

ANIMAL LAND ON THE AIR



HARRY WHITTIER FREES



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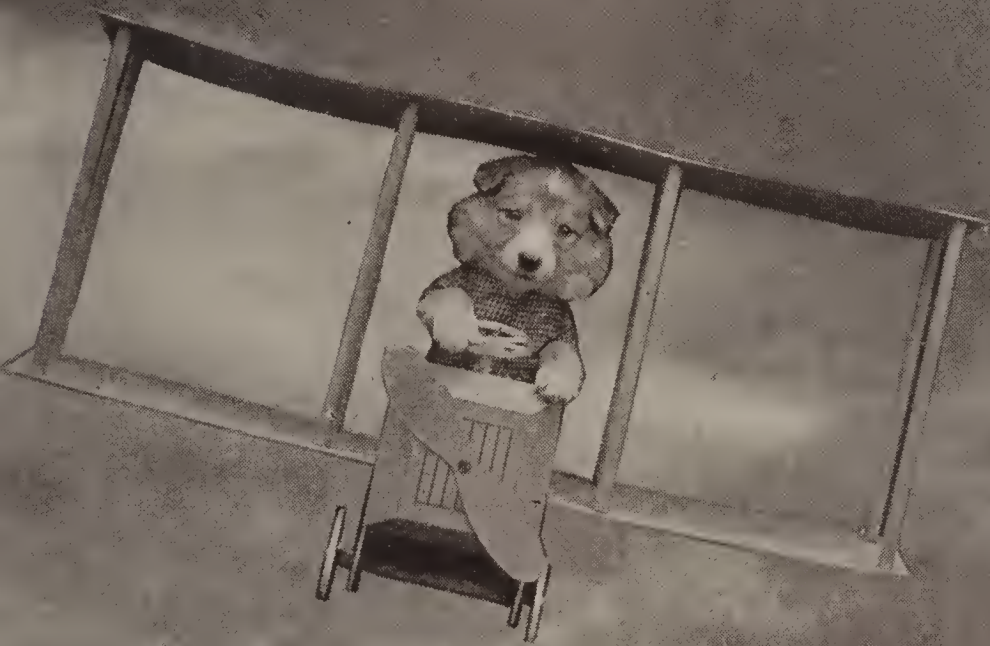
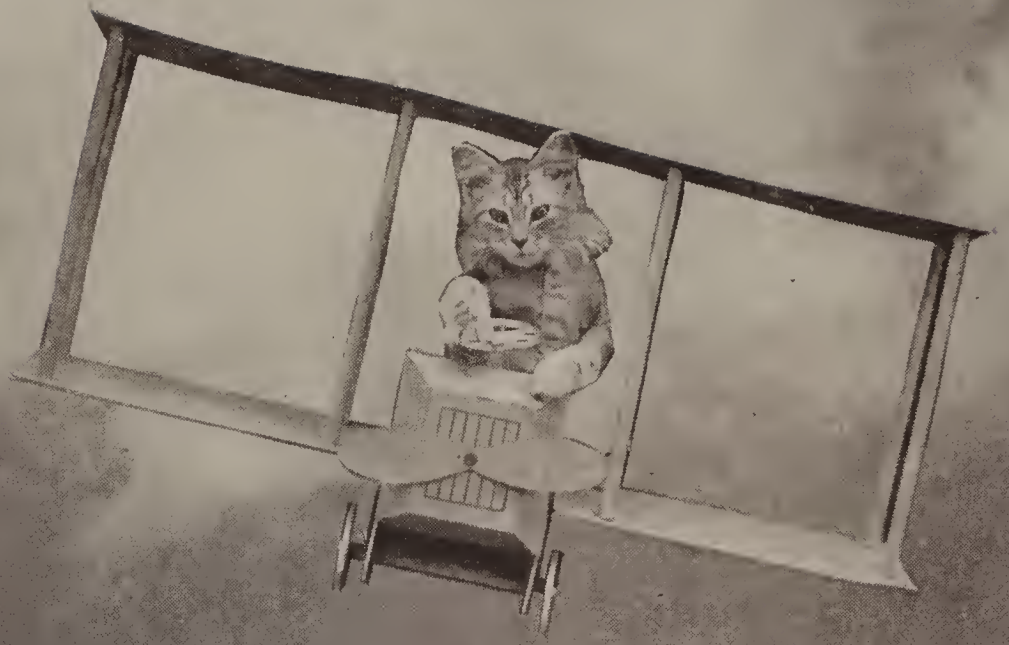
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**ANIMAL
LAND ON THE
AIR**





ANIMAL BOOKS

Written or Edited by

HARRY WHITTIER FREES

The Premier Photographer of
Pet Animals

*Quarto. Cloth. Each profusely illustrated from photographs
of costumed pet animals taken in the
studio of Mr. Frees.*

THE LITTLE FOLKS OF ANIMAL LAND. \$2.00.

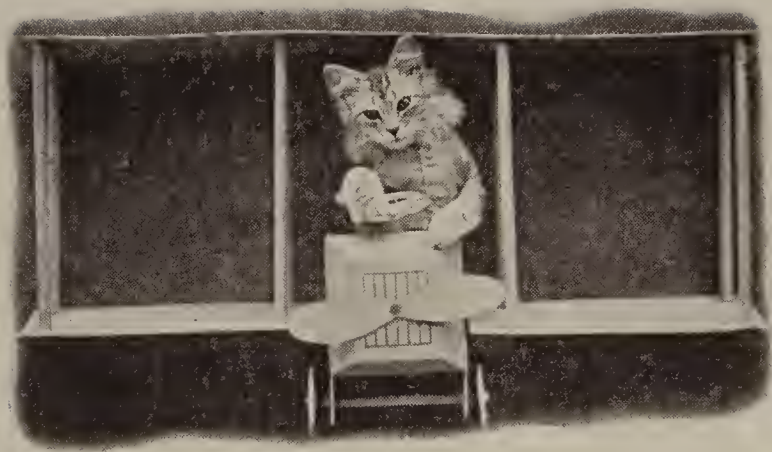
THE ANIMAL MOTHER GOOSE. \$2.00.

ANIMAL LAND ON THE AIR. \$2.50.
(Ready Sept. 16, 1929)

LOTHROP, LEE & SHEPARD CO., BOSTON

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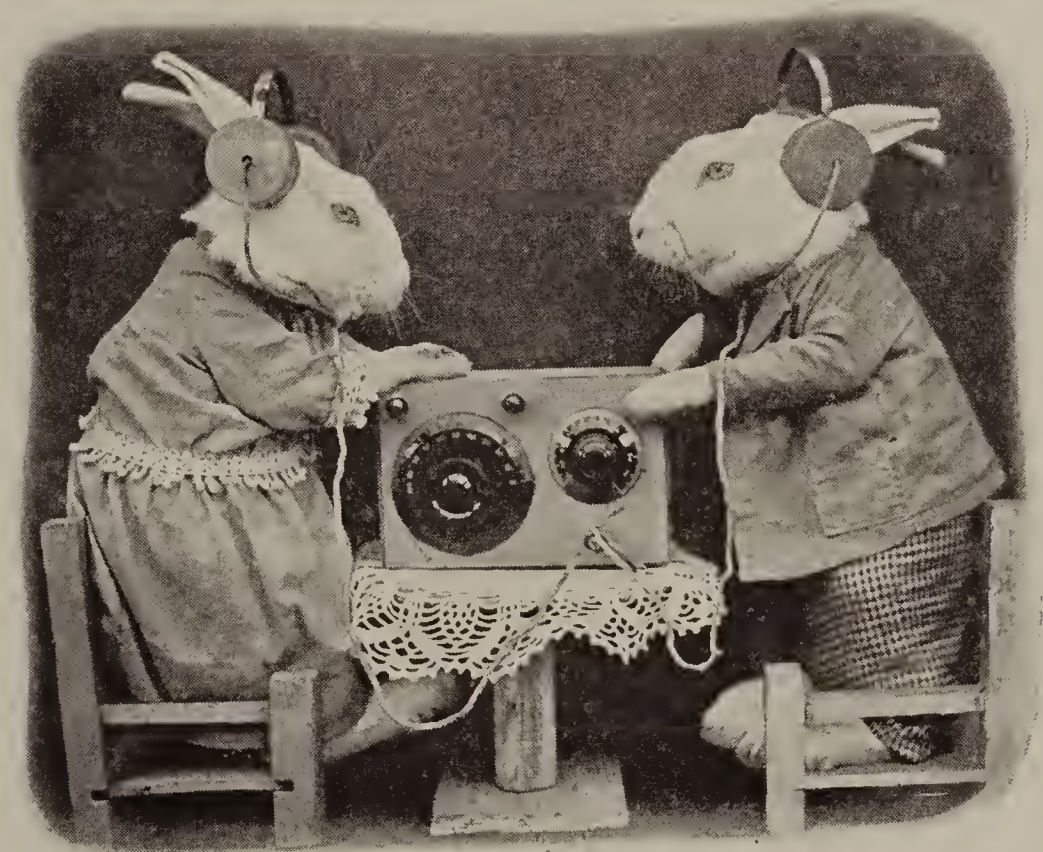
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ANIMAL LAND ON THE AIR



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PREFACE

“**T**HE LITTLE FOLKS OF ANIMAL LAND” made so many friends when introduced in a book, with stories of their doings combined with photographic illustrations, that their more up-to-date experiences in motoring, aviation, and with the radio will, it is hoped, be found of equal interest. Sixty situations involving the photographing of healthy, active,

contented young animals, dressed in appropriate costumes, serve to illustrate the account of what happened to the little people of that unique imaginative region, "Animal Land," distinctly a part of the world, and having all the activities and characteristics of present-day human society.

The author trusts that the affairs of these dwellers in the busy village, "Catnip Corners," will be found interesting, but of course the feature which sets his books apart from all other juveniles except those from the same source is the nature of the pictures, which represent an almost inconceivable amount of patience, care, and kind attention, as well as a very large number of spoiled films. Speed is essential in securing these pictures, but very often it is impossible to be quick enough. Young animals cannot hold a pose any better than human babies, and the situation is complicated when they are called upon to be precocious in situations naturally foreign to them.

It is happily no longer necessary to take time to refute earlier charges that such pictures are made by using stuffed animals, or by stupefaction, or even, as has been fantastically suggested, by hypnotism. Their expression is the best answer to all such surmises. But there may still be lovers of animals who are disturbed by the thought that unnatural means, savoring of

cruelty, may be employed. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Animals may be ruled by fear in certain performances, but never can this result in a pleasing picture. Only by unremitting kindness and constant sympathetic study of their tastes and instincts can they be made to enter into a story as the subjects for its illustration.

Rabbits are the easiest to photograph in costume, but incapable of taking many "human" parts. Puppies are tractable when rightly understood, but the kitten is the most versatile animal actor, and possesses the greatest variety of appeal. The pig is the most difficult to deal with, but effective on occasion. The best period of young animal models is a short one, being when they are from six to ten weeks of age. An interesting fact is that a kitten's attention is best held through the sense of sight, while that of a puppy is most influenced by sound, and equally readily distracted by it. The native reasoning powers of young animals are, moreover, quite as pronounced as those of the human species, and relatively far surer.

Let me repeat: It is *impossible* to mistreat an animal in any way and secure such pictures as you will see in this book, and no one capable of so doing would stand the slightest chance of success.

That as much pleasure may be taken in reading of the little residents of Animal Land and seeing how they look in the scenes in which they take part as there has been in the preparation for again putting them in a book is the wish of

HARRY WHITTIER FREES.

Audubon, Penna.





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I

JUNE IN ANIMAL LAND

Bargain Day

I

JUNE IN ANIMAL LAND

JUNE is a month of wonderful days in Animal Land, and the sidewalks were still sparkling with dew when they began to fill with shoppers, out to take early advantage of Monday morning sales.

Smiling merchants gladly gave their customers the benefits of a day's reduction, for the Catnip Factory was working overtime, while new accounts were opened every day, and old ones settled cheerfully.

This thriving industry had a modest beginning on Pussyway Lane, in a garden patch at the rear of a cottage owned by Mrs. Thomas Bufkins, who saw that dull times following the war must be brightened by some new industry that would bring money in, and keep young folks from going out.

She never dreamed of being so successful that she would be known as a public benefactor. But the population increased until the suburb of Dogville became the city of Catnip Corners, and boasted a mayor's rule.

Proudly bearing the results of a morning's thrift, a procession of weary homemakers, with hats somewhat awry, tried to hurry when they heard the noonday whistle on the factory blowing.

BARGAIN SALE
T O = D A Y



BARGAIN DAY.

II

MRS. STRIPES WENT SHOPPING

A Sweet Young Matron

II

MRS. STRIPES WENT SHOPPING

AMONG the returning shoppers was one who walked alone, and turned the corner into Pussyway Lane.

“Poor Lily,” sighed one of the neighbors behind her. “What a beautiful bride she made!”

“Who is she?” whispered a newcomer with interest.

“She is Mrs. Bufkins’ oldest daughter,” explained the lady, with the pride of long residence. “And less than two years after Lily’s marriage to the dashing Archingback Stripes, he was one of the first to respond to his country’s call to arms. And after Archie was reported missing in action,” she ended, “why, Lily and her baby came home to live with Grandma Bufkins.”

Mrs. Stripes was glad to reach the friendly doorway of her mother’s cottage. She entered in silence and stepped softly into her own room to glance in the mirror. There had been tears in her eyes, and it was one of her rules that no trace of her sorrow must be allowed to cast any gloom over the Bufkins household.

So she managed a smile, and called gaily, “Mother, I’ve made the most surprising purchase!”



A SWEET YOUNG MATRON.

III

NEWS OF A PURCHASE

The Head of the Bufkins Household

III

NEWS OF A PURCHASE

IN her own special chair in the living-room, Mrs. Bufkins was reading her favorite morning paper, but she looked up eagerly as Lily came in to talk over the forenoon's shopping.

“And what did you buy, my dear, a white elephant?” she asked, smiling fondly.

“I hope not,” laughed Lily, “they were offering wonderful terms on a radio”—

“And you thought this house was hardly up-to-date without one,” finished her mother. “Well, I think so, too. When will your purchase be delivered?”

Lily said the machine would be installed that afternoon, and she had been thinking that they might have a few friends in during the evening.

“A splendid idea,” approved Mrs. Bufkins. “If they should become interested enough to want radios in their own homes, I have no doubt the store would allow us a discount.”

“Oh, mother dear!” protested Lily, looking troubled.

“Did I ever fail to use tact?” asked Mrs. Bufkins.

And Lily had to answer that she knew their happy home was the result of years of a mother's clever efforts to provide her family with every comfort.



THE HEAD OF THE BUFKINS HOUSEHOLD.

IV

LOOKING BACKWARD

A Red Cross Worker

IV

LOOKING BACKWARD

MRS. BUFKINS usually dressed before lunch, as it was her custom, in the afternoon, to make a daily visit of inspection at the Catnip Factory.

She never liked to be idle, and having a few leisure moments, she took up her knitting.

Lily was trying to decide on the best place to set up the radio, but she curled down on the divan by her mother.

“Still working for the Red Cross?” she asked.

“Oh, yes,” said Mrs. Bufkins. “There will always be babies, fires, floods, and other disasters.”

“It makes me sleepy to hear the needles click,—sad, too,” sighed Lily. “I think of all the work you did for the soldiers.”

“It should make you glad to remember all those warm, soft garments we turned out,” answered her mother. “Think what a comfort those socks must have been to Archie,—and may be yet.”

“You are always so sure he is safe,” murmured Lily, “yet it is so many years since we heard from him last.”

“Archingback is safe, somewhere.” Mrs. Bufkins counted her stitches. “Don’t forget, my child, he had nine lives like all the rest of us.”



A RED CROSS WORKER.

V

AT CATTSBURG

Rookies

AT CATTSBURG

“MOTHER,” said Lily, “it was on just such a day as this, that we visited Archingback at Cattsburg.”

Mrs. Bufkins remembered all the details,—how they had been conducted by a thrilling young officer to the parade grounds, where among a very awkward squad indeed, poor Archie was having his troubles learning to keep step. On being asked by an impatient sergeant as to what was the matter with his feet, he had saluted, and replied there would be nothing wrong with them after he had become familiar with the idea of not trying to use them all at once.

Later, released from duty for a few hours, he had taken great pride in showing them through the camp.

Mrs. Bufkins had suggested that everything seemed to be completely wound up in red tape. He had laughed and said, “Well, to folks like us, you know, it will be only cat’s play to untangle it.”

There had been no farewells. He had simply said, “You must come back and see us after our uniforms are issued.”

And the next they heard, he was on his way across the ocean.



ROOKIES.

VI

“SO GOES MONDAY”

Brissle, the Washerwoman

VI

“SO GOES MONDAY”

IT was a Monday morning to delight the heart of any housekeeper, and the weekly wash, drying on the line in the breeze, was inspected by Mrs. Bufkins with satisfaction.

“Brissle is nearly through with her work in the yard,” she said to Lily. “I will see about her lunch, then you can have her in to help you rearrange the furniture after the radio is put in place. I don’t know what we should do without Brissle,” she went on, “such a splendid laundress and always willing to lend a hand with any other work in the afternoon.”

“She gets on my nerves,” sighed Lily. “I can never get a word out of her except ‘Hunh’, or some other sort of grunt.”

Mrs. Bufkins reproved Lily, saying it was hardly one of Brissle’s duties to entertain the family.

Stepping to the porch, she called that it was lunch-time, but Brissle let her understand that some fresh greens right out of the garden would be her choice.

Back in the house, Lily smiled when her mother agreed that it was a fact that their helper did not waste any words.



BRISSELE, THE WASHERWOMAN.

VII

MEWSIE IN THE KITCHEN

A Born Cook

VII

MEWSIE IN THE KITCHEN

“**W**HERE is my Mewsie this morning?” suddenly inquired Lily Stripes.

“Your sweet child is no farther away than the kitchen,” chuckled Mrs. Bufkins. “No sooner had you started for town than Barkley began to hint that she could not afford to miss bargain day, either. And I gave her the forenoon off because Mewsie urged me to. She wanted to try some new recipes, she said, and has promised to surprise us.”

“I’m too curious not to just peep in,” said Lily, “something smells delicious.”

The door was slightly ajar, and a lovely picture was framed for the admiring eyes of mother and grandma.

With a striped apron over her summer frock, and a cap perched on her curly bob, Mewsie Stripes handled the rolling-pin with the skill of a born cook. Tenderly she patted and caressed the rising dough into fluffy biscuits ready for the oven.

Mrs. Bufkin’s eyes grew moist with pride as she watched her.

“As clever as she is good, and as good as she is beautiful,” she whispered, “how I love that grandchild!”



A BORN COOK.

VIII

LUNCH-TIME

Prowler and Purra

VIII LUNCH-TIME

JUST as the gong was struck for lunch, Prowler and Purra Bufkins hurried in through the gateway, swinging the family errand-basket between them.

This brother and sister were twins, and from babyhood were never far apart, so when Prowler grew up and became his mother's right-hand man at the Catnip Factory, it caused no surprise when Purra took her place at a desk beside him.

They went to work together, and came home together, and always shared each other's secrets.

There was only one machine in the Bufkins garage, a touring-car of well-known make, for the lady of the house did not approve of display, but Prowler lost no chance to persuade his mother how much time might be saved if they could add a small sport model for business purposes.

He heard the result of Lily's shopping trip with interest, and nudged Purra under the table-cloth.

Between mouthfuls of Mewsie's delicious biscuits, he said a radio was a fine thing, of course, but he guessed another car was now a long way off.



PROWLER AND PURRA.

IX

TRAFFIC CONTROL

Traffic Officer Pause

IX

TRAFFIC CONTROL

PROWLER and Purra went to the garage to bring the touring-car around to the gate, where Mrs. Bufkins was waiting to drive, with the twins, to the Catnip Factory.

Catnip Corners has very few motor accidents.

A traffic officer stands at every busy turn to see that the signals are not overlooked by careless drivers.

As Officer Pause signaled the Bufkins machine to go ahead, Prowler remarked that he pitied Number Eleven, as he had been having a lot of bad luck.

Mrs. Bufkins, always ready with helpful sympathy, insisted that Prowler bring the car to a stop and, as Mr. Pause came forward, said, with a pleasant smile, "Mr. Officer, sometime when you are off duty, why not drop in to see me? Perhaps I can help you find a way out of your troubles. I am sorry for you, and will do all I can."

"I don't know anybody whose advice I'd rather listen to than yours, madam," replied Officer Pause, "I won't forget this kindness."

Mrs. Bufkins explained, as the family drove on, that Number Eleven had always seemed a fine, obliging young officer, and it was nice to think he considered her a friend.



TRAFFIC OFFICER PAUSE.

X

AT THE CATNIP FACTORY

Sanitary Uniforms

X

AT THE CATNIP FACTORY

PASSING tourists, who asked about special points of interest, were always advised that it would pay them to go through the Catnip Factory.

Visitors were welcomed every afternoon, between two and four, when Mrs. Bufkins was there to show them around herself.

Purra assisted her mother by giving away generous samples.

Everything was the last word in sanitary cleanliness, the young employées, who scampered about their work in the packing-room, always being greatly admired in their crisp caps and aprons of gingham.

But it was the happy holiday air of the place on which Mrs. Bufkins was congratulated most often, and she loved to say there had never been even the rumor of a strike.

Many visitors, not used to the herb, became so drowsy they had to retire to the rest-room, where, curling up in the easy-chairs provided, they would shortly fall sound asleep.

They were never disturbed. If they were not awake by six o'clock, the watchman had orders to leave the door unlocked, for it was a law-abiding community.



SANITARY UNIFORMS.

XI

INTRODUCING THE JOLLIPUPS

A Birthday Cake

XI

INTRODUCING THE JOLLIPUPS

THE Bufkins family and the Jollipups were great friends. Mr. Jollipup was a large, good-natured fellow with bright brown eyes. He might have been a success at almost anything, but was content just to be very popular.

Mrs. Jollipup never missed the Monday morning bargain sales, for there were twins in this family, too,—little boys, who were always growing out of something.

Mr. J. loved to potter around the house, and he had put in the entire forenoon baking a cake, and icing it, for it was the birthday of Buddy and Ruddy. They were six years old, so there were twelve pink candles to be lighted on it.

When his wife returned, Mr. J. met her at the door. He rather fancied himself as a chef, and wore a cap and apron while he called attention to the product of his morning's labor.

Mrs. Jollipup dutifully exclaimed, "Truly that's a marvelous cake, Henry," and her husband beamed under her praise.

She took Henry for better or worse, and he might have been a great deal worse, the twins' mother would say.



A BIRTHDAY CAKE.

XII

THE DOLL HOSPITAL

Mewsie Brings a Patient

XII

THE DOLL HOSPITAL

“**I** BELIEVE, Mama, Mewsie Stripes is bringing you a patient,” said Henry Jollipup. Mr. J. always called his wife “Mama.”

This clever lady was forever thinking up some scheme to piece out Henry’s very slender earnings without hurting his feelings.

Just now she was acting as chief surgeon of “The Doll Hospital,” which she had fitted up in their basement.

“Mewsie Stripes is past the doll age,” she was saying, when the visitor came in and explained that she had brought a favorite Japanese doll of her childhood, and hoped Mrs. J. might restore her to complete health.

Company was expected in the Bufkins household in a few weeks. Rose, a younger sister, was coming home with her little baby, and Mewsie thought it would be nice to have a doll ready.

“For I know the baby would love this one,” she finished.

Then she cried, “But I’m forgetting my most important errand, Mrs. Jollipup; you are all invited to our first radio party to-night!”



MEWSIE BRINGS A PATIENT.

XIII
IN THE OPERATING ROOM
Painless Surgery

XIII

IN THE OPERATING ROOM

POOOR Butterfly, which was the name of the Japanese patient, was laid on the table at once, as she had been unconscious some time as the result of an injury.

Besides, she had lost a great deal of sawdust, so transfusion was resorted to, but in less than twenty minutes, such was the skill of the operating surgeon, she was pronounced out of danger, and it was believed that the trip home would not lessen her chances for recovery, in the least.

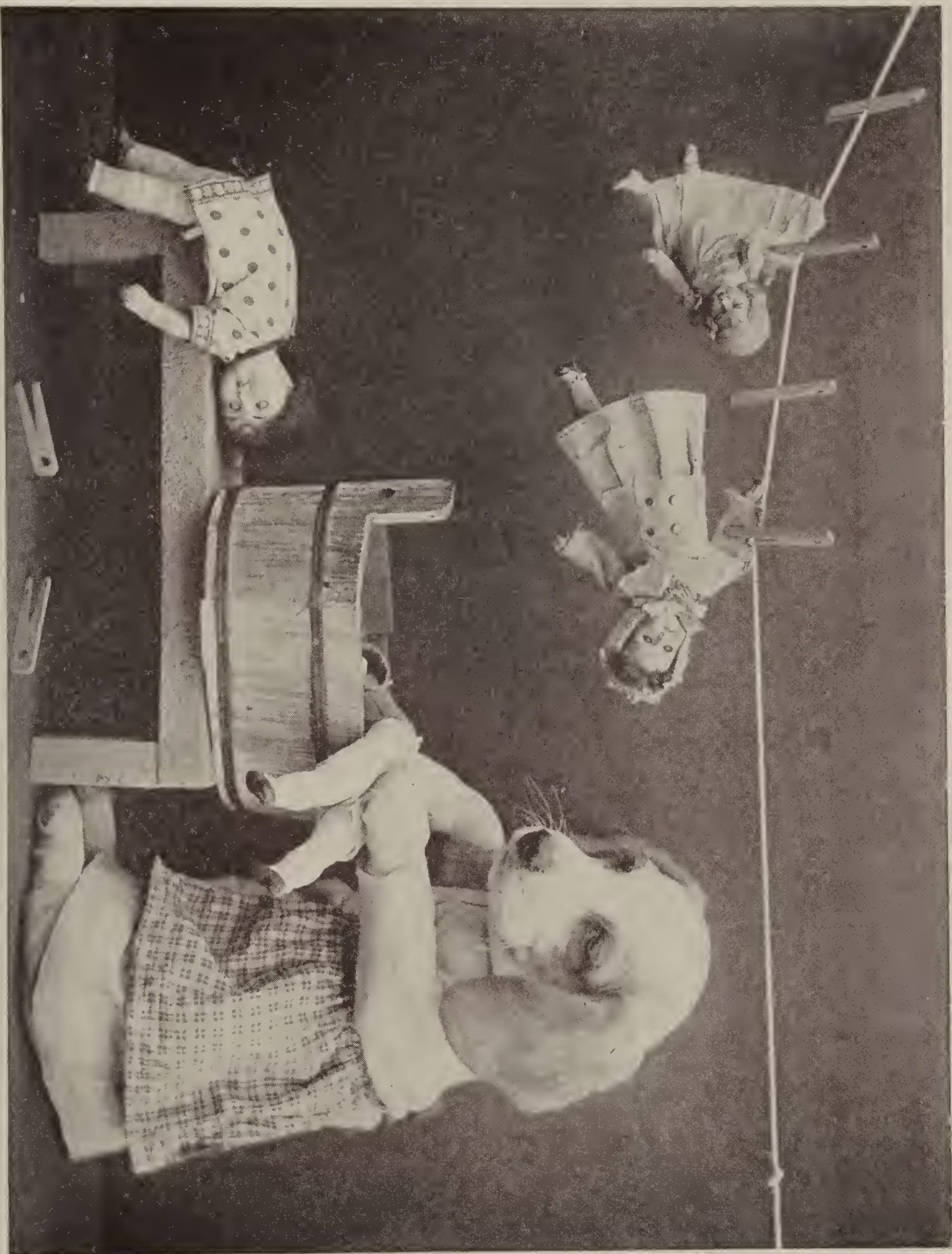
Still, Mewsie was in no hurry to depart, even after she had settled with the doctor for her services, and Butterfly had been delivered into her care.

She had also been told that the Jollipups would be delighted to be guests of the Bufkins family for the evening.

The truth is, she was simply fascinated by the capable efforts that quickly followed Dr. Jollipup's keen diagnosis.

Some patients, it seemed, needed nothing more than a brisk scrubbing with soapy water, to restore them to normal, after which they were placed in a current of air to revive them.

None of the day's cases was hopeless.



PAINLESS SURGERY.

XIV

RUDDY AND BUDDY

The Musical Twins

XIV

RUDDY AND BUDDY

FOR several months the Jollipup twins had been hoping and praying that they might receive French horns for birthday presents, so that these happy gifts were no great surprise to them.

But when they beheld the snappy uniforms their busy mother had turned out, after closing the doll hospital for the day, the little fellows were so tickled they could not say a word.

The birthday celebration was held as soon as they came home from school, and Mewsie Stripes was persuaded to stay to see the candles lighted, and the cake cut.

Butterfly sat at the table in a high-chair though her appetite had not yet come back.

The twins were anxious to appear at the Bufkins party in their little red-and-white outfits, carrying their horns, and said together, "We will play if they urge us."

"Better not, boys," warned Henry Jollipup, "Mama didn't have much time this afternoon, and performers on wind instruments need their uniforms held together with something besides common pins."



THE MUSICAL TWINS.

XV

A RADIO PROGRAM

“There’s Music in the Air”

XV

A RADIO PROGRAM

THE Bufkins first radio party was a great success.

Among those present, besides the Jollipups, were the Bassbark brothers, quite musical gentlemen, Mr. and Mrs. Padfoot, and His Honor, Mayor Roundhead.

All these guests decided to install radio machines of the same model, the solid mahogany cabinet being very much admired.

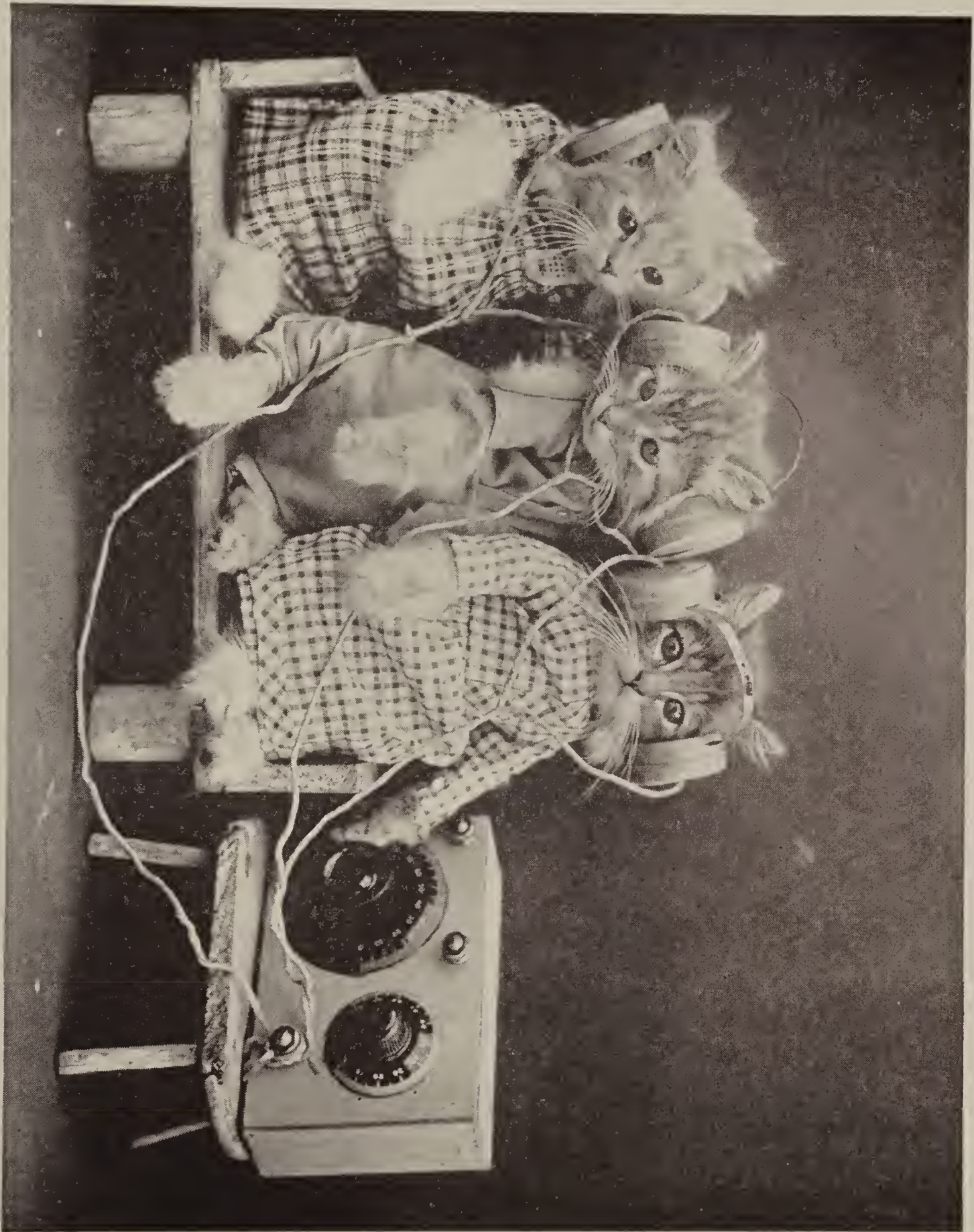
The evening's entertainment ran like clockwork, even the air behaving beautifully, until there was a sharp interruption of "Spitz-meow," repeated in a higher scale.

"Static playing pranks," suggested Mayor Roundhead.

But Henry Jollipup expressed the opinion that the "static" came from the alley in back of the house, and said if he might have a few old boots or tin cans, he would disperse the same.

With Mr. Padfoot and the mayor, Henry crept cautiously to the rear, and they found the fence fairly lined with residents not invited to the party.

They quickly explained they were simply listening-in, when an argument arose between two parties as to what programs were on the air; so the incident was quietly closed.



“THERE'S MUSIC IN THE AIR.”

XVI

AN INTRUDER

Just Frightening Him

XVI

AN INTRUDER

THERE was excitement enough on the evening of the party to suit everybody. In fact, as Mr. Jollipup said on the way home, there was not one dull moment.

The radio audience enjoyed a wonderful and varied program.

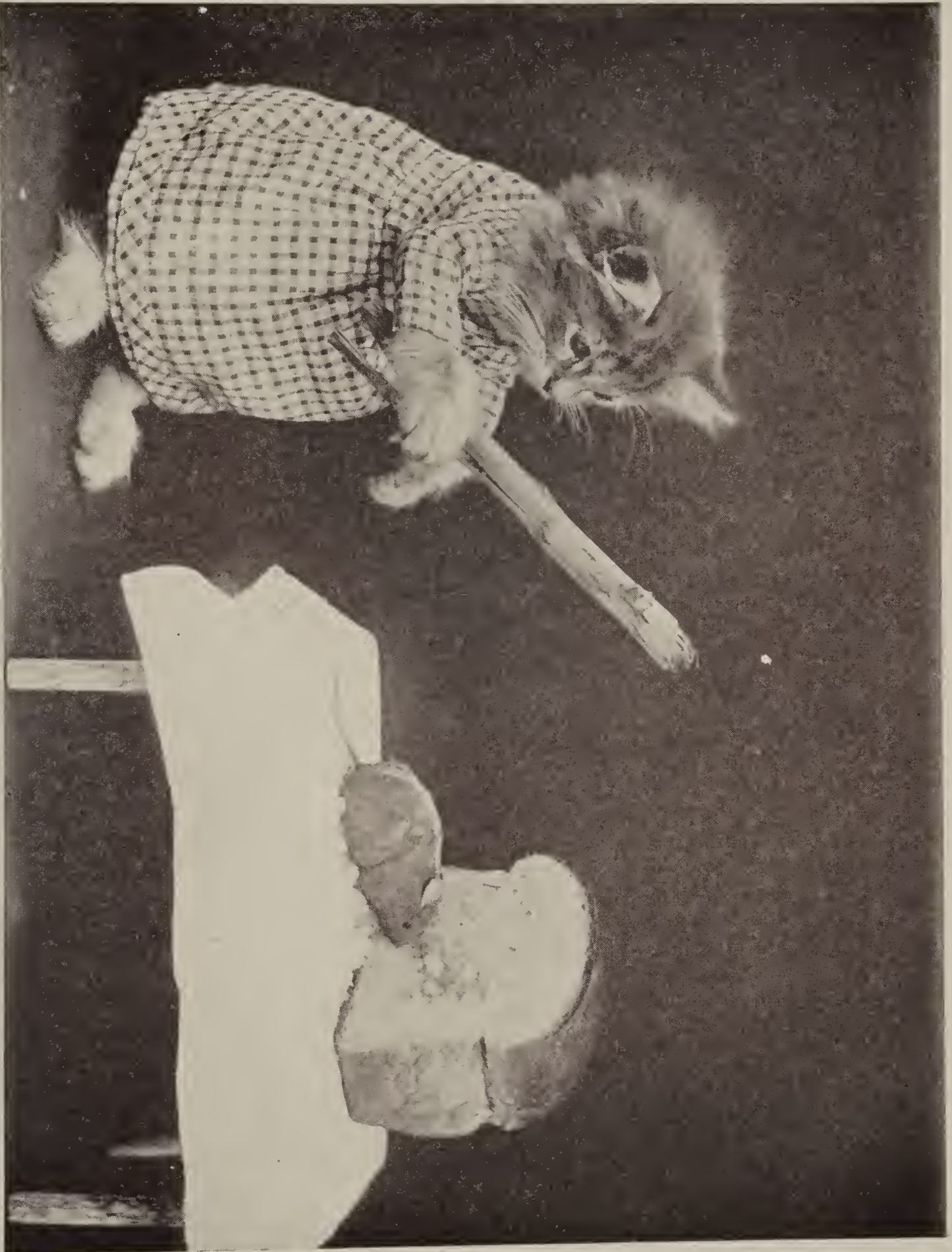
While the gentlemen were trying to tune-in on the Voter's Service, the ladies went to the kitchen to help with the refreshments.

In the pantry, Mewsie Stripes was going to slice bread for sandwiches when she found an unwelcome intruder at work ahead of her.

Now Mewsie did not scream,—not because she was too brave to be afraid of the thief—but she had some strange notions, and could never bear to see anything hurt. Not even a mouse!

So she got a stick of kindling from the wood-box and tried to scare the little animal, but he was not in the least frightened.

She gave his tail a gentle pull. Still he did not move, so she grew bolder and pinched him, and he rose up into the air in a series of jumps and jerks, and landed on the kitchen floor in the midst of the ladies.



JUST FRIGHTENING HIM.

XVII

AN AMUSING INTERLUDE

Panic

XVII

AN AMUSING INTERLUDE

ON hearing the sound of screams and dishes breaking, the gentlemen came running promptly to the assistance of the ladies, and were mean enough to laugh when they found three of them standing on a table, drawing their skirts around them.

“Do something to that mouse, Henry Jollipup!” shrieked Mrs. J. sticking her head out of the dish cupboard, where she had fled, with others.

“Don’t kill it,” begged Mewsie, “catch it and we can put in in a cage.”

More laughter followed, and hints were whispered that the world was getting civilized, indeed, if a mouse would upset the ladies of Catnip Corners.

In the meantime, the little offender seemed perfectly at home in the middle of the floor and Mrs. Bufkins began to see daylight.

“Prowler Bufkins,” she said, “if you had anything to do about this, tell all you know at once.”

“Mother,” answered Prowler, “that is the mouse I hope will make me famous. It is filled with catnip, and contains a tiny spring,—my own invention,—and when we get these toys on the market, just see if we don’t have to enlarge the factory.”



PANIC.

XVIII

A WONDERFUL IDEA

The Night Was Still

XVIII

A WONDERFUL IDEA

MR. HIRAM PADFOOT became a radio fan following the party and could hardly wait for evening to come.

He would hurry home from the factory, do very scant justice to the delightful dinner waiting for him, and before dessert was served, he was rustling through "The Catnip Corners Daily" till he found the column headed, "What Is On The Air For Us To-night."

As Mrs. Padfoot said, she might just as well have set a bowl of crackers and milk before him, for he no longer knew or cared what he was eating.

One night Mrs. Padfoot was awakened by loud cries of "Ida, hurry!"

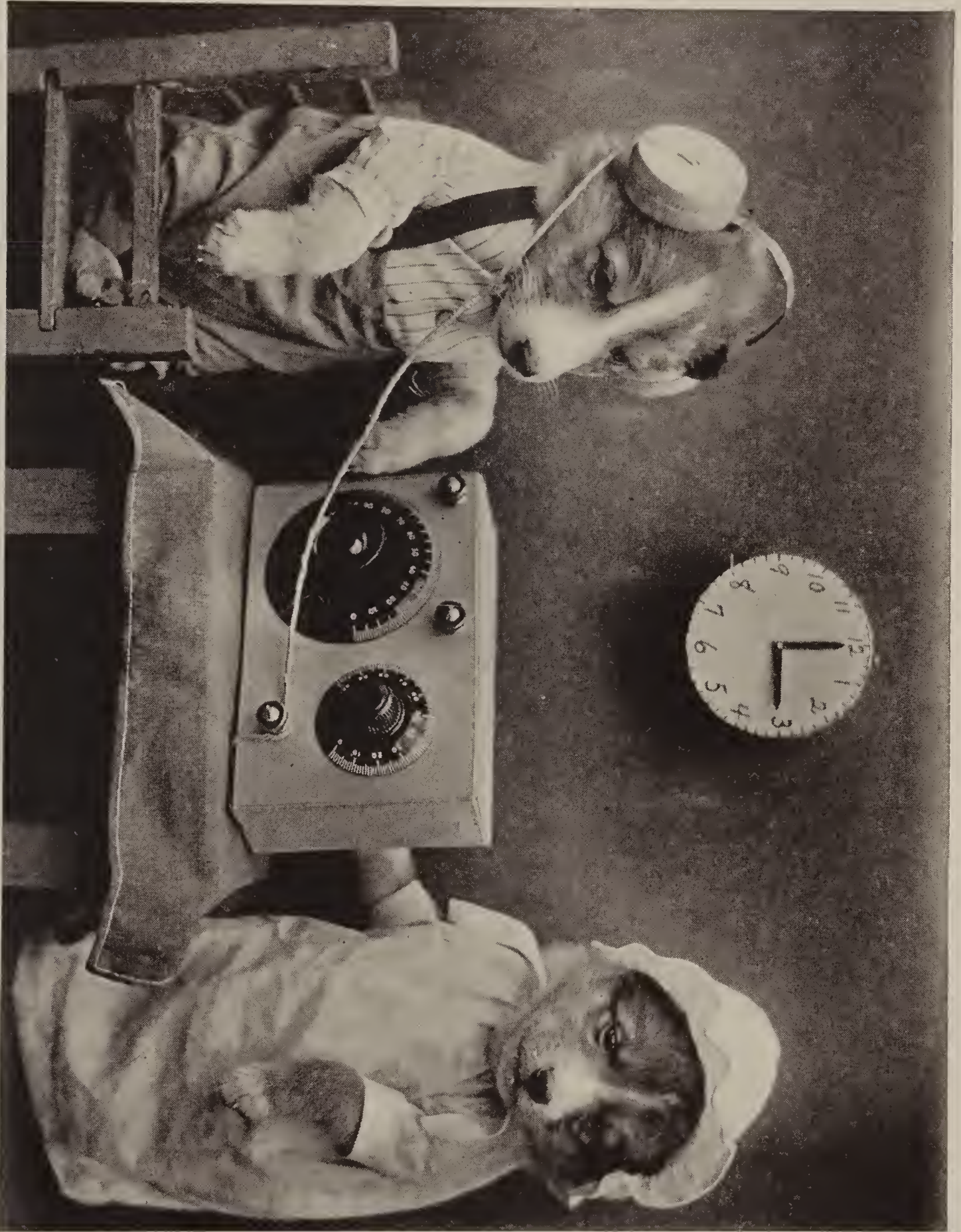
Never doubting that the house was on fire, she rushed from her bed to the living-room in her gown and boudoir cap!

And there, fully dressed, was her husband alert at the radio.

"The time has come," he shouted, "for Catnip Corners to have its own broadcasting station!"

"The time has come for you to look at the clock," snapped Mrs. Padfoot, after she had recovered her breath.

Hiram declared he had no idea it was after half-past eight.



THE NIGHT WAS STILL.

XIX

STATION N I P—CATNIP CORNERS

Home Talent

XIX

STATION N I P—CATNIP CORNERS

MR. PADFOOT was sure that his idea of a broadcasting station in Catnip Corners would interest Mrs. Bufkins, and in less than a week after his interview with her, the walls and ceiling of a room opening off the main floor of the factory were covered with cloth, and everything was in readiness for the opening of a first-class studio.

The announcer selected was Mr. Padfoot himself, and it was in his best style and choicest tones that he told the world of listeners-in that the privilege of hearing programs, both entertaining and instructive, would be theirs daily, during an hour at noon, and for an hour in the evening.

A few words followed about the city's leading industry, then "The Factory Frolickers" were introduced, and Pussie Purmow and Kitty Miyawl sent a folk-song out on the air, to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument played by Prowler Bufkins.

"You have been listening, good people, to Station N I P, Catnip Corners," concluded Mr. Padfoot. "Tell us how you like us, and sweet dreams to you."

Within a few days mail began pouring in from all over the country.



HOME TALENT.

XX

MME. PRETTI-PUPPI

Broadcasting an Appeal

XX

MME. PRETTI-PUPPI

“THE Catnip Corners Daily” stated, one evening, that Mrs. Thomas Bufkins had as her house-guest, Mme. Yella Pretti-Puppi.

This star of opera and concert stage was a childhood companion of Mrs. Bufkins, and in those bygone days boasted no finer name than Yellow Puppy.

She was still blonde, lovely, and very elegant, but a lady of warm sympathy.

Quite willingly she agreed to go on the air from Station N I P, just for the pleasure it would bring her old friends, and it was she who suggested that she follow her aria with a description of Archie Stripes.

So after a proper interval, Mr. Padfoot announced, “We will now stand by for a distress call.”

In a ringing voice, Pretti-Puppi spoke directly into the microphone. “Friends of the air, if you have news of Archingback Stripes, reported missing in action in nineteen hundred eighteen, remember that a wife, Lily, eagerly awaits your messages, at Catnip Corners, Animal Land, U. S. A.”

The singer promised Lily that she would add that appeal to her program, whenever possible, wherever she broadcasted.



BROADCASTING AN APPEAL.

XXI

THE ANNUAL OUTING

The Band Led the Parade

XXI

THE ANNUAL OUTING

THE Annual Outing of the Catnip Factory was always the event of the summer season in Catnip Corners.

The factory workers looked forward to this day from one picnic to another and their eagerness was shared by half the city.

The scene of festivities was the City Park, a delightful place of cool green lawns, and friendly shade trees.

During the last year interest had increased daily in some little rustic bird-houses placed on the grounds as a gift from the Woman's Club, of which Mrs. Bufkins was a charter member.

Bushy-tailed squirrels were a great attraction, too, but visitors often wondered why these were kept in cages.

On the morning of the outing, the Caterwaul Band, all factory musicians, rode on a truck through the principal streets, and gave a concert in front of the City Hall.

The boys really did not have much time to practise, but their music was of such a spine-tingling variety, that the most sedate citizens could not keep their feet still, and followed the band to the park.



THE BAND LED THE PARADE.

XXII

REFRESHMENTS

Purra and Prowler at Their Booth

XXII

REFRESHMENTS

PROWLER and Purra Bufkins were to have charge of the ice-cream booth this year, so they drove out to the park, bright and early, to pick out a good spot for their stand.

Just as they arrived, the place took on a holiday air with the sudden appearance of the old balloon man.

Where he came from, nobody knew. Purra said he must live in the magician's hat with the eggs and the ducks.

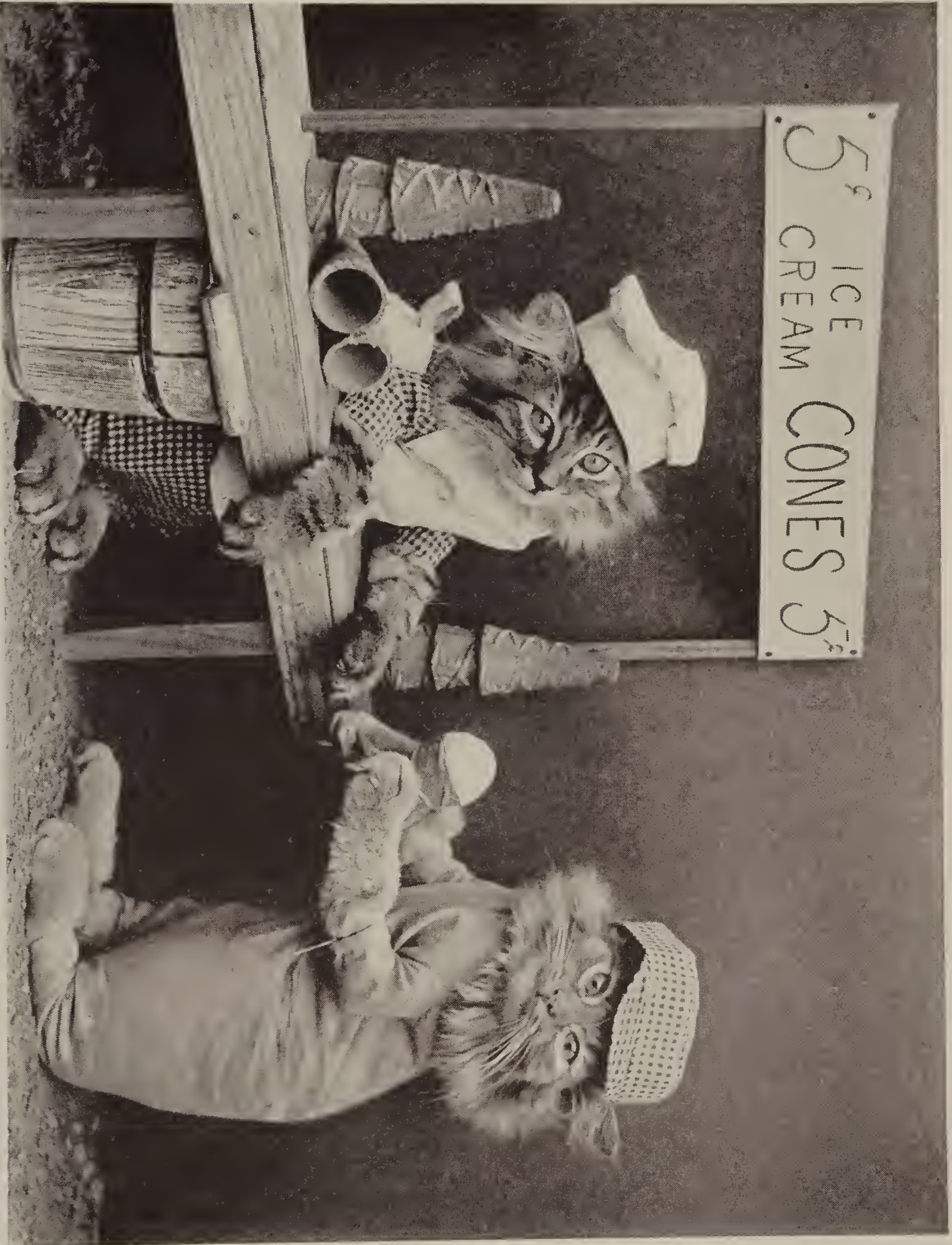
The twins drove back to town in a hurry to get their supplies ready, for they knew that they must be prepared to do a rushing business later in the day.

Dozens of crispy cones were arranged for, and freezers of cream were to be delivered every few hours as the day promised to be warm.

Of course, they ordered plenty of vanilla, always a stand-by, and several ices of new flavors.

"This 'Catnip Mousse' sounds good to me," said Purra. "I wonder if I should try it before lunch."

"Leave off the catnip and take out one 's'," replied Prowler, "and I'll tell the world this booth would make some real money to-day."



PURRA AND PROWLER AT THEIR BOOTH.

XXIII

A KIND HEART

Pretti-Puppi as a Hot-Dog Vender

XXIII

A KIND HEART

MME. PRETTI-PUPPI planned her yearly visit to Catnip Corners to include the Annual Outing.

There was, of course, a benefit society for the factory workers, and the proceeds from the sale of refreshments at the picnic were devoted to the fund for families of disabled members.

Charity was Mme. Pretti-Puppi's hobby.

Nothing suited her better than to make a jolly tour of the park, renewing old friendships, while she disposed of something salable.

It did not make much difference what she had to sell. Everybody considered it an honor to trade with an opera singer, and would pay almost any price for the privilege.

This time she got herself up as a hot-dog vender. In a tray hung around her neck, she carried rolls, frankfurts, and a mustard cup, and Prowler Bufkins said her hot-dogs tasted like a million dollars.

Mayor Roundhead, in the name of charity, purchased a photograph of the star, and she wrote across it, in a dashing hand, "Faithfully, PRETTI-PUPPI."



PRETTI-PUPPI AS A HOT-DOG VENDER.

XXIV

MOVING PICTURES

Purritt Long, Camera-man

XXIV

MOVING PICTURES

THERE was a new and interesting feature for this picnic, so a larger crowd than usual collected at the park.

Mayor Roundhead believed in advertising the city and nothing, he said, would help to put Catnip Corners on the map like getting some good movies of the outing run off in a Cathé Weekly News Reel.

Mrs. Bufkins, who had done so much to help build up a larger and better place to live in, had been asked for her opinion, and agreed heartily with the mayor.

It was also decided to have some scenes taken around the factory, showing the pickers and packers at work, as the catnip industry was of educational value.

The Cathé Company, on receiving the mayor's letter, replied the same day, promising to send a camera-man.

He arrived on the morning of the outing, and proved to be a pleasant, likable fellow, the name on his card being Purritt Long.

The mayor presented him to Mrs. Bufkins, who finding he had not yet registered at the hotel, urged him to have his bags sent right around to Pussyway Lane.



PURRITT LONG, CAMERA-MAN.

XXV

PURRITT MEETS MEWSIE

A Fortune in Her Face

XXV

PURRITT MEETS MEWSIE

PURRITT LONG was busy every moment on the morning of the outing.

There were many on hand who offered to show him around, and he thanked them, but said he would just roam around by himself, and pick out some beauty spots that would make good background for movies.

He filmed several scenes of crowds arriving at the gate, but so many were anxious to get into every picture, that not much could be seen but a mad scramble.

The merrymakers had to be warned that there was such a thing as too much action.

It was not until the Bufkins family and their guests gathered under a big oak-tree to open a bountiful picnic basket, that Purritt Long met beautiful Mewsie Stripes.

As strangers were often so thrilled by Mewsie's loveliness that they were at a loss for words, the fact that Mr. Long seemed unable to say anything, passed unnoticed.

When the time came to film the ball game, the camera-man was missing.

A searching party found him taking "stills" of Mewsie Stripes.

He explained that there was a fortune in her face.



A FORTUNE IN HER FACE.

XXVI

BASEBALL

Instructions

XXVI

BASEBALL

NO factory outing ever omits its baseball game, and just as sure as family heads must be signed for one team, so the other is always made up of workers without domestic cares.

Mr. Jollipup, who considered himself as good as any National League pitcher, managed to do a few days' work at the factory so that he might see his name on the roster with Mr. Padfoot and other friends.

Among those on the opposite nine was Prowler Bufkins, a fixture behind the bat.

Both line-ups had seemed complete, but on the day of the picnic there were gaps to be filled in.

Mayor Roundhead, who was to act as umpire, offered to instruct Bill Bassbark, who was hurried into a uniform and given a catcher's mitt at the last minute.

"This is the home plate," said the mayor.

"I'd like to see a pork chop on it," laughed Bill.

The mayor replied this was baseball, not a barbecue.

The whole nine innings did not last over an hour, and while the National Game received pretty rough treatment, the speed and dash displayed resulted in some very good movies.



INSTRUCTIONS.

XXVII

THIRSTY THROATS

Prohibition Beverages

XXVII

THIRSTY THROATS

AFTER the baseball game had been cheered to a finish, there were many thirsty throats in the crowd.

As soon as the ice-cream booth was sold out, the Snowball Wagon was surrounded.

The method of preparing a snowball, in Catnip Corners, is simply to crack off a small chunk of ice and sprinkle this with a flavor selected by the patron.

As these popular thirst-quenchers could not be made up in advance, a little cart, containing ice and extract bottles, had been wheeled around the grounds by Pawsie Tortoyes, all day long. His sweetheart, Furza, served the snowballs.

Furza, who surely did look limp and wilted, had just declared that she was "ready to drop," when a disturbance was heard, and a burly figure pushed his way through to the wagon, saying he guessed he would have to smell of those bottles!

He was recognized at once as Sheriff Spy Katz.

The mayor was soon on the scene, and told the sheriff his conduct was an outrage, as he ought to know Mrs. Bufkins would never permit a violation of the Eighteenth Amendment.



PROHIBITION BEVERAGES,

XXVIII

COMPANY ARRIVES

Mother and Child

XXVIII

COMPANY ARRIVES

T IRED and dusty, but good-natured as ever, Prowler Bufkins drove around the park, loading up the "bus," as he called the touring-car, with family and friends, to make the return trip to Pussyway Lane.

No one cared, at the moment, if the Annual Outing was over.

The drive home was rather silent, but as the cottage came in sight, Purra, less sleepy than the others, noticed that the porch-light was on.

Excitement soon prevailed, when it was learned that more company had arrived, for Rose, Lily's younger sister, stood in the hallway, holding her little baby girl in her arms.

After the first greetings were exchanged, the baby was gently handed back and forth while the fond relatives tried to agree whom the little one looked like the most.

Sound asleep, after the long journey, the color of her eyes could not be seen, but her tiny head was soft as yellow silk.

For this reason she had been given the name of "Goldie," after Grandma Bufkins.



MOTHER AND CHILD.

XXIX

A LULLABY

Bedtime

XXIX

A LULLABY

THERE were so many guests in the Bufkins cottage, that Rose and her baby had to share Lily's room.

Prowler was sent to the attic to hunt up Mewsie's first bed, and trunks were opened, and soft blankets brought out and aired before a fire built in the grate.

By this time the precious child was fully awake, and insisted on having her supper.

Rose said that her baby had never kept her awake "one single night," but this seemed to be an exception.

The small bed was strange and Goldie just refused to be placed in it.

Lily wanted to rock her, but Rose said she did not want to start a bad habit.

It was Pretti-Puppi who came to the rescue at last. Gathering the tired little mite close to her plump shoulder, she began to sing an old and favorite slumber song.

"I hear her voice with love rejoice,
While nestling on her arm
Lull-la-bye-eye-eye-lull-la-bye-eye-eye-'"

she hummed.

And even Baby Goldie was charmed by the magic in that lovely voice.



BEDTIME.

XXX

A FUTURE FOR MEWSIE

The Try-Out

XXX

A FUTURE FOR MEWSIE

WYSE CATT, the great movie director, had asked Purritt Long to look for new camera-faces, and wire him, so that he could give them a trial.

When Mr. Catt arrived, Mewsie said that he had better talk with her family.

The director told Mrs. Lily Stripes that his faith in her daughter was such that he believed he could make her name a household word.

A contract, containing a salary clause that looked like the yearly earnings of the Catnip Factory, was shown to Mrs. Bufkins.

Calm and keen, as usual, she told Mr. Catt that while they knew Mewsie was a beauty, they had really never noticed any talent in the movie line.

Mr. Catt shrugged his shoulders, and said that was a mere detail to be arranged after a star arrived in Hollywood.

“In that case,” said Mewsie’s grandmother, “let us make hay while the sun shines.”

Lily protested that Hollywood would be different from Catnip Corners.

“Pshaw!” declared Mrs. Bufkins, “There’s no place on earth, where there aren’t plenty of people who work hard all day and go to bed early.”



THE TRY-OUT.

XXXI

A BLOW-OUT

“My Kingdom for a Horse!”

XXXI

A BLOW-OUT

LILY STRIPES was going to Hollywood with her daughter, and on the morning of the departure the entire Bufkins family decided to drive to the station.

Handkerchiefs were much in evidence, and Prowler's voice far from steady, as he remarked that if many more piled into the "old bus," he would not risk the tires.

Just as he spoke there was a loud report from the right rear.

A passing taxi could only make room for Lily, Mewsie, and Purra, but Mrs. Bufkins urged them to go on. Then she ordered Prowler to get to work with the pump, and, saying the train was sure to be late, took the knitting out of her bag.

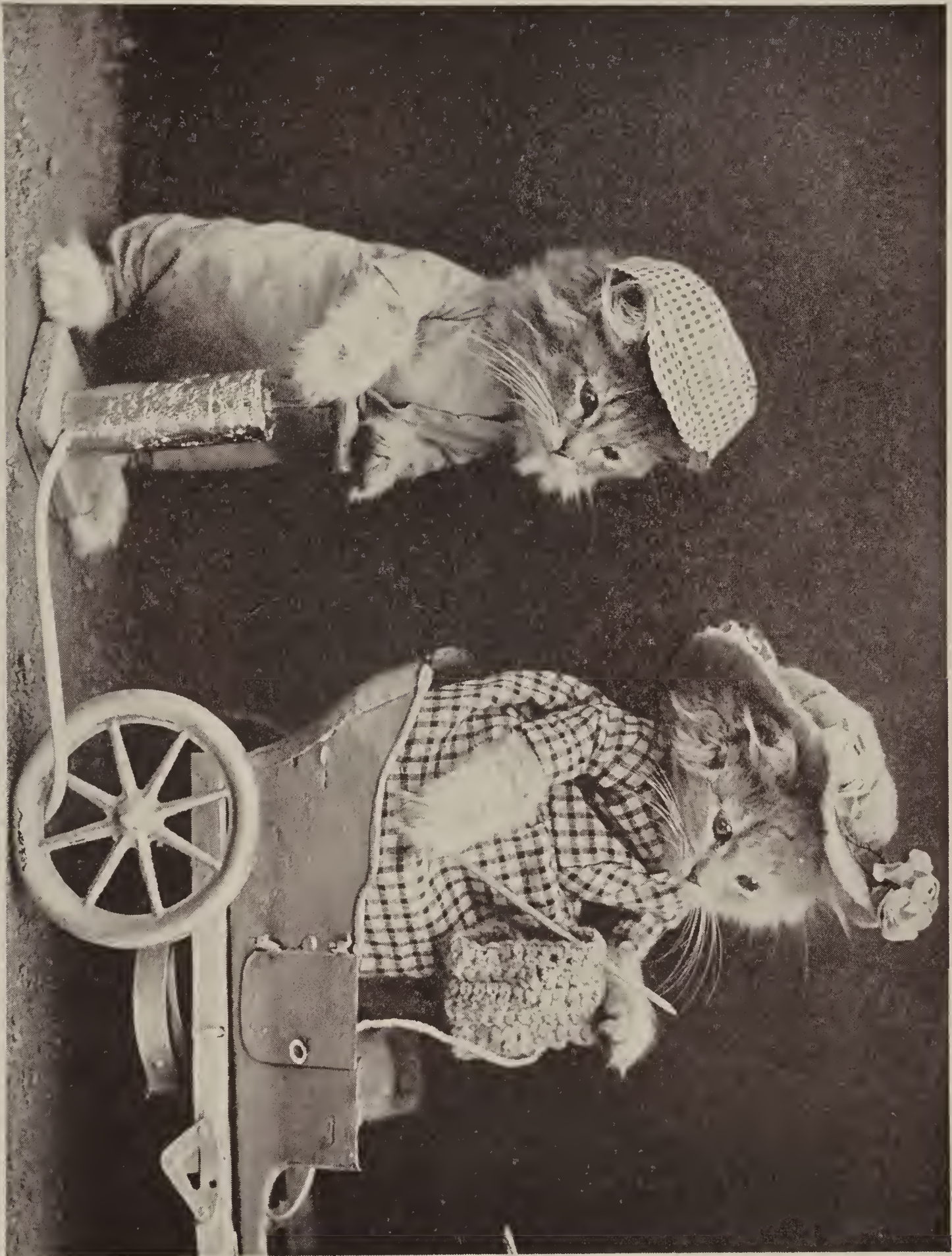
But the whistle on the California Limited screeched through the air while the tire was still soft.

For once the head of the Catnip Factory was dismayed.

"Drive in on the rim, but get there," she cried.

Prowler did his best, but they arrived at the crossing only to see the observation platform fade into the distance.

"My kingdom for a horse!" mourned Grandma Bufkins.



“MY KINGDOM FOR A HORSE!”

XXXII

A FISHING TRIP

Something on the Line

XXXII

A FISHING TRIP

THE cottage in Pussyway Lane seemed so still after Lily and Mewsie went away that Mrs. Bufkins sometimes had the blues in spite of wonderful reports that came from the western coast.

Prowler was very thoughtful of his mother these days, for since the incident of the blow-out, she had admitted several times that it might come in handy to have a sport roadster in the garage, and had even consented to look over some catalogues with him.

One afternoon in the late fall, when she said she thought a fishing trip would do her good, he agreed eagerly, and dug the worms.

The weather seemed ideal,—soft and hazy,—but Prowler and his mother must have gone to the wrong place, for everything that got on the line was Mrs. Bufkins' hat, and the mosquitoes were all that did any biting.

But the lady declared that, while she never in her life had been so hungry for fish, she felt both rested and refreshed,—and in a happy frame of mind.



SOMETHING ON THE LINE.

XXXIII

AT THE TEA-ROOM

Service for Two

XXXIII

AT THE TEA-ROOM

DR. JOLLIPUP was asked to treat so many charity patients at the Doll Hospital that she found herself obliged to look about for further means of support, so she opened a tea-room.

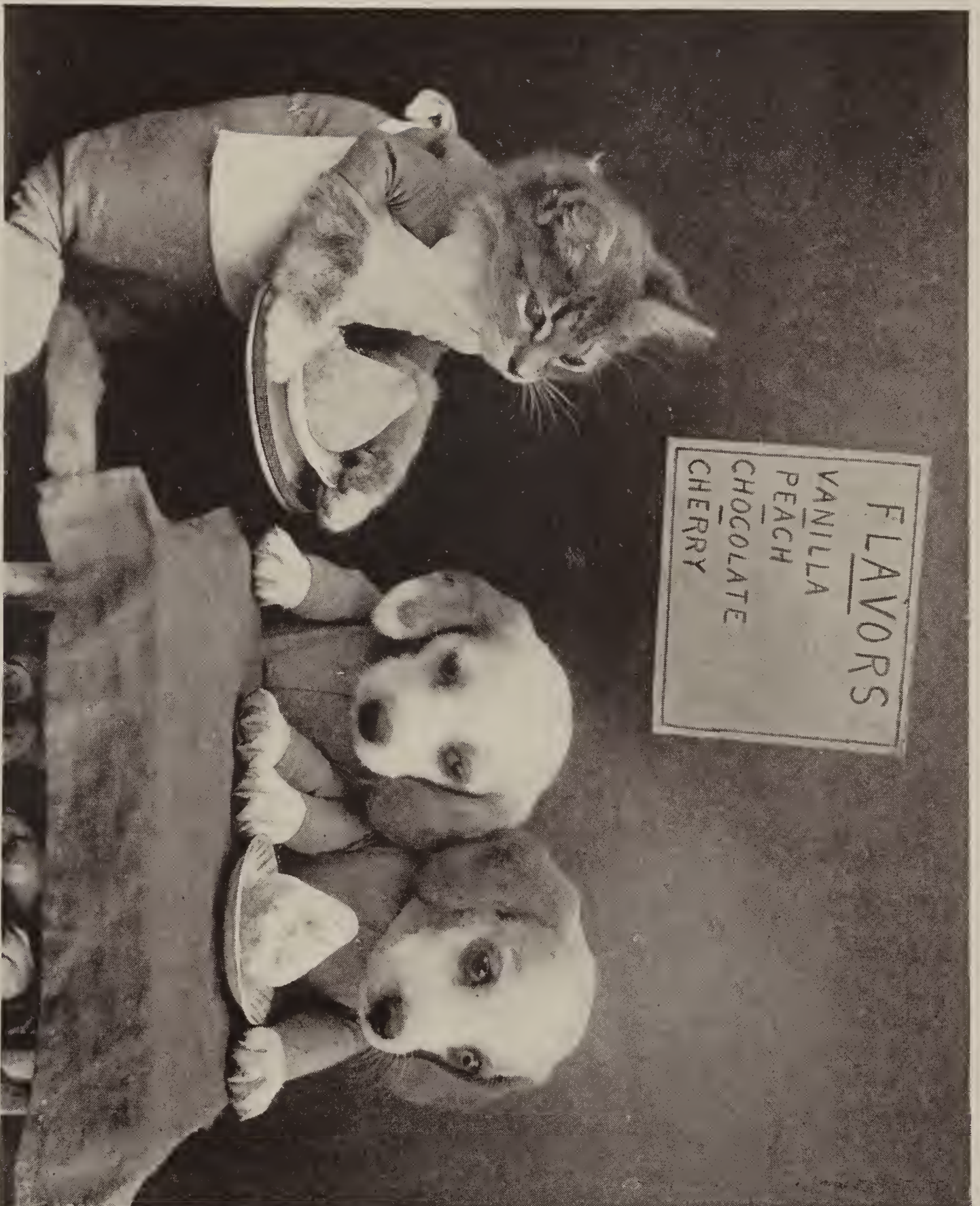
Mr. Jollipup made some little tables, and painted them green, and being highly complimented, began to wonder if he shouldn't have gone in for interior decorating.

Pretty Kitty Sweet was glad to act as waitress, after school hours, and wore a green uniform, with a dainty white apron, and served from a green-and-white tray.

The place was very attractive, but the fact remains that the two best customers were the Jollipup twins, Buddy and Ruddy. So when Mrs. Bufkins and Prowler dropped in, on the way home from the fishing trip, they received a very warm welcome.

Prowler was sorry there was no "Catnip Mouses," but he showed Kitty Sweet how to make a remarkable new college ice, and had a pleasant time doing it.

Mrs. Bufkins was very liberal in both praise and patronage, and Mrs. Jollipup told her how much the family enjoyed Mewsie's first picture.



FLAVORS
VANILLA
PEACH
CHOCOLATE
CHERRY

SERVICE FOR TWO.

XXXIV

A HAPPY INCIDENT

Lucky Jack Keennose

XXXIV

A HAPPY INCIDENT

JACK KEENNOSE was one of those amazing anglers that can fish in sun or rain, from bank or boat, and use live bait or fly, yet never come home with an empty basket.

He happened to be waiting for a car when Mrs. Bufkins and her son came out of the tea-room.

“Why go home without fish now?” whispered Prowler, nudging his mother’s arm.

At that moment the fisherman sauntered over, remarking it was a shame they had such poor luck.

“We didn’t fish where you did,” Mrs. Bufkins reminded him.

Mr. Keennose explained that he had to lay the piece of wrapping paper over his catch, for it was “a mighty hot afternoon.”

Mrs. Bufkins saw that he looked offended when Prowler laughed, so she hastened to agree with him that it was very warm for October.

And she added that she was “fish hungry,” and would consider it a favor if he could spare a few of his trout.

So Prowler and his mother went home with fish in their basket while Jack Keennose enjoyed the novelty of jingling money in his pocket.



LUCKY JACK KEENNOSE.

XXXV

AN INTERVIEW WITH MEWSIE

In Her Sedan-Chair

XXXV

AN INTERVIEW WITH MEWSIE

PROWLER and his mother had one more stop to make on the way home, and that was at the news-stand, for Lily had written that the October number of "Film-Folks" was to contain an interview with Mewsie.

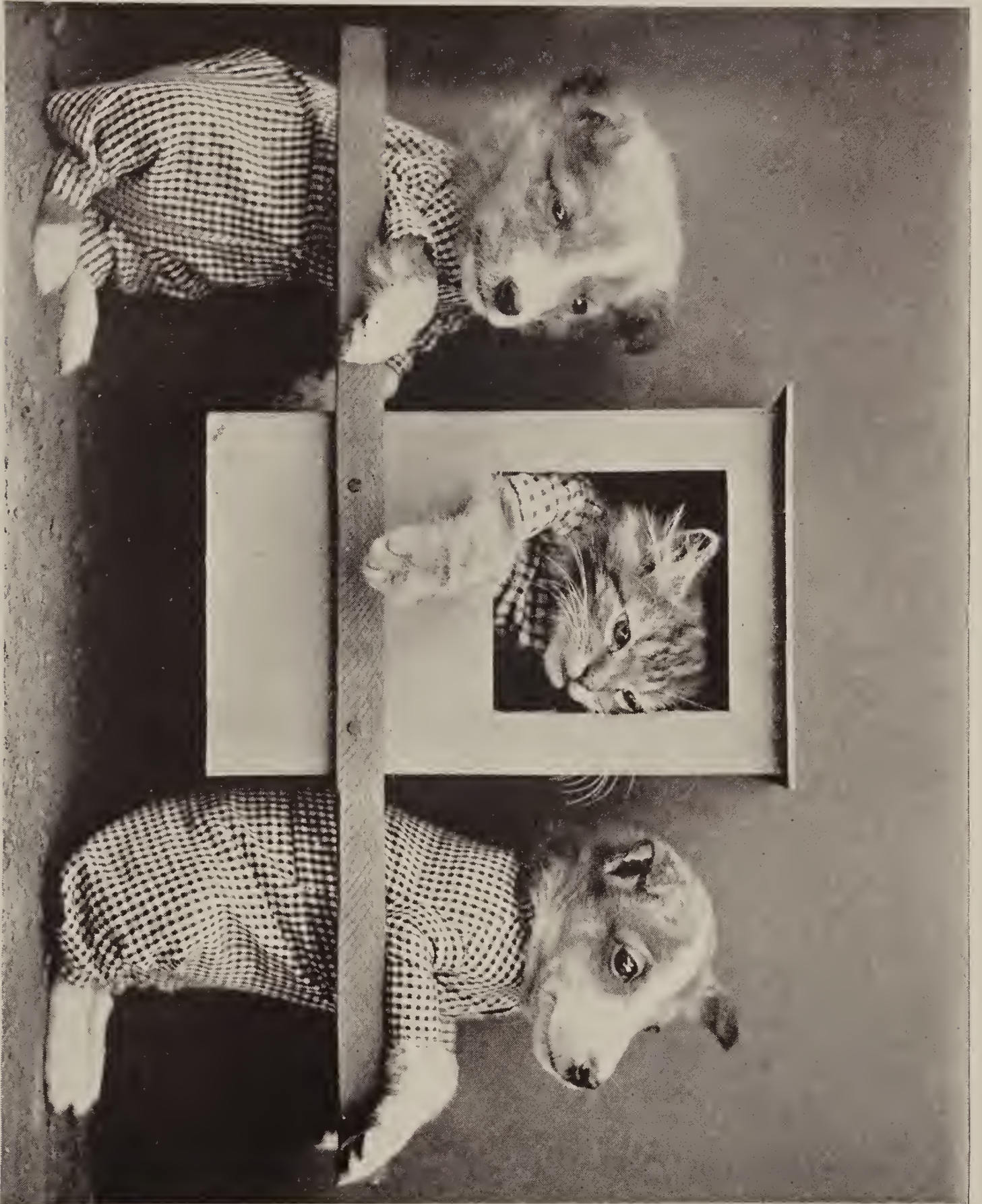
Mrs. Bufkins opened the magazine to a photograph showing Mewsie being carried to and from the studio in a sedan-chair because her company had taken out so large a policy on her life that they could not afford to let her risk it in a motor-car.

The star's grandmother gasped and leaned against a light-post. "Let me sit down in the park a few minutes and read the rest of this," she said.

"Oh, come on home and cook the fish," urged Prowler, "You're only hungry."

So they walked along slowly, while Prowler held the magazine open and Mrs. Bufkins finished the write-up which concluded:

"Mewsie Stripes is little and cute. Some 'fans' who have watched her frisk down a flight of stairs, compare her to the beloved Marguerite Clarke, who always reminded us of a playful kitten."



IN HER SEDAN-CHAIR.

XXXVI

COOKING BY RADIO

Up-to-Date

XXXVI

COOKING BY RADIO

WHEN the fish-basket was carried to the back door, Mrs. Bufkins saw another new radio set up in the kitchen.

She sat down wearily, and fanned herself with her hat.

Barkley, the cook, talked very fast, explaining that she had installed a machine for her own use so that she could tune-in on the "Housekeepers Hour."

All her friends were cooking by radio, and you could see what a grand thing it was, she said, just by this afternoon. For while she was thinking they never would catch any fish—and wondering what could she get for dinner—right out of the air came that recipe for the clam chowder they could hear bubbling in the kettle!

"Barkley," said Prowler, grandly, "your radio chowder smells pretty good, but you will have to move it over on the back of the stove while we fry our trout."

Barkley had intended to ask for a raise on account of the air service, but she was so surprised to see the fine mess of fish that she forgot it.



UP-TO-DATE.

XXXVII

A THRILLING MESSAGE

A Voice from the Past

XXXVII

A THRILLING MESSAGE

ONE evening after the World War a stranger strolled into the Revellers' Club in London.

It was apparent to all that he was a soldier and a gentleman, though he appeared to be in a daze.

He had no idea what his name was, where he came from, nor how he happened there.

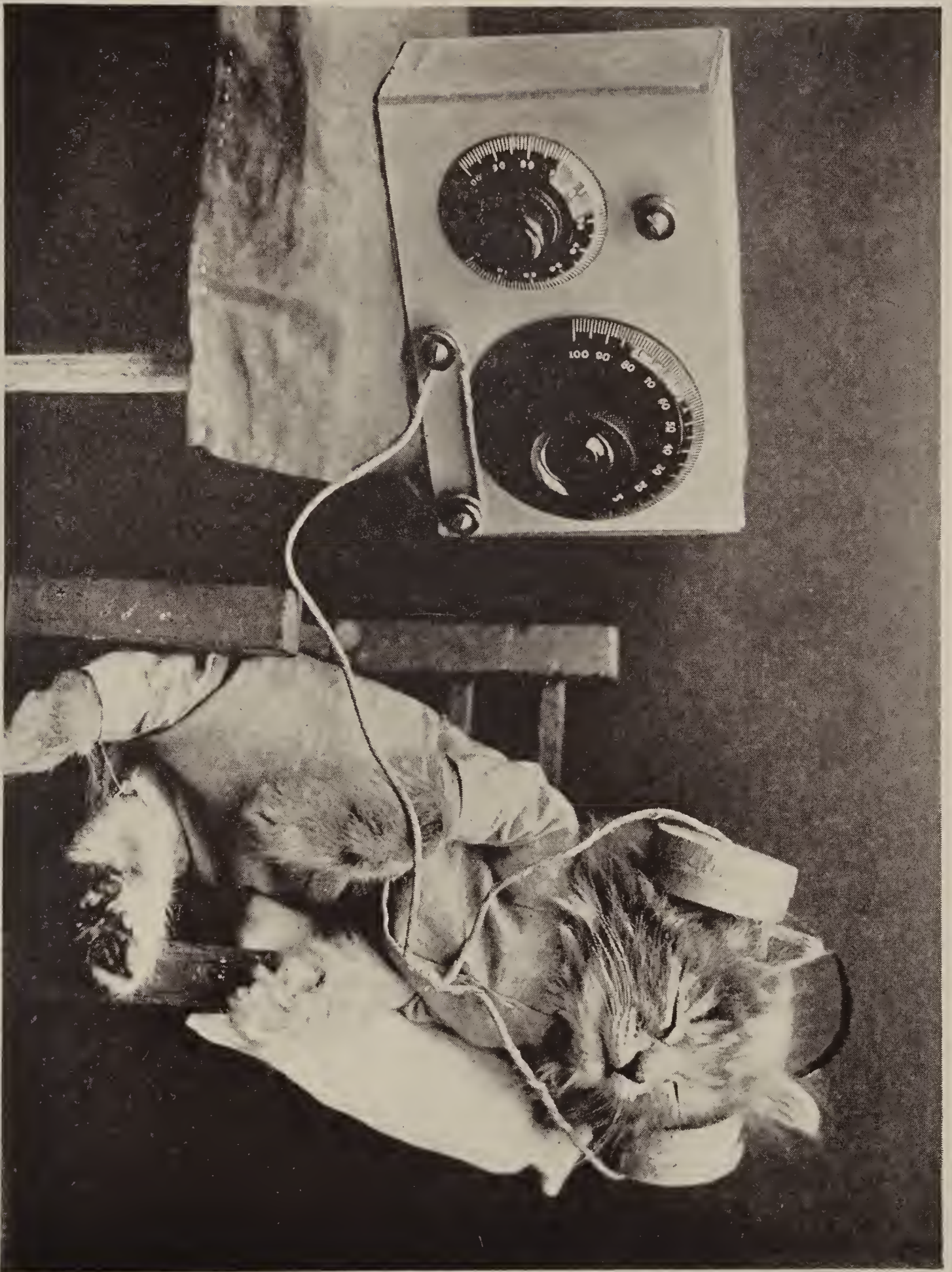
There were no papers of any description on him, but in his pocket was a medal for distinguished service, and a few brief questions revealed him as no ordinary adventurer.

"Shell shock," decided Captain Airkat of the Royal Fliers. And to the stranger he said, kindly, "Why not come home with me, and I'll call you Tom Smith? That was my buddy's name."

So "Tom Smith" settled down in pleasant quarters, to a life that was comfortable, and fairly contented, until one evening at the radio he tuned-in on the message of appeal that Pretti-Puppi was broadcasting faithfully, just as she had promised Lily Stripes.

"Catnip Corners, Animal Land, U. S. A.," repeated the listener, as if he were talking in a dream. "I have been there sometime. I can smell the catnip now."

Then the war-wearied veteran closed his eyes in blissful recollection of "Home, Sweet Home."



A VOICE FROM THE PAST.

XXXVIII

A PERILOUS JOURNEY

London to New York

XXXVIII

A PERILOUS JOURNEY

ON the same night that "Tom Smith" received the message that began to awaken memories of the past, a great honor had befallen his friend, Captain Airkat.

The happy aviator burst into the apartment, a few hours later, with the news that he had been chosen to pilot the first trans-Atlantic flight of the Aerial Express from London to New York.

He was surprised and disappointed when greeted by a silence.

When he asked what was wrong, and was told about the strange appeal, and its disturbing effect, he laughed in relief.

"Well, Tommy," he cried, "things just couldn't have happened any better for you. This is only a test trip, I'm to make, but besides my mechanician I'm allowed to carry one passenger. So why not take a chance with me?"

And the captain added that, once across, he would spare no effort to locate Catnip Corners, and help his friend clear up all the mystery.

That promise decided "Tom Smith" to attempt the perilous journey, and the two buddies waited for the right kind of weather with great impatience.



LONDON TO NEW YORK.

XXXIX

THE RESCUE

The Sea Was Like Glass

XXXIX

THE RESCUE

THE day came at last when charts and weather data were favorable for the take-off of the Aerial Express, and the gigantic bird rose into the air, zipped and zoomed out of sight, and was last viewed off the coast of Ireland.

It was in mid-ocean that Captain Airkat, working desperately at the controls, yelled into the ear of his buddy, "Take out all that's left of our nine lives. We're going to need them!"

The next that "Tom Smith" knew he was floating on a big green wave.

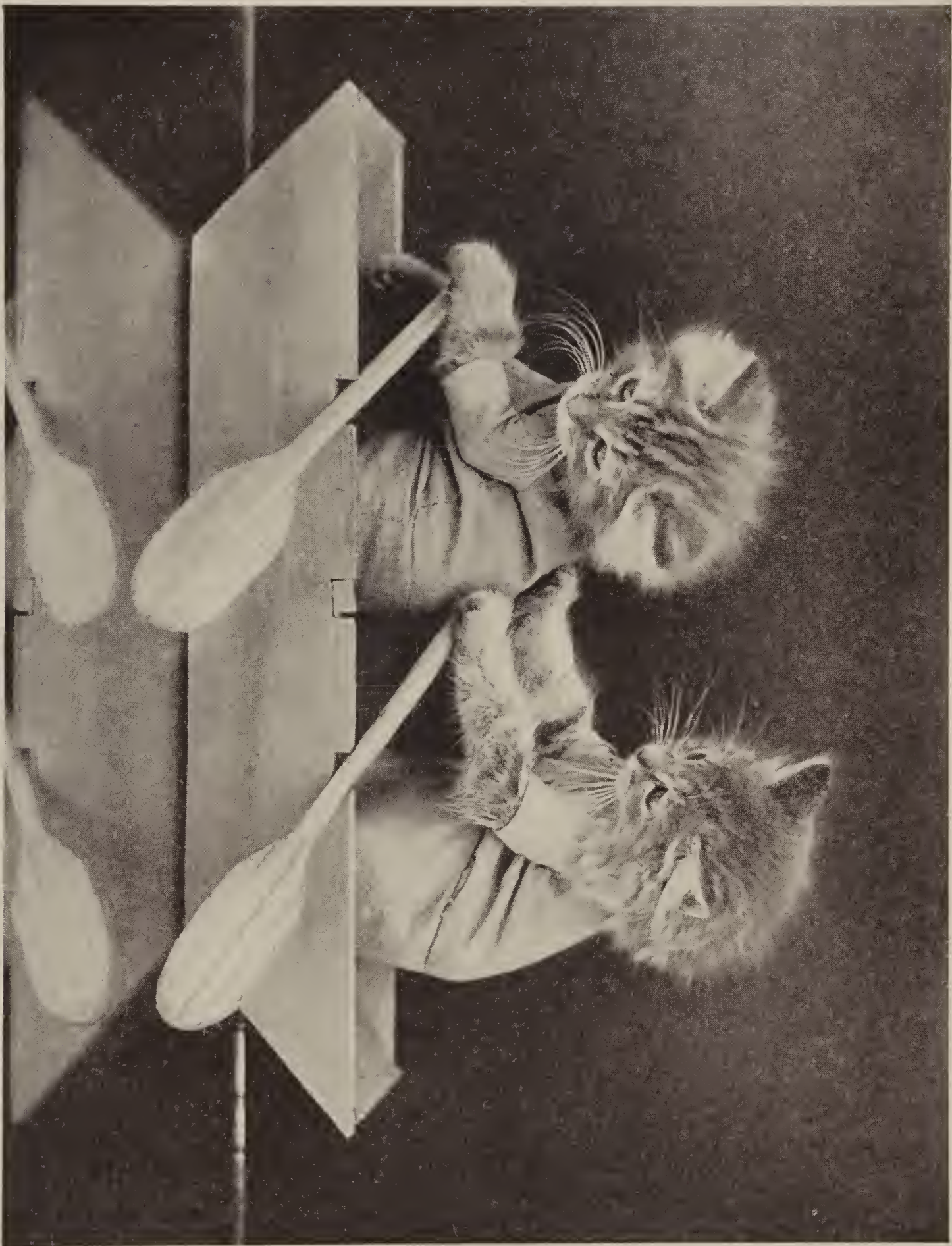
He was a splendid swimmer, so he held his head up to look for his companions. Not far away the gallant captain and his mechanic were treading water.

"Cheer up, old chap," came the pilot's voice, "I've signaled a freighter!"

It seemed hours before the friendly ship reached them, but the sea was like glass, and with the water so warm, it was hard to realize that they were in danger.

When life-boats were finally lowered all were rescued in safety.

But the Aerial Express was a plaything for the fishes.



THE SEA WAS LIKE GLASS.

XL

IN THE PUBLIC EYE

A Gift from a Royal Admirer

XL

IN THE PUBLIC EYE

CALLERS at the Bufkins cottage one day were excited over a picture on the front page of a marked copy of "The Hollywood Gazette."

"How cute!" they chimed in chorus.

"How ridiculous, I should say," returned the hostess, who, nevertheless, wore quite a satisfied smile. "Let me read this nonsense aloud:

" 'It is the sensation of the hour when beautiful Mewsie Stripes and her charming mother appear on the boulevard in a smart turn-out drawn by, what is said to be, the gift of a royal admirer. We print what is an exact copy, we understand, of the letter the star received with her present.

" ' "To Hollywood's Queen:—If it be true that Her Most Gracious Majesty resents the refusal of her director to permit her to risk her life in the saddle, she is wrong,—and her adviser—quite right.

" ' "A fall from a horse is a funny thing only for the newspapers.

" ' "If Her Majesty would promise to substitute for her daily canter, a drive behind the gentle animal that is being shipped her, it would ease the minds of her subjects, and delight the heart of

" ' "A PRINCE WHO MUST BE CAREFUL" '."



A GIFT FROM A ROYAL ADMIRER.

XLI

A WEARY TRAVELER

At the Crossroads

A WEARY TRAVELER

BRISK winds were blowing winter toward Catnip Corners as Henry Jollipup finished the task of repainting all the guide-posts within the city limits.

As he stood thinking with pride how his bold, black letters would jump out through blinding storms to point the way to puzzled drivers, he discovered with dismay he had omitted his final "S."

This meant a trip to town for more paint before his work would be complete. The artist sighed.

He was still wondering what he had better do, when his attention was drawn to a dusty traveler approaching the crossroads.

One glance was enough to mark the sharp contrast between the pathetic little bundle slung on a stick across the stranger's shoulder, and his military figure, so gallant and erect in spite of weariness.

"Let me give you a lift into the city," suggested Mr. Jollipup, genially.

"I thank you, sir,—but I do not know yet just where I am going," was the tired answer.

"Well, think it over," laughed Mr. Jollipup. "I'm coming back." And he drove away wondering where he had heard that voice before.



AT THE CROSSROADS.

XLII

BACK TO NATURE

A Wanderer

XLII

BACK TO NATURE

CATNIP CORNERS, which was now only five miles away, had been the destination of the dusty traveler for many weary months.

But he had forgotten what he had expected to find there.

Perhaps, he thought, if he went in among the friendly trees and rested a few days, things would seem clearer.

Mr. Jollipup's empty paint-can reminded him that, with bait, he might have fish for supper.

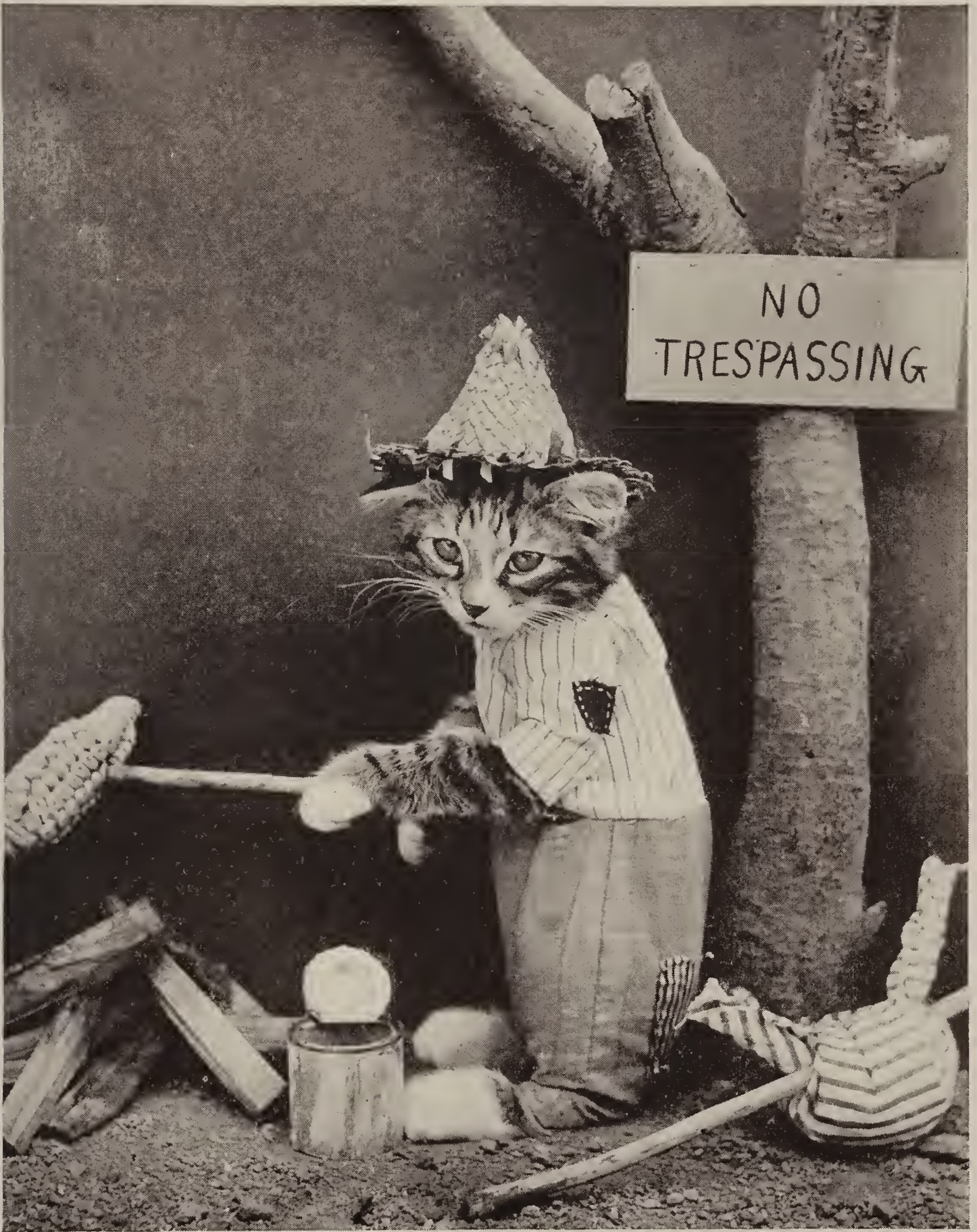
During his travels he had been surprised that life proved so simple for him. He had seldom gone long without food.

As he wandered about in the dusk, he found a few ears of corn and was soon roasting one over a slow fire.

He must have been a Boy Scout, he decided, since he fared so well in the woods. He did not think of the "No Trespassing" sign, which a Boy Scout would respect.

Briars tore his clothing, but in a khaki safety kit in his little bundle there were needles, patches, and thread. He could not remember using this in active service, but it came in very handy now.

To-morrow he must locate that pleasant, drowsy scent that excited his nostrils. He went to sleep believing he was, really, almost home.



A WANDERER.

XLIII

IN HOLLYWOOD WITH MEWSIE

Real Tears

XLIII

IN HOLLYWOOD WITH MEWSIE

IN Hollywood, Mewsie Stripes was rehearsing a film, the climax of which was the farewell of a princess to an exiled nobleman, who appears under her window disguised as the court jester.

But although Wyse Catt, himself, was directing her, and the leading man was a second Valentino, the little star failed to register any proper emotion.

“Can’t you stop smiling,” begged the great Mr. Catt in despair.

Mewsie shook her head. “I’m too happy,” she replied.

“Well, just try to imagine you will never see Purritt Long again,” snapped the director.

“But I’m going to take him back to Catnip Corners,” explained Mewsie sweetly.

“Ah, that gives me an idea,” cried Mr. Catt, and he beckoned to an assistant.

In the twinkling of an eye a radio was set up in the studio, and the director made a deft turn of the dials.

At the first haunting note of melody he shouted, “Camera!”

And, oh, how poor Mewsie’s tears began to flow!

When the scene was finished, Mr. Catt, whose own eyes were moist, shook hands with the star, and remarked that he doubted if Mrs. Fairbanks could have equalled her.



REAL TEARS.

XLIV

BROADCASTING FROM CATNIP CORNERS

The Three Brothers Bassbark

XLIV

BROADCASTING FROM CATNIP CORNERS

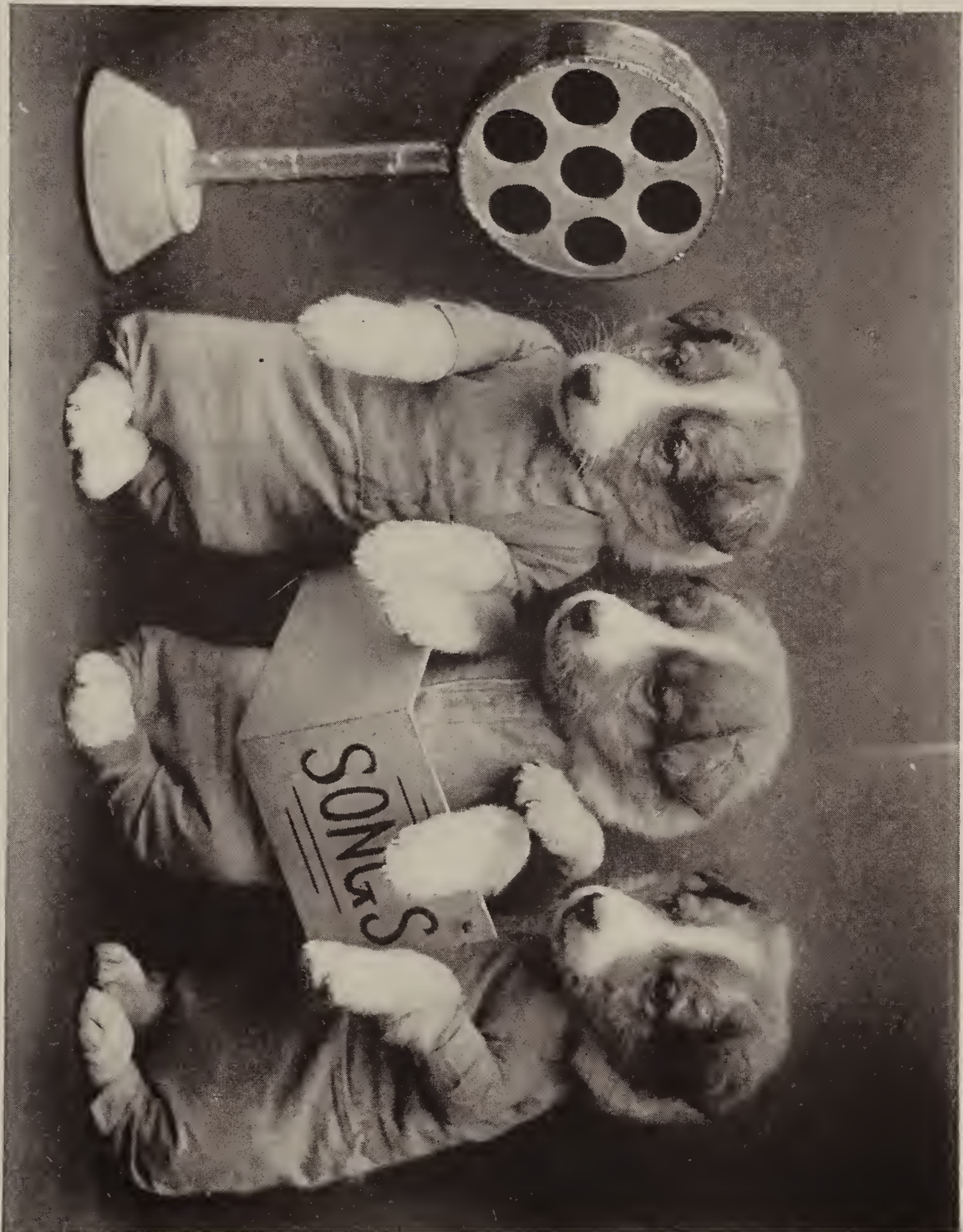
IT sounds stranger than fiction, but on the very day that the three Bassbark brothers went on the air from the Catnip Corners Broadcasting Station, Mr. Hiram Padfoot, the announcer said to them, as they took their places in front of the microphone, "Now, boys, sing—and remember Mewsie Stripes may be listening to you in Hollywood."

And everybody agreed that "The Three Brothers Bassbark," as Mr. Padfoot smartly announced the trio, were never in better voice than they displayed in the effort that proved the inspiration of Mewsie Stripes' great acting in the most popular picture of the year.

Letters that were received at Station N I P during the next few days, showed that the boys made a wise choice in their selection, which seemed to have been heard by few listeners-in with dry eyes.

Many requested copies of the song, which begins like this:

"Carry me back to Catnip Corners,
Where birds make music while they may—
Let me taste once more of the charms in that wildwood,
And I'll call it the end of a perfect day."



THE THREE BROTHERS BASSBARK.

XLV

CAUTION

The Section Hands

XLV

CAUTION

TWO section hands lived in Catnip Corners, and when their day's work was done, they rode back home together in their little hand-car while the tracks were clear between the local freight and the evening express.

On the day after Henry Jollipup finished the repainting of the guide-posts, Mike, who had a sharp eye and a keen nose, saw smoke rising out of the woods.

He had been over the track so many times that anything out of the ordinary always aroused his interest.

A poor time for a fire, he thought, with all the dry leaves blowing. It was probably only some tramp cooking his supper, yet—if the blaze should spread, it might be laid to sparks from an engine.

They ought to report this.

His friend, Tom, said maybe it would be just as well to ask Jollipup, first, if he had seen any strangers about while he was painting. They would not want to get somebody that meant no harm into trouble.

Not while Spy Katz was sheriff! No, sir.



THE SECTION HANDS.

XLVI

INVESTIGATION

✓ Sheriff Spy Katz

XLVI

INVESTIGATION

SHERIFF SPY KATZ had never been very popular in Catnip Corners.

He was not a choice of the voters, but had been appointed by Mayor Roundhead because he made such a fine appearance as an officer of the law.

He certainly was an imposing figure in his uniform, and his chest seemed made to pin a badge on.

But since the Annual Outing of the Catnip Factory, when he had insisted on sniffing of some extract bottles on the Snowball Wagon, he had been criticized for everything, even the way he wore his cap on one side of his head.

The mayor had been known to rebuke him for being over-anxious to make arrests, and citizens were very careful not to let a breath of suspicion against anyone escape in his presence.

So it was most unfortunate that he should happen to overhear a whispered conversation between the section hands and Henry Jollipup.

For he started the next morning to search the woods for the mysterious stranger who had vanished at the cross-roads.

And with Sheriff Spy Katz, capture meant arrest.



SHERIFF SPY KATZ.

XLVII

AN ARREST

Cause for Suspicion

XLVII

AN ARREST

SPY KATZ could not have arrived at the cross-roads at a worse moment, for he had not searched far into the woods when the stranger blocked his path with each arm through a jug handle.

“Aha,” was the sheriff’s greeting. “Just a supply of pure cold water there, of course.”

The suspected party answered politely that his jugs contained nothing stronger than catnip tea, which he had just been brewing over his fire.

And this was the truth. It had not taken the weary traveler long to discover that this country was full of stray catnip plants, seeds of which had been blown in on the wind from Mrs. Bufkins’ factory.

Instinct told him there would be nothing better for his ragged nerves than a soothing herb drink, and, indeed with the first swallow, pleasant memories began to revive.

But listening to explanations was something that Spy Katz never did well.

“Tell your story to the judge, stranger,” he thundered. “You are under arrest.”

And he marched his prisoner toward the city.



CAUSE FOR SUSPICION.

XLVIII

THE ARM OF THE LAW

Against the Signal

XLVIII

THE ARM OF THE LAW

MRS. BUFKINS was driving home to Pussyway Lane with her daughter Lily, who had just arrived from Hollywood for a visit, when she noticed the crowd that had collected around the city jail.

She persuaded Lily to take a nap, explaining that she must return to town for a few errands.

Something told her that she was needed.

For the first time since learning to drive, she exceeded the speed limit, lost control of her car, and crashed against a stop signal, throwing the traffic officer to the ground.

“Oh, what have I done!” she screamed as she yanked at her emergency brake.

But Number Eleven was Officer Pause, and he arose to his feet, unhurt. Brushing off the dust, he said, “Madam, I have not forgotten your kindness in the past. Proceed, I suspect you are in a hurry.”

Mrs. Bufkins smiled in relief and after another wild ride reached the court house.

Forcing her way through the crowd she caught a glimpse of the prisoner.

“Stop, sheriff,” she commanded. “You have made a terrible mistake!”



AGAINST THE SIGNAL.

XLIX

NEWS TRAVELS FAST

✱ Correct Time

XLIX

NEWS TRAVELS FAST

MRS. SPECKLEBACK owned what was truly a “grandfather’s clock,” for the tall heirloom that graced the hallway was a legacy from her own grandfather.

She was fond of asking what better way she could serve his memory than to keep his clock wound and oiled so faithfully that it never ran down or gained or lost one minute.

Mr. Jollipup said that he believed exercise was what kept that antique in such splendid condition.

It is a fact that if there was ever any doubt as to the time that any event of interest occurred in Catnip Corners, Mrs. Speckleback could be trusted to come forward with the correct time.

Even in the middle of the night, at any unfamiliar sound, she would arise, light her candle, and “look at the clock.”

So on the morning that Spy Katz arrested the stranger, half the city soon knew that, at exactly ten o’clock, the sheriff had marched a prisoner past the Speckleback home, and, at twenty minutes of eleven, Mrs. Bufkins had dashed by, driving her own car, making no less than sixty miles an hour!



CORRECT TIME.

L

PROWLER IS NOTIFIED

Old Friends

L

PROWLER IS NOTIFIED

PROWLER BUFKINS, at the Catnip Factory, answered his desk telephone, hung up, and started to fox-trot around the office.

“Prowler—what is it? Tell me,” begged his twin Purra, who had heard just enough of the conversation to arouse her curiosity.

“Ever remember hearing the old saying—‘And the cat came back’,” grinned Prowler. “Well, brother Archie is back—and I am off to break the news to Lily!”

Leaving Purra wide-eyed in excitement, Prowler danced away, but rushed, first, to two former buddies of Archingback.

Jack O’Hare, a gentleman truck farmer, had just come in from the fields with his chum, Ayer Dale.

In a few words they were told how Sheriff Katz had arrested a stranger that proved to be no other than poor Archie Stripes, who was only trying to find his way home to Catnip Corners.

The two friends gayly agreed to drive to Pussyway Lane with Prowler.

Jack, in honor of the occasion, slapped on his opera hat with such vigor that one ear went through the brim, and the trio grew very hilarious.



OLD FRIENDS.

LI

SCHOOL IS DISMISSED

A Holiday

SCHOOL IS DISMISSED

CATNIP CORNERS is proud of its school, which is of a rustic design, very appealing to the pupils.

The principal, during this eventful year, was Miss Tabitha Speckleback, a daughter of the lady of the clock.

On the day that Spy Katz made his unfortunate mistake, Miss Tabby, as her scholars affectionately called her, was about to ring the bell to open the afternoon session, when she received a message from her mother through the kindness of the Jollipup twins.

The note advised her of all the details of the exciting morning with, of course, the exact time at which everything had happened.

Mrs. Speckleback concluded that, as Mrs. Bufkins was one of the school board, it would do no harm to give the children a half-holiday.

And Tabby must come directly home, for they were invited to the reception in Pussyway Lane in the evening and she, herself, had nothing to wear.

So the school was dismissed with great rejoicing, and Miss Tabitha—always obedient, hurried home to help her mother properly honor the return of Archingback Stripes.



A HOLIDAY.

LII

WAITING FOR THE HERO

A Reserved Seat

LII

WAITING FOR THE HERO

THE schoolchildren, in irrepressible spirits at the sudden release from discipline, scampered gaily to the business district, chanting, shrilly, "Archingback's back—Archingback's back!"

The streets were already crowded with residents anxious to catch a glimpse of the Catnip Corners hero, reported missing in action so long ago, and now returning after a series of remarkable adventures.

As a whole, the crowd was a jolly one, but there were some, who, shocked at the noisy antics of the youngsters, frowned on them so severely that they retreated toward Pussyway Lane, where they felt sure there was no chance of missing Mr. Stripes.

Angora Fluff disappeared up a tree ahead of several others, and cried that she had a reserved seat.

Up there she amused herself by giving a false alarm every little while. She would dilate the pupils of her eyes, and declare that she could "see him coming!"

But after she failed to fool her companions, she told them that Miss Tabby would be ashamed of the way they were acting, and, when Archingback did come in sight, they must all stand at attention.



A RESERVED SEAT.

LIII

PREPARATIONS FOR THE HOME-COMING

His Favorite Jam

LIII

PREPARATIONS FOR THE HOME-COMING

ON the drive to Pussyway Lane, Prowler's friends had helped him think up several nice ways that the news of Archingback's return might be broken to Lily gently.

But when they arrived at the Bufkins cottage, all their fine fancies fled and Prowler burst into the house and cried out in a loud voice, "Hello, Lily, Archingback is home! Let's open some jam."

Tired out after the trip from Hollywood, Lily had been taking a nap, and the great surprise added to Prowler's crude awakening, proved altogether too much for her.

She fainted away.

Ayer Dale ran to the garden and picked a sprig of catnip, which he waved back and forth under Mrs. Stripes' nose, while she slowly revived, but it took some time to make her realize that Mr. Stripes was safe and sound and due home at any minute.

It was always Prowler's idea to begin a celebration by opening a jar of jam, and he gave Lily no peace until she let him assist her to a high shelf in the pantry where special delicacies were reserved.



HIS FAVORITE JAM.

LIV

HOME AT LAST

A Private Citizen

LIV

HOME AT LAST

IN the meantime Archingback Stripes was being transformed from a bewildered adventurer into a distinguished private citizen.

Always resourceful, Mrs. Bufkins secured Archie's release at the court house, where she saw that a severe reprimand was dealt to the crestfallen Spy Katz.

Then, tactful and sympathetic, she waited at the haberdasher's while Archie was at the barber's, and soon her son-in-law looked like the gentleman that he was.

He did not care for the wool headgear that Mrs. Bufkins chose for him, but wore it to please her, and set a new style for Catnip Corners. His ulster was also copied through all the winter season.

When he finally appeared on the street with Mrs. Bufkins, he was surrounded and given such an ovation that they could not make their way to the family car, but were forced to take a taxi to the daily newspaper office, where they gave out an item which included a general invitation to Pussyway Lane in the evening.

At last the hero was on his way home.



A PRIVATE CITIZEN.

LV

WITH THE JOLLIPUPS

A Cheering Cup

WITH THE JOLLIPUPS

AMONG close friends who were very much excited over the return of the long missing soldier were Mr. and Mrs. Jollipup, who had been present at the Bufkins-Stripes wedding.

The couple engaged in quite an argument as to whether Ruddy and Buddy should be allowed to attend the evening festivities, but the twins decided it in favor of their mother, by declaring that they were ready for bed.

Mrs. Speckleback had generously tipped them a quarter for delivering the note to Miss Tabitha, and the little boys had celebrated until they could not keep their eyes open.

Mrs. Jollipup, having gained her point, became very sweet, and, using the silver service, poured a cup of coffee for Henry, who soon admitted that he was sure the children would be just as well off at home.

“For,” he explained, “it is pretty certain that the punch-bowl will be safe from Spy Katz tonight.”

“Wasn’t it lucky that Lily should arrive home to-day,” asked Mrs. Jollipup.

“It has all worked out just like a puzzle,” agreed Henry.



A CHEERING CUP.

LVI

A PUBLIC RECEPTION

Musicians for the Evening

A PUBLIC RECEPTION

THERE has never been, and probably never will be, any event in Catnip Corners to compare with the public reception that was tendered Archingback Stripes on the night after his return to Pussyway Lane.

His wife Lily, proud and happy on his arm, wore her wedding dress, which needed no stitch to fit her youthful slenderness.

Music for the evening was furnished by "The Catnip Blossom Trio," musicians on stringed instruments from Station N I P.

Mr. Jollipup's forecast was correct—Sheriff Katz did not appear, but everybody was so thrilled at the chance to shake hands with a real hero that the punch bowl was sadly neglected.

Mr. Stripes was eager to talk about the remarkable progress of Catnip Corners, but so modest about his own adventures that his friends were disappointed.

It was Mrs. Bufkins' threat to tell the story of his exploits, herself, that finally persuaded Archie to sketch briefly an outline of all the wonderful things that had happened to him.

And he never guessed until he saw the newspapers, that his talk had gone on the air.



MUSICIANS FOR THE EVENING.

LVII

HIS EXPERIENCES

A Flag of Truce

LVII

HIS EXPERIENCES

NEWSPAPERS told Animal Land that the rescued passenger of the ill-fated Aerial Express was the Catnip Corners hero.

The freighter, which lowered the life-boats, had been bound for Halifax, where Captain Airkat placed Archingback, sick and delirious, in a hospital.

He eluded his attendants with one sane thought persisting. He must get to Catnip Corners.

And his wanderings had ended at the crossroads.

Of his army service, he remembered vividly how he and a comrade had been hurled into a shell-hole. As consciousness returned, they found that a canteen worker had made a hazardous trip to bring first aid.

But attempt to escape from enemy ground seemed hopeless, so they made a flag of truce from a roll of bandage, and were marched to a prison camp.

From that time, until Archie arrived at the London lodgings of the air pilot, his memory was still dark.

It was after he tuned-in on Lily's appeal, before events of the past began to arrange themselves in his mind in proper order, and another mental upset had followed the air crash.



A FLAG OF TRUCE.

LVIII

A SPECIAL HONOR

Archingback Stripes Post, No. 13

LVIII

A SPECIAL HONOR

ARCHINGBACK STRIPES had been home only a short time, when he received the unusual honor of being asked by Mayor Roundhead to review the monthly drill of the Home Guard.

The boys wore their new fatigue uniforms of khaki flannel for the first time, and went through the Manual with a smart precision that befitted the occasion.

When Mr. Stripes asked the name of the organization, and was told that it was the Archingback Stripes Post, Number Thirteen, tears rolled down his cheeks.

He did not know that Catnip Corners had learned that he had been decorated with a Distinguished Service Medal, but he had been cited for bravery several times before he was reported missing in action.

At the request of the mayor, he made a short address to the guard which left them very happy, for he declared that it was plain to be seen that the city was safe in their protection.

To close the program, the salute to the flag was given in unison, after which the Boy Scouts Band played "The Star Spangled Banner."



ARCHINGBACK STRIPES POST, NO. 13.

LIX

A BRIDE AND GROOM

Mr. and Mrs. Purritt Long

A BRIDE AND GROOM

MRS. BUFKINS sat in her easy-chair in front of the fire. For once, her knitting-needles were thrust through the garment on her lap.

“I wonder just how much more in the line of surprises I could stand,” she murmured.

But when Archingback and Lily, with Purra and Prowler, came in from viewing one of Mewsie’s films, she was smiling brightly, and as busy as ever.

“How does it feel to be the father of a movie star?” she asked Archie.

“Oh, very thrilling,” replied Mr. Stripes, “but I do believe that a daughter right here at home in Pussyway Lane would be even nicer.”

While he was speaking, a motor purred softly at the gate, and, soon, an impatient blast on the horn sent everybody to the door.

Mrs. Bufkins put on the porch light, then leaned heavily against Prowler’s shoulder.

For in a gayly decorated, white-ribboned car, Mr. and Mrs. Purritt Long (*nee* Mewsie Stripes) had arrived from Hollywood on their honeymoon.

“And we’re all going to live right here in Catnip Corners, forever and ever,” cried the little bride. “For there is no place like home.”



MR. AND MRS. PURRITT LONG.

LX

ANIMAL LAND SIGNS OFF

“Good night, Ladies and Gentlemen”

ANIMAL LAND SIGNS OFF

TWO of the Bassbark brothers, Bill and Charley, had returned from a glorious party at the Bufkins cottage, to celebrate New Years Eve.

Though the hour was late, they were such ardent radio fans that they were prepared to tune-in, even after they went to bed.

But the air was noisy so they talked a while.

Bill said that he had never hoped to dance with a real live movie star.

Charley wondered if Purritt Long would be put on the pay-roll of the Catnip Factory. He rather fancied that Archingback Stripes would go in for politics; he would not be surprised if they ran him for mayor.

“Why, Mayor Roundhead has done well for the city,” protested Bill.

“Oh, yes,” yawned Charley sleepily. “But, you know, there are always some who like to see a new tail wagging.”

“Well, it’s almost the end of the year,” said Charley, “and a wonderful twelve months it has been for all the folks of Animal Land.”

He imitated Mr. Padfoot’s best tones. “We are now signing off, ladies and gentlemen—a happy New Year from Station N I P.”



“GOOD NIGHT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.”





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