

IMAGES

...THEN AND NOW

From the Indian Hill Historical Society



Buckingham Lodge-1861

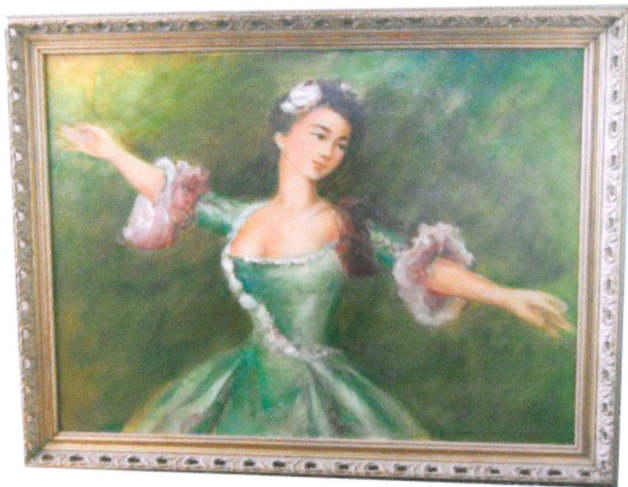
The Name “Camargo”

Camargo has long been associated with Indian Hill. There are numerous uses of the name – some now defunct, some long established, and some recent. It is a name with history.

In the 1920's when Indian Hill changed from an agrarian community to a residential neighborhood for some of Cincinnati's premier families, the Camargo Realty Company was established to broker the land. The Camargo Club was located at the hub of a wheel of acreage, and prospective members could purchase property surrounding the new club. Julius Fleischmann of Winding Creek Farm christened his yacht *Camargo*; the Camargo Kennels housed the hounds of the Camargo Hunt; and the Camargo Bank was built in Madeira. The Camargo Hunt and the Camargo Club still flourish, and there are numerous local businesses which carry the name, including Camargo Beverages, Camargo Cadillac, Camargo Rental, Camargo Racquet Club, the Camargo Animal Hospital, and Camargo Trading Company. Three roads in the Village are Camargo Club Drive, Camargo Pines, and Camargo Road.



One theory about the origin of *Camargo* is that the name was derived from a small town in Warren County. In 1851, the General Assembly of the State of Ohio authorized a turnpike company which intended to link Madisonville (Hamilton County) with Obanion (Clermont County) and Camargo (Warren County). A toll road would have passed close to the current boundaries of Indian Hill, and perhaps *Camargo* became familiar to travelers on the turnpike. Another theory revolves around the Mexican War (1846-48). Soldiers described Mexico as “the most lovely country on earth”, whose scenery “exceeds in picaresque beauty”. After being discharged at Camargo, Mexico, some veterans returned to unsettled American lands, naming towns after places in Mexico. Possibly Camargo, the hamlet in Warren County (the terminus of the toll road) was so named, and later Indian Hill planners borrowed the melodious word.



Another plausible explanation is that the name referred to the French ballerina, Marie Anne Cupis de Camargo (1710-1770). She debuted at the Paris Opera and gained fame for her leaps, formerly associated only with male dancers. She also is thought to have introduced ballet's fundamental 180 degree turnout of the legs. The mistress of a nobleman, her beauty and style inspired portraits and tintypes, one print of which hangs at the Camargo Club. The use of her name may have been suggested by an admirer of Mademoiselle de Camargo.

Possibly *Camargo* can be traced to the Camargue region of southern France. This area is famous for its horses that have roamed the marshlands of Provence for centuries. Some Cincinnatians who admired the region Camargue may have adapted the name and spelled it a little differently.

None of these theories can be proven, but, whether the source is French, Mexican, or just borrowed from a nearby village, the name Camargo had a positive connotation, and it has a special appeal in this community.