

Every Himalayan breeder in the world knows the story of the birth of the breed in England in 1950 at the Briary Cattery of Mr. Stirling-Webb, with recognition by the G.C.C.F. in 1955. It is well-known, too, that Mrs. Goforth founded a line of Himalayans in California, U.S.A., at about the same time as Mr. Stirling-Webb but neither breeder knew about the other. The story of the development of the Himalayan on the European Continent, however, is not as widely known most probably because few European breeders write in English and have their work published in English-language journals. In fact, Europe, for this reason, has become something of a forgotten continent for the cat fanciers.

The first-known Himalayans were actually in existence in Germany prior to World War II. These cats were originally known as Persians and later as Khmers. Years ago, I came across a German magazine with the story of the development of the breed in Germany from the early days. It appears that there was a breeder in Berlin who experimented with a number of outcrosses and did extensive work with this breed. Unfortunately, I do not recall all the details and feel it would be very interesting if a *CAT WORLD* reader in Germany would write in with more particulars.

Int'l. Ch. UNEXPECTED VICTORY VAN'T BENTHUY, Red Point male, bred by Baroness v. Heerdt, Holland, born May 15, 1971. Photo by Sera, Paris, France



HIMALAYANS

The name Khmers was retained until the breed was recognized in England in 1955 and was given the name Colourpoints. This name for the breed was then adopted in Europe and unified all the different lines.

A leading cattery working with the Colourpoints at that time was Frau Schafer's Cattery Vogelsberg beginning to breed with cats of the Rosenthal Cattery. Frau Schafer specialized in Seal Points which were really beautiful breed representatives of that era. When I began to go to the shows in 1959, Vogelsberg was already well-known.

There was a Red Point Khmer at the Wiesbaden show in 1962, *Bubi von Saxeck*, from East Germany. At the same show was a kitten of 7 months, *Nezar von Reifachark*, owned by Frau Rombach of Cattery Rombachsburg, which became the founder of her line. She began to work with Himalayan hybrids, crosses from one Vogelsberg cat with different White and Blue Persians. Frau Rombach became well-known for her Rombachsburg Himalayans which were mainly Blue Points with long coat and good type.

At the start of the 'sixties, the Himalayan cat was introduced in Holland. Miss van Wessem, a biologist, founded her Siyah Gush Cattery with one cat, as many of us did. This was a Siamese Seal Point who had been born in a home where the dam's owner had never heard of a Fancy. They had a male with a big round head, *Smor*, and an elegant, slim female, *Dicky*, both unregistered. When mated, the resulting litter included a daughter, *Asa*, who had inherited her sire's head type.

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Miss van Wessem later mated *Asa* to a Siamese male and then thought that a cat with Persian type and Siamese markings would be very decorative. She was not acquainted with anyone in the Fancy but did know an old lady who had some Blue-Eyed White Persians. These were not very typey but they did have beautiful coats. *Asa* was mated to a male known as *Lohengrin*.

Miss van Wessem had the luck of a novice! In the litter were some Longhairs and some Shorthairs, all being either Black or White, which proved that *Asa* carried the Longhair factor from one of her unknown ancestors. A welcome surprise for a new breeder of future Himalayans!

Out of this litter, Miss van Wessem kept a big Black male with long coat whom she named *Attila*. Mated back to his dam, the Pandora's Box was opened! In succeeding litters from *Asa* and *Attila* Miss van Wessem got: Shorthairs, Longhairs, Himalayan Seal Points, Chocolate Longhairs. *Asa* seemed to have all the desired factors for the breeding of Himalayans: Longhair, points, chocolate. She lacked only the Blue dilution and, by that, the Lilac. This was introduced later on by a color bred Blue Persian.

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EUROPEAN CONTINENT



STEAM WITH HALLS, PAUL RIGBY
 APRIL 25, 1961, BOSTON WITH THE
 AT THE HOTEL BOSTON WITH THE
 LATE DR. HALLS' MISTRESS



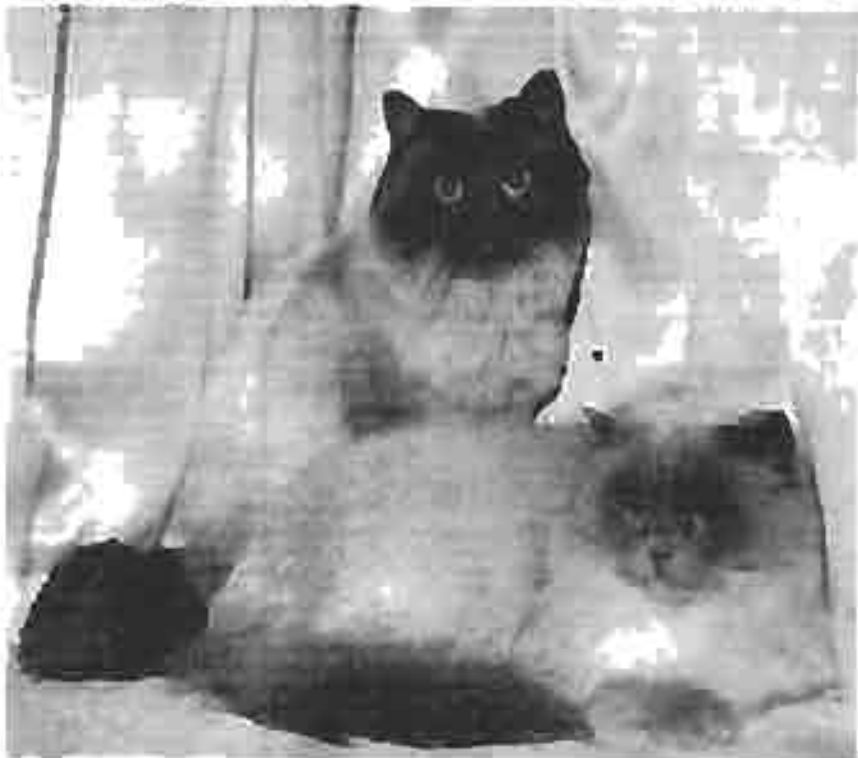
STEAM WITH HALLS
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DR. H. H. HALLS, BOSTON WITH THE
 APRIL 25, 1961, BOSTON WITH THE
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BY

MR. H. H. HALLS

John H. Halls of the
 International Cat Club
 Dr. Halls



HIMALAYANS ON THE EUROPEAN CONTINENT (CONT'D)

The historic milestones of the birth of the Dutch Himalayan are the following:

SITAH GUSH CHENG SEN:

first Self-Chocolate, born May 15,
1960 (*Asea* x *Attila*):

SITAH GUSH CAZIDAN:

first Himalayan Seal Point, born
June 4, 1961 (*Sen* x *Attila*):

SITAH GUSH MELA:

first Himalayan Chocolate Point,
born July 24, 1961 (*Asea* x *Attila*).

Following these births, Miss van Wessem began the work of outcrossing with the best Persians she could find to improve both type and coat. For this purpose, she used a Blue, a Blue-Eyed White and a Copper-Eyed White.

Miss van Wessem is still active in the Fancy and is now well-known for her Self Chocolate and Self Lilac Persians.

I took over from Miss van Wessem the work on developing the Chocolate Point and Lilac Point Himalayans. I still have *Siyah Gush Mela* who surprised us this summer with a litter of kittens at the age of 11 years! This was an unexpected love story: she had chosen a mate for herself, her own great-grandson. *Mela's* daughter is still here, too, as well as two great-granddaughters and the children of one of these. *Mela's* granddaughter is deceased. So we are now five generations beyond *Asea*, the Siamese, with a Persian between each generation.

Besides this genuine Dutch line, there are many Himalayans in Holland including progeny of English imports from Briarry, Amaska, Kala and Mingchiu catteries. I think that the Dutch shows offer a representation of the most Himalayans of the European Continent.

At the moment, the pedigrees reflect many crosses of the different lines: Dutch, German and English. Several years ago a Red Point Himalayan female was imported from America, *White's Lilly*: she has good color, good eyes and is a strong, healthy cat. She came from Goforth lines and a good Tortie Point, *Joni*, Ch. *Viviane von Hoop-Moerebergen*, now owned by Mme. Coupleux of Paris, was bred from her when mated to *Joni*, Ch. *Adonis von der Rombachsburg*. This male was the first kitten to be bred by Rombachsburg; he was born in 1964.

As is the case in all parts of the world, the Himalayans in Holland are making terrific progress in beauty and in popularity.

France began her Himalayans in 1959 with the importing by Mme. Gamichon of *Aweka Blue Masque* from England, together with some English females. Prior to that time, France had some Himalayans which had been bred from Birmanas. This was the result of a mistaken thought in the early years that Himalayans could easily be outcrossed with Birmanas. The experiment proved to be no good for either the Himalayan or Birman breeds.

In Switzerland, the Himalayans today are mainly the result of English imports. However, they did have the German Khmers in the early years and it is possible that the two lines were crossed.

In Scandinavia, the Himalayans are descendants of English and Dutch imports. ☺☺