

IMAGES

...THEN AND NOW

From the Indian Hill Historical Society



**Buckingham Lodge
1861**

Historical Meets of the Camargo Hunt

The 1949 illustrated map of *Meets of the Camargo Hunt* provides insight into the activities of the equestrian group in the mid-twentieth century. The Camargo Hunt was founded in 1925, the same year as the Camargo Club, and two years after the Camargo Realty Company was established. The Hunt and the Club enticed city residents to move to the country to develop what is now officially Indian Hill.

The Hunt's purpose was "to pursue the sport of foxhunting" and its traditions and related activities while preserving the natural environment and wildlife therein. It appealed to those families who relocated during the "estate era" of the Village and included the Fleischmanns, Smiths, Vanderbilts, Wymans, Blacks, Atkins, Harrisons, and Goodmans. Many of them had been members of the Cincinnati Riding Club, which practiced riding, equitation, and polo in Mt. Auburn and North Avondale. When the opportunity to foxhunt in the eastern Cincinnati suburbs arose, these families seized it. Julius Fleischmann, Learner Harrison, John Emery, Leonard Smith, and O. DeGray Vanderbilt were the prime movers in the creation of the Camargo Hunt, clearing trails and building jumps throughout the countryside. Fleischmann's Winding Creek Farm of 1600 acres was equipped with state-of-the-art stables and kennels. Mr. Fleischmann purchased a pack of British foxhounds and employed an experienced huntsman for the Camargo Hunt. Some members kept their horses at Camargo Stables across the road from the club. By the 1930s, 50 square miles of hunting country existed in Indian Hill, and permission to hunt in Clermont and Warren counties had been granted by landowners there. According to *From Camargo to Indian Hill*, "the golden age of live fox chasing in Indian Hill extended from about 1930 to about 1953." Members of the Hunt gathered twice or thrice weekly from Labor Day until April 1st, the end of the season. They met at pre-arranged "fixtures" or "meets", before embarking out across farms and woodlands on horseback with a pack of hounds leading the way.



Drawn by Lee Jones, the *Meets of the Camargo Hunt* pinpoints the locations where hunts started in 1949. The map depicts the Little Miami River and tributaries from Plainville to Loveland, with meet locations represented by a fox, and the name of the location in red ink. Two hounds, a fox, and a hunting horn are portrayed at the corners of the drawing. Twenty meets are shown. The southernmost is Camargo Stables on Shawnee Run Road; the northernmost are Mr. Balch's and Humphrey and Hopewell Road. Ambleside, the estate of Leonard Smith, recognized as Joint Master of Fox Hunting (JMFH) on the illustration, is the westernmost meet, and Guinea School in Clermont County (where a 3 day meet was held in 1949) is the easternmost. The other JMFH at the time was O. DeGray Vanderbilt, and that fact is noted on the fox denoting his estate, Twin Fires. Other meet locations included Emery's Stables, Mr. Goodman's, Mrs. Stephenson's and Mr. Sutphin's Stable. Mr. Warner Atkins' meet is marked by both a fox and a fence, the fence representing the then location of the Hunter Trials. Around the perimeter of the drawing are 15 names of horses owned by various members of the Hunt. They are inscribed in red cursive, and include Journeyman, Galway Sandra, and Trader Trophy.

Each month postcards were mailed to members of the Camargo Hunt with the schedule of meets. Hunters hacked (rode) their mounts to the meet where the MFH, Huntsman, Whips, and hounds convened. There were usually be 20-60 riders, including staff. The cry to start was blown through the hunting horn. And off they'd go across streams, over fence rows, panels, ditches, and uneven terrain in pursuit of the fox. The exhilaration of the chase was part of this centuries old sport.

Over time, as development occurred, as larger parcels of land were divided, and I-275 was completed, some of the best hunting territory was closed. The Camargo Hunt had to seek new hunt country. In the 1970s, the Hunt expanded to Clermont County, and in the late 1980s it went to northern Kentucky. The Hunt still rides in Indian Hill, and seeing the riders, horses and hounds in action is a thrill. The *Meets of the Camargo Hunt* illuminates their original home territory in Indian Hill, and captures some history of earlier times.

Note: The 77th Annual Camargo Hunter Trials will be held on October 7th at Clippinger Field.