

Flying Tipplers and the Competition Flyer

Adrian A. Jessop – FTA Secretary/Treasurer

- written 1967

When I received the August 1967 issue of the Pigeon World, the cover picture immediately caught my eye. It was a picture of three flying tipplers (?) that had a fine flying record and had done 16 hrs. These were all black and badge marked birds.

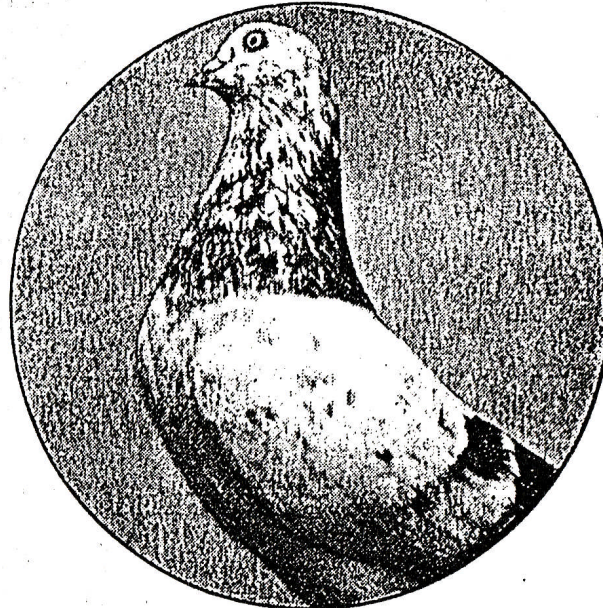
If we look back to any of the earlier writings on tipplers you will find that the original Flying Tipplers had two main attributes. One being their colour and a high pleasurable flying style for long times, but not the long hours of today. Sixteen and eighteen hours not being uncommon. To hear me out on this, I would like to make reference to certain authorities who had this to say:

E.R. Ball, 1960 – The new strain of Tippler I have consists of blues, blacks, black white flights, blue white flights, black badges, in fact I could put in my roller coop and it would be hard to tell them apart. These are the descendants of the last of the West of England Tumblers, and when crossed back to the blues and blacks produce the birds they are flying overseas today. This is a fact saying they are not pure Tipplers.

W. T. Kern, 1962 – The subject of correspondence in the S.U.T.&T.S. of England was classified in two categories. Just plain Tippler and Tumbler. The former comprising of Light and Dun Prints, Red Mottles and Prints, Grays and Bronze, colour rather than shape signifying the difference of the breeds, mindful that all Tipplers more or less derived from Tumblers. The Tumbler as referred to was a non-performing flyer mainly known as Sheffield Crossbreeds. Reds, blacks, blues, badges, oddities, white flights and any odd colour that cropped up.

They eventually proved the hardest flyer, and still top the flying list today.

Wm. Hoffman – “The Flying Tippler, as the name implies, and always has been essentially a flying or working breed. In its early years it was valued chiefly for it’s great elevation of flight and it’s ability to remain longer on the wing than some of the other highflying breeds. As the sport of competition flying gained in popularity the longer flying times were demanded of the birds, many of the old types were found to be unsuitable due to difficulty of control, lightness of the build and the lack of the factor known variously as “heart”, “guts” or the will to fly. In order to overcome such deterrents to longest times, outcrosses into other flying breeds were resorted to, and these crosses frequently



ONE OF THE OLD TYPE OF TIPPLERS. "CLOUDY."
A light grizzle cock, flown by Mr. John Summer, 36, Elswick Street. Darwen.

produced a pigeon that, while capable of flying more hours than it’s ancestors on the Tippler side of the cross were quite dissimilar in appearance and it’s style of flying to the original type. To the competitive flying fancier, such details as colour, markings, length of beak, colour of eye and cere, shape of head etc. are of no importance since they will neither help nor hinder the birds in the execution of its primary function, long flying. Some of the present days flying strains bear little if any resemblance to the old breed of fifty or sixty years ago. But though the newer strains and types are greatly respected for their flying prowess, the old type, or what is left of them, are still cherished by fanciers on both sides of the pond. To some a pretty pigeon that will fly several hours at a great height and in good style of wing action is more desirable than a less attractive bird possessing the capacity for dawn to dusk flying.

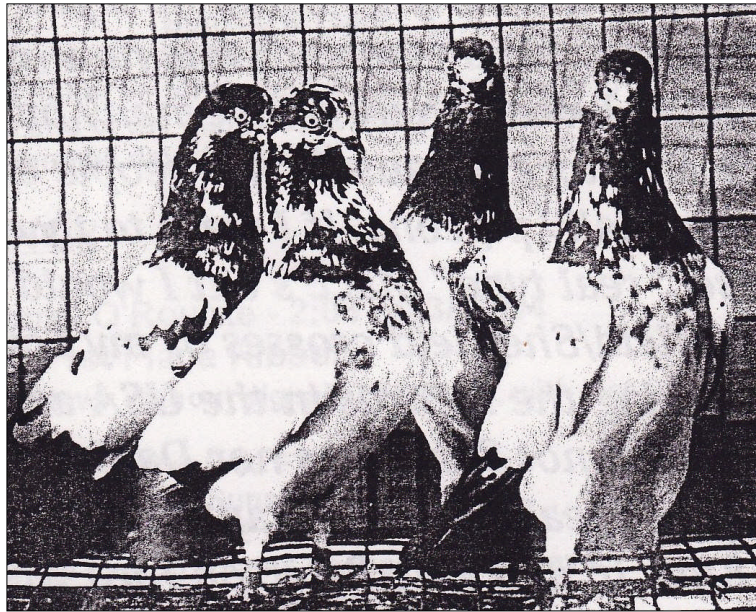
The old Macclesfield type, I believe, comes pretty close to being the epitome of what pigeon fanciers consider true Tippler type. In size, I should think the "Maccs" might better be described as a small bird rather than medium as some writers have depicted it. A small bird then, fairly shallow of keel and cobby type. Broad at the shoulders and tapering back to a fairly narrow rump. Wings carried well up and extending to about approximately three quarters of an inch from the tip of a tightly folded tail. Neck fairly short, broad at the base and tapering toward the throat. No gullet. The head to rise in a gentle radius immediately behind the wattle, with no excess of either top or back skull. The eye is light in colour enriched by a fine dark cere. Beak rather short, probably no more than three eighths of an inch in length.

In colour the old Maccs are known to have occurred in blue bars, grays, or grizzles, bronzes and probably greasies and mottles. But to the average pigeon man, the most typical and certainly most attractive Tippler marking was the very popular light print – an all white body, black tipped flights and tail, a dark patch of colour directly below the chin known as the "chuck", a black or grey ticking in the neck and head. To many old fanciers the old Tippler was all anyone could desire in a pigeon. I wonder why so many of them gave them up in preference of Homers or fancy birds. It was a naturally and beautifully formed birds with a set of distinctive markings which set it apart from other breeds and made it pretty enough to attract attention and admiration in the showroom. But best of all, it was a flying pigeon that possessed a style of flight that was beautiful and thrilling to witness.

B. H. Wedgewood – There are numerous coloured marked birds amongst same being lights, greasies or grizzles, silvers, mottles, prints, selfs and sandies, but this is a detail for flying qualities, although it is advisable to cultivate a showy and attractive bird combined with its high flying propensities, so that eventually you may be induced to enter one or two at some show. For the latter at deep keel, not

crooked breasted, medium size and short in feather, i.e., not too long in tail and body, good strong and broad flights and full fronted and head well thrown back with a good chest. The head should not be too full or too long but medium size. Legs should be fairly short, not what is termed as "leggy" with small feet. A nice pearl eye standing well out and neat cere is a great point with beak of medium length, not like the flying Homer as these qualities make the bird very attractive.

Job Ofield – Although there is nothing on record as to its origination it is generally believed to have had its source at Rainow about two miles from Macclesfield. Mr. Pownall, of that town verifies this in a statement that there is a painting of a Flying



Tippler executed somewhere about 70 years ago and that he personally remembers his father keeping blues, grays, and bronzes nearly black 50 years ago. He does not remember such birds as badges, bald pates, or reds and yellows appearing in the pure Tippler. And when white was present it was generally on the shoulders, the heads and tails remaining colored

the longest, no matter how you bred until they came with mixed tails and flights, ticked heads, with pure white bodies.

Now back to our badge, beard, white flights, oddities etc. The name Sheffield Crossbred or Non Performing Tumblers Mr. Kern calls them, or personally Competition Flyer, not Tippler is the name they should go by.

The standard for the Show Tippler as printed in Wedgewood's book around 1931 still reads the same today. This has preserved a beautiful natural show pigeon that is much closer to the original Flying Tippler than many of today's so called Flying Tipplers. The standard for the Flying Tippler accepted by the NPA and FTA by John Curley will do the same for our Flying Tippler. Many breeders of our sporting breeds condemn standardizing their performers, saying that it is for the showmen.

As it is now, any pigeon that will fly long times is being called a "Tippler".

"FOOTNOTES"

American Pigeon Journal,
August 1958 p. 244

The Tippler for Exhibition
and Flying
B.H. Wedgwood

The Flying Tippler – Job
Ofield 1932

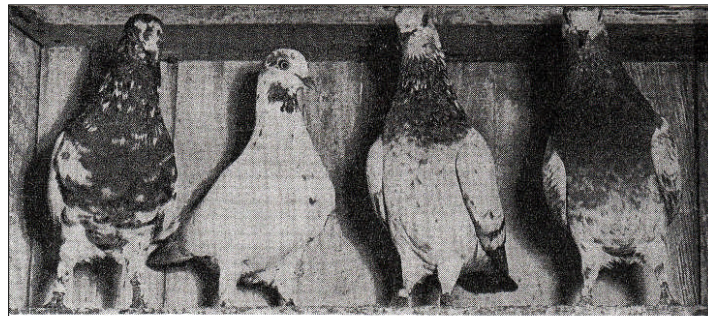
*Here is a letter written on
October 17, 1960 to Mr
Adrian A. Jessop, the FTA
Secretary at the time.
However, I am uncertain
as to the author of this
letter.*

*A question was asked
about the history of strains
in Canada at the time....the answer is below.*

The question is a very involved one, in fact, I am very doubtful whether I can answer to your satisfaction or not, but I will try. We will start with what was known as the Hall birds, and are better known today as the Butterfly strain, owing to the movement of their wings, it being very similar to that of the butterfly in flight. This strain was all of a dun colour, there being dun mottles, dun selfs dun prints etc. These were imported to Canada about 40 years ago by Mr. Doug Prud'homme of Toronto. These birds were a good flying bird, flying higher than the average, but I believe, owing to the fact they were so closely inbred. It was almost impossible to train them to dark, for being very high strung. As soon as dark approached instead of lowering they would rise and you could say good bye to your kit for that day. Again these birds are rather on the small side and are inclined to have a more or less square head. The last few years these birds have

been crossed back to the older strain which not only improved their flying ability but also brought an enroundment to the skull, so that today some of them are nice enough to show. The older strain that I mentioned was imported to Canada over 60 years ago, but just who imported them escapes me at the moment. The strain known as the Pass Waterfowl and Curtis, and later on the they were crosses of Redney PeeWee Pass and Browns introduced so that you had pretty near any and every variety of colour imaginable, except dun. There were blacks, mottles, brown mottles and even the odd red mottle, light prints, Grizzles blues; in fact just about anything you could ask for. Their flying ability never was nor ever will be questioned as they hold the record in Canada and the USA.

If you have any comments on this or any other article we would certainly want to publish in future CNTU newsletters.
Send us some stuff!



Mottle, chuck, gray bar, and grizzle of Logue's family of time-flyers.

