

IMAGES

...THEN AND NOW

From the Indian Hill Historical Society



Buckingham Lodge-1861

John Clippinger and Clippinger Field

John Henry Clippinger (1897-1979) was the third of four children of Walter Welty and Helen Clippinger. The family divided their time between two houses – a stucco home on Erie Avenue in then-fashionable Madisonville and a frame farm house in then-agricultural Indian Hill. John's father, known as W.W., had a thriving law practice in downtown Cincinnati. John and his siblings attended school in Madisonville, but spent the weekends and the summer months in Indian Hill.

John served with the 37th Army Division in France during World War I. Known as the Buckeye division, the infantrymen of the A.E.F. were engaged in the Battle of Meuse Argonne. This was one of a series of Allied attacks known as the Hundred Days Offensive which was instrumental in the final victory of the Allies. Upon his return from Europe, where he had been gassed in the trenches, the family doctor recommended the dry climate of Texas for John so his lungs could heal faster. He moved to the Lone Star State. John graduated from the University of Texas Law School in 1922. Then he returned to his home state. He was admitted to the Ohio Bar the same year and five years later became Assistant Hamilton County Prosecutor. It was there that Mr. Clippinger worked professionally with Charles P. Taft on several noteworthy murder cases. He also played a major role in the fight against organized crime, which had moved into the county during Prohibition. John Clippinger left the prosecutor's office to join the private firm of Taft, Stettinius, and Hollister, where he became a top-notch trial attorney. At one time, he was being considered for a seat on the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Besides his career, John led an active life. He was socially popular, reputedly loved to talk, and had a wonderful sense of humor. He dated a Hollywood movie starlet before his marriage to Jane Becker. An avid outdoorsman, he excelled in competitive horseback riding, boxing, and swimming. He served as a director on the boards of the Midham Corporation, L.B. Wilson, Inc., the Ohio Valley Financial Corporation, and the Buckeye Building and Loan Company. He was chapter chairman of the local Red Cross, president-elect of the Greater Cincinnati Hospital Council, board member of the YMCA, and trustee of the Widow's and Old Men's Home. His greatest love was foxhunting, and he held the position MFH (Master of Foxhounds) of the Camargo Hunt from 1955-1967.



While he was Master of the Camargo Hunt, John Clippinger insisted on high decorum and cavalry style rules for its members. He started the tradition wherein only the Hunt staff and Master wore green wool shirts and gray caps. His favorite mount was Fleetwood, upon whom he often won the Hunter Trials and the Point-to-Point circuit race. He managed the Camargo Stables for many years and subsidized the Stables' operations.

John Clippinger, his wife, and their three children resided in Mt. Lookout even though his family owned vast acreage in Indian Hill. An avid proponent of green spaces, he conveyed much property to the Village of Indian Hill. The largest tract was the 275 acre piece now known as Clippinger Field, which Mr. Clippinger acquired and then sold to the Village in 1965 at a discounted price – a practice consistent with the established Green Areas policies. The sale price was \$275,000 – thus \$1000 per acre. The land included fields and woods between Shawnee Run and Kugler Mill Roads and extending to State Route 126 and the inter-

section of Park and Shawnee Run Roads.

Clippinger Field will be the site of the 74th Annual Camargo Hunt Hunter Trials this month. It is a marvelous tradition bringing together foxhunters and spectators who appreciate pageantry, competition, and gourmet fare in a festive outdoor atmosphere. Due to John Clippinger's generosity, the event will occur on property that he provided to the Green Areas Trust.