

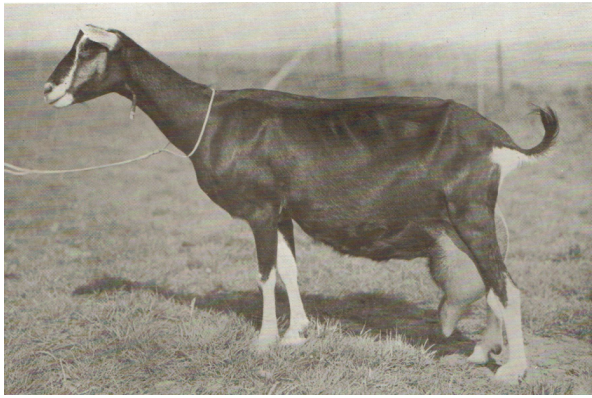
## **Chapter Six. The BGS of Today Takes Shape 1950 to 1960.**

The last ripples of the adverse effects of the war years were gradually fading away - there was now sufficient paper for the Society's various publications, and petrol was plentiful enough to get to shows and take goats for service. Food rationing ended in 1953. All this was beneficial to goat keeping but what was not was the de-rationing of cows' milk in 1950. Many small herds had been started during the war to provide additional milk for the household, especially where there were small children. Other larger herds had set up milk rounds. However, once cows' milk became readily available, these members gave up their goats and BGS membership plummeted. Income dropped just as administrative costs rose and the Society was again facing one of its financial bad patches. One of the first economies was to reduce the large number of committee meetings by half, to five a year. Fares for both elected members and delegates were paid by a mixture of donations and contributions from clubs. Although these were matched £1 for £1 by the BGS Northern members felt that this made it difficult for them to be committee members and there was some feeling that the BGS was being 'ruled' by Southern members. The AGM and the Affiliated Societies' Conference were now held on the same day, with the AGM initially in the afternoon, but in 1958 the order was reversed to that of the present day, i.e. AGM (and sometimes EGM and a talk) in the morning and Affiliated Societies' Conference in the afternoon. There were also open meetings held at the Dairy Show.

The BGS was now the recognised body for goats and goat-keepers and provided goats for display at the Festival of Britain in 1951. For five months various members supplied goats - a milker and a goatling of the same breed - for a week each and lived on site. Following the death of King George VI, Queen Elizabeth II agreed to become Patron and occasional invitations (usually for two which were allocated to Committee members) were received to Royal Garden Parties at Buckingham Palace. The BGS opened a fund for the Coronation Cup - presented to the BDFA - to be awarded to the Best Goatling at the Dairy Show. In 1956 T.W. Palmer was awarded the OBE in the Birthday Honours for services to the Society.

With the improvement in their diets goats' yields were rising again. The Saanen, Judith of Delamere produced the highest yield for a lactation ending between October 1949 and 1950 with 6284lbs 14oz.

Despite this she was only an R5 as the yield was between 5500 and 6500lbs! However, in the following year Twynkel became a RM6 with a yield of 6518lb. In 1956 Malpas Malicia broke the record for a first kidder with 6121lbs 7oz in 365 days.



*RM6 Twynkel \*1 (HB 19370P). The first goat to obtain the R6 with a yield of 6,518lbs.*

Lifetime yields of over 20,000lbs (the goat also to have won a \*) were eligible for the Malpas Melba Trophy and, during the fifties, about six names were listed each year. In 1956 R5 Northmoor Gazelle beat Melba's total with 35863lb 9oz in 3816 days. Two years later this yield was capped by RM52 Toyse Wilful with 36884lb 8oz.

In 1956 the regulations relating to the R prefix were changed yet again - a yield of 2000lb and over in a lactation ending after 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1956 being indicated by the R prefix and numerals, i.e. a yield of 2100lb being R21 and so on. Yields for the previous eight years were brought into line with this ruling and an updated list published in the Herd Book. Section Mark and Double Section Mark males had fresh numerals too. \$25/42 indicated a R25 dam and the sire's dam entitled to R42. Extended lactations of a minimum of 3000lb for the first 365 days and 1500lb over the remainder of the lactation (maximum 730) were now published in the Herd Book. Recorded yields were now, for the first time, to be butterfat tested.

Shows continued to be well supported but concern was expressed at the standard of the exhibits, especially the quality of the milk. Over the 1948 show season milking competition results showed that out of 945 entries 288 were disqualified for low fats. From 1950 both Quality and Quantity milking competitions had fat analysed. No \* was to be awarded for less than 3% butterfat per milking, but fats carried no points in the competitions. At that date \*s were the award in the Quantity competition and Q\*s in the Quality Competitions. A few years later Quantity Competitions were discontinued and the new milking competitions (much more like those taking place today) were introduced. Now fat was analysed and both \*s and Q\*s were awarded with the \* having a lower qualification level. This reduction in classes opened the way for Breed Milking Competitions instead of those merely for first kidders and subsequent kidders. Milkers were now disqualified if their yield was less than five and a half pounds or with butterfat less than 3% at either milking. Milkers also had to have kidded at least ten days prior to, and within two years, of the date of the show. Plugging teats and artificial colouring incurred disqualification.

Also implemented in 1950 were new conditions for the Dual Purpose Challenge Certificate. Only prize-winners and reserves on inspection were to be brought out and placed for inspection points. The size of the classes at this time meant that it was impossible to bring all milkers out. The BGS also began restricting the number of shows at which the CC and DP were on offer. Championship shows were required to put on not less than five inspection classes for adult females and five for goatlings with all the adult females to be entered and to compete in both Milking Competition and Inspection. No amalgamation of classes was allowed. If there were fewer than three

entries the class had to be cancelled. If there were fewer than three adult entries of any one breed competing that BCC could not be awarded – a stipulation rescinded in 1955.

Bronze medals were discontinued in 1953 and replaced by the BGS Rosette for Best Exhibit. The Ten Guinea Cup (the Society's first trophy) became known as the Challenge Cup for the Best She-goat. Judges who failed to get a licence could now reapply after six months, but, as now, any form of canvassing would disqualify the application. Show results were published in the Journal and included judge's comments but no kid results. Yields for AR, RM and R goats were listed in the Journal as they were received from the MMB; finally annual lists with full details were published in the Herd Book. Transfers of ownership ceased to appear in the Herd Book from January 1953. Mis-marked kids, eligible by virtue of their pedigree to be registered in a Breed Section were, for several years, demoted to the Foundation Book. They were to be treated as if by a Herd Book male from a Supplementary Register female. This meant that only females were registered (FB) and her sons were

ineligible for registration. In 1953 more stringent rules were brought in for upgrading goats seeking to enter AN, BA, BS and BT sections of the Herd Book- effectively now seven, rather than six great-grandparents had to be registered in the relevant Breed Section.

In 1956 the Ministry of Agriculture withdrew support for the Stud Goat Scheme. Apart from one or two war years when petrol rationing had precluded the necessary inspection of males, this had been running since 1924. Each owner with a male on the Scheme could provide a maximum of three reduced price services a season and receive a Government grant for each reduced price service. Over the years the Scheme had provided a valuable contribution to the aim of improving the standard of the 'scrub' goat. The loss of this scheme really marked the end of the BGS's efforts to help 'cottagers' improve their goats...something which had been central to the Society's original aims. (See the caption of the photo below the photo on the following page.)



*This picture from the Monthly Circular of 1921 illustrates both the fact of the BGS's help to cottagers and the pride felt in the goats produced.*

Changes occurred in the administration of the Society. H.E. Jeffery resigned as Secretary and in 1951 Miss M.F. Riggs moved to Diss, together with her sister and herd, to take over. H. R. Fortescue became Chairman in 1955 when his predecessor, T.W. Palmer was elected President.

During the fifties the Year Book was compiled by the Secretary and included a number of articles which had originally been contributed for inclusion in an encyclopaedia. This project had been mooted just before the war but some ten years later the idea was abandoned as it was proving uneconomic to produce and no publisher would take it on. What a shame! Had it existed it would now provide interesting insights into the attitudes to goat-keeping at the time.

A project which did go ahead was a film. In the late fifties funds were raised to finance the making of 'The Dairy Goat', a colour film on Goat-keeping which would be hired out to Affiliated Societies and other organisations for their meetings.

Margaret Dawson, as Chairman of the sub-committee wrote in the December 1957 Journal requesting donations to help the fund reach the £300 considered necessary. The editorial in the Journal of October 1958 tells us '*Work on the Goat Film will be complete when this appears and the first showing will be at the Dairy Show....The producer, Mrs D. Sawyer, says that her caprine stars have shown a natural aptitude for film work, so much so that she regrets that the opportunity has been delayed so long*'. The film was first shown at the Dairy Show in 1958 and has recently been re-issued on DVD.

Also at the Dairy Show Stand EH550 was the BGS publicity stand where, according to an article in the December Journal Miss Rigg and A. W. J. Sheppy were kept busy over four days doing a variety of things including selling milk at 6d a carton!

Despite successes, it was not all plain sailing. In 1951 there were no Milking Competitions at the Royal. The following year Foot-and Mouth disease was so bad that only seven shows were held over the whole season. Few years during this period escaped Foot-and Mouth cancellations and petrol rationing was in force for several months as a result of the Suez Crisis in the autumn of 1956. A voluntary earmarking scheme was introduced. Groups of two or three letters (indicating club or breeder) had to be registered with the BGS to avoid duplication. These letters were to be followed by the number for the individual goat, then the year letter (A for kids born in 1966). However the scheme received a disappointing response. There was also an unfavourable response to the suggestion that the Society should change its name to the 'British Dairy Goat Society', despite considerable Journal correspondence on the subject. However this was not the last to be heard on either topic!