

"painter, mezzotint engraver and china manufacturer." (Right) 4.—PORTRAIT IN OILS OF CHARLES TOWNLEY, OF CLAPHAM, SIGNED AND DATED 1743. As he filled all these rôles with distinction, it is very surprising that so little of the history of the man has been recorded. His mezzotints are equal to those of any other engraver of his time, his portraits bear comparison with those of many of his contemporaries and, above all, his name will continue to go down in history as

that of the "father" of modern porcelain manufacture. For it was with the widespread introduction of bone-ash into the composition that the standard high-quality English porcelain came about and gained a world-wide fame that has not been eclipsed. This alone, without his

artistic work and in spite of our ignorance of his circumstances, will keep alive the name of Thomas Frye.

Illustrations: 1, Victoria and Albert Museum; 2, British Museum; 3, Mr. C. A. Rosedale; 4, National Portrait Gallery.

ANGELICA By BARONESS ELIZABETH BECK

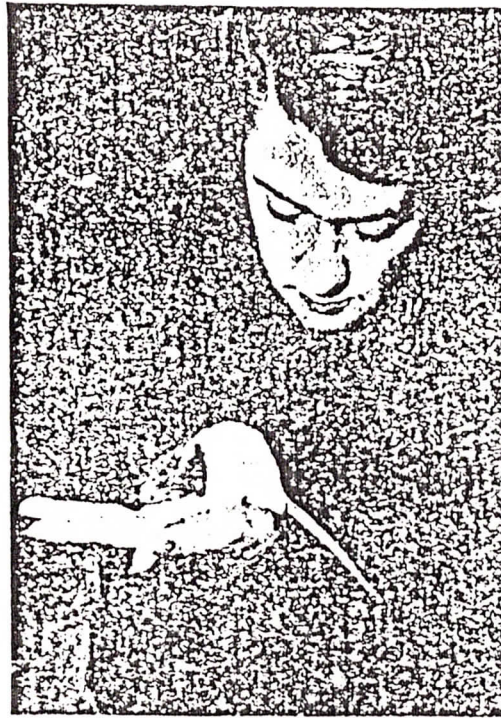
NO doubt it is the snake-like tail of the white rat that offends the sensibilities of grown-up people; it certainly has no such effect on children. How sad it seems that for so poor a reason the kindest of children's small pets have, of late years, been completely banished!

When we were children we all had them, but more recently, losing our beloved dogs from hard-pad, I went, to comfort my small son, and indeed myself, in search of a white rat. No pet store, East-end or West-end, had a white rat. Hamsters and smelly little mice in quantity, but no white rats. Finally, rather wearily, we paid a guinea for a cream hamster, an attractive little fellow, who bit us all, and finally disappeared down a mouse-hole.

Then, by chance, we found a store with four white rats. The manager confessed he had no idea where they came from, and that the only customer to date had been a snake-charmer, with whom he, the manager, had kindly declined to co-operate.

She cost the pathetic sum of two-and-threepence. She was weak and bewildered when we brought her home, through lack of handling and exercise. She wobbled doubtfully about the room, having taken a dislike to the stupid mouse cage which was all we were able to buy. Next day we found her a palatial hamster cage, with a tin lining (against savage little teeth) and a wide glass front. The glass front was immediately removed, as white rats do not need to be enclosed, and the tin lining she philosophically ignored. We called her Angelica, after an old favourite, a name which was unromantically reduced to Jellybags by our small son. We began feeding her, each time a little farther from the cage. In three weeks' time she would gallop out, with a swish of that unfortunate tail, sit up and beg for her food, or follow us round like a tiny inquisitive dog, continually getting stepped on.

Then came the moment when we had to travel. To my husband's concern, she was popped into a tennis-ball box and stowed away in our car. After a time, however, she found



THE AUTHOR WITH ANGELICA II,
A PET WHITE RAT

that when we cornered fast she was thrown about, so, slightly incensed, she left the box, found one of my husband's old sheepskin gloves, and in this travelled for the rest of our thousand-mile drive round Scandinavia and Germany. Sometimes a little pink nose would show, sometimes the tip of that despised tail, but these were hastily thrust back when we passed through Customs. She entered and left hotels in my pocket. When we were long in reaching our room she registered indignation by refusing to go back to her box, and by long and violent washing.

White rats play and wash like kittens,

and this washing is one of the most amusing things to watch.

They are really more like squirrels than brown wild rats, and their diet is almost that of the rabbit, mainly lettuce, brown bread, milk and carrots. They will play with a piece of meat or fish, sometimes hide it, but seldom eat it. They dislike cheese. No doubt people in restaurants thought me curiously eccentric as I popped little pieces of lettuce and carrot into my bag, and the odd fried potato—the mad English, indeed—but any such worry was forgotten when we went back to our room and a tiny figure hurtled towards us to find out what we had brought her. One thing was remarkable, considering the short while we had had her, and this was the distinction she could make between our footsteps and those of a chambermaid or valet, at whose approach she hid quickly under the bed.

When we left the room for any length of time we put her, with her box half open, in a drawer or cupboard, where she would sleep peacefully until we returned. If she were discovered, we always knew it from her agitated behaviour, or by meeting the manager, or his assistant, guiltily leaving our room. In no hotel was there any complaint. Indeed, in Hamburg she made great friends with the chambermaid, who had once had a hamster (until it chewed up her clothes); she was taken on show all round the hotel, ate far too much, and thoroughly enjoyed it.

Back in London, she returned happily to her tin-lined cage on the landing, where she would pop out to keep an eye on anyone coming or going.

We now have, since Angelica's death, Angelica II, the hooded white rat of the photograph, which, having been taken very young is, if anything, even tamer and more absurdly playful.

The great charm of these gentle little creatures for children lies in their complete lack of smell, that they refuse under any circumstances to bite, that they do not chew furniture or carpets and that they have no desire at all to run away.