

## **BREEDING WHITE COCHINS BANTAMS**

by Art V. Granger, with commentary by Matt McCammon

*So, I looked back in some old ABA yearbooks and found an interesting article written by Art V. Granger of South Bend, Indiana. He wrote this article in 1934, but I think it pertains to today also as it is timeless in its descriptions and requirements of a first rate Cochins bantam. This article, "Breeding White Cochins Bantams", does not only pertain to whites. So enjoy the article and I hope you agree that the birds of the 21st century should look very much like those described by this well known Cochins legend. - Matt*

The breeding of white Cochins bantams does not differ a great deal from the other varieties as far as type and general confirmation go, but there is a wide variance in methods employed to obtain color. I shall try to outline the methods I follow in breeding my White Cochins bantams.

One mating is all that is necessary to produce both male and females of exhibition quality for the male and female correspond in most respects in a masculine and feminine way. When putting a pen together, I like to select females first, and then pick a male to fit them. Naturally, I pick those for each pen that are similar and uniform in quality and nearest standard requirements. Pick the females that are vigorous, well rounded, and those not possessing straight sides or flat spots, in other words avoid the angular bird, and also those that rear up in front like an Indian Runner Duck. The females should represent a rotund figure, with raised cushion, neatly curved downward main tail feathers having soft quills, and plenty of breast carried well forward. The cushion should be carried as near level with the head as possible and should not make an abrupt break at the base of the hackles, but rather should carry a continuous curve. The females should be broad and carry the same width from front to rear when viewed from the top, without any tapering to a point at the tail. The fluff should be plentiful and soft standing out from the body in globules rather than possessing that pasted pomade hair effect that follows the hock out to a point in the rear. The hock feather should be soft and loose with a tendency to curve slightly in . Stiff hocks are a serious defect. There should be no break where the feathers follow down the leg to the foot, but should be continuous in growth from the body, blending into the leg and foot feathering, so as not to appear as the man in the high water pants. Wings should be short and well tucked up, thus showing off the fluff to greater advantage and creating the impression of even greater massiveness than actually exists. The wings should not project beyond the body in the rear. *(DID YOU READ THAT SENTENCE CAREFULLY??)* While it is desirable to have the wings well tucked up. I dislike those that cling so tightly to the body that when the bird is viewed from the top, the wings appear to notch in. The primary and secondary wing feathers should curve inward slightly to fit the contour of the body. Some breeders go daffy over long foot feathering. While the toes should be profusely feathered to the outer ends, with the exception of the inside toes, I do not like extremely long toe feathering. What I favor can be best illustrated by holding a deck of common playing cards firmly in one hand and spreading them with the other, using one corner as the center of the spread circle. This I think will give about the proper length and spread, and is plenty long. *(TRY IT AND COMPARE TO YOUR*

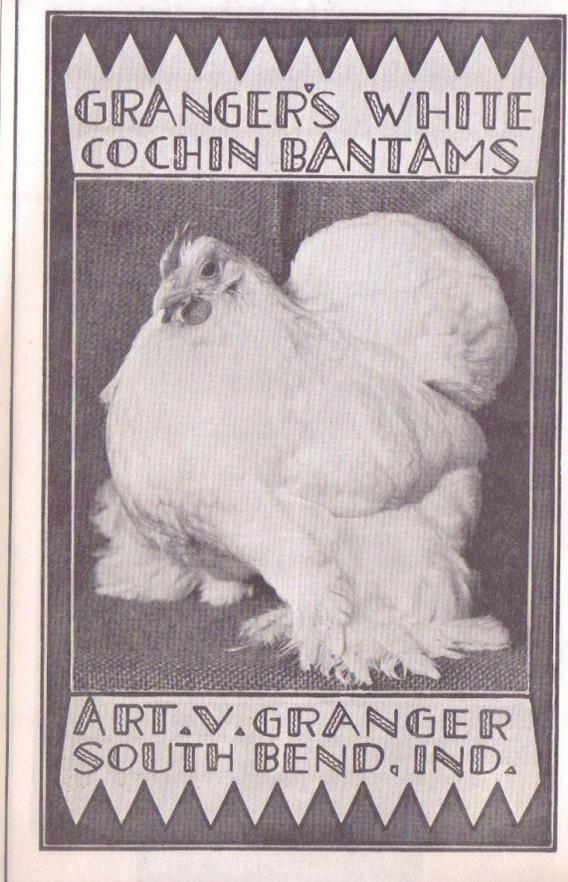
*BIRDS!*) Next comes the head. Pick the birds having strong female heads denoting vigor, with well set five point combs of medium height and fine texture. The eye should be reddish bay, and the ear lobes brilliant red, free from creaminess or white. The eye should be surrounded with fleshy protrusions of rings to set off the head and add to the massiveness desired in Cochins bantams. Avoid the flat sided and flat topped head. (*DID YOU READ THAT SENTENCE??*) It is part of the Cochins makeup to have the protruding eye and thick set beak. The Cochins female should be of medium length in leg, with great depth of body swung down between these legs in balanced proportion to the overall length of the bird from breast to tail. By this I mean she should not be so short on leg that from the profile she will appear longer than she will high, or vice versa. What I strive to attain is a well balanced bird, all sections in relation to each other. From the side I like to have a Cochins appear as though it would fit into a circle and touch all sides. In selecting a bird to fit these qualifications, do not neglect to take into consideration feather texture. They should be soft, well rounded on the ends, and possess body. I do not go a great deal on "thin" feathers. I like them heavy but soft. I try to avoid feathers that are square across the ends, and those that are stringy and pointed. Extremely great length of feather is not necessary if the feathers are broad and have fine texture and rest upon great underfluff.

Now I have described the qualifications for a desirable female, I might add that I have never had one to measure up to these standards I have set up in my mind, and I try to visualize this ideal when I select females, and pick them as close to it as I can. Next comes the selection of a male to mate to such females. After the lengthy discussion of what the female should be, it is not hard to describe the male. I go through all my male birds carefully and try to pick a male bird that is a real guy- a male that is good enough to deserve such a pen physically, and one that possesses as near as possible, in a masculine way, what I have described for the females. I have heard breeders say they wanted to mate up so many pens the coming year, or that they want so many females for this pen or that. I do not do it that way for I go by quality and if there is but one female to my liking she goes into the pen and the others go into the setting hen division. I would rather have two pair matings that were good, than a dozen pens of mediocre or poor birds. (*BREEDERS RULE #1*)

Now, getting back to the subject of the male-try to avoid any defects in the male that the females may have, for to breed two birds together with the same defects, you are only prolonging the life of that defect and establishing it in a more pronounced fashion upon the young stock. The comb on the male should be neat and not beefy or coarse. The blade should follow the head and not point skyward. The legs of both male and female should be yellow. Avoid the willow legged birds and also those possessing creamy white plumage. Due time should be given all molting and young birds to allow the sap in the feathers to dry up before discarding them, for nearly all white feathers appear creamy while growing, and it is wise to allow the feathers to become completely matured before casting out any birds, for they may turn out pure white. The color problem is one that you cannot be too careful with, for a well feathered bird that is just crippled with type is not worth a dime if he is creamy white or lemon on top. I have made quite a few experiments on color and have proven and disproved a

few of the popular theories. I might add that I have never shown a chemically bleached bird at any show.

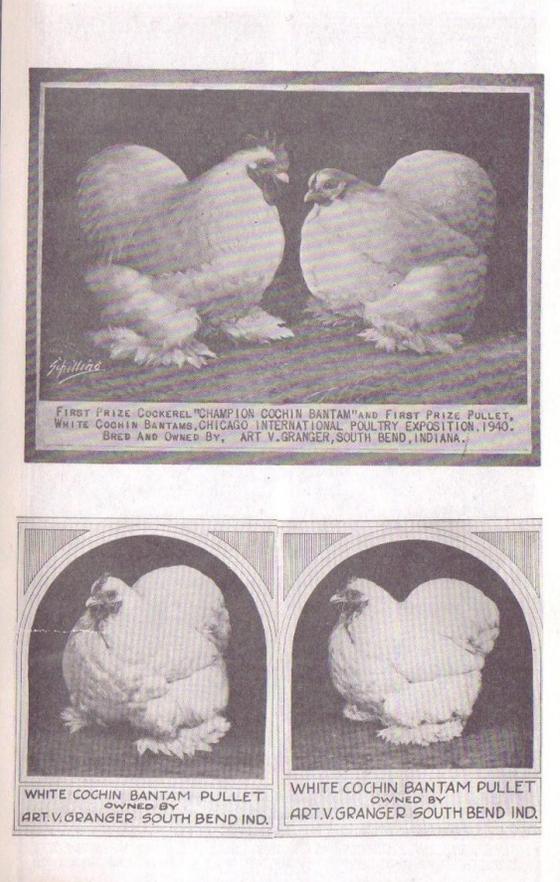
What I have written may not meet with the approval of all the readers of this article, but we all have various points that we ride to death and these happen to be mine. If this article happens to be of any value to other breeders, I shall be glad, and if not, just file it away with the non-usable. -Art V. Granger (COMMENTS BY MATT IN PARENTHESESE)



GRANGER'S WHITE COCHIN BANTAMS

ART. V. GRANGER SOUTH BEND, IND.

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FIRST PRIZE COCKEREL "CHAMPION COCHIN BANTAM" AND FIRST PRIZE PULLET, WHITE COCHIN BANTAMS, CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL POULTRY EXPOSITION, 1940. BRED AND OWNED BY, ART V. GRANGER, SOUTH BEND, INDIANA.

WHITE COCHIN BANTAM PULLET OWNED BY ART. V. GRANGER SOUTH BEND IND.

WHITE COCHIN BANTAM PULLET OWNED BY ART. V. GRANGER SOUTH BEND IND.

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