the conclusion that none but a philosopher could have drawn up such a classification for our pets. The trouble which we now frequently experience at a cat show of being 'wrong classed' could not well arise on that happy day in August 1894, when eight catteries were represented in the one and only class, viz, 'Any variety, any age, male or female.' But if our pets made a modest bow to the public in that year, they have lived to be proud of their position. In the succeeding year three classes were provided, bringing together 31 cats. From this date the cat classes have shown substantial improvement. The year 1900 found Sandy with five classes and 41 entries. By this time the cat fancy throughout this country had come into prominence; clubs had been established, and specialist societies were springing into existence. With a leap forward the cat section of the 1901 show numbered 20 classes. This was far too bold a bid for popularity to be lightly. The support was obtained of the Cat Club, the Silver Society (to-day the Silver and Smoke Persian Cat Society), the Short-haired Cat Society, and the Siamese Club.

Generous aid was given by many individual lovers of cats, and fifty special prizes, in addition to the class prize money, were offered. The show was attended with success, both as regards the number (about 150) and the quality of the exhibits. From a public point of view, moreover, the result was most gratifying. The cat tent was crowded throughout the day, and this section was acknowledged on every hand to have been one of the best features of the show.

With such success attending their first earnest venture in cats, it is not surprising to find that the committee resolved still further to increase the classification. In August 1902, therefore, 32 classes were arranged, of which 21 were guaranteed. Special prizes numbered 85, and the cat section had the support of all the specialist societies. With such attractions the splendid entry of 1901 was eclipsed, and at the very worst time of the year for cats as many as 266 entries were made. Long haired cats were decidedly well represented, and in the blue kitten class 21 specimens were penned. In the short-haired classes some noted winners appeared.

Ring classes were provided, and proved a great attraction to the public. The local classes were proof that Mrs F W Western has succeeded in interesting some of her friends in the hobby, and the specimens to which the honours fell would have done well in the keenest competition."

Mention was made in the list of clubs on a previous page of the Northern Counties Cat Club, which was founded in 1900. The committee decided on holding a one-day kitten show in September of that year, and the judges selected were Miss D Champion, Miss Frances Simpson, Mr T B Mason and Mr L P Astley. Entries came up well, numbering 154, and this novel undertaking was in every way a great success. The Northern Counties Cat Club kitten show is now an annual fixture, and on October 1<sup>st</sup> of 1902 a really splendid exhibition of promising youngsters was held at Bellevue, Manchester. Twenty-two classes were arranged, and over fifty specials offered. Entries were twenty in excess of the previous year, and would have been still higher in number had not sickness prevented several well-known silver breeders from exhibiting. The litter class numbered 17, and these, with the splendid blue classes, were the chief glory of the show. There were 18 pairs of blue kittens and 40 entries in single blue kittens, and it was most noticeable how few of these specimens failed in eyes. There were rows of gleaming orange orbs that rejoiced the heart of the Hon Sec of the Blue Persian Cat Club. The kitten show of 1902 may fairly be classed as another success for the Northern Club. A similar show for cats and kittens is held annually in December in Manchester by this enterprising club. I am indebted to Mrs G H Walker for the group of officials and members of the Northern Club. The photo was taken by Mrs Walker at the Manchester kitten show of 1902.

In connection with the dog show of the Ladies' Kennel Association, and exhibition of cats is now held annually at Harrogate under the rules and patronage of the National Cat Club. The first venture in this popular and fashionable water resort was made by Mrs Stennard Robinson in 1901, when entries came in splendidly; but rain descended most disastrously, and seriously interfered with the success of the show and the attendance of



visitors. In 1902 the weather proved most favourable, but the cat section suffered considerable as regards numbers of exhibits in consequence of the date clashing with that of the Sandy Show held also on August 28<sup>th</sup>. On this occasion the Hon Mrs McLaren Morrison was advertised as judge, but owing to ill-health her place was taken by Mrs Stennard Robinson, and Mr J B Townend, of the National Cat Club, undertook the management. The Midland Counties Cat Club held its first show in Birmingham. The classification was on a liberal scale, and several of the classes were guaranteed. Several of the specialist clubs supported this first venture of the Midland Counties Cat Club. A new departure in the matter of shows may shortly be attempted, and a scheme has been submitted to the cat world by the Hon Sec of the Silver and Smoke Persian Cat Society, that the specialist societies should combine and hold a show in the West of England. Each society is to be asked to bear a part in the expenses and secretaries will probably hold a meeting to consider the best ways and means of carrying out such an undertaking. It is not intended that such a show should be in any opposition to those held by the parent clubs, and registration in either of these clubs will be enforced; but, to quote the words of a well-known fancier and supporter of the specialist societies, "It is simply a way of escape from the enforced division of interests, and a means for permitting the cats of all club persuasion to meet on equal ground. As matters now stand, open competition is a thing of the past, and the sooner it becomes a possibility again the better for the cat fancy. On this ground, therefore, we think all unbiassed minds will accept with pleasure the scheme submitted to the public by the secretary of the SSPCS."

The Scottish Cat Club, which has Lady Marcus Beresford for its President, holds its annual show during the winter months, and its exhibition follows closely on that of the Midland Counties. Under the list of winter shows mention may be made of the following, where, in connection with other live stock, cats play a more or less important part:- Peterborough, Sheffield, Hounslow, Kendal, Bedford, Caterham, Hinckley, Hamilton, Doncaster, Yarmouth, Stratford-on-Avon, Bristol, Haverfordwest, Stockton, Cheltenham, Taunton, Epsom, Hexham, Larkhall, Stirling.

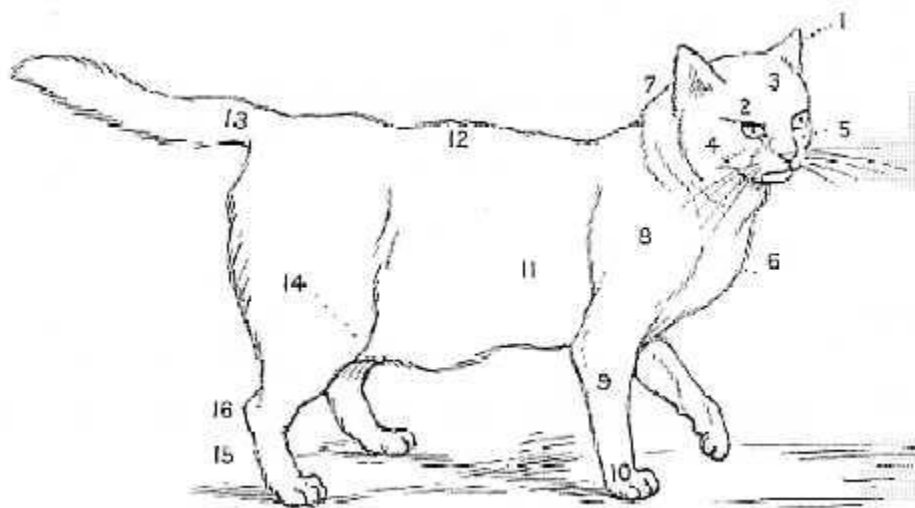
In this list I have made no mention of the great championship show of the National Cat Club, held annually at the Crystal Palace in October, to which the whole of cat creation looks forward with awe and longing. This is one of the greatest events in the cat world, and is always eagerly looked forward to by fanciers in all parts of the British Isles. In the schedule for the exhibition in 1902 no fewer than 216 special prizes were offered. Many of these were given by the following specialist clubs, who generously supported this annual fixture:- The Blue Persian Cat Society, the Silver and Smoke Persian Cat Society, the Chinchilla Cat Club, the Orange, Cream and Tortoiseshell Society, the Siamese Cat Club, the Manx Cat Club, and the British Cat Club.

The names of the judges acting on this occasion were as follows:- Mrs Greenwood, Miss Forestier Walker, Miss G Jay, Miss Cochran, Miss F Simpson, Mr Louis Wain, Mr Sam Woodiwiss, Mr C A House, and Mr Jung. In our latter-day shows the work of the judges is considerably augmented by the numerous specials that have to be awarded amongst the winners in the well-filled classes, and as regards the Crystal Palace show of 1902, the patience and skill of the judges making these awards were taxed to the uttermost.

The Cat Club's show has been held for three years in succession at St Stephen's Hall, Westminster Aquarium, about the beginning of January, and it is at this season that the really finest exhibition of Persian cats is witnessed, for at not other time are long-haired cats in such grand coat and good condition as in the middle of winter.

It is no wonder, therefore, with so many shows held throughout the length and breadth of the land, that the cult of the cat is becoming more and more widely known and appreciated, and that the fancy is really assuming such proportions that there can be no doubt of its permanent position amongst us.

## THE "POINTS" OF A CAT



Before entering upon the distinctive breeds of cats, of which I propose to treat fully in the ensuing chapters, I would draw attention to the accompanying diagram of a cat, and will proceed to point out the general contour of the animals, whether long- or short-haired. [Note: this section is heavily biased towards the Persian type, this being the favourite cat of that time.] Having given a table of reference, I will take the points of the cat as arranged in order:-

No. 1, Ears: These should be small and rounded at the tops, carried somewhat forward, and not wide open at the base. In the Persian varieties especially the inner surface should be hidden by a growth of fur extending from the face, termed ear tufts. It is a beauty in the cat to have the ears set well apart, giving an appearance of greater width to the head. The outer portion of the ears should be evenly covered with soft, short, downy fur.

No. 2, eyes: These ought to be round, large, and full. A small beady eye is a great disfigurement in a cat. The eyes should be set straight in the head, not slanting like those of a Chinese. In the Persian varieties a fringe of overhanging fur greatly improves and softens the expression. The colour varies in different breeds, but in green, orange, or blue eyes, purity and depth of colour should prevail. Very often an orange eye is spoiled by an inner rim of green, and a blue eye is weakened by a paler shade of blue, giving the appearance of an opal.

No. 3, Skull: Should be broad, with width between the eyes and ears.

No. 4, Cheeks: Well developed.

No. 5, Face and nose: These should be short; if the contrary, a "snipey" appearance is given to the cat, which quite spoils the expression.

No. 6, Chest: Should be full and broad.

No. 7, Neck: Short and full.

Nos. 8 and 9, Shoulder and fore-arm: These call for no special remarks; but in male cats especially firm and massive limbs are most desirable.

No. 10, paws: A large, broad paw, with short, but not stumpy, feet. In the Persian varieties the tufts are an additional beauty.

Nos. 11 and 12, Body and back: There is a diversity of opinion as to whether a cat should be long in the body or of cobby build. I incline to the latter as regards beauty of form, but I am of opinion that female cats with long bodies are the best breeders. All cats should be low in the legs.

No. 13, Tail or brush: In both breeds [*long-hair and short-hair*] this should be short rather than long, and in the Persian varieties broad and spreading. The tail should be carried almost on a level with the body, and slightly curving upwards towards the end. A too-tapering tail is a defect.

Nos. 14, 15 and 16 call for no further remark beyond the desirability of symmetry in form.



The foregoing list of points in a cat may be of some service to novices in the fancy, but it is necessary to add that, as in all animals, condition is a very important factor. A cat may be perfect in all points, and yet if in either the long- or short-haired varieties the coat lacks softness of texture, and in Persians the fur is matted or draggled, such specimens cannot expect to find favour in the eyes of a critical judge, or even an ordinary lover of cats. In short-haired breeds there is an unmistakable gloss on the coat of a cat that is in good health. A spikey appearance of the fur always denotes poor condition, and greatly detracts from the charms and chances of our pets or show cats. A great deal depends in keen competition upon condition. It turns the scale in a vast majority of instances. Therefore, as great attention should be paid to this point as to those set forth in the list I have given.

A small yet distinctive feature in a cat is the whiskers, and these vary in colour, according to the breed. They should be strong and yet sensitive, and curving slightly inwards. It is supposed to be a sign of strength if a cat's whiskers attain a great length.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE GCCF

As well as the Crystal Palace cat shows which began in 1871, shows were held at Brighton, Richmond, Hounslow, Harrogate, Sandy (Bedsfordshire), Newbury, Reading and at several London venues including the Crystal Palace, Westminster and the Botanical Gardens (Kew). These early shows became so popular that, at a show held at the Alexandra Palace in summer of 1887, a number of fanciers formed The National Cat Club. Membership was by invitation, there was a committee with elected officers and the National Cat Club formulated rules for cat shows. The foundation of the National Cat Club in 1887 is considered by many to be the birth of the Cat Fancy. From 1887 until 1910, the National Cat Club ran many shows including its Championship Shows at the Crystal Palace. It remains the premier cat club of Great Britain, and from it in 1910 The Governing Council of the Cat Fancy was born. From 1887 to 1910, the National Cat Club carried out the functions which are now performed by the GCCF including keeping breed registers. It also became a court of inquiry/appeal in cat-related matters. In 1893 it issued the first ever cat stud book.

The Scottish Cat Club was formed in 1894, and this early club ran many shows which were staged in Glasgow. Later, numerous other clubs were founded, and when the GCCF was instituted, these came under its jurisdiction. Among the specialist breed clubs formed in 1900 were The Black and White Cat Club; The Silver and Smoke Club (later incorporated with The Chinchilla, Silver Tabby and Smoke Society); The Orange, Cream and Tortoiseshell (which later became The Red, Cream, Tortoiseshell, Tortoiseshell-and-White, Brown Tabby and Blue-Cream Society). The Siamese Cat Club started in October 1900. These were followed in 1901 by The Blue Persian Cat Society; The Manx Club and The Short-hair Cat Society. Several regional clubs were also instituted: The Cat Club (1900); The Midland Counties Cat Club (1901) and The Southern Counties Cat Club (1904).

By 1898, the rival "The Cat Club" was founded and drew up its own rule and held its own successful shows at the old Westminster Aquarium. The Cat Club published a 2-volume stud book in 1899. Some clubs sided with The Cat Club while others remained attached to The National Cat Club. In 1904, these 2 rival clubs decided to try to settle their differences, but for the next 6 years there was general unrest in the Cat Fancy, and a Cat Fanciers' Association was formed. The National Cat Club (and several others) did not take part in the often fierce arguments and controversy and made the first move towards peace. In April 1909, The Cat Fanciers' Association was invited to send 3 delegates to confer with 3 members of The National Cat Club to consider "the condition of the Cat Fancy generally". Neither party was satisfied and negotiations continued until March 1910 when a historic conference of the Cat Fancy took place at 11, Victoria Street, Westminster. This conference resulted in the formation of The Governing Council of the Cat Fancy.

The National Cat Club agreed to hand over its governing powers to the newly formed GCCF and in return was granted 4 delegates in perpetuity; other clubs affiliated to the council were granted 1 or 2 delegates. In later years attempts were made to change this numerical representation. Mr FW Western said "in Council" that he recognized that The National Cat Club had certain rights, and that he would resist attempts to reduce their representation. The handing over of registrations and fees to the GCCF meant a huge loss of revenue to The National Cat Club, but the club agreed that it was for the overall good of the Cat Fancy.



The Midland Counties Cat Club, The Southern Counties, The Northern Counties and The Blue-Persian Cat Society were each permitted 2 delegates. The Blue-Persian Cat Society was the only breed club to be granted 2 representatives at that time and other breed clubs (The Black and White and The Brown Tabby (later The Red, Cream, Tortoiseshell, Tortoiseshell-and-White and Blue-Cream Society); The Chinchilla, Silver and Smoke Society; The Short-hair Cat Society; The Siamese Cat Club and The Neuter Cat Club (later combined with the Kensington Kitten Club) were granted only 1 delegate, though this could be increased to 2 if their memberships increased. One regional club was also allowed 2 delegates: The Newbury Cat Club.

The Siamese Cat Club grew rapidly and in 1930 had 4 delegates, the maximum number permitted. All clubs which had a certain number of delegates allowed to them by 31st December 1930 were allowed to retain that number in perpetuity even if their memberships decreased. This was accepted by the GCCF when its Constitution was revised in 1932. The Croydon Cat Club had one delegate in 1920 and a second in 1923. The Kensington Kitten Club was allowed 1 delegate a little later. The Siamese Cat Society of the British Empire and the Abyssinian Cat Club were each permitted one delegate from 1930. Later, many clubs were formed and became affiliated to the GCCF and were also granted representation. Some of the early clubs ceased to exist and were thus no longer represented.

Before the Second World War, The Southsea Cat Club and The South-Western Counties Cat Club became affiliated. In 1946 The Notts and Derbyshire Cat Club was formed. In 1947, the Blue-Pointed Cat Club, which had ceased to exist during the war, was re-affiliated. In 1948, The Herts and Middlesex Cat Club appeared. The Scottish Cat Club, had been hard hit during the period of distress on the Clyde and had dropped out as a member of the GCCF. It nevertheless carried on with shows and eventually rejoined the Council. In 1950, The Edinburgh and East of Scotland Club was affiliated. In 1951 The Lancashire and North-Western Counties and The Yorkshire County Cat Club also became affiliated. Soon after, the Russian Blue Club was affiliated, but did not have sufficient members for it to be granted a delegate.

The GCCF's preliminary meeting was held on the 17th May 1910, at the Inns of Court Hotel and a chairman (Russell Biggs), officers and a committee were appointed. The Constitution and Rules were drafted in outline. The first official meeting was 11th October 1910. In 1911, the GCCF's Constitution and Rules were drawn up by Mrs Slingsby, Mr Little and Mr Russell Biggs. The first General Meeting of the GCCF was a historic event for the Cat Fancy. Those present were Mr Russell Biggs (Chairman and representative for The National Cat Club), Mr de Vere Brooke, Miss Burton, Miss Cope, Mrs Fosbery, Miss Jay, Miss Kerwell, Miss H Lea, Mrs TB. Mason, Mrs Robinson, Miss Frances Simpson, Mrs Slingsby, Mrs Spoforth, Miss Wood, Mr Cox, Mr R Little, Mr T Watson, Mr J Wilson and Mr S Desborough (Secretary).

Following the First World War (the "Great War"), Mrs Slingsby was responsible, with several others, for rallying the Cat Fancy. She later helped redraft the Constitution and Rules, which were not amended again until 1932. The Constitution was further revised in 1953.

Sir Claude Alexander was for some years Chairman, succeeded in 1926 by Cyril Yeates (a delegate from The Black and White Club since 1921). Yeates' popularity made it impossible for him to retire; when he did finally retire he was elected the first President of the GCCF. Yeates died in 1950 and was remembered as a far-sighted chairman who also assisted cat clubs outside of Britain. Along with his wife Gretta, Yeates assisted the formation of The Cat Club de Paris and other French clubs along the same lines as the GCCF. GCCF secretaries not only attended all GCCF meetings, they also controlled the registrations and transfers of kittens and cats and are responsible for show catalogues and records of Challenge Certificates and Premier Certificates. Secretary for some years was Miss H Lea, followed by Mr Edmonds, Mr Barratt and Mr Herbert Thompson.

The first show run by the GCCF's was held in celebration of the Coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 1953; the Coronation Show was held at the Royal Horticultural Society's New Hall. It was attended by cat fanciers from many parts of Europe and also from the USA and South Africa; some as judges and others as observers. By the 1950s, several overseas clubs and foreign governing bodies were also affiliated to the British GCCF: The Cat Club de Paris; The Cat Club Vaudois (Switzerland); La Société Royale Feline de Flandres (Belgium); Felikat (Netherlands); Norsk



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Racekatten (Norway); Svenska Kattklubben (Sweden); Racekatten (Denmark); JYRAK (Denmark). The clubs of many nations were also represented by La Fédération Internationale Feline d'Europe (FIFE).