

Origin of the Blue Laced Red Wyandotte

By Jerry Foley

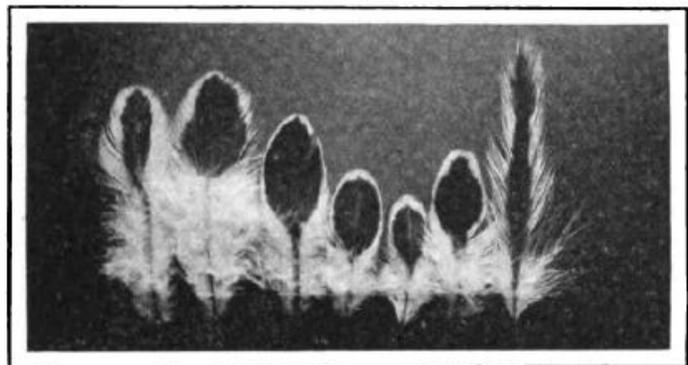


Everything I have ever heard or read concerning the origin of the blue laced red wyandotte traces back to Germany. They were created using Andalusians and Gold Laced Wyandottes. The oldest breeder mentioned of this variety is a Mr. Heidenbluth in Saxony, a center of German Wyandotte breeding. They were entered in the German Standard of Perfection in 1929. Blue Laced Red Wyandottes (BLRW) were originally referred to as Blue Laced Gold and sometimes called Violet Laced. The German official name was changed at some point to Gold Blue Laced Wyandottes.

BLRWs are thought to have first been imported from the UK into America by Lowell Barber. Lowell is credited with coining the name Blue Laced Red instead of Blue Laced Gold. He immediately crossed the imports on Gold Laced Wyandottes from Duane Urch. Later, a hatchery ended up with the stock and crossed them on other hatchery birds where they quickly generated into a mess. There are rumors of some BLRW stock being imported from Canada. However, I could never really see much difference in quality between that stock and what the hatcheries were selling to the public at large.

I really never questioned the true origin of the BLRW until I ran across an old poultry book titled Standard Bred Wyandottes, published by Reliable Poultry Journal in 1910. There is a section in this book called "Non-Standard Wyandottes..origin of the Buff Laced and Blue Laced Varieties". The title alone caught my attention quickly.

According to a chapter in the book titled "Blue Laced Wyandottes", the variety was created by three American Wyandotte breeders. Between 1886-89 (this predates any printed material concerning the date of origin of BLRW in Germany by 34 years). Mr. Ira C Keller of New York who had this to say in Poultry Monthly May 1900 " I originated a strain of Violet Laced Wyandottes, laying the foundation in 1886, I used pure



BLUE LACED WYANDOTTE FEATHERS
Furnished by Waldo Kennard, Massachusetts.



American BLRW Pullet picture from 1889

Wyandotte breeds and by crossing and re-crossing, produced a Wyandotte the same as the Golden, except with violet blue for black." He reported selling a trio to Rev. Crombleholm of England in February 1897. They took the fancy at a rapid rate in England and different parts of Europe. The Europeans took all the good birds we had to spare for three years. Many of these birds won high honors in the leading shows there. One can readily see why BLRWs have not been more generally bred in America. They simply were not to be had.

The two other breeders mentioned are Mr. George Brackenbury and Mr. Chas P Pond. Both started breeding BLRW in 1888, with Mr. Pond reporting that he also sold stock to breeders in England. Reporting the following, "In

England, these varieties (Buff Laced and Blue Laced) found instant popularity which has endured to the present day. Their lapse after a season of limited favor in this country may be ascribed to the fact that poultry fancying in America is more generally a commercial matter and less a gratification of individual taste than abroad. Despite their handicap of being derived colorations, with their present defects of color corrected, their possibilities of beauty arising from striking contrasts of color-delicate in the Buff Laced, and of unequaled richness in the Blue Laced or Violet-should someday bring a reaction in their favor."

Based on information provided by a book that was printed in 1910, it is very probable the BLRW was first created in America (as was most other varieties of large fowl wyandottes) in 1886. The wyandotte breeders that created the BLRW sold stock to breeders in England in the 1890's. The BLRW then showed up in neighboring Germany around 1920 (based on printed material that I have found).

All I can do is present the facts as spelled out by the printed and dated evidence I have discovered. Perhaps the BLRW that we now have did originate in Germany in the 1920's. Or, maybe some American BLRW stock found its way to Germany through England where German Wyandotte Breeders worked with them and improved them to the beautiful bird we see now. It is also very possible that the BLRW were created in both America and Germany with no contact between the breeders in separate countries.

Despite how they were created, the Blue Laced Red Wyandotte is a beautiful bird to behold. The color contrast of deep mahogany red with blue lacing on the Wyandotte shape gives you a bird that looks like it could not possibly exist in the real world.... I am glad it does.



