



Author

The beautiful Birman Cat was imported to England in 1965 by Mrs M. Richards and Mrs E. Fisher, and the Birman Cat Club was formed in January 1969.

Vivienne bought her first Birman — a female namely Champion Cunga Opal in 1970, and served as a committee member of the Club until January 1972 when she became the Treasurer. The birth of her son forced her retirement from this position in 1976 when she again became a committee member until, after the death of Mrs Fisher in 1977, she became Chairman of the Birman Cat Club.

A further addition to the family was a two-legged daughter in 1979. A son in 1984 and another daughter in 1986 completed the human family. Vivienne became President, and is now Patron of the Birman Cat Club.

This second edition is in tribute to Ch. Cunga Opal and her daughter Ch. Miorama Sheba who both lived to 15 years of age. Sheba's daughter Miorama Moon Mirage is now 14¹/₄ and has watched the book being written with great interest. If you have not been "owned" by a Birman, life is yet to begin.

**THE BIRMAN CAT
WORLDWIDE**

(The Sacred Cat of Burma)

SECOND EDITION

by
Vivienne Smith

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The Birman Cat Worldwide

(The Sacred Cat of Burma)

This book follows "The Birman Cat" and has drawn on worldwide knowledge, covering history (both legendary and factual) Birmans worldwide, and is lavishly illustrated throughout — including 24 colour pages.

Every aspect of owning a Birman is covered, from choosing a kitten, showing, breeding (with comprehensive midwifery advice), general care, and an illustrated stud section together with pedigrees to detailed information on the "new" colours — chocolate, lilac, red, cream, tabby and tortie points. Export and Import information is dealt with in detail, including quarantine stations and shipping agents.

There is a comprehensive veterinary chapter written by Esther Denham MRCVS who bred the lovely stud Ch. Attimore Tanglepaws Tor, and to whom I am deeply indebted for her hours of hard work, fitted around a busy schedule.

I also thank John Wakely, MRCVS, who sifted through mountains of possible inclusions and liaised with the University of Pennsylvania.

My grateful thanks to all Birman owners who have given both time and information so freely, and who are wonderful advocates for the comradeship and liaison which exists worldwide between Birman lovers.

This book would not have been produced without the help of my family, my Birmans (of course!), Mary (who helped with its compilation), Liz (for general help), Sophie (for computing) and my other friends in Riseley who all rallied round.

I hope every Birman owner will find at least one of their cat's ancestors pictured in the book, and will ensure that our lovely Birmans continue to be bred honestly, and with integrity, to the highest possible standards.

Once you have been owned by a Birman, your life will never be the same again, and this book is dedicated to every single one of them.

Their surreal beauty, love, and loyalty to their human companions will transform even the darkest clouds into rays of sunshine, and you will have found true happiness.

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Grand Premier Stratheden Saroki Chio
BRITAIN'S FIRST GRAND PREMIER — DATE OF BIRTH: 3.8.79

Sire: Champion Attimore Tanglepaws Tor
Dam: Vanbelma Sirisha

"Chio" obtained 24 Premier Certificates
24 Best of Breed Certificates
8 Grand Premier Certificates

Owner/Breeder: MRS TERESA COLE

(PHOTOGRAPH BY KIND PERMISSION OF ANIMALS UNLIMITED — PADDY CUTTS)

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Allgemeine Geschichte aus Neuseeland

Dieser Artikel ist eine Übersetzung eines in *Mundikat* 1980/1981 veröffentlichten Serials, das im *New Zealand Birman Newsletter* März/April 1988 abgedruckt wurde.

From Siamese to Sacred Birmans Von Siamkatzen zu Heiligen Birmas von MRS. WILLY JENNINGSHOF

Obwohl Birmas in Europa seit mehr als 50 Jahren bekannt sind, wurde seltsamerweise fast nichts über diese Katzen veröffentlicht. Offenbar waren die alten Züchter nicht bereit, gute Informationen preiszugeben. Wir mussten uns mit dem Mythos, einigen vagen Geschichten und ein paar Bildern in den bekannten Alben zufriedengeben. Selbst in Büchern über Rassen und ihre Standards fehlen oft Informationen über Birmakatzen. Aus diesem Grund biete ich eine Auswahl von Veröffentlichungen aus französischen, deutschen, englischen oder amerikanischen Quellen an. Natürlich habe ich all das gelesen, was ich finden konnte, und hier eine Liste von Büchern und Artikeln zusammengestellt, die ich zu den neuesten FIFE-Standards herangezogen habe.

In den letzten 8 Jahren habe ich auch umfangreiche Korrespondenz mit mehreren ausländischen Züchtern geführt und während Ausstellungen weitere Kontakte geknüpft. Die meisten der in diesem Artikel veröffentlichten alten Stammbäume, zusammen mit Beschreibungen und Fotografien, stammen aus diesen Quellen. Sie reichen bis ins Jahr 1945 zurück. Ich verdanke Frau Tiny van Ujpijen, die viele Jahre lang die langjährige Sekretärin von Felicat war und mir alle Informationen über Birmas gab, die sie bekommen konnte.

General History from New Zealand

This article is a translation of a serial published in Mundikat 1980/1981 which was printed in the New Zealand Birman Newsletter March/April 1988 . . .

From Siamese to Sacred Birmans by MRS WILLY JENNINGSHOF

Although Birmans have been known in Europe for more than 50 years, oddly enough almost nothing has been published about these cats. Apparently none of the old breeders seemed to have been willing to yield up good information. We have just had to make do with the myth, some vague stories and a few pictures in the well-known albums. Even in books concerning cat races and their standards, information about Birmans is often missing. That is the reason I cannot offer you a selection of publications from French, German, English or American writers. Naturally, I have read all there was to find and have provided a list of books and articles I consulted in addition to the most recent FIFE standard.

I have also kept up an intensive correspondence with several foreign breeders during the past 8 years and sought more contacts during exhibitions. Most of the old pedigrees published in this serial, together with descriptions and photographs come from these sources. They go back to 1945. I owe a lot to Mrs Tiny van Ujpijen who for many years was Felicat's longhair secretary and who gave me all the information about Birmans she could lay her hands on.

GENERAL INFORMATION

How did we come to have Birmans now? It is certain they appeared in the experimental breeding of a longhaired Siamese, in the same way Colourpoints were developed. Without a doubt a breeder trying to make sense out of the old Colourpoint pedigrees will have met Birmans, as I found Colourpoints in reading old Birman pedigrees. Possibly both varieties were originally booked under number 13B (this is the number used in Europe when registering Birmans). A lot of breeders had both Birmans and Colourpoints in their catteries and made selection on the 'yes' or 'no' of the presence of the piebald factor, the factor which gives the Birman his charming white gloves. Even now we find old fashioned Colourpoints in Denmark and France which would make wonderful Birmans if they had white gloves. Regretfully there are also Birmans who would fit the Colourpoint breed.

Bicolor (or piebald) is the factor # 3 in the pallet, giving the Birman his uniqueness. This together with the Siamese factor — unbreakably coupled to blue eyes — and the long coat made the Birman three-in-one.

The myth took care of his name — The Sacred Cat of Burma or Sacred Birman. As everybody can read this legend in other cat books and magazines, I will not bother with it here. If you are not familiar with the myth, it is interesting to read.

The white factor is undoubtedly borrowed from stray cats which are the only cats with white socks. There can be some doubt when exactly — by accident or on purpose — this white has been bred into the Birman. There is evidence that this was done in the 30's. "Wiben en de Katen" by the Dutch author Til Brugman pictures a German "Birna Katen" having a white spot on the head,



General Information

ALLGEMEINE INFORMATIONEN

Wie sind wir dazu gekommen, heute Birmas zu haben? Es ist sicher, dass die Birma-Katze durch experimentelle Züchtung mit einer langhaarigen Siamkatze, auf ähnliche Weise wie Colourpoints entstanden sind. Wer sich mit alten Colorpoints Stammbäumen beschäftigt, wird auch auf Birma-Katzen stossen- In alten Birma-Stammbäumen fand ich Colorpoints-Rassenkatzen.

Vermutlich wurden beide Varianten (Colorpoints/Birma) in der Kategorie 13B zusammengefasst und Züchter hatten sowohl Birmas als auch Colourpoints in ihren Zuchten. Unter der Nummer 13B wurden Birmas in Europa registriert. Die Züchter trafen die Auswahl nach dem „Ja“ oder „Nein“ des Vorhandenseins des Scheckungsfaktors, der dem Birman die charmanten weissen Handschuhe verleiht.

Auch heute finden wir altmodische Colourpoints in Dänemark und Frankreich, die wundervolle Birmas wären, wenn sie weisse Handschuhe hätten. Leider gibt es auch Birmas, die auch zur den Merkmale der Colourpoint-Katze passen würde.

Bicolor (oder Scheckung) ist der Faktor #3 im Genpool, der der Birman ihre Einzigartigkeit verleiht. Dieser Faktor zusammen mit der Siamkatze – untrennbar verbunden mit blauen Augen – und das lange Fell machten die Birman zu einer Drei-in-Einem.

Der Mythos sorgte für seinen Namen – Die Heilige Katze von Burma oder Heilige Birma. Jeder kann diesen Mythos in alten Katzenbüchern und -magazinen lesen, ich werde ihn hier nicht weiter erläutern.

Der weisse Faktor wurde zweifellos von Streunerkatzen entliehen, die die einzigen Katzen mit weissen Socken (Pfoten) sind. Es kann einige Zweifel daran geben, ob dies absichtlich oder versehentlich geschehen ist – dieser Zweifel besteht. Es gibt Beweise, dass dies in den 1930er Jahren geschah. „Wiben en de Katen“ von der niederländischen Autorin Til Brugman zeigt ein deutsches „Birman Katen“, das einen weissen Fleck am Kopf hat.

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,obwohl weisse Füße nicht sichtbar sind. Bei der Siamkatzenrasse treten weisse Flecken manchmal am Schwanz, an den Füßen und anderen Stellen auf. Wahrscheinlich sind die Birma-Züchter daran schuld, da Siamkatzen häufig für die Züchtung eingesetzt wurden. Unweigerlich hat der Scheckungsfaktor die Siamrasse beeinflusst. Die Gesetze der Vererbung kümmern sich nicht um unseren Wunsch, einige Merkmale einer Rasse auf eine andere zu übertragen. Einige Züchter waren wohl nicht vorsichtig genug, um den Faktor aus der Siamkatzen zu eliminieren. Oder vielleicht haben sie einfach vergessen, dass er rezessiv vorhanden sein würde.

Birma-Züchtern ist es gelungen, das Weiss nur auf die Füßen zu fixieren, obwohl unerwünschte weisse Flecken hin und wieder an Schwänzen, Nasen, Kinnen und anderen Stellen auftreten. Auch hier handelt es sich einfach um eine Frage der Auswahl und Eliminierung. Vielleicht wurde dies nicht immer richtig gemacht.

although white feet are not visible. In the Siamese breed white spots sometimes occur on the tail, the feet and other places. Probably the Birman breeders are guilty of that, as Siamese cats have been used many times. Inevitably the piebald factor has influenced the Siamese breed. The laws of heredity do not care about our wish just to transplant some characteristics of one breed to another. Some breeders simply were not careful enough about eliminating the factor out of the Siamese afterwards. Or maybe they just forgot that it would be recessively present.

Birman breeders have succeeded in fixing the white just on the feet, although undesirable white spots still occur now and again on tails, noses, chins and other places. Again this is simply a matter of selection and elimination. They may not have always been done properly.

ORIGIN AND BREEDING

The previously mentioned facts should not be taken to imply that there were no Birmans before 1930. Every myth has some truths and in the Far East the spontaneous appearance of Colourpoints and Birmans could have taken place. The names of the race involved point to that part of the world, as there is Siamese (old name of Thailand), Khmer (aboriginals of India), Burma or Birman (inhabitant of Burma). Surely longhaired cats with Siamese markings, with or without white feet would have been brought to Europe and America. Most new varieties just accidentally appear in one litter. Breeders simply follow behind. The first Birmans cannot be traced however.

It would be interesting to know the ages of the ancestors of our today Birman, just to learn more about what exactly the old breeders have been doing. I discovered a method of discovering the year of birth. I did this through interpretation of first names and pedigree numbers — they often follow a fixed pattern. There is still some information missing, but what is known yields the following picture about postwar Birman breeding.

Contrary to what is usually said about the French Birmans after World War II, there must have been more longhaired Siamese available than just one couple, Xenia and Orloff de Kaabaa. Orloff may have been born before 1945, but Xenia undoubtedly is from 1948. Furthermore they used German cats in the Birman breed, probably before the war. Not all will have had white feet, not even the ones registered as a Birman. Most interesting in this context is the pedigree of a Birman born in 1962. Some of her ancestors are reported as having 4 white feet, which must have been rather special in those days. Old pictures often show Birmans with just a little white on the front toes; some of them don't have any white at all, not to mention the gauntlets, most of the time they were not visible.

The use of German Birmans in the French breed makes the monopoly of France on this breed debatable. Every country usually tries to claim the honour of having been first in the development of a particular race. In the 30's, two German breeders occupied themselves with Birmans. Frau Liselotte von Werner, Colourpoint breeder, used her male with a Birman female of Frau Hanna Kruger, owner of the "von Frohnau" cattery. In the already mentioned book "Wiben en de Katen" I found pictures of Negus and Hugo von Frohnau and a Birman litter of Frau von Werner. On post-war French pedigrees, the names "von Frohnau" and "von Irak" can be found. The "von Frohnau" cats seem to have been sold and brought



Ergänzung:

Die Siamkatze, eine der ältesten natürlichen Katzenrassen, stammt ursprünglich aus Thailand (ehemals Siam). Sie wurde im 19. Jahrhundert nach Europa und Nordamerika eingeführt und ist bekannt für ihr schlankes, elegantes Aussehen, ihre blauen Augen und ihr kurzes Fell mit einem charakteristischen Point-Muster (dunklere Färbung an Gesicht, Ohren, Pfoten und Schwanz).

Colorpoints hingegen beziehen sich auf Katzen mit einem ähnlichen Farbverteilungsmuster wie die Siamkatze, aber diese Bezeichnung wird oft für andere Rassen verwendet, die durch Züchtung entstanden sind. Während Siamkatzen auf natürliche Weise in Thailand vorkamen, wurden Colorpoint-Rassen wie die Colorpoint Shorthair und die Heilige Birma (Sacred Birman) durch gezielte Züchtungsprogramme entwickelt, bei denen das Point-Muster von Siamkatzen eingeführt wurde.

Zusammengefasst: Siamkatzen sind eine eigenständige, natürliche Rasse, die ursprünglich aus Thailand stammt. Colorpoints hingegen entstanden durch Zuchtprogramme, die das Point-Muster der Siamkatze auf andere Rassen übertrugen.

Eine **Colorpoint Cat** bezieht sich auf frühere Zuchtlinien von Katzen mit dem charakteristischen Colorpoint-Muster, das durch eine helle Körperfarbe mit dunkleren Abzeichen (Points) an Ohren, Gesicht, Pfoten und Schwanz gekennzeichnet ist.

