

2-54P 851

CENSUS OF THE CYGNETS - Rounding up and marking the young swans of the Thames to decide ownership. Henley-on-Thames.

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Picture.:- Nearly all sorts of birds may be bought with money - - but swans can't ! Correctly speaking,--

--swans have only three masters. There are the King's swans, the Vintners' swans, and--

--the Dyers' swans. When cygnets are--

--born, they have got to belong to someone, so the Dyers,--

--or the Vintners come along and capture them. If the parents have--

--a nick in their bills, the--

--youngsters are nicked, too ! But if they are unmarked, then the--

--King's Swan Master takes charge of them - - they belong to His Majesty.

I don't think the birds appreciate all this fuss. When--

--they are released after examination the--

--impertinent flap of their wings is almost equal to a rude remark.

Anyway, if you want a swan, you must--

--find somebody to give you one ! They're not for sale !