

THE POSTURE OF POUTERS:

Pomeranian Pouter, Dutch, English and Ghent Pouters

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The great national exhibitions are a good place to compare the different Pouter breeds. Pouters differ in size and weight, the length/height proportions, in behavior and not least in the posture that make a significant difference in some otherwise very similar breeds. In the standards, these characteristics of a breed are postulated. Even breeds of the same size get by a different posture a very different and characteristic outlook, provided that the individuals shown comply with the standard requirements. And that does not always hold, unfortunately also not at the great shows. Those interested in the anatomical basics of domestic pigeons in general and also in pouters will have to take a look at the book by Dieter M. Fliedner (2012), 'The Artist's Guide to Pigeon Anatomy' (both in English and German language) with impressive photographic documentation of the skeletons of individuals of different breeds. A documentation of measurements published in literature in the past is given in the author's book 'Taubenfärbungen' in the introductory chapter (2015, pp. 14-26).

Dutch, Pomeranian and English pouter have many similarities, which point to the shared history. That applies to:

- The size of the frame
- Feathered feet
- Proximity of the regional origin, between which there were intensive contacts and trade relations in the 19th century
- The spread of the specific pied marking in all three breeds

All three breeds have feathered feet, the English pouter very scarce, the other two breeds strongly developed muffs. Important as a difference is the postures that was already shown in the author's book on pigeon breeds (Fig. 1)



Abb. 4-6: Holländischer, Pommerscher und Englischer Kröpfer

**Fig. 1: Dutch, Pomeranian and English Pouters
from the book 'Taubenrassen', 2009.**

The different stance is the most obvious difference between these pouters: Balanced the Dutch, the Pomeranian more upright, and erect with consistently sloping topline the English. For the Pomeranian pouter the stance in the standard is anchored (standing at an angle of 45-60 degrees) , and the Pomeranians shown on the shows usually have no problems with this requirement.



Fig. 2: Pomeranian Pouter self red at the Show in Leipzig, graded with excellent V (Hans-Gero Sperlich)

A further difference between the breeds are the only medium long legs of the Dutch Pouter. Differences in leg length in some Pouters breeds is more apparent in the clean-legged as shown in Fig. 3 for the old German Pouter and the yellow Brunner.



Abb. 7-9: Genter, Aldeutscher und Brünner Kröpfer

Fig. 3: Ghent Pouter with the Dominikaner pied marking, Old German Pouter in the middle and Brunner Pouter at the right (Taubenrassen, 2009).

As a descendant of the Dutch Pouter the Ghent Pouter completes the group. The Ghent should have a balanced body in the back, but with erected front body. The correct formulation of the standard properties of the different breeds was a complicated and long lasting task end of the 19th and in the first decades of the

20th century to avoid an overlapping of different breeds that all reclaim their right.

The historic pictures of Pomeranian Pouters at the book by Prütz 1885, Lavalle and Lietze 1905 still show with the erect stance similarities at the former fashion breed, the English pouter, who for himself was a descendent of the old Dutch pouter. The overly upright stance also applies to photos of some Pomeranian Pouters that were shown all over the world on the Internet. Probably the main characteristics of breeds have not yet in all strains settled, and moreover also not in the mind of every fancier.

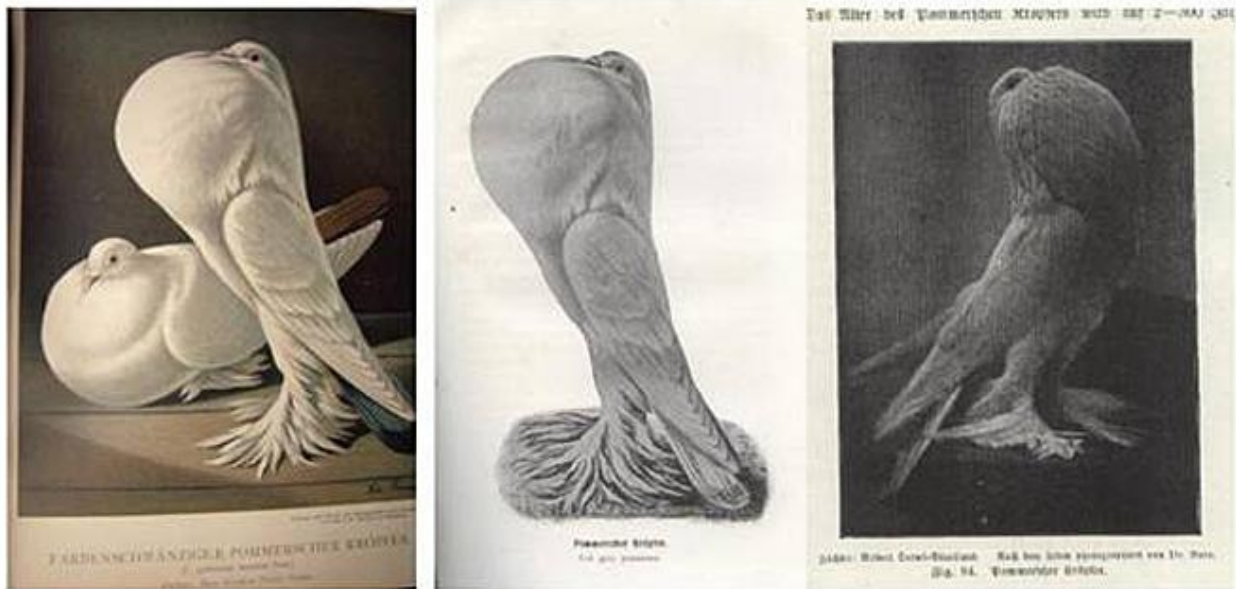
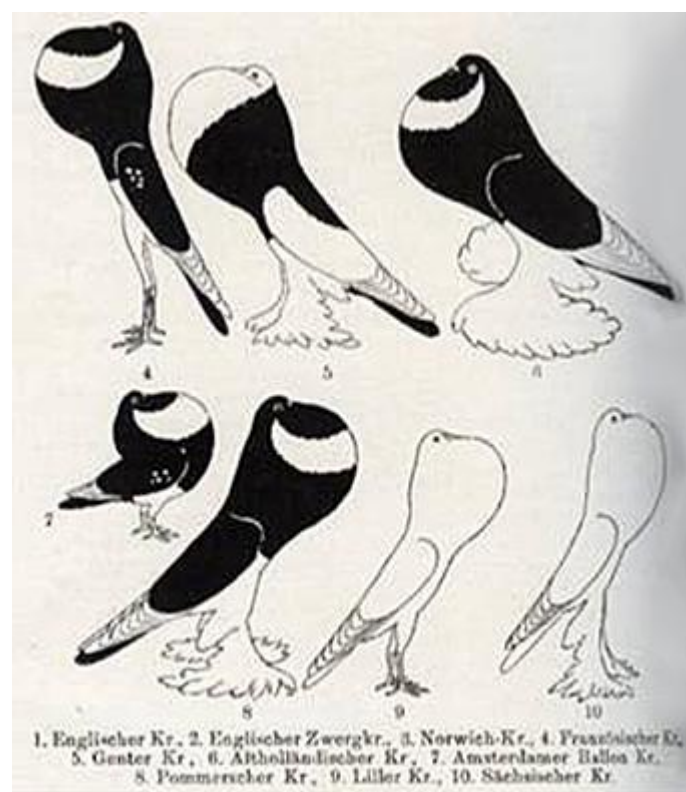


Abb. 9-11:Pommersche Kröpfer bei PRÜTZ 1885, PRÜTZ 1904, LAVALLE/LIETZE 1905.

Fig. 4: The process to find the own way between the different breeds. Here at the example of the Pomeranian Cropper about 1900 influenced by the then fashion breed, the English Pouter with extreme erect stance, from the book 'Pommersche Taubenrassen' 2010.

In 1925 a painting demonstrating the characteristic of selected pouter breeds was published in the book edited by Wittig. At the left below an English Pouter, no. 5 a Ghent, no. 6 the then called Old-Dutch Pouter and no. 8 the Pomeranian Pouter. The Pomeranian now not as erected as shown by Prütz and the today desired posture, the Dutch and Ghent at that time not yet with the balanced stance of the present-day standards.

Fig. 5: Different size and stance at selected Pouter breeds (Wittig, 1925)



In the standards the differences in the stance of breeds are clearly defined . For the breeders the meaning will become obvious often only in direct comparison of breeds . The ideal image of a breed can be internalized only, if you know the related breeds and something about the development of the breed . For the judges, the problem exists that a pigeon should show in the desired pose in the short period of the evaluation, what they do not always do . If one stays long time before the cages, we see that some pigeons almost permanent show the desired stance, while others only exceptionally, if at all.



Fig. 6 and Fig. 7: Too flat stance at a grizzle Pomeranian Pouter, and too erect at a Ghent Pouter.

The figure and possibly faulty posture are hereditary, which is also well known from breeders of other pigeon groups, at least from the top breeders. Fanciers who can constantly monitor their animals in the breeding facility, have better ways of judging as a judge at the shows and that advantage should also be used for selecting stock birds.

English language summary of the Chapter on Pomeranian Pouters from the book *Pomeranian Pigeon Breeds*, 2010.

The Pomeranian Pouter has been developed from the Dutch Pouter who was brought to Pomerania in the early 1800s and was bred there for a type with longer legs and an upright carriage. The Dutch Pouter at that time was neglected by the fancy in The Netherlands what also happened to the Pomeranian Pouter in the late 1800. The name 'Pomeranian Pouter' was established by DR. BODINUS in the 1850s who lived in Greifswald and Rügen in West-Pomerania before he became director of the zoo in Cologne in 1859 and of the Berlin Zoo in 1869. The merchant WILHELM HEVERNICK saved and propagated the Pomeranian again in the 1870s.

The overall impression is a powerful pouter with a massive body, an upright, but not too straight station and huge muffs. Pomeranians are very tame and gentle and to quote the American Book of Pigeon Standards it has to be said "that nervous people always in a hurry should take up with this beautiful pouter, that they would do a person more good for comfort and relaxation than any medicine."

Standard Pomeranian Pouter

Origin:

Ancient Pouter Breed from Pomerania (West Pomerania and Rügen) whose ancestors were imported from Dutch.

Overall impression:

Huge, broad, thick, massive figure; proud upright station (45-60 degrees, length up to 60 cm.); kegs placed in the middle of the body; broad stance; heavily muffed.



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Above: Dutch Pouter. Photo Dick Hamer.



**Right: Pomeranian Pouter.
Photo: Scott Sharp.**

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