

# LINE BREEDING

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FOR THE

## Pigeon Fancier



ILLUSTRATED

By E. R. B. CHAPMAN

Author of the

**"Practical Hint Series"**

**"Fancy Pigeon Series"**

**"Color Breeding for the Pigeon Fancier"**

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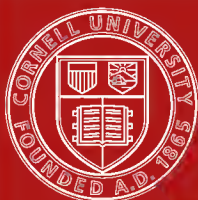
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**ILLUSTRATED**



By **E. R. B. CHAPMAN**

Author of the

“**Practical Hint Series**”

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## DEDICATION.



This little Brochure is dedicated to my son, Allen E. Chapman.

Every father should encourage the love for birds and animals in their children.

The breeding of Fancy Stock in the right way develops the mind of any boy or man who tries it.



**Mr. E. Percy Olive**

**"In Ye Olden Time"**

## CRITICISMS.

But one criticism has been made as yet through the Pigeon Press. One of the Nestors or the Nestor of the Pigeon Fancy thinks that my article teaches the young fancier that with poor birds he can start a strain. He can, and in time breed good birds and prize winners. Yet is any fancier so foolish as to start with poor birds when with an extra outlay of money he can get the best and advance much farther in the value of the birds which he himself breeds in the same time in which he is breeding up his poor birds, advancing the quality of those already bred? Many a fancier visiting our large shows thinking as he came in the door that he has the best ever, goes away with the resolve that his birds get the axe when he gets home and that he immediately acquire birds of this or that strain.

Use the best that you can get, but do not be discouraged if you cannot own the best that there are.

Skill and line breeding will inevitably put you on top, if you breed according to the standard and not to your own ideas.

### What the Press Says.

This month we are offering our readers the first installment of Mr. E. R. B. Chapman's great article on "Line Breeding." This will appear in two installments and the breeder who does not read it will miss one of the greatest articles that ever appeared in the Pigeon Press. Mr. Chapman is an old breeder and has bred birds along the lines laid down in his article for many years with success. In offering this to our readers we feel confident that we will be doing the fancy of this country more real good than has any one thing which has appeared in recent years. The article alone is worth, to the beginner or veteran fancier, many times the price of a year's subscription. Pigeons feels that it has been very fortunate in securing it for its readers.

The charts which accompany the final installment of Mr. Chapman's great article on Pedigree Breeding represent months of hard study and should not be put aside until thoroughly studied and the meaning of every mating understood. This is the first article of this kind that has ever been given to the pigeon breeder through the pigeon press and if it is carefully studied and carried out it will make a wonderful difference in the quality of birds turned out by fanciers in this country.



## PREFACE.

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This is the second of my serial articles to be published in Brochure form and is published at the request of many of those who have the No. 1. of my Practical Hint Series. While following the main lines of the article published in "Pigeons" it has been revised and re-written very carefully, as it is intended not only for the boy fancier, the beginner, but also for the older ones as well.

The Fancier from whose strain this scheme was drawn vouches for every word as being the truth. Not being a wealthy man, he was obliged to begin at the bottom, but he reached the top.

Several of his wins were made in classes of 21 and 25 birds respectively.

This little work has seen much tribulation before being finally printed as upon Nov. 30, my Boston office was entered and all my manuscript and notes taken by some party or parties unknown. It was with great difficulty that some of them were duplicated.

The photographs are all of the "Olive Branch" strain of birds taken by himself.

The especial thing claimed about the charts is the original way of showing the blood lines by black and white.



A Pair of Blue Prize Winners.

# Line Breeding.

## Foreword.

Line Breeding is not an experiment. The time has gone by when a fancier can mate a pair of birds together and just because they look well trust to luck for results.

In these days when line breeding is followed by our best fanciers and those across the big pond exclusively, he would find himself soon away at the tail end of the procession.

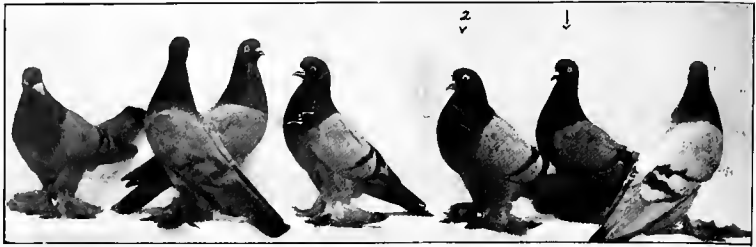
Being a firm believer in it myself and having won time and time again with birds that were line bred and the pedigree kept for ten and even twenty years, I do not hesitate to say that I believe that that is the only way to properly breed and improve Fancy Pigeons.

Many fanciers, old as well as young begin their career with the erroneous idea that to succeed, they must at every mating have birds of entirely different families. Different bloods as it were continually fighting amongst themselves, sometimes one and sometimes the other having the ascendancy. Not so the true breeder, for he knows which blood point, etc., is the most prominent in his loft and breeds accordingly.

Pedigree stock, or line bred stock, is now so abundant that anyone entering the fancy has his corner stones all laid to build upon as he will.

My article to beginners, I think, accomplished the objects for which it was written, namely: Awakening the interest of some of the older fanciers who have retired for a season, and also has started quite a few younger ones. A great many have written me letters containing all manners of queries.

The many enquiries have suggested this article. The preponderance of queries have been as follows:



Some of the Original Breeding Stock.

“How can I breed a prize winner?”

“What is a strain?”

“What is pedigree breeding?”

“What is line breeding?”

“Can any one start a strain?”

“I am a poor boy earning \$— per week. Can I compete with the wealthier fanciers in the show room?”

I will try to answer the letters through this magazine so that all can easily understand, using as my illustration a strain of Blue Barred Muff Tumblers which is well known. I am using this strain because its founder, E. Percy Olive, a Boston photographer, owing to the death of his only son four years ago, has retired and I cannot be accused of advertising through the article.

In 1897, E. Percy Olive, while visiting the Boston show, seeing the Clayton Cup, a beautiful affair, which was awarded the best young Blue Barred Muff Tumbler, made this remark: “By George, I would like to win that.” Previous to this he had kept Fantails and other pigeons, but had never owned a prize winner or a Muff of any kind. He went home thinking seriously. “How?”

A week or so later he was called to the door one evening by a couple of boys who wished to trade a pigeon which they carried in a bag. When they showed it he found that they had a Blue Barred Muff Tumbler. He traded a pair of Homers for this hen Tumbler, as he supposed, and tossed it into his loft. The next morning he found that he had a merry cock bird, splendid in

color, fine in muffs, dark rump, but with such a head. "A regular dishpan, looks as if it had been carved off with a cheese knife," as he expressed it, and such a down face.

Having occasion to visit the loft of F. L. Weston, of Medford, Massachusetts, a noted Muff judge of that time, now in California, he told him of the pot pie he was going to have. Mr. Weston persuaded him to keep the bird and gave him a young hen with which to try him out.

The first season he raised a dark hen and obtained a cock from Mr. Weston. This was an imported bird with a head like a billiard ball but light in color. He then joined the American Tumbler Club and came in third for the cup. This cup was to be won three successive times by one fancier and was the bone of contention for many. It had already been won once by the donor, Clayton, and twice by Eastis, a Tumbler breeder hard to beat.

By line breeding Mr. Olive secured the cup three successive years, 1900, 1901 and 1902, also the Pan-American Cup at Buffalo, the last year with a beautiful bird five months old.

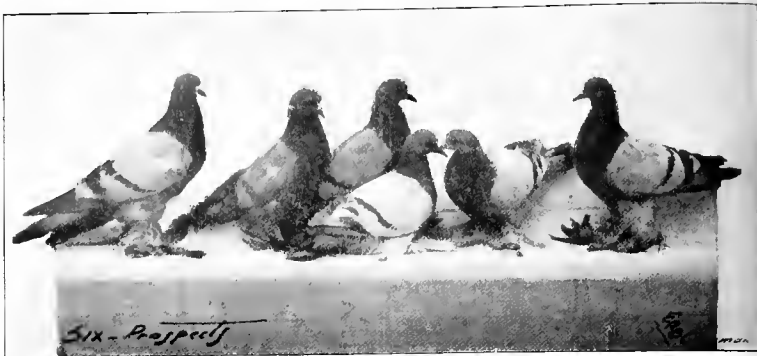
During these years Mr. Olive made but one out-cross. Of course in breeding Blues, Silvers will crop out and when they do they are never as good in head properties as the Blues. Every Silver was disposed of or eaten.

In looking over the advertisements in a journal he found one offered two Barred Tumbler hens for two dollars. He sent for them and received two Silvers. One was much worse than those he had eaten, but the other had a wonderful head. Even Gorse, the Tumbler judge, said he had seen few its equal. By judicious crossing, this bird founded the head qualities of this strain.

Since Mr. Olive's retirement his birds have been scattered both east and west. His own words, "I bred to win, of course I won, but never paid more than \$2.00 for a bird," go to show that anyone with patience can go in the show room and compete with the wealthiest.

The following, if carefully read and studied, will show how a majority of strains are founded.

If you care to go to work, have the patience, and cull your youngsters, you can breed prize winners. Every one cannot start a strain because they have not the staying qualities. They



A Group of Prospective Prize Winners.

do not win the first year or the second and the third year perhaps they just reach the ribbons. Not content to live and learn for the "know how" comes to a man only through actual experience, they buy their prize winners or quit the job as too slow for them.

Now what is pedigree breeding? There is a law of nature, or rather two laws, which are as follows: "Like produces like," and the "Survival of the fittest." Upon these fundamental principles all breeding must be done.

To start a strain, select your breed. If you start with one pair, see that the hen is as near the desired shape or type as it is possible to get. Rely upon your cocks for color and feather, of course the nearer to perfection in type he can be got the better. The birds should not be related, and if you have room for two or three pairs of birds to start so much the better.

Breed your first years youngsters. Kill every undesirable bird, don't spare one, then select the young hen nearest your ideal and mate her back to the old cock. Do the same with the best young cock and the old hen. This is line breeding.

Do not mate inter se, nest mates, unless absolutely forced to do so. Your youngsters will die in the shell, at least a large proportion will, and almost every point that you are striving to get rid of will crop out, and if your older birds have anywhere

in their ancestry, had tuberculosis, canker, or any constitutional weakness, it will invariably crop out, or come to the surface with this mating. For this is inbreeding.

“Ah!” you say, “I have done this and now I’m stuck. Now what shall I do?” You have bred two years and must have some youngsters very near approaching your ideal. If you have started with three or four pairs you have we will say eight units on which to start or eight entirely different bloods. You now have four pens of youngsters. Two pens having 3-4 and 1-4 respectively the blood of the cock, and two pens having the blood of the hen in the same proportion.

I will now try to tell you what not to do and a little later what to do.

Don’t out-cross—that is, buy a bird simply because he won some coveted ribbon and is a typical specimen, because by so doing you may introduce blood into your strain which will force you to begin all over again.

No matter how poor your birds were at the start, if you had some special object in view you must have made some headway. Of course, the better your birds were at the start the sooner you will show birds. The fancier who constantly buys birds for crossing, unless he knows the blood, rarely succeeds.

Every variety has various points to consider, some being harder to attain than others, consequently of more value. Fix your eye on the hardest and keep it there, continually working for it. You can catch the others as you go along. Should luck throw in your pathway a particularly desirable specimen from one of your matings, don’t sell it. It may do your strain irreparable injury to do so. In fact that bird will probably be the corner stone of your success. Again if a pair of your birds produce uniformly good specimens do not break them up, but breed them as long as they will breed.

Don’t get impatient, you must work and wait if you want to learn what scientific breeding means. By this time you will be able to understand why so few make a success of more than one strain.

Don’t go for every point at once, your strain will be a failure if you do.



A Pair of Blue Cup Winners.



Of course, when your strain is practically perfected, experiments on the side may be made, but keep the result of these crosses out of your strain. These experiments have for ages been the chief fascination of pigeon breeding. You enjoy having pigeons around. Their care is no bother and you steal a little time from your business and even lay awake nights to plan their matings.

Now what are we going to do with our strain the third year and so indefinitely. I will illustrate this by a chart showing what I did and am doing. See chart No. 1. In reading this chart don't give it a casual glance and then lay it to one side, but study it until you understand exactly what every mating means. I have seen family trees, of which this is only one form, tacked all over the interior of the largest lofts in the far east, especially in Asia Minor, the home of the Satinette, and have seen the blood of one bird traced for twenty generations.

In this chart we start with two birds, a cock and a hen, and shall, by selection, endeavor to breed our ideal. A hen (A) is mated to (B) a cock, having the combinations of blood, 1 and 2 unknown. Their progeny the first year is 3. Selecting the best young hen we mate her back to (B) and produce 5, mating the best young cock to (A) gives us 4. Again selecting and breeding back gives us 6 and 8, which, mated together produce 9. We also mate a cock from 4 with a hen from 5 or vice versa and produce 7. 3, 7 9, 14, 15 being the strain we own, and obtaining by selection the required results.

As long as you can mate to produce these (one half breeds) your strain will thrive and be strong and healthy, provided you throw out all undesirable, unfit specimens, made so by a tendency to disease, or otherwise.

If you want to keep the blood lines of the cock and hen unbroken, follow systematically the first nine figures, repeating with hen from 6 and cock from 8 taking the place of (A) and (B), or if (A) and (B) are alive and in good shape, you can duplicate the matings 3 and (B) and 3 and (A), or if (A) departed this life a hen from 6 would represent her blood. If all your matings of any one years, after your strain is started, produce 3, 7 and 9, and 4 and 5, 6 and 8 are set aside or sold, you will ruin your strain.

Some fanciers set aside 7 and breed 9 back to 6 and 8 as per chart, while others set aside 9, breeding a, "hens from 7" to 8



and 7 to 6. In either case the progeny will resemble 10 and 11. Through all this mating, presuming that the life of a bird is three years, you will notice a marked resemblance between 6 and (A) and 8 and (B).

Use this resemblance: Supposing that when starting your strain the cock was a Blue Barred Muff Tumbler, a dandy, great massive head, large muffs, fine in color, eyes, etc. But your hen was a dirty, insignificant runt, yellow eyed and grouse muffed. It stands to reason that 7 and 9 progeny would be disappointing, but what have we in 8, a lot of medium birds, cocks and hens, but one hen a clear cut diamond among the others. Ah! This is the bird on which your whole strain hinges. See chart No. 2. Mate her to a cock and produce 19. Hens having a preponderance of blood of (B) should be, and probably are, prize winners. Using a hen from 19 and keeping your line of succession unbroken, also doing the same with cocks as per chart No. 1, and you will have a line of cocks and hens that is born to the blue.

Of course the line of cocks and hens may be reversed. The original hen may be the bird whose blood you wish to perpetuate in cocks and hens. This can be done as shown at 20.

Chart No. 2 is the way new varieties are formed. Selection of the fittest or of a bird in this or that strain, and forming a strain upon that bird forms the variety.

We all know that birds left to themselves in fifteen or sixteen years return to the color and shape of their ancestors, the old Blue Rock doves.

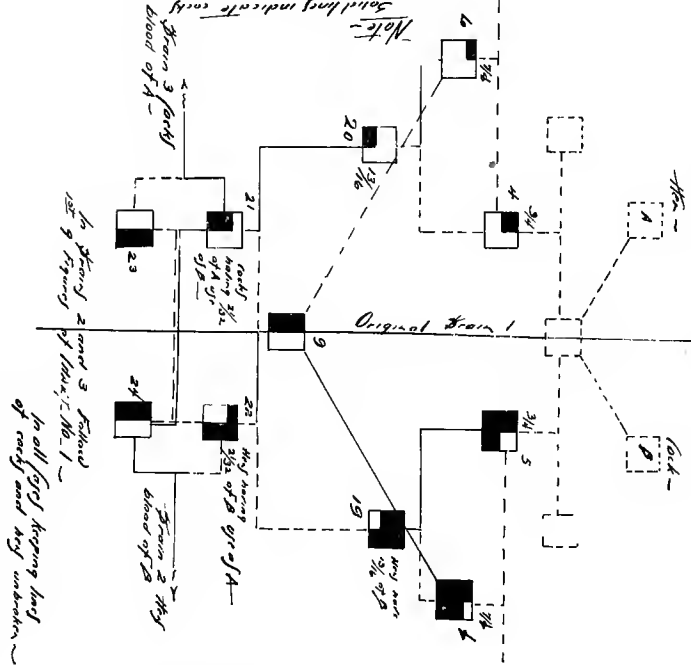
Start with strong vigorous, typical birds. Remember that the cock will invariably throw color and feather, and the hen type.

In the selection of breeders strong vitality is the keynote of success. Choose only perfectly developed, bright, healthy hens, and vigorous active cocks.

Given a good inherited constitution, an abundance of fresh air, the right kind of food, a bath every other day, under a fountain if possible, and plenty of fresh drinking water, your birds should not need doses of tonic. Nature's tonics are the best.

If you follow faithfully the lines laid down here, or any other lines that tend to throw the blood inter se, (brothers and sisters), you will have a uniform lot of youngsters and success from the start.

Note -  
 Solid lines indicate early  
 of back from 6 -  
 of back from 4 -  
 of back from 2 - Same to hand 5-6-8-9



In all cases keeping back  
 of early and they unbroken

CHART No. 2  
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 E. Chapman

# The Frillback Pigeon.

By Elmer R. B. Chapman.

## The Present Day Frillback Standardized.

The Frillback, as we in America know it, is a large dove-house sort of a pigeon, very awkward in shape, having a long spindly, downward curved beak.

There are three or really two distinct varieties, as the Clean Legged are similar to the other two with the exception of having no feathers on their shanks and feet.

The white or variety said to have originated in Holland which we call the Dutch is a very beautiful bird. It should be as near the engraving shown herewith as possible.

Having a plump massive shape, shell crest, long frilled muffs, also frills as near covering the birds as possible. In the frilling is their beauty, a good specimen looking almost as if they had been curled with a curling iron. The author has never seen a Dutch Frill in any other color other than white that had this point to perfection.

For this very reason a very white nicely frilled specimen of this variety can stand no comparison with the Austrian or German variety. These we find in all colors, including Bell-necks and Grizzles.

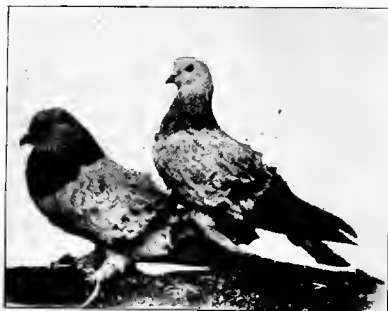
A well frilled, grizzled Frillback is a very beautiful bird. A Bellneck Austrian should be a medium sized bird with grouse muffs, all white, excepting a colored bib, narrow across the neck, with crescent over the crop. The frilling should extend well over the sides and up the back.

A grizzle should be well mixed all over, being black, blue, red or yellow combined with pure white.

A solid color should be solid, of uniform color, very bright, with a brilliant sheen.

Frillbacks are very hardy and good feeders, but for results, they should always be kept in a separate loft. They also have another property which recommends them very highly to any fancier who keeps his birds without an aviary. That is, they entirely lack the homing instinct. The author has imported birds and allowed them to fly at large within 48 hours after receiving them and never lost a bird.

So much for a general description. Now what is the standard requirement for which we must breed to win in the show room? Unfortunately this variety has not as yet been taken up by any club, nor any fixed standard been formulated.



A Pair of Blue Grizzle Austrians

The idea has always been and really how could it be otherwise at present. The best frilled specimen to win, irrespective of type or color. Most judges under which my birds have been shown have never before even seen a modern Frillback.

The standard which I believe should be used is as follows, and as some of the Frillback breeders may differ from me in their views, if they will differ aloud, the breed will surely make progress.

Breast—rounded and projecting beyond the wing butts.

Legs—of medium length, birds should not have a crouchy appearance.

#### Varieties.

Dutch. All white with long well developed muffs.

Austrian or German.

All as per above standard with the exception that they should have evenly muffed (grouse) legs.

Clean legged. All as above without any trace of feathers on shanks and feet.

Feather. Abundant but quite closely fitting.

Frilling. The feathers over wing covering, saddle and back as far up the neck as possible should be frilled. The longer the frills the better the bird. These curls or frills to be as symmetrical as possible.

Shape—cobby.

Head—dove headed, rather low with long convex crown.

Beak—slender, rather long and straight, slightly curved downward. Color white in whites, and dark in all other varieties.

Wattle—very small and smooth, with natural whitish bloom.

Eye cere—thin and fine in texture, white in white and dark in all other varieties.

Eyes—bull in whites, orange in all other colors except Bell-necks, which are preferred pearl.

Neck—of medium thickness.

Shoulders—broad and full.

Color.

Selves. All colors.

Bellnecks. All white except the wing bars, and a crescent or band around the neck.

Grizzles. All colors. A good grizzle should be grizzled all over.

Erminettes. White peppered with black. Tails colored in all varieties except the white. Very bright in coloring.

Crest. All Dutch Frills should have a shell crest extending from eye to eye, rising about a 1-4 inch over the cap, showing cup-like cavity but not resting on or touching the head.

This, I believe, should be the standard of the modern Frillback. What we need is a Frillback Club to push this variety, and place it where it belongs as one of the most beautiful of the toy varieties.

Having bred Frillbacks for over 20 years, and being often asked if there are any settled breeding rules, I will give you a few of my own.

1st. Never mate any except a well frilled cock. The cock throws the frilling properties every time.

2nd. Don't cross the Dutch with the Austrian.

3rd. In breeding Bellnecks, breed from those having the darkest wing barring and the lightest shoulders.



A Yellow Grizzle Austrian Hen.

, 4th. Don't cross the colors expecting great results. Bred from ages as this bird has been without regard other than that of frill, colors have got sadly mixed. Almost any color is liable to crop out.

5th. In breeding grizzles, breed the best grizzles together or cross a solid color onto a white, never onto a grizzle.

6th. Don't put a clean leg with a grouse or long muffed bird and expect to get that even beautiful muff.



I am well aware that as there are fanciers that cannot abide the Pouter with its stockings, but who think the Cropper perfection, also others who cannot fancy the Tumbler with wings on its feet, but who dote on its cleaned legged prototype, so there are fanciers who are working on the clean legged Frillback.

It is true there are clean leg Frills. The author owns a few himself. Fine in color without a stub. But way, way back in comparison with the muffed birds. I am also aware that Fulton describes the Frill as a clean leg. I still contend that a frill if obtained anywhere near the cut, cannot be improved.

In showing Frillback I have noticed that gently winding the bird with a damp towel tends to increase the frills, also that birds show to a much better advantage in damp, moist weather, rather than when it is hot and dry.

Let the Frillback fanciers get together, talk and boom the Frillback. It can be easily made one of the most popular of the Fancy Pigeons. Let us hear from you. Don't keep your birds at home. Fill the classes at the different shows chock full with bird to spare. Let's have a Frillback specialty club.

Wake up, fanciers of the Frillback!

What is a Frillback?

Why was it so named?

Of course I believe a Frillback should be a pigeon having an abundance of frill extending as far up the back as possible, being as its name signifies, a Frillback. But is that all? Take for instance the Black Mottle C-Leg Tumbler. Why, the very mention of the word shows us what we should expect,—a black pigeon mottled as per the Standard without a trace of stubs on its shanks or feet and the true tumbler type.

But no, most everyone thinks that a Frillback is any sort of a pigeon having curly feathers or frills.

The one having the most should always win 1st, irrespective of shape or type, feather, eye, etc.

Again I say, get together and compel the judges to judge them properly.

How often are we at the present time put in the left-over class, that is, any judge who may not be otherwise engaged is set to judging our birds?

What does a man who has bred Tumblers all his life, (although he may be, I warrant you, a good Tumbler judge) know concerning our birds?

Has he ever bred or handled any outside of the show room?

At the beginning we should get at the Show Committees, as the classes allowed us are first of all too wrong. They should not be white or any other color, but hatch which is a distinctly crested, long-booted bird, Austrian, which is an entirely different type, with even grouse muffs.

If classes are sub-divided, there should be the Grizzle, the Bell-Neck and Solid.

As to frills—acting as judge over many classes—I say that the best all round bird should win. But supposing that we have only one Frillback class—all colors and kinds competing—why then I say the best frilled specimen ought to win.

Now again what is the best frilled specimen? The frill is in the shape accurately described as similar to a steel shaving thrown from a drill, a good frill having that beautiful spiral and holding it too.

A bird is not a good frilled specimen just because his feathers are rough and do not lay smooth. The frills should be distinct and stand clearly away from the bird and not look like rumpled feathers.

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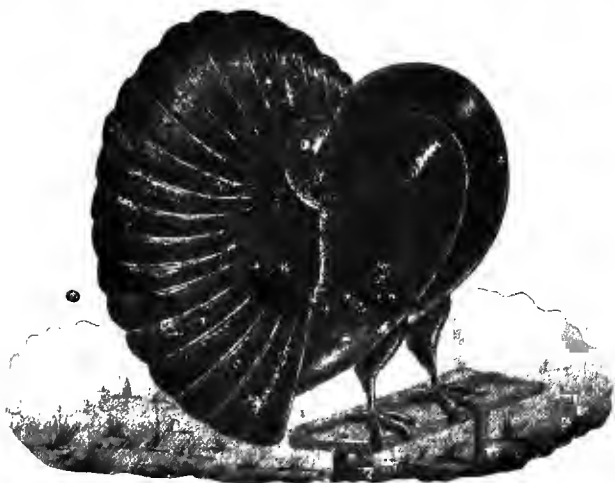
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The National Pigeon Magazine

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