

THE ORIGIN OF THE CANADIAN "CHANTECLER" FOWL

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I WILL deal with my subject by briefly answering the following questions:

1. *Why did I originate a new breed?*
2. *How did I succeed in forming it?*

FIRSTLY: WHY DID I ORIGINATE A NEW BREED

My answer is very simple: I had both a patriotic and an avian reason.

Ever since I have been a poultry worker, and until the last few years, I regretted that my country, while having its Canadian breeds of horses and cows, did not possess its own breed of poultry. It seemed to me that a poultry breed, not of foreign origin and hardened to our winters, but really our own, having on one hand all the qualities of the best breeds already existing in Canada and other countries, and which, on the other hand, should be hardier in order to resist our severe winters, would be appreciated by all Canadian poultrymen. My ideal, therefore, was to originate a bird really Canadian and eminently practical, having its individual characteristics and particular qualities, without any fantastic or whimsical features.

Knowing by experience how roosters' combs are damaged by our heavy frosts, I wished to obtain a new type with comb and wattles reduced to the minimum.

It seemed to me that white plumage was the best to adopt.

Lastly, preferring utility birds, I wanted my new breed to have an abundance of succulent flesh, and to be, at the same time, a good layer, especially a good winter layer.

Having thus fixed my ideals, I had only to discover the means to realize them. The best way seemed to be a judicious crossing of existing breeds, chosen in accordance with the particular qualities which I had in mind.

Owing to Canadian climatic conditions, the Canadian fowl must first of all be strong and hardy. The Cornish seemed to me the ideal breed to give both vigour and hardiness, assuring also an abundance of delicate flesh, and above all, the minimum of comb and wattles. I wanted my bird to be one of the best egg producers and so had recourse to the White Leghorn. Lastly the Rhode Island, the Wyandotte and the Plymouth Rock, while giving additional body weight, should, in my opinion, contribute largely in transmitting the quality which I wanted above all, namely heavy winter egg production.

You have seen my objective in originating the Chantecler; I have now only to state how I arrived at the realisation of my ideals. To do this, I will explain more fully than ever before my work year by year, and the results, not always happy, which I obtained after 1908 when I began the task to which I consecrated ten years of experimental effort.

SECONDLY: HOW DID I SUCCEED IN FORMING IT?

In 1908, I made two crosses. On one hand a dark Cornish male was mated with a White Leghorn female, and on the other, a Rhode Island Red male with a White Wyandotte female. The results were interesting.

In the first place (and it is worthy of notice, being contrary to the statements of some writers on genetics), in both of my first crosses the white easily dominated over the red. The writers in question maintain that the white has so little influence, that at the end of the generations necessary for black to disappear completely

through crossing with a white bird, the red would hardly be modified. By a remarkable and exceptional chance, the white dominated so much over the red that it took seventeen years for the red to reappear in some of the descendants of my two original male breeds. Even here it was not a pure red but somewhat a buff colour, and, additional peculiarity, the buff appeared on the breast of these descendants, while according to these authors, it should have shown on the upper parts of the body.

As I expected, the birds from my Cornish male and Leghorn female mating were exceptionally vigorous, long bodied, without comb and wattles. The colour was generally a dirty white, with short, tight feathering.

The crossing of the Rhode Island rooster and White Wyandotte pullet gave white birds, speckled with black and grey spots here and there, and among them a beautiful Columbia Wyandotte cockerel. I kept only the males of this second cross.

The pullets of the first cross gave no eggs in the winter, but laid well in the spring, though not for long.

In the spring of 1909 I mated my fine Columbia Wyandotte with the whitest pullets of the first cross. Some of the birds from this mating were a greyish colour, and others speckled, but the dominant characters were Cornish; long massive body, and practically no comb or wattles. The laying was again negative in winter.

In the spring of 1910 I made a new mating. After making a selection of the pullets obtained so far that came nearest to my ideals in colour, shape and comb, I mated them with a very fine White Plymouth Rock cock weighing $9\frac{3}{4}$ pounds. This cross made a very decided improvement in the plumage, it being whiter and more abundant, but little or none as regards shape, weight and egg laying qualities. For the first time single and pea-combs appeared.

In the spring of 1911, I made a choice of the 1910 pullets and mated them with a rooster hatched in 1909 from my Columbian Wyandotte. A new surprise was in store; the resulting birds were lighter in weight, with Leghorn characteristics and pea-combs predominating. On the other hand, the year's egg production was heavier, but not the winter production in which I was particularly interested. The plumage was white enough and uniform.

In 1912, for the first time, I could mate pullets having laid in winter with a cock hatched in 1910. Results: weight of birds still lower; Leghorn still dominant; more eggs; nearly white uniform plumage; many single and pea-combs.

The next year, 1913, in order to form two strains I divided my pullets into two flocks. In one, by out-crossing, I introduced a White Wyandotte cock, so as to give my birds a more graceful, more compact, and less elongated shape. The influence of this cock was nearly nil as regards body shape and it gave too many rose-combs. The feathers were longer and more compact and the winter laying better.

In the second flock I continued to practise in-breeding, and I was pleased to note the birds from these matings were remarkably hardy and vigorous, the egg production being abundant and prolonged until the autumn.

Before speaking of the use made of the birds coming from these two flocks of pullets, I must call your attention to an out-cross I made in 1914, and which, in my opinion, played a very important part in the making of the **Chantecler**. In 1914, I mated some White Wyandotte pullets with a cock out of the 1912 mating; this cross was destined to form a reserve strain, in case I needed to refreshen the blood in my other strains. That is what I did in 1919, as I will explain later.

Thus having provided against all surprises of the future, I made the matings of 1914, 1915 and 1916, by taking roosters from one or the other of the two flocks formed in 1913, to mate with pullets of the other flock and vice versa. The influence of the White Wyandotte rooster introduced in 1913 then showed itself in the shape of the birds, which became more graceful. The plumage was absolutely white; three-fourths of the birds had cushion combs and the others rose and pea-combs. Egg production was abundant and vigour remarkable. There was only one fault: the birds were far from having the desired weight.

There was, happily, one exception: a beautiful pullet which I obtained in the spring of 1916 and which at the age of 7 months, and at her first egg, weighed seven pounds and three-quarters. Luckily, this same pullet showed herself to be an excellent winter layer, for in the four months' winter period from November 4, 1916 to the end of February, 1917, she laid 91 eggs, and by May 15th, 1917, she had laid 141 eggs. The arrival of this exceptional bird opened new horizons for the young breed. Then and there I conceived the plan—rather bold and rash in the eyes of some—of mating this remarkable pullet with a superb White Wyandotte cock weighing 10 lbs. As a result, I could not but get heavier birds, without adversely affecting egg production. My previsions were correct: I obtained cockerels which in the autumn weighed 9 to 10 pounds; 75 per cent of the combs were cushion; 20 per cent rose and only 5 per cent single combs. The plumage was as white as snow.

The best cockerels from this new cross were then chosen, and mated in the spring of 1918 with the best pullets of my two strains. I had no doubts as to the results. Doubtless there would be a few single combs among their descendants, but this defect would be largely offset by the increase in body weight. I considered that the new breed was sufficiently fixed in its principal characteristics to be presented to the poultry world. The reception which the public gave it is known to all.

In the reserve strain I made in 1914 I found cockerels of exceptional vigour. I had recourse to them in 1919 and mated them with pullets hatched in 1918. This infused new vigour into the breed, a vigour which has maintained itself even since, and which permitted the **Chantecler** to have the honour of being accepted by the American Poultry Association and to take its place as a breed in the Standard of Perfection.

A NEW SPANISH BREED OF GENERAL PURPOSE POULTRY "PARADIS."

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UNTIL the present time, Spain has possessed only those breeds of poultry which might be placed among the egg producing classes, such as the "Castillanne", the Black "Balear" (the real foundation stock of the Minorcas), the Black Andalusians, the Slate or Blue Andalusians (probable source of the Blue Andalusians), the Peninsular Mediterranean or common fowl of the country and the "Catalanne du Prat".

The "Castillannes" and Andalusians, which lay a large number of very large white eggs weighing rarely less than 65 or 70 grams, have rightly been classed among the best laying breeds, but they are not breeds which give good table poultry. The "Catalanne du Prat" (and especially the buff and white varieties) is the only breed which produces good table poultry. The birds of this breed, however, are always inferior from this standpoint to those of certain foreign breeds which fatten more readily, such as the "Mans" and "Bresse" of France, the "Malines" of Belgium, the "Sussex" and "Surrey" of England and many others.

In order to remedy this deficiency to endow Spain with a good table fowl, and at the same time to originate a Spanish double purpose breed, the Royal Official Spanish Poultry School conceived the idea of producing a new type by means of existing breeds, and undertook the task under the direction of Professor Salvador Castello.

After ten years of uninterrupted work, the new breed has just been offered to the public with great success.