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POULTRY NOTES.

THE PLYMOUTH ROCK.

The Barred Plymouth Rock is probably the most popular farmer's fowl raised, and is also a great fancier's fowl. While all strains of Barred Plymouth Rock are founded on the Dominique, there were many different matings and combinations of crosses used in the originating of this breed. White Plymouth Rocks are a sprout from the barred variety and compare very favorably in all ways with their parti-colored brothers and sisters. The other varieties of Plymouth, viz., Buff, Patridge, Silver Penciled and Columbian, have really no claim to the name—they are interlopers.

The Barred Rocks were first shown at Worcester, Mass., in 1868-9. Although a bird of this name but with a variegated plumage was shown at Boston in 1848 9. The absolute originator of this fine breed of birds is very much in doubt, as it seems to have been raised in various parts of New England at about the same time. The various claimants using different crosses and then breeding to the Dominique cock, and it is very questionable whether it is really a better utility breed than the old American Dominique.

The Barred Plymouth Rock of the show room is seldom seen on the farm, owing to the fact that is necessary to employ double mating to get males and females of the same color, the females always tending to become too dark. This difficulty of breeding them true to standard color is the greatest objection to the Barred Plymouth Rock as a general purpose fowl. Their utility qualifications are, however, undoubted. They are of good size, the cocks weighing as high as 16 lbs. and the hens 8 lbs. each, though this is the exception rather than the rule, and it is probable that the average birds as raised on the farm fall short of these weights by 2 lbs. Careless mating is the chief cause of this, as it is also the cause of the non-uniformity of shape. They have the yellow legs and skin so essential to the American market, and where the brown egg is preferred, or there is no premium on white eggs, are a good breed to keep for egg production, their eggs being a good size and being uniform in color. They lay well all the year if carefully handled, though they have a tendency to get over fat in confinement. They are good setters and make excellent mothers.

The young grow fast and at 12 to 14 weeks make excellent broilers. When the farmer realizes the advantages of raising one breed of poultry only, instead of the nondescript collection of rainbow colored dunghills that is such a general thing at present, it is probable that the Plymouth Rocks will be more popular than ever now. They come second only to the Orpington as a utility bird, though the Rhode Island and Wyandotte run them a close race in every respect except weight. They are both about one pound lighter and while this is a drawback in many peoples minds, it is not sufficient to materially affect their popularity with their numerous and enthusiastic supporters. While it is not necessary nor always even an advantage when raising utility poultry to strive too much after the requirements of the show room, it is always very essential to bear in mind that the men who perfected the various breeds have after careful study adopted a certain standard of perfection and every poultryman should always be careful to follow as closely as possible the adoped shape and weight.

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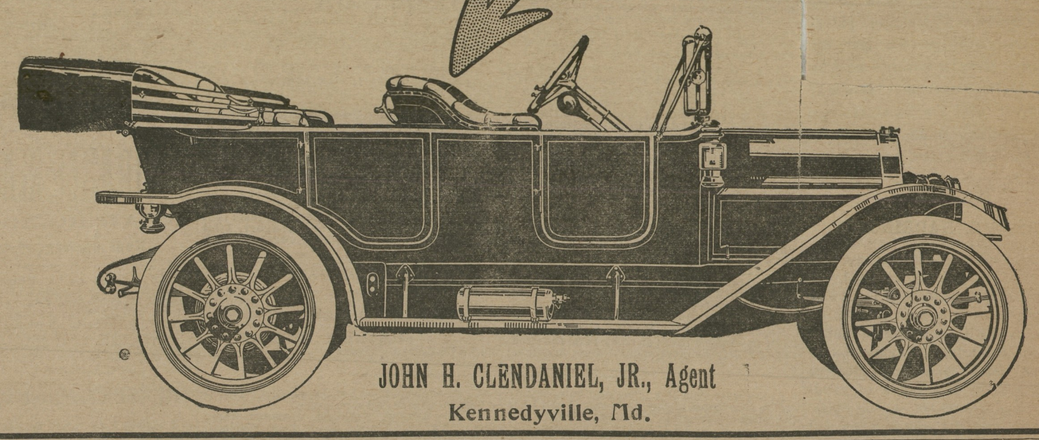

JOHN H. CLENDANIEL, JR., Agent
Kennedyville, Md.

A BLAST OF DEATH

Steamer and Tug Carried to The Bottom, Collier Badly Injured—Thirty Persons Killed And a Score Injured The Shock Blew Fires Out in Kent, Broke Open Doors, Shook Houses, Broke Window Panes And Scared Nearly Everyone.

The awful dynamite explosion last Friday will go down in history as one of the greatest accidents of the kind yet recorded. Kent Countians will not soon forget it.

Beneath the waters of the Patapsco lie the remnants of the death ship Alum Chine rent into thousand pieces by the 350 tons of dynamite she bore. Beneath the same waters are the charred remains of the tug Atlantic, of the Atlantic-Transport Company, whose men in the hour of peril Friday refused to flee from danger, but which, in its work of rescuing the Crew of the Alum Chine and the stevedores at work on the vessel, went down to its own destruction, carring with it to death its captain and its first mate, Willian Vandyke, 1448 Boyle St., and Henry M. Diggs, 503 South Potomac street, the two men who stand out above all others as the heroes of the tragedy. The car float was also lost in the accident.

A quarter of a mile away from the spot where the Alum Chine disappeared stands the collier Jason, recently built for the United States Government by the Maryland Steel Company. A few days ago the Jason returned from her triumphant trial trip, a trim vessel, the pride of her class, beautiful and rugged in a new dress. Today the vessel stands scared and battered, as if she had just emerged from battle. Large parts of her upper works have been wrecked—the work of huge fragments of steel and iron hurled from the wreck of the Alum Chine while her decks are sprinkled with blood, where the dead and wounded fell in the pitiless bombardment. Her damage amounts to $100,000.

The explosion was one of the greatest tragedies that has ever occured in Baltimore. Sights that gripped the heartstrings and made men gulp were witnessed at the morgue, when hundreds gathered in an effort to identify the bodies those who were brought there.

Most of the victims lived in the foreign section of the city a number of them in the Polish colony. In a flash in a second-men upon whose shoulders rested the burdens of needy wives and children had their lives snuffed out.

Thousands of persons who lived within a few miles of the scene of the disaster were thrown into consternation. Houses throughout the eastern section of the city and the eastern suburbs seemed to tremble on their foundations. Windows rattled and in a number of places furniture was scattered about. At Jackson's Wharf a clerk was sitting in a chair in an office, was thrown from the chair to the floor, being severely shaken. At Sparrows Point the roof of the blacksmith shop of the Maryland Steel Co. was badly damaged and a number of windows broken.

Even as far away as Coatesville, Pa., the windows in the high school of that town were rattled, startling the pupils. The shock was felt at the Philadelphia Navy Yard, and in Reading, Pa., nearly 100 miles from Baltimore. In other cities in Southeastern Pennsylvania and in New Jersey as far as Atlantic City the tremor was distinct and there were many people who believed that an earthquake had occurred.

Cause Not Fixed.

Just how the accident happened may never be known. It is thought, however, that a fire, the origin of which was due to spontaneous combustion, started in the coal in the forward bunkers of the ship. The flames spread to the dynamite stored in cases between decks, the cases resting on the coal, which served as a cushion for the explosives.

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