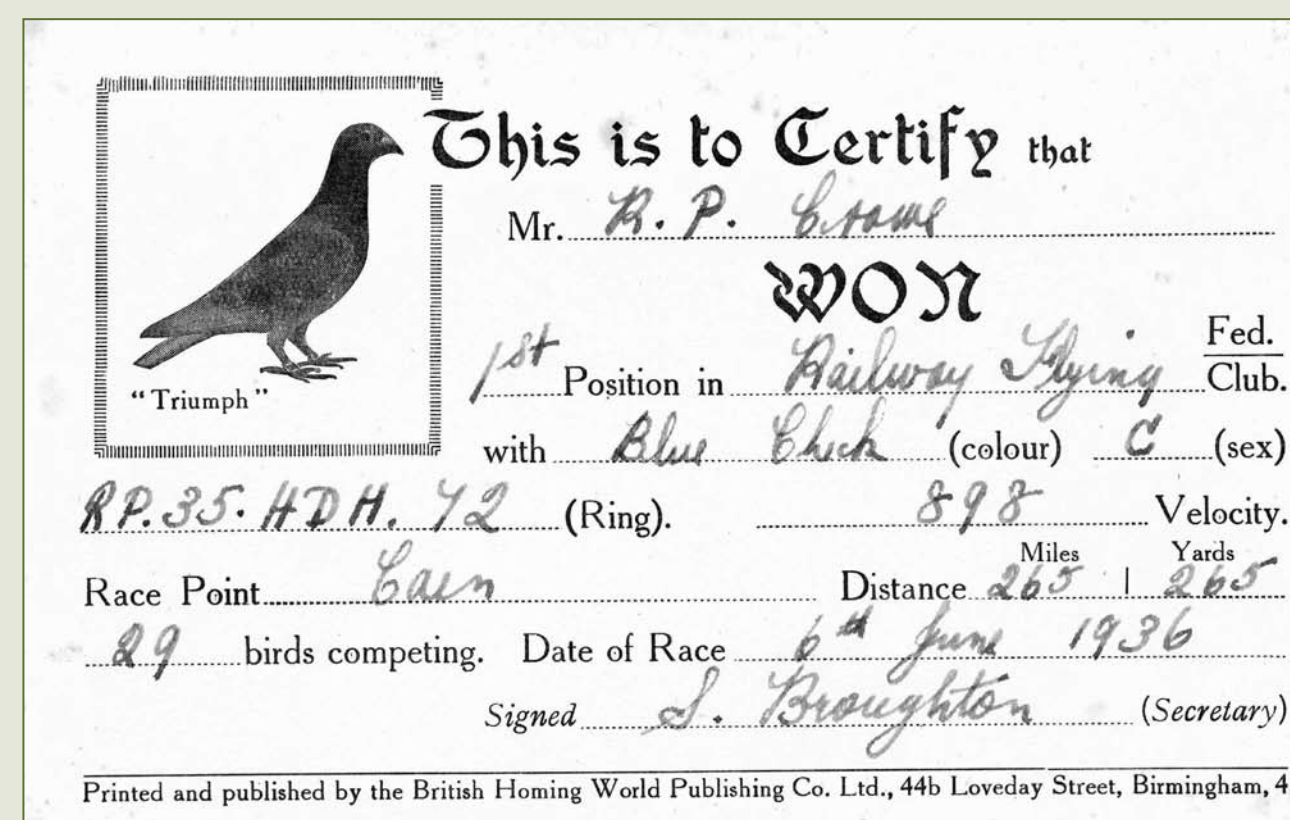


GLIMPSES OF HOLT

PIGEON RACING



Alfred Crowe, shown above with his daughter Dora, was a very successful racing pigeon owner, breeder and competitor in the 1930s. On one occasion he sold a pigeon to a gentleman who worked for Huntley and Palmers. The following Christmas all the family received individual cakes from the grateful purchaser.



A First Prize certificate won by Alfred in 1936.



Who are these men?
We think the man on the right is Harry Cockaday.



Harry Cockaday (on the left, with George Dancocks) won the Challenge Cup of the Holt and District Homing Society so many times that in 1948 he was allowed to keep it. The local M.P., Sir Thomas Cook, took an interest in pigeon racing and agreed to release Harry's pigeons from the Houses of Parliament; all arrived safely back at his house in Albert Street.



Mr Jex's Pigeon

Painted as a prize for C. W. Jex to commemorate a flight from France by one of his pigeons in 1912. The artist was Vivian Smith, art master at Gresham's, who was later killed in World War 1.

The painting was discovered, dirty and damaged, by Michael Hill and was cleaned and fully restored in 2000.

Through the early and middle part of the 20th century, pigeon racing was a popular activity in Holt. Interest waned but in 1982 the Holt Pigeon Racing Club was re-founded and remains active.

At the lively 1967 AGM of the Allotments Association it was claimed that Mr Doughty's pigeons (which he kept on his plot) 'were playing havoc with crops'. He defended his birds by claiming that they were so well fed by him that they could not possibly be raiding the brassicas!

C. W. Jex



Charles Jex was a portly, flamboyant man with a flourishing moustache. His early death in March 1932 followed a period of poor health, the Norwich Post recording, 'Seldom has the Parish Church of Holt seen such a large congregation as assembled on Tuesday afternoon to pay their last tribute of respect to the late C.W.Jex.

Charles W. Jex (1874-1932) had a powerful influence in Holt in the 1920s. Apprenticed to a butcher he opened his own shop and later became a partner in the local building firm of Royall & Jex. He served with the RASC in Palestine during the War and was a keen member of the British Legion serving on the National Executive Council.

He created a Labour Exchange for Holt and was known as 'Jobby' for his efforts to find work for local men. This apparently inexhaustible man was a member of the Parish Council and Chairman, respectively, of Holt Fire Brigade, Football Club, Workingmen's Club, and the Pigeon Club. Jex was also Chair of a Lodge of the Norfolk Druidic Circle and a prominent member of the Silver Owl Lodge of Buffaloes. And he enjoyed bowls, serving as Secretary of the Feathers Bowls club for a number of years!



Founding members of the revived Holt Racing Pigeon Club in 1983. From left to right: Brian Doughty, Ronnie Hall, Roy Bentley, Veronica Olby, George Hendrie, David Olby, Jenny Adams, Mike Adams, Paul Adams, John Grand and Sid Adair.