

## IMPORTATION OF COCKERELS FOR BREEDING

**T**WELVE cockerels were landed from Great Britain on October 10 to head the breeding pens on our larger poultry stations.

All the cockerels were bred at the Northern Ireland Pedigree Poultry Breeding Station, Hillsborough, County Down.

This station is run by the Agricultural Research Institute of Northern Ireland.

The station has two objects—

- (1) To make it possible for the smaller poultry farmer to have his best hens mated to first class pedigree sires, which he could not afford to purchase for his own use.
- (2) To assist specialist breeders to sell their stock at home and abroad, by providing them with birds which are officially guaranteed to come from strains with high egg records.

The station receives hens which have been entered by the owners and breeds pedigree chickens from them. It is recognized as an official Pedigree Breeding Station, and is inspected as such by the National Poultry Council (Great Britain).

The entry fee for each hen is £1. Hens entered must possess a copper ring awarded at the Stormont Laying Tests. This means in the case of a Rhode Island Red or White Leghorn that they must have laid at least 200 first grade eggs in the 48 weeks of the test. They must also be of good type for their breed and must come from premises free from infectious disease and must pass the agglutination test for Bacillary White Diarrhoea before being accepted for the Station.

The cocks which are mated to these hens are provided by the station. They are the best procurable and all have officially recognized pedigrees and must be approved as suitable by the Ministry of Agriculture as regards size and type.

The hens are at the station from October until March. They are all trap nested and a complete record is kept of the number and size of eggs laid.

All eggs laid during the breeding season which are over 2 ozs. in weight, of good shape and with good shells are incubated.

Weak and abnormal chicks are killed and all others are wingbanded and toe-punched. Complete records are kept as to numbers of infertile eggs, chicks dead in shell, chicks killed and of the wingband numbers and pedigrees of all chicks reared.

The chickens are culled during rearing; at the age of 12 to 16 weeks they are examined for deformities and faults of type. If they are satisfactory in these respects and have made normal growth the original wingbands are removed and official wingbands, supplied by the National Poultry Council and sealed with the Council's official seals, are put in their place. Birds thus marked are returned to the owners of the hens from which they were bred, the owner paying 5 shillings for each bird returned to him.

All records are published each year in the Annual Report and Stud Book.

The chickens sent out to the breeders from the station are guaranteed by the management as to their pedigree and as to the particulars given in the Stud Book regarding their ancestors.

The cockerels which have been imported are 8 Rhode Island Reds and 4 White Leghorns.

The Rhode Island Reds go to Ambepussa and Wariyapola.

The White Leghorns are at present at Perdeniya. One will probably go to Polonnaruwa and one to Anuradhapura or Murunkan.

Their pedigrees are as follows :—

(1) Rhode Island Red cockerel No. 103.

*Dam's record* :—

Super grade 134, 1st grade 77, 2nd grade 3.  
Total 214 eggs in 48 weeks.  
Size of eggs 2 1/16 to 2 13/16 ozs.

*Sire's Dam's record* :—

Super grade 206, 1st grade 7, 2nd grade 1.  
Total 214 eggs.

*Sire's Grand Dam's Record* :—

Super grade, 196, 1st grade 54.  
Total 250 eggs.

The remaining 7 Rhode Island Red cockerels were all sired by Cock No. UP. 173/36

*His pedigree is as follows* :—

Dam laid 240 eggs.  
Grand dam laid 275 eggs.  
Great grand dam laid 222 eggs.

Three of these cockerels, namely, Nos. 37, 126 and 399 are from Copper Ring hen No. U. 93/36.

Her record was 252 eggs in 48 weeks.

She was specially commended by the judge for type.

The remaining four cockerels Nos. 82, 86, 387 and 390 are from Copper Ring hen No. U. 173/37.

Her record is 205 eggs in 48 weeks made up of 187 super grade eggs, 17 first grade and 1 second grade.

Her mother laid 228 eggs in 48 weeks of which 184 were super grade and 44 first grade.

Her grandmother laid 214 eggs of which 206 were super grade, 7 first grade and 1 second grade.

Her great grandmother laid 265 eggs of which 184 were super, 80 first and 1 second grade.

The four White Leghorn cockerels were all sired by Cock XRP 249/37.

His dam laid 236 eggs in 48 weeks.

His grand dam laid 225 eggs in 48 weeks.

His great grand dam laid 249 eggs in 48 weeks.

Two of these cockerels Nos. 118 and 289 are from Copper Ring hen No. U. 149/37.

She laid 223 eggs in 48 weeks.

Her mother laid 230 eggs in 48 weeks.

Her grandmother laid 255 eggs in 48 weeks.

Her great grandmother laid 271 eggs in 48 weeks.

The other two, namely, Nos. 23 and 417 are from Copper Ring hen No. U. 150/37.

She laid 247 eggs in 48 weeks made up of 191 super, 53 first, and 3 second grade.