

New From Rare Breeds Canada  
Do you know your goat history?: Part 2 Nubians  
by Rebecca Lange

Dairy goats are part of Canada's agricultural heritage, in particular the Nubian, Saanen and Toggenburg breeds represented the earliest days of the development of purebred dairy goats in this country.

### **Nubians**

'The Nubian (really the Anglo Nubian as we know it) is the product of crossing between goats imported from Asia into England and the native English goat. They are large goats entirely of a different build from the Swiss breeds, their chief characteristics being the Roman nose and long pendulous ears. Though these goats in India are known to yield 8 and 10 quarts daily, in this country they have not equalled the Swiss breeds on the average; their handsome appearance with their varied colouring and short coats makes them great favourites.' Stated a British Columbia Department of Agriculture Bulletin in 1918.

A tentative set of standards described in the British Columbia bulletin; that the Nubian breed should have distinct characteristics; quite separate from the Swiss breeds.

1. Nubians had to exhibit a Roman nose; and large and heavy drooping ears.
2. Fully mature bucks were supposed to weigh no less than 175-200lbs and does in good breeding condition were expected to be from 140-170lbs.
3. Hair on the Nubian is described as being to standard when medium, fine and short; although a heavier coat was allowable for bucks.
4. The body had to be "well proportioned with shoulders so placed as to give a deep wide chest and full heart girth; strong straight back; ribs well sprung and wide apart; hips wide apart and level; rump long and wide; pin bones high, wide and apart."

### **The First Registered Nubians**

Nubians are the second breed to be entered into the Canadian Goat Society herd book - to meet the requirements for entry into the record; they had to meet the following criteria:

1. Animals recorded as pure-bred in the general section of the British Goat Society Herd Book.
2. Animals recorded as pure-bred Nubian in the American Milk Goat Record.

3. Animals whose sires and dams are recorded in the Nubian section of the Canadian National Record for Goats.

4. Foundation Stock: Animals worthy of registration if inspected and passed by a competent inspector approved by the Dominion Livestock Records Commissioner.

Quite fittingly it is Burnaby Goldie (born on May 4<sup>th</sup> 1913) a female inspected Nubian that makes the first entry for Nubians in Canada. The Burnaby herd was absolutely dominant during the early development of the breed. D. Mowat, from McKay, British Columbia owned the herd; he frequently imported purebred males and females from the United Kingdom and his goats were also sold throughout Canada - including to the Dominion Livestock Commissioner in Ottawa. It is also a buck owned by Mowat who is the first listed pure male in the herd book - Edenbreck Cyrus (born on January 25<sup>th</sup> 1917) who came all the way from Edenbreck in Lancaster, England. Edenbreck Cyrus was eventually sold into California, where he went on to sire Spring Beauty; the first Nubian to be awarded AR status. Mowat, also imported the equally influential buck Harborough Volunteer - Volunteer went on to sire many Nubians. In one year Mowat brought in 10 Nubians from the Garrochty, Rushmere, Sedberge and Edenbreck herds. Rushmere Mimi included a line from the well known Theydon herd. The Theydon herd was established in England, by a Miss Pelly. Her goats were bred to be high yielding and have good butterfats too and are credited with being highly important to the establishment of the Anglo-Nubian. There is no doubt that without the Burnaby herd and Mowat's obvious admiration of the breed; Nubians would have had much smaller beginnings.

The first ever Nubian female to be recorded in Canada as a result of having both parents entered into CGS records is Clara. Clara was born on March 19<sup>th</sup> 1918, in Kingsville, Ontario and was owned by Reginald B. Samuel. Her sire was Kitchener and dam Jersey. Once again the Burnaby herd takes another honour of having the first male recorded: Burnaby Venicio was born on April 23<sup>th</sup> 1918, sired by Harborough Volunteer and born to Sadberge Plover.

Nubians were a favourite in British Columbia and Ontario, with breeders throughout each province. However; there were also herds in Winnipeg, Manitoba, North Battleford, Saskatchewan and Strathmore, Alberta. A steady number of registrations meant that by 1923, 195 grade and purebred Nubians had been entered into CGS records.

In 2009, Nubians as they have been for many years were once again placed on Rare Breeds Canada's conservation list and are designated as "At Risk".

With thanks to Sharon Hunt, General Manager of the Canadian Goat Society for the use of the original CGS Herd Record Book, which was invaluable in writing these accounts.