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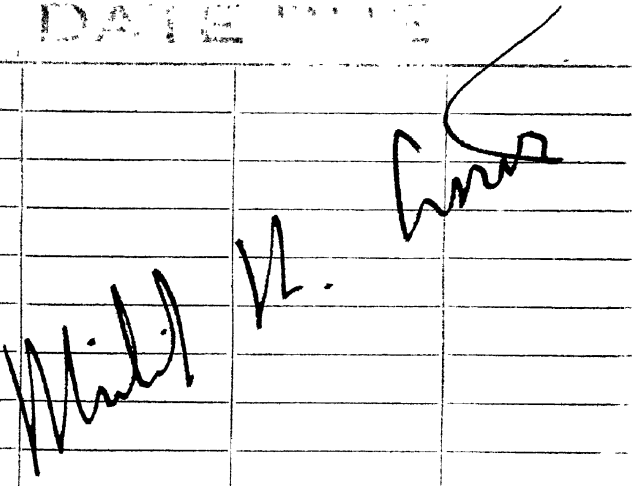

SPORT
Is Where You Find It


Paul Brown

SPORT

Is Where You Find It

By PHILIP K. CROWE

ILLUSTRATED BY
PAUL BROWN

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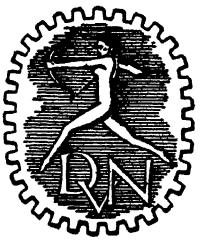

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TO PHILLIPPA, RENE, AND MARY

Preface

Words mean different things to different people. The fox, to the great majority of Americans, is a sly form of vermin who steals chickens or an expensive ornament for a lady's shoulders. To the hunter—and by the hunter I mean the farmer who listens to his dogs in the moonlight as well as the scarlet-coated rider to hounds—the word takes on an almost mystical character. It stirs the blood and invokes memories. It stands for a whole panorama of pleasure. Masefield put this magic on paper when he wrote "Reynard the Fox" and Cantor captured the essence of it in "Bugle Ann." The trout is equally subject to definition. He can be ordered with fine herbs at "21" or tempted with dry flies on a mountain stream. The nuances of Walton's art are offered to him by dedicated experts and he can be taken on the lowly worm by any child. Sladang is a proper name familiar only to zoologists and crossword puzzle experts. Like the fox and the trout, however, the old Malay word can also invoke pictures to the initiated. For the benefit of those who have not been to the zoo recently, it is a wild ox and the world's largest living bovine.

Precisely why hunting and fishing has always had so much appeal for me is a matter of some mystery even to me. Granting the primitive urges latent in all of us, my passion for field sports was certainly not greatly stimulated by an early childhood in New York City or, later, by the regimented sports of St. Paul's School at Concord, N. H. True, my father was a great admirer of the English country way of life and through his interest I made an early and happy acquaintance with the novels of Surtees and the articles of Apperly. Kipling's India and Haggard's Africa were very real worlds to me, but, to the best of my memory, my only fishing incentive was furnished by Moby Dick. I learned to

ride on a hired nag in Central Park, caught my first fish, a gold one, in the fountain of Gramercy Park, and shot my first bird, a sitting pigeon, with an air rifle on the roof of our apartment house.

At the University of Virginia, an institution of learning that I chose primarily because Charlottesville was flanked by several packs of foxhounds, I got my first taste of genuine sport. Three of us organized and hunted a pack of drag hounds, possibly the only one in America to be supported by the undergraduates of a University. The horses were borrowed or hired and the hounds donated for the day; but we had some good runs, especially when the pack lost the drag line and took off after deer. Cock-fighting was another sport that attracted me at this period, so much so, in fact, that I wrote my term paper on these gallant little birds. My professor gave me a good grade and promptly reported the matter to the sheriff. I had neglected to find out that he was president of the local Audubon Society.

Because of the necessity of earning a living, my next exposure to sport after leaving the University was some years later. Interim periods of working before the mast on freighters in the Mediterranean and reporting for the New York Evening Post were stimulating, and it was not until I settled down to the life of a Wall Street broker that I realized how dull life can become. The trapped expression on certain fish in the old Battery Park Aquarium decided me and, in the Spring of 1935, I happily resigned from my firm and took passage on a freighter to Saigon, French Indo China. The sladang and tiger stories were written at this period. Subsequently I went on to India, where the pig-sticking story originated and then to England, where fox hunting in the Fall of 1937 was still an imposing spectacle. Fields of more than four hundred met the Quorn hounds and the glorious grass countries of the Midlands had not yet been plowed and cemented for air fields.

On my return from Europe I started a pack of beagles, went

to work for Life magazine and got married. I mention these developments in the order in which they occurred rather than in the order of their importance. The pack, known as the Kingsland Beagles of New Canaan, Conn., consisted of fifteen couple of fourteen inch hounds and hunted the country around New Canaan, Greenwich and Mount Kisco until the start of World War II, when I disbanded them in order to enter the service.

As an intelligence officer with the headquarters of the 8th Air Force in England, I made frequent inspection tours of the various subordinate commands, and, since many of the air fields were close to packs of hounds, I found it possible occasionally to get in some sport. The stories on stag hunting, beagling and otter hunting, as well as some of the sketches of fox hunting and hounds resulted from this period of the war. I shall always be grateful to the British masters for their kindness in mounting me and to their wives for hospitality at a time when food was a very real problem for civilians.

In the Spring of 1943 I returned to the States for a short period and subsequently joined the Office of Strategic Services and went to the China, Burma, India theatre. Beagling in Bengal and the Delhi sketches were written at this time. Later, I was ordered to China and wrote several articles on the Chinese cavalry and mounted guerrilla operations.

After the war my wife and I had several seasons fox hunting with Mr. Stewart's Cheshire in the cream of American countries, before I returned to China as Special Representative of the Economic Cooperation Administration. The Shanghai Paper Hunt and Nanking Sketches were written while I was living in China's capital. Following the Red Victory, we returned home and have since made our home in Easton, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, where descendants of the Kingsland Beagles now chase foxes and my children are learning to take over the horn.

I have not given much space to fishing and shooting in ensuing pages but both sports have always occupied important places in

my affections and spare time. I have fished for trout on the streams of New York State, and Eastern Canada, in the primitive areas of Montana, on Admiralty Island off the coast of Alaska, in some of the classic chalk streams of England and in Kashmir. I have also pursued the salmon in New Brunswick and Scotland and the marlin and the tarpon off the coasts of Cuba and Mexico. In addition to the big animals of Indo China and India, I have shot most of the varieties of upland game in the United States and Canada. But it is in the field of waterfowl shooting that I have been exceptionally lucky. The lakes of India and the rivers of China provide duck and goose shooting that can scarcely be imagined in a country of licensed and limited bags.

Every sportsman owes a debt to the men who introduced them to their favorite diversions and took the trouble to teach them something of the various sporting arts. My god-father, Kingsland Hay, bought me my first rod and showed me the rudiments of dry-fly casting. Later, I profited by some sage advice from Edward Hewitt, and finally there was the Gilly on the Devron River in Scotland who never opened his mouth but whose expression of approval or disgust taught me a lot about taking salmon. Aside from my father's basic instruction in firearms, I had no serious lessons until I went to Indo China. My teacher there, the old Marquis Andre Guidon Lavallee, gave me a healthy respect for both the gun and the big animals.

In the field of hunting with hounds, I owe much to many men. Joseph B. Thomas, MFH, a classmate of my father's at Yale, took me on my first hunt when I was twelve and years later gave me invaluable advice on the care and breeding of hounds. Richard V. N. Gambrill, master of the Vernon Somerset Beagles, helped me start my own pack by selling me good hounds at token prices. But the man from whom I learned most in the art of hunting was Major Maurice Barclay, Master of Puckeridge Hounds of Hertfordshire.

All of the articles, sketches and book reviews in this volume

have appeared previously, and are reprinted with the kind permission of the publishers of the Spur, Town and Country, The Field, (of England) The Wilmington (Del.) Every Evening, the Downingtown (Penna.) Archive, The Chronicle (Middleburg, Virginia), Horse and Hound (of England) and The Anglers' Club Bulletin. The great majority of the pieces appeared originally in the Chronicle and special thanks are due to Stacy Lloyd, the publisher, and Nancy Lee, the managing editor, for their permission to use the articles.

Victor Weybright, field master of the Timber Ridge Bassets and publisher of the New American Library, gave me a great deal of technical advice and help and Eugene Connett, former head of the Derrydale Press, was an invaluable aid in preparing the text for publication.

PHILIP K. CROWE

Easton, Maryland
June 1953

Contents

CHAPTER I

Our Hunting Forefathers

Modern hunting owes so much to the past that it seems only logical to begin this book of reminiscences with a few essays on the great sportsmen of England, who rode and wrote in that golden age of hunting, the early nineteenth century. Of the many who made sporting history during the Regency, three are outstanding and I shall confine myself to glimpses into the rollicking world of Surtees, Nimrod and Osbaldeston.

And what a world it was. Hunting was the ruling passion and all that really mattered was the money to pursue it. The young blades of the period firmly believed that they had a divine right to ten thousand pounds a year and were not above "post-obiting," that is, raising a loan on the lives of their beloved parents, with the money lenders' interest predicated on his impressions of pater's and mater's soundness. Hunting six days a week and praying most of Sundays, the men of Melton Mowbray had little time for women and insufficient energy left to pursue them.

Robert Smith Surtees, creator of the immortal Jorrocks, turned a kindly if ironical eye on this fantastic universe of sport and gave the world some superb satirical novels. Best known is HANDLEY CROSS in which Surtees speaks from the rubicund visage of old John Jorrocks, sporting green grocer of Great Corum Street, London. "'Untin," said Jorrocks, "is all that's worth living for—all time is lost what is not spent in 'untin—it is like the hair we breathe—if we do not have it we die— It's the sport of kings, the image of war without its guilt and only five and twenty per cent of its danger."

Surtees was a keen lampooner of the stuffed shirts of his day. "Some people say," jeered Jorrocks, "that a man is a master of 'ounds wot sticks an 'orn in his saddle and blows when he likes but leaves everything else to his 'untsman. That's not the sort of master of 'ounds I mean to be." But Jorrocks was also well aware of the vast dignity attending such an elevated post and says that "of all sitivations under the sun, none is more enviable or more 'onerable than the master of a pack of 'ounds."

Ridiculing the steeplechase riders of the fashionable hunts, who often ran over hounds and tried to do the same for the fox, Jorrocks said "a fox, like a sovereign, must be first or nowhere. It's all nonsense depriven him of his precedence—people who go out 'untin must make up their minds to let the fox go first."

But Jorrocks' heart warmed to the real fox hunter. "Ahe, give me the few—the chosen few—the band of brothers as the poet says, wot come to 'unt—men wot know 'ounds and know the covers and know the country, and above all know when 'ounds are running and when they are hoff the scent—men wot can ride in the fields and yet 'old 'ard in the lanes."

Jorrocks' sayings on horses and horsemanship were epigrammatic. "There is no young man wot would not rather 'ave a himputation on his morality than on his 'ossmanship," and "the buyer has need of a hundred eyes, but the seller but one."

Those were the days of serious drinking and Jorrocks allowed that he "rather distrusted a water-drinker. To be sure there are two sorts, those that drink it to save the expense of treating themselves with ought better and those wot undergo water for the purpose of bringing their stomachs around to stand something stronger. Now, if a man drinks water for pleasure he ought not be trusted and ought to be called on for his subscription in advance; but if he drinks water because he has worn out his insides by strong libations, in all probability he will be a good sort of fellow."

Surtees was born at Hamersly Hall, Durham, in 1803, and

after a few years as a lawyer in London, gave up his profession and turned all his amazing energies to writing sporting articles. In 1831, he started the *New Sporting Magazine* in whose refulgent pages the character of Jorrocks first greeted an admiring audience. Besides HANDLEY CROSS, all fox hunters should read SOAPY SPONGE, ASK MOMMA, FACEY ROMFORD, and HILLINGTON HALL. Surtees died at Brighton in 1864, mourned by all of the society he poked fun at.

Nimrod, the pen name of Charles J. Apperley, was also a leading sporting writer of the period but took it all with deadly seriousness. He spent his life writing about a society he could not afford and was, in fact, that saddest of sad figures, a gentleman without any money, in an age where there were virtually no polite means of making any. The calls on a gentleman's pocketbook in the early years of the nineteenth century were myriad. Hunters and grooms, pheasants and keepers, gamecocks and prizefighters, to say nothing of the truly vast costs of hunting a country at one's own expense. Squire Mytton, a fabulous M.F.H. of his day, whom Nimrod greatly admired and wrote a life of, actually squandered half a million sterling in fifteen years.

It was a vigorous and exhausting world. Devoted wholeheartedly to sport, they evolved a fantastic little universe whose values rested uneasily on the speed of horses, the flip of cards, and the health of parents. Yet the Meltonians were far from uneducated from the classical standpoint. Graduates in many cases of England's best schools, they could write their money lenders in polished prose, quote both Latin and Greek in the hunting field, and pen passable French poems to any heiress who might improve their financial prospects.

Such was the gay world into which Charles Apperley was born at Plas-Gronow in Denbighshire in 1779. He was the son of Thomas Apperley, Esq. of Wootton House, Gloucestershire, and, as befitted a gentleman's son, attended Rugby School,

where he seems to have done well at his lessons in addition to beginning his hunting career with a bit of rat hunting. Describing this sport as "the lowest branch of the hunting art," Apperley later alludes to it in his classic LIFE OF A SPORTSMAN, as the first stage in the development of his hero's sporting education. He married early a young lady with some but not enough money and subsequently found himself at the age of forty-four without the means either to continue hunting or even to eat regularly. This poverty was fortunate for hunting literature as it spurred Apperley to seize his pen and begin a long series of contributions to *The Sporting Magazine*. His first piece appeared in 1821, and he continued to write even when forced to flee to France for debt in 1830. He subsequently returned to England, and died in 1843. I hasten to add a sober note that for a short period after leaving Rugby, Apperley served as a Cornet in Sir Watkins Wyn's ancient light British dragoons but the army life was but a pale copy of Melton life and he soon left it.

The Sporting Magazine provided Apperley with a liberal salary and a stud of hunters and he soon repaid his publishers by trebling the circulation. He visited all the leading countries of his day and wrote vivid descriptions of not only the sport itself but the masters, huntsmen, and members of the field. So popular were Nimrod's articles that he became the paramount hunting authority and his chance remarks on a horse often resulted in a considerable enhancement in its price. Nimrod himself "made" many a hunter and sold it at a good profit. The articles of this early period are often grouped in book form under the title of NIMROD'S HUNTING TOURS.

He was the first writer on sporting subjects that even mentioned the lower and middle classes. He was especially considerate of the yeomen farmers of Leicestershire and often wrote of their importance to the sport. In those days few of the great land

owners cared for hunting and the support of the small holders was important. He immortalized the sporting tailor of Cheltenham who hunted on foot with Lord Seagrave's hounds, and what is more, stayed with them. So fond did his Lordship become of the little tailor that he offered him a post as earth-stopper but the tailor replied that he "couldn't stop all night and 'unt all day" so he declined.

Nimrod's literary treatment of his own class was necessarily somewhat careful. As a professional writer for a magazine whose circulation depended on his friends not enemies, he had to watch his criticisms. At times, however, he told the truth and we find in his REMINISCENCES that he did not regard Osbaldeston as a great M.F.H. The Squire, as Osbaldeston was called, was then master of the Quorn and it took considerable courage to question his ability with hounds.

Perhaps because he could never afford to be part of this glittering crew, which he so much admired, Nimrod threw his whole soul into his efforts to glamorize and unconsciously defend it. This was the period of Waterloo but only once does he mention a sporting officer who was wounded at Napoleon's defeat. Shirking one's military duties was considered smart, especially since everyone had an abiding faith in the British Navy. Bravery in the hunting field was Nimrod's standard of gallantry and he mentions the Yorkshireman, who, though crippled with gout and the additional agony of chalk stones working their way through his hands, hunted six seasons with Lord Derby's hounds.

Describing Hugo Meynell, undoubtedly the leading M.F.H. of his day, Nimrod says: "Mr. Meynell is of middle height, of compact and well proportioned form; with a highly expressive countenance and a very intellectual eye. His manners, and general deportment are those of a man of the highest fashion, and he combines zeal with talent which would render him distinguished in any pursuit that might be congenial to his inclination and

taste. Fortunately for fox hunting he made that his election." Certainly a literary bouquet that would have done credit to a Prime Minister.

False and shallow as Nimrod's world appears from the perspective of today's values, it was not all bad. The courage that inspired England's hunting men to risk their necks six days a week was certainly foolhardy, but who can say that it did not also indicate that contempt for danger that is an admirable quality in all men.

As I mentioned above, Nimrod so admired Squire John Mytton, one of the less lovable rakes of the Regency, that he wrote a biography of him. The curious part of it was that Nimrod only occasionally seemed to note the pathetic side of his hero. He appeared, in fact, to see some grandeur in Mytton's sure and swift descent to the gutter.

"It may be unnecessary," said Nimrod, "to go beyond five centuries back for the pedigree of John Mytton. No one, I believe, ever doubted his being quite thoroughbred. No half-bred could have done much more than half what he did in the short space of his life." Whether blue blood played so great a part or not, there is no doubt that Mytton inherited, along with his fortune, a magnificent physique and truly amazing powers of endurance. He never wore anything but the thinnest silk stockings and light shoes, so that his feet, in those days of perpetual muddy roads, were always wet. In winter his shooting gear consisted of white linen trousers and a light jacket, yet he never needed to carry a handkerchief. When hunting his hounds he often rode to covers twenty miles from kennels and returned the same day. Although he never learned to swim, he would frequently force his horse into lakes and rivers in order to save the trip around and then ride all day soaked to the skin.

Of course, money played a vital role in this sporting caravanserai; and those who could rid themselves of it fastest and with the most verve were widely admired by their peers. Mytton had

so little respect for the new paper currency that he ate it in sandwiches. No wonder he was able, in the relatively short space of fifteen years, to squander half a million pounds sterling. In the end, he escaped to Calais with "two couple of bailiffs hot on his brush,"—but I am getting ahead of my story.

Not content with these bold attempts to murder his constitution, the Squire went out of his way to risk his neck. He actually drove a light gig across country at night and successfully negotiated several fences and ditches in the process. On another occasion, he rode his hunter at a full gallop over a rabbit warren to see if the horse could miss the holes. It did not. About this time, Mytton acquired a tame bear from a strolling player and, in full hunting garb, rode it into one of his dinner parties. Every thing was fine until the bear felt the spur and turned and bit his rider in the leg. His ability to bear pain was extraordinary and Nimrod speaks of the numerous times the Squire broke his ribs and continued his sport, as if nothing had happened. Late in his life, he set himself afire, while in his cups, and later boasted that he did not cry out, even though nearly consumed by the flames.

A glance at the Squire's boyhood explains a good deal. Left fatherless in 1798, at the age of two, young Mytton was raised by an adoring mother without the ability to say "no." By ten, he was what was known then as a "Pickle." Expelled from Westminster and Harrow, he subsequently knocked down his tutor and entered Cambridge. There he learned to drink vast quantities of port and left at eighteen. At twenty, he came into his patrimony and the "Rake's Progress" began in earnest.

Mytton lived at Halston, one of his estates at Shropshire. He kept at his own expense seventy couple of foxhounds and hunted two separate countries with them. He maintained a racing stable of twenty horses. His yearly bill for pheasants and foxes alone was fifteen hundred pounds, and he employed fifty laborers simply to keep up his coverts and preserve his shooting. A careless dresser, Mytton put on clothes just as they came to hand and

sometimes wore out a coat in one wearing. Nimrod counted one hundred and fifty-two pairs of riding breeches with suitable waistcoats, coats, etc., in the Squire's closets. Down in the cellar hogsheads of ale "stood like soldiers in column, while there was enough wine in wood and bottles for a Roman Emperor."

Despite his restless quest for adventure, Mytton was generous to a fault and was genuinely loved by his tenantry as well as his friends. The Halston chaplain used to have two sermons ready for Sunday—one about the evils of dissipation and another innocuous one in case the Squire came to church. The old boy loved the Squire and did not want to "hit him hard" if he could help it.

The Squire's ability to put away strong drink was enviable. On rising, he shaved with a bottle of port beside him, worked on others throughout the day, and wound up with a minimum of two more bottles over the billiard table in the evening. Yet, to the end he retained a steady hand on a horse and a gun. The average kill at Halston was twelve hundred brace of pheasants, two thousand hare, partridges and wild duck without number. On the opening day of the season, the Squire always killed fifty brace of partridges with his own gun. His record was made on a wintry day when he and a friend killed a head of game every three minutes for five successive hours. He was equally proficient with a rifle and Nimrod cites an instance when the Squire hit the edge of a razor with a ball at thirty yards. Remember, this was in the days of slow-burning powder and hand-poured charges.

The feeling of his fellow fox hunters and sportsmen for Mytton was succinctly expressed by Sir Bellingham Graham. As the Squire took a particularly vicious fence and landed safely, Sir Bellingham shouted, "Neck or nothing: you are not a bad one to breed from!" The epitome of a compliment was, of course, a hunting term.

Mytton's end was the usual one of his set. He exhausted his finances and fled to France, from which in those days there was

no extradition. It is surprising that despite a life devoted almost entirely to sport and various self-indulgences, Mytton also found time to represent his county in Parliament, serve abroad with the army of occupation, and be a major in the local cavalry. He was, in fact, very popular in the county of Salop and was twice appointed High Sheriff.

Shortly after his return to London, John Mytton died at the age of thirty-eight, a debtor in King's Bridge Prison. Unquestionably he would attribute this distressing final scene of an extravagant life not to excessive love of sport, but to insufficient funds.

A far more appealing character of the day was Squire Osbaldeston, known affectionately through the ranks of sporting England as "The Squire." To picture him, conjure a man who hunted his own hounds six days a week, spending an average of eleven hours a day in the saddle, who killed one hundred pheasants out of one hundred shots, who beat England's top professional tennis player, using a gloved hand instead of a racquet, and whose fighting cocks and pit bulls were the envy of the Midlands. Then revise your impression by the fact that our hero was only five feet tall, and was so badly injured by hunting and racing accidents that one of his boots had to lace down the side. The loss of all his front teeth only annoyed him at the time because he was forced temporarily to give up hunting hounds, being unable to blow his horn until the missing teeth were replaced.

Such a man was George Osbaldeston, "The Squire of England," one of the truly great sportsmen of hunting history. Even granting that he was born in an age and of a class that enabled him to devote his entire life to sport, the legend is still awe-inspiring. In the eighty years between his birth in 1786, and his death in 1866, he broke more records on horses and off than one can shake a crop at. What is more, he sustained his prowess to a remarkable age and nearly won one of England's big steeplechases at sixty-eight.

Despite the great events which took place during his lifetime, the Squire was so whole-heartedly devoted to sport that his autobiography fails even to mention such apparently major happenings as the Indian Mutiny and the American Civil War. Nor does it record that just before he reached Eton, Marie Antoinette died on the guillotine and that while he was at Oxford the Prince of Wales was made Regent and serious machinery riots had begun to darken the industrial revolution. His vivid memories of his first mastership of the Quorn do not include any reference to the fact that the Duke of Wellington had been made Prime Minister. If he thought of "The Duke" at all it was probably as somewhat of an equal, for in his own world of sport he was "The Squire."

Sir Theodore Cook in his preface to the Autobiography (Edited by E. D. Cuming and published by Scribner, 1936) takes a lenient view of this insularity and adds that he does not think any other nation could have produced such a man. Perhaps he is right and perhaps it is just such one-tracked thinking that confuses England's critics and baffles her enemies. *The London Times* in a leader published on the news of the discovery of the Squire's manuscript added: "he might have spent his life and certainly his money better. But he had one great quality. The bruisers of his youth would have called it 'bottom'; today we call it 'guts'! It compels homage, for many envy it bitterly and no man dares despise it in his heart."

The famous hunting scribes of his day—Cecil, Nimrod and Surtees—all knew him and thought highly of him. Nimrod saw him fall and break his leg so hard that the bone protruded through both skin and boot, yet the Squire's only remark was regret at not being able to finish the run. His manners were kind to his inferiors as well as his equals and he was singularly free from affectation. In fact, some of the strongest tributes to the man came from his own hunt servants.

Osbaldeston was born on the 26th December, 1786, in Wel-

beck Street, London. He had four sisters but was the only son and therefore inherited a considerable estate on the death of his father. He estimated that he spent three hundred thousand pounds sterling on hunting, racing and gambling during a period of fifty years, and if it were not for the loyalty and good sense of his wife, he would have died in the poor house.

Osbaldeston's main claim to fame rests on his fox hunting abilities. He held the masterships of nine countries from the period 1810 to 1834, and always gave his followers six days sport a week. When Master of the Quorn in 1825, he maintained one hundred couple of hounds in three packs. Among these was *Furrier*, one of the great stallion hounds of the period. He set great stock by his hounds and was a careful student of breeding, paying particular attention to speed, staying quality, and temper. In those days hounds were often pressed hard by huge fields and there were few masters who could say with Osbaldeston "There they are, gentlemen, I have bred these beauties to please. Ride over them if you can."

His endurance was stupendous. While Master of the Pytchley he ran three foxes for a total of thirty miles. Then hacked to Cambridge to a dance, a matter of another twenty miles. Danced all night, and then hacked fourteen miles to the meet, where he hunted hounds all day and killed two more foxes. To finish the saga he rode fourteen miles to a dinner party and gave a spirited rendition of the Highland Fling. About the same period he attended at dinner where he was much smitten with the beautiful Miss Burton. Miss Craecroft, a rival belle, who was wearing a fine orchid, teased Miss Burton about the inferiority of her bouquet. Osbaldeston heard the insult, immediately excused himself, mounted his horse just as he was, rode twenty-five miles to a conservatory, and returned to the Ball in time to give an even better flower to Miss Burton.

Osbaldeston's prowess with the shot gun was especially remarkable when it is remembered that he fired a muzzle-loading

flintlock. Under perfect conditions there was always a lag between the flash in the pan and the discharge from the barrel, yet the Squire was a dead shot on such fast and erratic birds as snipe. Smokeless powder never obscures vision for the second barrel, but in the Squire's day black powder was used and on windless days it hung like a pall over the muzzle, making a second shot virtually blind.

His most famous bags, usually on bets, included the day in Scotland when he killed ninety-seven grouse with ninety-seven shots. He missed twice but got two birds each with two other shots. Shooting with Mr. Hill of Thornton, he killed twenty brace of partridge with forty shots from an eighteen bore flintlock make by the celebrated Joe Manton. With a duelling pistol he could put ten bullets into the ace of diamonds at thirty feet. In a match with Lord Kennedy he killed ninety-four pigeons out of a hundred.

The Squire was also quite a man in the prize ring. He fought Shaw, the Lifeguardsman, and broke the latter's ribs. The Squire weighed less than eleven stone and was little more than five feet high while his burly adversary weighed in at fifteen stone and stood over six feet.

His interest in the Turf led to heavy losses but his fame as a jockey was made when he won his wager that he would ride two hundred miles in ten hours, number of horses being unlimited. The famous match took place at Newmarket on November 5th, 1831. The bet for a thousand guineas was made with Col. Charrite. The Squire rode the distance in eight hours and forty-two minutes, which included time for changing horses and light refreshments. He rode fifty horses in the match and used the majority of them twice. His best time was on *Tranby* who did the four mile heat in eight minutes. Great sums were bet on the event, one man wagering one thousand to one that the Squire could not ride the distance within nine hours.

Even two hundred years ago there were disagreements as to

what constituted a "Gentleman Rider." The Squire notes that "officers of the Army and Navy, members or sons of members of White's, Boodles, Brooks, Goodwood, or Bibury Clubs" were always accepted. Another buck of the era defined a Gentleman Rider as "a man who has no ostensible means of getting his bread and can keep his hands out of his breeches pockets."

As I noted above, his old age was eased by the affection and loyalty of his wife and from her we have a final picture of the old Squire. Every day after seven o'clock dinner, Mrs. Osbaldeston gave him a sovereign. With this he repaired to his club, the Portland, in Stratton Street, and proceeded to bet on billiards. He never returned with any winnings and when his eye became too weak to guide his cue, he took to more sedentary means of betting. Somebody bet him a sovereign that he could not sit twenty-four hours in his chair without moving. He took the bet and, of course, won it.

CHAPTER II

The Sahibs of India

"Wah jata, wah jata," shouted the line of beaters as a grim old boar broke cover and charged away across the plain. Behind him, their spear points glittering in the sun, thundered a little group of horsemen. For a hundred yards or so they galloped straight, then, turning like polo players at right angles, made off again to the left. A spear dipped into the waving marsh grass and came up dyed deep red. The first heat of the Kadir Cup had been won.

It was a sight that only India could produce and even the vanguard of a Mogul Emperor could not have put on a better show than that which now swept across the Ganges Valley. Strung out in front were the four restless bands of spearmen, and behind them the long thin line of native beaters armed with staves and controlled by two shikaris mounted on camels. Next a great crescent of swaying elephants carrying the spectators and finally a veritable army of syces leading the extra horses.

Pigsticking was to the sahib in India what fox hunting is to us in America and the Kadir was the Maryland Hunt Cup. As a test of man and horse it had few equals in the sporting world. I knew a good many men, in fact, who would rather have won it than the Grand National, and the fellow who did, enjoyed a lasting fame from Cape Cormorant to the Himalayas. Of course luck played some part as it does in all sports, but a cool head and a horse with the legs of a deer and the heart of a lion were absolute essentials.

The point of the competition was to draw first blood. In other

words, the first man in a heat to show crimson on his spear won the event, even though he gave the boar the merest scratch. In that respect it differed from the Meerut Cup where one had to kill the pig to win. Of course, if the animal was badly wounded by the first spear it was generally polished off by the rest of the heat, but this did not count on their score.

The meeting, which takes its name from the word Khadar, meaning low-lying country on each side of a river, was held in an area around the village of Sherpur in the district of Moradabad, thirty miles east of Meerut, and about eighty from Delhi. The country is wild and featureless consisting of mile after mile of uncultivated plain broken here and there by deep hollows or nullahs and covered with brush grass that in some places reaches to the horses' withers.

A five hour train trip from Delhi and an eighteen mile drive over wandering bullock ruts landed me at the camp called Suymana bagh, after the grove of trees in which it was situated. In fact there were four different baghs. One for the men, one for the ladies (half a mile away), another for the elephants and a fourth for the horses. My tent was complete with tub, and the long chota peg, which my friend Captain Henry Carden of the 17/21 Lancers, poured into me, augured well for the three days stay.

Early the next morning there was a great hustling of man and beast. Spears were given a last minute razor edge, horses saddled with infinite care and the elephants' howdahs roped tightly in place. There were thirty-two of the huge animals, lent for the occasion by neighboring princes, and as four people could sit on each elephant beside the mahout, the gallery was well provided. Contestants were allowed to enter two horses each, and nearly a hundred were taken for the first day's hunting. At eight sharp the lead elephant lumbered to his feet and we began the three mile trek to the starting point. There we found the beaters, lined up by Babut, the famous old one-armed shikari of

the Meerut Tent Club. He had been handling beaters since the Mutiny and rode his camel with the dignity of a Maharaja.

The heats of four men each had been chosen by draw the previous night and the first three ranged themselves in front of the beaters as we moved off. After perhaps ten minutes steady advance, one of the A. D. C. officers, whose duty it was to ride just in front of the line and follow the pig until the heat could come up, took up the gallop, and, almost under the beaters' staves, a fair rideable boar broke cover and charged off. The heat came pounding after him hell for leather, and when the umpire saw that all four of the contestants had seen the boar, dropped his flag and cried "Ride" as a sign that it was anybody's spear. In ordinary pigsticking only "rideable boars," those measuring more than twenty-seven inches from shoulder to hoof top, are hunted, but in a competition, the heat is generally loosed at smaller animals also. This boar was a big fellow and he led a strong chase. For a little way he ran straight and then suddenly "jinked," or changed his line, and made off again. The nearest man missed his spear and took a terrific header into a nullah, but the rider to the right of him had a clear field and took the pig with a beautiful dead-on lunge.

And so it went on through the long Indian day. Eight dead pigs lay in camp that evening and more than one pony limped home. If the pig charges and the rider misses, there is a good chance that he will rip the horse's legs as he passes under it and the wound inflicted by four inch tushes can easily prove fatal. A broken collarbone from a fall was the only casualty among the riders that day.

The second day's sport was even keener than the first. The original ninety-two entries had been reduced to twenty-three and the experts were coming into the home stretch. Pigs were cut quicker and with more dispatch. It seemed, in fact, that as soon as the umpire's flag dropped, a member of the heat was riding back to him with his spearhead dyed crimson. I saw one old


Paul Brown

veteran take a pig as his horse plunged down the almost vertical side of a nullah. At the bottom the pig merely shivered once before it died.

The final day found the field narrowed down to two heats of three men each, and, after a half hour's exciting chase, there were left only two, Captain Tuck, Royal Artillery, and Lieutenant Odling, Royal Horse Artillery. Tuck was Hon. Secretary of Meerut Tent Club, and an officer of the Kadir, while Odling had killed many a pig in Muttra. The significance of the last heat ran quickly along the line of elephants and there was a great urging of the mahouts to get their beasts into better viewing positions. The young lady on my elephant became so excited that she slipped half off the howdah and had to be hauled back to avoid being crushed by the next eager pachyderm. For a tense fifteen minutes the beaters failed to raise anything but the usual deer or partridge. (On the first day a good sized panther was flushed and knocked over a beater on his way back through the lines). Then when everyone could hold their breath no longer, out jumped a really fine boar, by far and away the largest of the meeting. Tuck and Odling set spurs to their horses and after a fair half mile run, came at the pig. Odling's luck was out and the pig's one jink took it almost into Tuck's spear. We saw him dip forward in the high grass once and the 1936 Kadir Cup was won.

In the afternoon there were two point to point races over fair pigsticking country, a two and a half mile grind for heavy hunters and a three and a half for lightweights. By three we were all back in camp with nothing but the serious business of drowning sorrow and toasting triumph before us. Tuck was made to sing the Hoghunter's Song, an unprintable ditty of decided merit, and drink his boot full of whiskey.

Thanks to Mr. P. W. Marsh, C.I.E. and I.C.S., President of the Meerut Tent Club, and of the Committee, I was able to learn something of the ancient and honorable beginnings of the

Kadir Cup. It seems that Mr. William Ashburn Forbes, an officer of the Indian Civil Service, was stationed in Meerut to reassess the land revenue from 1865 to 1870. He was decorated in the Mutiny and was the old type of Indian civilian who combined a love of the "simkin peg" and the sports of the field with a real understanding of his villagers. To him is generally accorded the organization of the competition.

The Meerut Tent Club Log of 1867 contains an account of the first meeting at Garhmuktesar. It was written in biblical language which I quote: "It came to pass that Fawben was a ruler in the land and collected taxes for the King. A great cry rose throughout the land from Delhi even unto Garhmuktesar and the people came unto Fawben saying 'we are mightily oppressed by the unclean beast, come now and help us or we shall die,' and Fawben said to Nill, the Scribe, 'write now unto my young men and say why tarry ye of the unclean beasts, even the soors, and slay from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same;' and there came men of the tribe of Hooza and some of the tribe of Buff, the men that are clothed in scarlet, all of them decidedly young men. And Fawben gathered together a great multitude of the tribe of Hind, hewers of wood and drawers of water and they took staves and instruments of music and smote the bushes and shouted greatly so that the unclean beasts fled before them and the young men slew many riding valiantly. At the close of the day Fawben made a feast for the young men and gave them all manner of meats and water of the brook simkin which is also called dry and Fawben took a vessel of silver in his hand and said to the young men, 'Ye have done well this day and slain many of the unclean beasts.' This cup which I shall give will be a sign to you that ye shall not be sparing of your horses until ye have utterly destroyed the soors, and he gave the vessel of silver to 'Bedol' (Mr. Biddulph, 19th Hussars) as a memorial for his horse was very swift."

Calling for a chota peg, Mr. Marsh settled again in his camp

chair after the reading and proceeded to enlighten me further on the art. The history of earlier India unfolded easily. . . . India of tongas and pukka sahibs and Mr. Kipling, when a pig horse could be picked up for three hundred rupees.

The actual forerunner of the Kadir Cup was not a pigsticking competition but a race for horses which had been used for hunting pig. In the early days, in fact, the riders were compelled to carry a spear. The meets were first run around the jail at Meerut and later across country. Mr. Forbes himself was always present and it was noted in the log that a race for the Forbes Cup without Forbes was like drinking a peg without whiskey. In 1869 Lord Mayo, the Viceroy, came himself to compete in a meet at Garhmuktesar. By 1871 the list of entries for the race had swollen to such an extent that it became necessary to limit horses to those which had taken first spear with either the Cawnpore, Allahabad, Lucknow, Agra or Benares Tent Clubs, and horses not ridden by owners had to carry a penalty of twenty-one pounds.

The real Kadir began in 1874, when an officer of the 4th Hussars and Captain Studdy, Royal Horse Artillery, donated three hundred pounds each for a pig sticking competition. It was not necessary for the pig to be killed. The deciding factor should be the first spear to draw blood. To satisfy those who wanted the old race carried on, however, a sweepstake was begun and the Hog Hunters Cup donated. Both the competition and the race have been run every year since then with the exception of time out for the Afghan War of '79 to '80 and the Great War. The last Kadir Cup was held just prior to the Second World War.

The rules prevailing at the time I attended the competition had changed but little from the original ones laid down by the two captains. In 1886 it was decided to have an umpire ride with each heat since the old elephant judge was often too far behind to give the riders a fair start. The umpire's decision is usually final and only in a case of extreme doubt can an appeal be made

to the Committee. Until 1928 no first spear was allowed to count unless blood could be shown, but this was afterwards changed to allow the umpire to give a man credit if he himself was absolutely satisfied that the hunter had penetrated the pig.

Until 1900, the heats consisted of not less than four spears but in that year heats of three were allowed and for a number of subsequent years when pig were plentiful they were favored. In later years more competitors and less pig resulted in heats of four being resumed. It was also necessary to insist that the entries be genuine pigstickers who could be trusted to use their spears properly and who would be mounted on horses with at least some hunting experience.

When the competition first started spears up to eight feet in length were allowed and it is curious that ever since the longer underhand spear has been preferred in the Meerut district to the short overhand spear which is used in Behar, Bengal and other parts of India. Recently the spear has been limited to seven feet as being an easier weapon to handle. The ruling is popular despite the fact that the Kaiser was said to have said "every inch that you add to a man's lance, you add two feet to his self esteem." The present spear is made of male bamboo that is solid wood and is weighted at the end with lead. Kadir competition spears are lighter than those used in ordinary pigsticking and can be more easily handled.

A good pig horse is of paramount importance. The horse on which Captain Tuck won this year's Kadir was twice before a winner. He romped through in both '30 and '31 with Major Richards, the owner-rider. A pig horse must be a horse, not a polo pony, but be able to handle himself as quickly as the latter and over far more difficult going. A good pigsticker gallops his own way over a treacherous plain where a fall may not only prove fatal to his own legs but may often throw his rider in front of a wounded boar. He must have no fear of the pig and drive in beside him close enough for his rider to use the spear. Often

a horse that has once been cut by a boar's tusks proves useless for the sport afterwards.

And lastly come the qualifications of the man himself. He had to be not only a good horseman but a good horse master. He had to be skillful with his spear and have a keen eye for country. He had to think quickly and be in perfect physical condition to stand the long days in the sun. In fact the men who won the Kadir could easily have posed for Kipling's "If."

Soon after witnessing the Kadir, I went up to the Northwest Frontier and had a fine day's hunting with the Lahore Hounds.

We met at six of a fine clear morning in October, about three miles from the cantonments. The ground was dry and hard from the long summer baking, except where laced by irrigation ditches. There were virtually no fences, but the banks of the ditches, like the proverbial Irish ones, were often rotten, and it took a good strong hunter to clear them successfully. Through the kindness of the Master, Major Curtis, I was given such a horse, a big Australian whaler with plenty of stamina and a strong dislike of landing in ditches.

The pack consisted of about ten couple of English hounds, whose home kennel I did not know, but whose ability to find and kill a jackal I was soon to find out. Some two dozen British Officers with a sprinkling of Indian Officers and a few girls made up the field. In addition to the Master, who hunted hounds himself, there were several honorary whips and a very smartly turned out native kennel staff.

The first draw, a mustard field beside a nasty looking ditch, yielded a big jack who promptly crossed the ditch on a plank and made off across the fields beyond. Hounds also tried the plank but their weight overbalanced it and the first two couple landed in the water. Then it was up to us, and I didn't like the challenge at all. The whaler, however, took things in hand, and

taking off a good four feet from the muddy bank, sailed the ditch and landed me safe and sound well beyond the other shore.

Jackal run very straight, and it seems to me are far faster than either the English fox or our own. They are, of course, bigger and stronger animals, and by the very nature of their struggle for existence, have developed an amazing amount of cunning and stamina. Needless to say, they are not preserved.

The jack in question carried us a good eight miles with ruler precision before hounds came to their noses beside an apparently empty wooden bridge across a dry ditch. The Master cast in all directions and was just about to give up when up popped the jack from a hidden hole in the bank under the bridge. Taking a broken field run that would have done credit to a Notre Dame back-fielder, he zigzagged through the astonished pack and made good his escape. He then led us another five miles in an equally straight line before hounds nabbed him in a brush cutter's hut and broke him up. The mask was too badly damaged to mount, but I still have a pad to remind me of one of the best hunts I have ever had in any country.

Organized hunting with foxhounds for jackal is a far older sport in India than most Americans realize. There are records of hunting near Bombay as early as 1818, and of English fox hounds being imported to Madras in 1776. The gentlemen of the Honorable East India Company liked their sport as much as Washington and Jefferson at approximately the same period in our country.

Three years before Victoria was crowned Empress of India, the Lahore Hunt was started when a regiment of the Royal Horse Artillery was stationed at the Lahore Cantonments in Upper India. The country was quiet at that time, and the officers turned to sport to fill in the long winter days. Pig sticking, black buck and partridge shooting helped, but there were many who yearned for hunting, and when Major Willis, R.H.A., dur-

ing the spring of 1874, decided to raise a pack of hounds to chivy the local jackal, he received enthusiastic support from his own and other regiments stationed at the cantonment.

In due time a draft of hounds arrived from England, and the Lahore Hunt began its history which with a few lapses continued for the past seventy-four years. It was only in 1948, in fact, that it was finally decided, due to the exodus of British officers, that the Hunt would have to be given up. The hounds were presented to the Rajah of Chamba by the last Master, Colonel Bolton, with the understanding that he would return them if hunting at Lahore was ever revived.

As an epilogue to the Lahore Hunt, I will mention an incident that occurred when I returned to see some friends there during the late war. It was out of season, so there was no hunting, but we took a long ride over the country and stopped in at a village for a sandwich lunch which we had carried with us. The head man, a magnificent old boy with curling white whiskers and faded campaign ribbons pinned on his tunic, came to see us. He asked my friend, Colonel Royce, what was going to happen to the Hunt after India got her independence, and was told that it would probably have to fold up.

His reply, translated to me, seemed prophetic, and I made notes on it at the time; roughly, it ran this way.

"Colonel Sahib, if the officers who hunt the jackal go, the soldiers will go, and with them will go the peace of this village. There are many bad men to the North (he meant the border tribes) who want our cattle and grain and women. When they hear that you are no longer at the great Cantonment, they will come and kill us."

The communal riots at Lahore during the division of the subcontinent between Pakistan and India were among the worst in India, and the jackals grew fat and lazy.

My headquarters, during the fall of 1944, were at Delhi and in order to keep in some sort of shape physically I rented a re-

liable old "waler." He was nothing much to look at but he could gallop with the best of them and had the iron legs capable of standing up under the constant jarring of the baked Indian plain.

I rode almost every evening and as it is possible to take a horse anywhere around New Delhi, there being no wire and few hard roads, I saw a good deal of the city and its historic suburbs.

One of my favorite rides started at the wrought iron gates of Hyderabad's Palace. From there I cantered across the lawn of the Central Vista to the city gate of Kair Ul Manada. Under it, at that time of the evening, flocked a throng of sweepers, the criminal tribesmen, classed as untouchable by most of India, but always singing as they walked back to their hovels in the sweepers' village just outside the walls. The men salaamed and the women drew their shawls over bright eyes in case they offended. Only the little naked babies, carried usually by their elder brothers or sisters, smiled unashamed.

A scant quarter mile from the gate rise the walls of the old Fort of Intrapat, also known as Purana Kila. Built on the ruins of almost mythical Indraprastha by the great Moslem Emperor Humayun, the fort contains the fine red Mosque of Sher Shah, and the little building of Sher Mandal, where Humayun slipped while rising from evening prayer and died a few days later of his injuries. An old Indian fortune teller squatted on the inlaid piazza and prophesied promotion, love and home for eight annas.

Leaving the Fort I rode out across the brown rolling hills beyond to the railway embankment where the city ends. Passing through an underpass I emerged into the open country bordering the Jumna and had a long gallop between the yellow mustard fields to the river itself. A few fishermen lived on the bank and I always paid to see the catch. Mostly they had the little white fish of the Indian rivers but occasionally a twenty pound mahseer that made me wish for the tackle to go after him prop-

erly. The river turned deep purple at sunset and the herons and wildfowl stood like painted sentinels along its sand bars.

Turning toward the city again, I rode through a stretch of river jungle where the tracks of boar used to gladden the hearts of Delhi's pre-war pigstickers. Twice I surprised an old tusker who sidled away grunting. Many jackal also have their lair in the area and the fishermen told me that a hyena had come there lately.

Recrossing the railway embankment, I rode across country to the marble-latticed Mausoleum of Humayun, and dismounting, climbed to the top to see the sunset over the city. It was dusk when I rode back to my barracks to find my Nepalese syce, waiting under the big trees with carrots for my horse and a broad Gurkha smile for me.

It was the pleasant habit of Colonel Jack Toyne of the Indian Army and his wife Nancy, to spend their holidays shooting and riding, rather than drinking and sleeping, so when Lt. Tom Davis of Wenham, Massachusetts, and I were invited to have Christmas day with them, we knew it would not end up with a hang-over. In fact, we were told to appear at nine A.M. on horseback with shotguns.

The day, like almost every other at this time of year in Central India, was perfect, with clear blue skies and just enough chill in the air to make the horses want to dance. The guns and lunch were dispatched in a tonga by a short route, while the four of us started on a long sweep of the countryside. Unlike most cities, New Delhi has virtually no suburbs. One minute you are cantering along the bridle path which parallels the sidewalks and the next you are in open country, picking your way between the irrigation canals or racing across the long barrens.

The land is flat and except for the green plots of mustard and thin struggling wheat, stretches away to the hazy skyline in a vast yellow plain, sere and hungry for rain. It is not a lush country like England, nor a majestic one like America, but it

has a certain ageless beauty that one grows to like. The crumbling walls of the forgotten cities, the tiny villages whose thatched roofs melt into the plain, the friendly wave of the farmer and the onyx stare of his stately bullock.

A few miles from Delhi we passed the tomb of Nizam Ud Din, a daughter of Shah Jehan, who chose to live in poverty but was buried very beautifully. A caravan of camels piled with firewood moved slowly before its blue grey walls and the horses shied. A little farther, the red Minaret of Qutab Ud Din, decapitated by an earthquake, loomed on the horizon and a mile or so beyond we came on the village of Kalkachi Devi, where the good twin giants used to do all the farm work for everyone. Then came the grim walls of the fifth Delhi which the Tuglak emperor built, and which was deserted for lack of water after barely thirty years of tenure.

By this time the sun was high and the horses were beginning to lather as we swung around to the little lake beyond Agra Canal, where lunch was waiting. Nancy could not have picked a better place. Green grass ran up from the water's edge to nullahs cut in the bank of the plain and in one of these we ate and then stretched in the sun and watched a tireless kingfisher divebomb the fish of the lake, and a herd of water buffalo swim silently across the far end.

This pleasant loafing was soon ended by the arrival of the "shikari" consisting of five farmers whom Jack had hired to beat for us. Despite the fact that he expects to be and is paid for it, the average Indian farmer likes to beat for guns and these were all smiles. The first field, a mustard plantation of perhaps fifty acres, produced a big Indian hare which Jack bowled over with a very nice left swing. A moment afterwards five partridges rocketed out of the bushes in front of me and for some unaccountable reason I merely watched them fly. This produced a lengthy cackle from my beater to the effect that partridges were really quite good to eat and the Sahib should indeed try to hit

them. To cheer him up I did kill the next bird, but was far behind Jack, who in the meantime had been steadily accumulating his bag. We had three good hours of shooting before the sun started to dip and we returned to the horses, tired but very satisfied.

Few American officers in Delhi rode and still less hunted, but there was a small group of us who turned out as faithfully as we could for the Sunday morning meets of the Delhi hounds. Among these were Colonels Rose and Peake, Majors Schaffer and Rand and myself. Bill Rand was with the service of supply and among his numerous duties was the care of stables of pack horses, veterans of Guadalcanal which for some reason had been assigned to the Delhi quartermaster. Some of these proved able to negotiate the country, however, and Bill could always be counted on to provide a mount for anyone wanting to hunt.

Colonel Codrington, the British veterinary officer of the Delhi command, was the master and he reigned over a very scratch pack of hounds. They were all sizes and all colors but they could run a jackal and occasionally kill him.

My hunting diary of November 16, 1944, notes that we met at the Pembari Bridge at seven. Ten couple of hounds out and a field of about fifty, among them several British generals and one minor Rajah.

The first draw, a thick citrus grove behind the brick kilns near the bridge, produced a jack who gave us a good twenty minutes before he headed back into cover. He would have been stopped from doing this if a pony stallion had not broken loose from a village barn and taken the whip's attention away from his job. The damn pony later spied the field and caused a devil of a mess before he was caught.

The second draw, a cane brake on the opposite side of the Ambala road, also held mischief, and before hounds were half way through it a big jackal streaked out of the other end and

took off across country in full view of the field. I managed to get away well with hounds having been invited to stay up with the whips. The country is flat, hard and cut by endless ditches. My horse, who must have had some blood in him, took off well and sailed the ditches with ease but the jar on the landing end was stiff. The clear sunny days since the monsoon had baked the untilled fields to cement and left the thin Indian crops little softer. I was surprised that we didn't go round these crops, but the prevailing sentiment seemed to be that a bit of stirring up does them good. In any case the villages get some backshish from the hunt for riding over crops and they seemed to enjoy watching the run as much as we did.

The jack gave us about six miles almost straight before he turned and dived into another cane brake. Hounds quickly moved him out but the sun was strong by then, and despite the fact that he had barely a three minute lead on them out of cover, they were unable to own the line when they emerged themselves. Colonel Codrington told me that the minute the dew was off the land, all scent disappeared and there was no use in trying further.

We were home by ten and back at the office at work by ten-thirty.

The Delhi hounds were kenneled at the Viceregal stables and Colonel Codrington showed them to me at feeding time. They were certainly a scratch lot, but in view of the fact that there had been no imports from England for the past five years and that breeding was necessarily restricted to the Indian packs, the results were not too bad.

There were nine and a half couple, about evenly divided between Welsh and English strains. The stud books show that the original drafts came from the Cottesmore but where the Welsh blood originated is not stated. I do not think Mr. Isaac Bell would claim them. One curious effect of either the Indian climate or the inbreeding was to produce sterns like pekinese.

On some of the hounds the "stern" circle had been virtually completed.

As far as I could gather, the pack was started in 1922, and has changed masters almost every year since. Colonel Codrington returned to England and I believe the Delhi Hunt did not long survive him.

Those were the last days of the British Raj and wishing to see as much of the Viceregal Lodge as I could while it was still the seat of government, I requested the then Viceroy, Lord Wavell, for permission to look around. He generously showed me the Lodge himself and after a drink turned me loose in the grounds to wander where I pleased. I naturally gravitated to the stables and on entering I was greeted by a very old and very straight Indian servant.

He saluted and asked me if I would like to see the coaches. Carefully, almost reverently, he showed them to me, one by one. First the state coach that came from England in 1901. It was a Victoria with all its brass shining and the great seal of India on its doors. Then came the Vicereine's coach, the less formal coaches, the informal surreys, the box carts. Not one had been used in twenty years but every one could be taken out immediately and do its keeper proud.

He showed me the harness room. Row upon shining row of bits, leather soaped and rubbed to a fine patina of mahogany, and the white horse hair fly brushes that waved over the heads of forgotten Viceroys. But perhaps the mutest testimony to a grander age were the lines of shoes and caps. Twenty pairs of black shoes with shining brass buckles and twenty black hunting caps with gold braid on the top, comprising the official accoutrement of the Viceregal coachmen when the rulers of India went abroad.

Later one of the Viceroy's A. D. C.'s told me that the old man had been the Viceregal coachman for the past thirty years

and lived on, in the hope that there would be another Durbar before he died.

Certainly the most unexpected day's sport of the war occurred in Calcutta in the spring of 1945.

I had just flown in from China and the change from the cool air of the Yunnan Mountains to the wet heat of Bengal hit one between the eyes. The monsoon clouds hung low in the sky, but little rain had fallen and the parched land seemed gasping for moisture. Nothing, in fact, was further from my mind than beagling when Lt. Colonel Simpson Dean, peace-time Master of the Vicmead Hunt of Wilmington, Delaware, suddenly appeared in shorts, announced he was going out with hounds and urged me to come. Gulping the last of a gin sling, I joined him and we drove to General Wakely's.

Although Major General A. V. T. Wakely had a string of decorations ranging from D. S. O. to M. C., I quickly got the impression that the one he valued most was that of Master of the only beagle pack in India. At that time eleven packs of fox hounds hunted jackal but the general's two and a half couple of beagles represented the only pack of these famous little hounds in the subcontinent.

The pack, looking very workmanlike despite the heat, were gathered on the lawn under the charge of three Indian whippers-in armed with staves. The object of the latter is to force a way through the thick undergrowth and to assist in jumping the deep ditches that abound in this part of Bengal. The General, Mrs. Wakely, two British majors, Colonel Dean, and I made up the field.

By this time it was six in the evening and the great heat of the day had passed. Occasionally warm breezes stirred the palms and in the shadow of the thorn trees it was possible to walk without too much effort. Hounds were first cast into an acre of brambles, while the rest of us surrounded the covert. The little fellows

drew it systematically and near the far end pushed two good sized jackal into the open. Scent was so poor, however, that, despite the fact the jack was barely twenty feet ahead of hounds, they could not own the line. As one of the whippers-in aptly put it "the smell is not." The remainder of the evening produced several more finds but hounds could do nothing with them, and we finally gave up and walked home in the gold and purple blaze of the Indian sunset.

Over numerous long cool drinks, I learned the history of the pack. Back in 1938, the General bought three hounds, *Duster*, *Passion* and *Relish* from Mrs. Otho Paget, Master of the Thorpe Satchville Beagles in England, and brought them to India. They showed great sport in the United Provinces, where the General was stationed. Later when the General was transferred to the Punjab, he bred from the original hounds, and excellent sport was enjoyed in the country around Attock on the borders of the Northwest Frontier Province. When the General went on active service to Burma, Mrs. Wakely carried on with the beagles. In 1942 the General was in military charge in Bihar during the anti-Government trouble. Here, not only the General and his staff, but also the "rebels," enjoyed runs with the little hounds. After picketing the General's house in the mornings, they joined the beagles in the evenings. Possibly the object of the picketing was to make sure that the General did not disappear on tour before beagling time.

In 1943 the General went to Bengal to assist in alleviating the effects of severe famine in the Province. His duties there left little time for beagling but they entailed tours throughout the Province, and the little hounds went along with him. In a land of big rivers they travelled to covert by boat and hunted along the banks of the rivers. On these trips first-class sport was enjoyed, the only anxiety being to avoid chance encounters with tigers and panthers. This must be one of the few occasions in history

when the banks of the mighty Ganges reverberated to the cry of hounds.

The quarry hunted by the beagles is cosmopolitan, jackal, hare, fox and "baghrul," the Persian hunting cat. Despite his cat-like appearance the baghrul is a stout runner and gives long points. When that elusive but necessary concomitant scent is present, consistently good runs up to four miles and more take place. They are all within walking distance of the General's residence in the 24 Parganas District of Bengal near Calcutta. I noticed that hounds were remarkably steady to cur dogs and never opened on any line until they were sure of its nature.

The General started his hunting career with the Island Hunt in Ireland about 1890. Coming out to India in 1926, he was Master of the Delhi Hounds for two seasons, and later Master of the famous Peshawar Vale Hunt, the "shire" pack of India. He was personally responsible for the formation of the Masters of Foxhounds Association of India in 1929. The General went home soon after I saw him to renew his acquaintance with the forty or so packs he has hunted with in England and Ireland.

The problems confronting masters of hounds in India were always multiple and on a recent trip to England I had the pleasure of meeting Sir Robert Dunlop, whose experiences while reigning over the Bombay Hunt at the turn of the century are both amusing and illuminating.

In the quiet of an old St. James Street club, and over some equally ancient port, Sir Robert told me of his troubles in finding grooms. A keen applicant wrote as follows:

"The horse is a noble quadruped, but when he is angry is not so. He is ridden on the cord by the bridle. Sadly the driver puts his foots in the stirrups and divides his lower limbs across the saddle and drives his animal to the meadow. He has four legs; two are in the front side and two are afterwards. These are the weapons on which he runs, and also defends himself by extending

those in the rear in a parallel direction towards his foe, but this he does only when in a vexatious mood. His fooding is generally grasses and grains. He is also useful to take on his back a man or woman, as well as some cargo. He has power to run as fast as he could. He has got no sleep at night times and always standing awaken."

While Sir Robert's job in India was Solicitor General to the Viceroy he often came on legal problems in connection with the hunt that quite stymied him. Viz., the bill for damages submitted by an irate Goanese half-caste in the year of grace 1908.

"To the Manger of the Fox Hunting Company, Camp, Santa Cruz, I, the undersigned, beg to bring to your kind notice this morning I was out of my house for my work. Unfortunately the dogs belonging to the Fox Hunting Company enter in my house after the fox and some of the fox hunting officers also. The damages had been caused as under: Sixteen small chickens killed by dogs in rushed, 4 annas each; One cloth bed sheet torn by dogs and also bedding dirty by officers. 36 eggs broken by dogs inrushed; one pigling bitten by dogs inrushed. Etceteras to a total of 16 rupees. Signed Enos Penton D'Sousa. (Signatures of police Patel and ten witnesses)." Of course the hunt paid.

A description of Anglo-Indian hunting as reported by one George Cecil of the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* of 1910, is no more quaint than the writing of some equally uninformed sporting editors of today.

"Although seven out of every ten Anglo-Indians are interested in horses, hunting, alas, is confined to certain centres. In India the conditions are very different to those prevailing in England. Owing to the appalling heat, hounds meet shortly after daybreak. Indeed the sportsman usually has to dress by candle-light and the lamps of the "tun-tun" or dog cart in which the sahib drives to the meet are also lit. After exchanging

greetings with his enthusiastic supporters, the master gives the signal to his whips, who wear pink and sola-topis, or the orthodox velvet caps which are covered by a white cloth the minute the sun is up."

Describing the jackal of a half century ago, the local scribe wrote thusly: "The jackal takes just as much beating as a fox and sometimes more. Even when the leading hound has opened its jaws to seize the jackal, he often manages to make good his escape." Sir Robert said that a good season's kill was twenty brace.

The country was hard, with plenty of jumping. Cactus hedges and grass-topped mud walls formed most of the obstacles. Wire in those days was almost unknown. The field was careful to keep off irrigated patches and the cultivators always had a kindly feeling toward the hunt.

The Bombay pack of Sir Robert's time consisted of thirty couple of hounds drafted from many of the best English packs. The rigors of the Indian climate however, were too much for many hounds. In the season of 1892-93, seven couple died of "malaria." Lung trouble, due probably to the Indian dust, was also a cause of many casualties. The Master of 1898 noted candidly, however, that five couple were done in by being ridden over by the field.

Oat meal in those days was cheap and Sir Robert used to import it for the pack from England at fifteen pounds a ton. It was such a good grade of meal that he often fed it also to his guests. Flesh consisted largely of goats which made the proceedings rather odoriferous. Seven kennel boys were employed and every hound was groomed and examined for thorn scratches daily. The hunt budget was about 12,000 rupees, or $4,000 in our money.

The Bombay Hunt was still a going concern, although it merged with the Poona and Kirkee Hounds, in 1947, and added

their names to its official title. The master was E. D. Sheppard and twenty-three couple of English and crossbreds hunted the two countries. Meets were held in the Bombay country from December to March and on the Poona side from July to October.

CHAPTER III

Beagling in America

"Hunting causeth a man to eschew the seven deadly sins" wrote Edward, Second Duke of York in 1406, and, while we do not quite hold with His Grace that all those who do not beagle are given over to "sloth, gluttony, envy and lechery," there is a great deal to be said for the sport when compared with the tamer temptations of a Sunday afternoon in the fall and winter. Where is the pageantry in paddle tennis! Where the fervor in mere walking! Compare the misguided ice skaters flitting aimlessly over a small pond with the soul-stirring chase after purposeful hounds. And for that matter, what sportsman would harken to Beethoven on the radio when hounds were in full cry in the fields.

Beagling as a community sport is looking up. Not only does it offer the delights described above but it can be enjoyed for very little money. Subscriptions to such packs as the Treweryn outside Philadelphia and the Buckram on Long Island are nominal and give the member six months of hunting. All of which brings me to my point, namely to outline as briefly as possible the way to start and maintain a pack of beagles on a moderate budget with the help of the community. I did, with a fair degree of success, do just that in New Canaan, Connecticut, just prior to the late war.

The prime requisite, of course, is suitable land and before anything else the prospective master of a new pack should look carefully into the area he intends to hunt. The permission and the general good graces of all the land owners is a basic essential for beagling. Remember how John Jorrocks warned his mem-

bers that they should beware of the cockney who "looks upon a farmer as an inferior crittur—a sort of domestic conwict, transplanted far beyond the bills of morality, and condemned to wander in 'eavy 'ob-nailed shoes amid eternal hacres o'dirt and dandylions." Sometimes, of course, one runs into the humanitarian who dislikes the thought of chasing bunnies, but he can usually be gotten around by reminding him what they are doing to his flower garden. Then again, a quart of whiskey is an excellent persuader. All land owners should, of course, be invited to hunt.

The question of game is usually easy, for cottontail rabbits (incidentally misnamed as they are really hares) abound along the eastern seaboard. Their great failing as sporting quarry is their unwillingness to stay out in the open long. A run of ten to fifteen minutes is about their usual limit. The alternative is the importation, if the State law will allow, of Jack rabbits (also really hares) from the West. These will live and sometimes breed in fairly open rolling country. Their drawback is that they are prone to run roads where scent is poor. By far the best quarry is European hares (wrong again—they are rabbits found around Millbrook, N. Y.) but under existing Federal laws they cannot be imported, even from Canada.

Having received permission to hunt over the countryside and having made sure of your game, you are now ready to think about acquiring some hounds. The wisest course is to go to the master of one of the better known packs and buy a few couple outright instead of trusting to your own judgment in picking up single hounds from anywhere. With two good bitches you can soon have a dozen puppies and your pack is well started. The most important thing is a good blood line and most registered packs watch their breeding carefully.

The kenneling and kennel management of your pack is of great importance to the health of your hounds. If you cannot afford to build a kennel, a good strong chicken house can be

made into quite satisfactory quarters. I converted two chicken houses to this use by dividing them into three compartments each, two of which were for hound living quarters and one for feeding. The interiors were first fumigated and then whitewashed. Both houses had runs enclosed by two hundred and fifty feet of galvanized wire (hounds break out of chicken wire). Large trees growing in the enclosures shaded the hounds in summer. By shifting my pack weekly from one kennel to the other and treating the vacant yard with lime, I managed to avoid distemper. In addition to my two main kennels, I had two small ones for bitches with puppies.

If your choice of a kennel man is limited to one of your own servants, I strongly advise one who likes hounds better than waiting on the table and driving the car. A master can put up with a few broken plates and an occasional dented bumper if he knows his hounds are getting the right attention. As most masters have to be at business five days a week, the importance of the kennel man to the pack cannot be overestimated. Hounds will undoubtedly thrive on many different kinds of feed, but we had considerable success with Gaines prepared food plus cooked meat once a week, and a small allowance of cod-liver oil.

The cost of maintaining ten to twelve couple of hounds on such a basis ran then to about $1,000 a year, but today it is three times as much. This is an inclusive figure and should take care of even such incidentals as the printing and mailing of fixture cards and the "buttering" of an occasional rabbit lover. It is then up to the master to raise as much of this sum as he can from the community. He probably will not meet his costs until the pack has been established for several years, but it has been my experience that he can count on a substantial return even during the first season. The best solution, of course, is to organize a pack with the full cost underwritten in advance by the members.

To the average person, however, the beagles are presumed to be a nice young couple they have never met and it is up to the

would-be master to stir interest and then educate them. The appointment of a Hunt Committee which has a wide circle of friends is a good idea, as is the enrollment of some of the younger generation as whips, but the best selling point you can give a prospective member is a good day's sport. Like a hit on Broadway, it draws by reputation, and once an addict, the beagler is usually a loyal supporter of his pack. A percentage of my field always turned up despite the worst possible weather, and tramped cheerfully through oceans of mud!

As it is impossible for the average master of a small pack to hunt his hounds and also give time to the field by way of explanation, a field master with a thorough knowledge of the sport should be appointed. It should be his duty to see that the members of the field get their questions answered and have the high lights of hunting pointed out to them. In addition I sent all subscribers a summary of the sport including a glossary of hunting terms and the names of the hounds. By knowing which hounds are hunting, the member got infinitely more fun out of the sport, and by learning the correct terms for it, he soon felt himself one of the initiated.

Instead of referring to the pack as "our dogs" he spoke of them properly as bitch and dog hounds. He learned that a hound's tail is called a "stern" and that he does not wag it, but "feathers" it. When the hare sprang up before hounds he did not shout "there goes the bunny" and take off after it, but stood stock still and pointed with his cap to the line taken while at the same time uttering the stentorian cry, "Tantara," the ancient hunting halloa of the hare hunter. The shout and the waving cap not only notified the huntsman that a hare had been found but showed him where the quarry had gone.

He soon realized that there are manners in the hunting field as well as in the drawing room and that loud talking not only distracted the hounds from their job but drew scowls from those intent on the day's sport. He closed gates, particularly when the

fields held cattle and sheep. He did not dash across newly planted fields and did not crash through gardens. While Master of the Kingsland, I was once presented with a large bill for some rose bushes members of my field had allegedly broken in passing.

He learned a good deal about the hare herself. That she does not live in a burrow like rabbits but makes her "form" or nest in an open field and changes it often. That her young are known as "leverets" and unlike rabbits, which are born blind and naked and must nurse their mother for a period of time, the young hare arrives in the world wide awake, fully clothed and capable of fending for himself almost immediately.

He knows that when that rare event a "kill" takes place the huntsman first removes the trophies, i.e., the head of the hare, known as the "mask" and the hind feet, known as the "pads." If he is lucky and a good enough runner to be in at the kill, he may be presented with one of these mementos of his and the hounds' prowess. Such a trophy should be mounted and inscribed with the name of the pack, the date and the length of the run.

When the master has his organization fairly established, he should apply to the secretary of the National Beagle Club, at present writing, Mr. Morgan Wing of Millbrook, N. Y., for permission to register his pack and his country. Every pack has distinctive colors worn on the collars of their green hunting coats. These green coats and the rest of a hunting uniform which consists of a black velvet cap, white stock, white trousers, green socks and white spats, are worn only by the master, his whips, and such other members of the field whom the master has designated as having earned the privilege. A lesser reward for earnest beagling is given in the form of brass buttons inscribed with the initials of the hunt.

Next to the master, who actually hunts the hounds with a copper horn, the job most to be desired is that of whip. I had four

whips to help me with the Kingsland and they were all carefully chosen for charm as well as brains and running ability. Two were always girls and Mary Challinor of Darien, Conn., and Polly Mathesius of Stamford, Conn., were spectacular additions to hunting. To see them flying after hounds on a bright autumn afternoon with a bevy of Yale and Harvard boys strung out behind was to wonder who was chasing who. Two of my best known male whips were Stuart Higley of New Canaan and Harrison Houston of Greenwich. Both of whom had amazing powers of endurance and long after the pack had dwindled to a thread in the distance, I could see these stalwarts skimming the fields and leaping the walls behind them.

It is, of course, necessary to breed unless, like the prodigal son, one wishes to live off one's capital. The cost of maintaining a lot of young ones in the kennel during the summer can be avoided, however, if the British practice of "walking" puppies is instituted. This consists of allowing various members of the hunt to take a brace of little ones home with them for that period. Beagle puppies have charm and eat little but are hardly mannered house pets. A wire run in the yard is the best place to raise them and teach them their names. Among the best "walks" I had was that of Mr. and Mrs. Hans Springorum of Greenwich. So solicitous were they of *Humble* and *Humorous* that these puppies returned to me in the fall fit to compete at any canine beauty show.

There are today fifteen packs of foot beagles registered with the National Beagle Club and the boundaries of the beagling world stretch from the Widford Beagles at Novelty, Ohio, in the heart of the Middle West to the Waldingfield Beagles of Westwood, Mass., on the Atlantic seaboard. Farthest north are the Don Valley Beagles of Toronto, Canada. The oldest pack still hunting is the Vernon Somerset of Peapack, N. J. Formed in 1920 by the amalgamation of two packs, the Somerset founded at Bernardsville, N. J., in 1883 and the Vernon Place

Beagles started at Cambridge, Mass., in 1912. The late Richard V. N. Gambrill, the master, served for many years as secretary of the National Beagle Club and did more than any other person to foster the sport in America in recent times.

While few beagle masters care about dog shows all who can should send hounds to the Bryn Mawr Hound Show at Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. It would be well worth while, in fact, for any prospective master to go to this show and study the various types of hounds competing. Broadly speaking there are two divisions of beagles, thirteen and fifteen inch hounds. For an open rolling country consisting mainly of grass pasture land like that of the Treweryn Beagles of Berwyn, Pennsylvania, a thirteen inch pack is plenty big enough. As "Bun" Sharp, master of the flying Treweryns will testify, few men can stay with his hounds when they open on a hare. For a rougher terrain which includes woodlands and plowed fields, the fifteen inch is more suitable. My own pack was composed of the larger hounds, but I often wished at the end of a long hard day that I was able to emulate Queen Elizabeth who had a fine pack of ten inchers.

Another important event in the beagling year is the National Trials held in November at Aldie, Virginia, by the National Beagle Club. Here one sees in competition not only the representatives of the packs but outstanding hounds belonging to individual owners. The Club owns over five hundred acres stocked with cottontails and every hound gets an adequate opportunity to show his stuff. These trials have been held since 1890 and have done much to promote the breeding of hard hunting hounds.

Once a year in late January, the masters of the various packs with their whips and members get together at an annual dinner held in New York at either the Racquet and Tennis Club or the Knickerbocker Club. A description of one of the best of these dinners follows:

With the savory aroma of jugged hare mixing mellifluously with that of "spirited" liquors, the Sixteenth Annual Dinner of the Masters of Beagles got off to a Jorrockian start. I doubt, in fact, if the famous green grocer himself could have ordered a meal more certified to please the inner man and stimulate the lagging hounds of memory.

The hares were a present from Allan Snowden, Master of the Don Valley Beagles of Toronto, Canada, and their advent at the dinner marked the only legitimate time that these famous hares had been imported south of the Border. "Too bad they aren't alive," said a master, tired of running cottontails, while another purist looked sorrowfully at his plate and made a sotto voce remark about the moral issue of devouring anything so sacred to the beagle world. "Like eating one's aunt, only worse," he concluded.

Morgan Wing, Secretary of the National Beagle Club and Toastmaster, deserved great credit for the fast way in which he maneuvered the speakers up and down. Some three dozen masters and their staffs made up the party, and all agreed that the speeches were the shortest and best at any dinner to date.

A high point of the evening was the presentation by Joe Child, Master of the Waldingfield Beagles, of a puppy to John Cowperthwaite, Master of the Reddington Foot. Years ago, John helped the Waldingfield with a draft, and little *Waldingfield Minstrel* was a dividend to help John get his pack started again.

Ostrom Enders, Master of the Waterville Beagles of Avon, Connecticut, also announced that he was starting up his pack again and hoped to be able to get a few hounds from Alfred Bissell's Stockford down in Wilmington, Delaware.

Charles Rogers, Master of the Timber Ridge Bassets, made his maiden speech and expressed the hope that his pack would be recognized by the Club. The Timber Ridge is the first basset

pack to apply for membership in the National Beagle Club, and I for one feel that the trend toward slower hounds should be definitely encouraged.

Henry Thompson, ex-Master of the Buckram Beagles, made his usual pithy contribution to the speeches, and it is a shame that the mail laws do not allow me to reprint it.

Kimball Clement, Master of the Pentucket, rendered "Albert and the Lion" without a single omission and disappointed many of us old beaglers who hoped to be able to correct him. Without "Albert and the Lion," it wouldn't have been a Beagle Dinner, and the greatest compliment we can give to Kimball is that through the years, his audience has almost learned the epic too.

Chetwood Smith, Master of the Sir-Sister Beagles, and one of the oldest members of the National Beagle Club, gave us a charming picture of beagling more than sixty years ago. I will quote:

> "The Sir-Sister Beagles had its conception in a small lumber camp in northern Maine situated on Tim Pond, sixteen miles from the Canadian border in July, 1882, where the present master stopped with his father on a fishing trip. He was nine years old.
>
> There was a small hound at the camp, probably one-quarter spaniel and three-quarters beagle, that spent all day, every day and many nights running white hare (Lepus Americanus). During the preceding January, she had a litter of six pups sired by a half beagle and spaniel. The youngster begged his father to buy all six pups, which by the end of July had begun to run with the bitch; this was refused, but a compromise was made and the 'kid' proudly returned home in August with a male pup, the smallest in the litter. But the thought of having several rabbit dogs to run together was implanted in the youthful mind and has remained there ever since. The pup named *Caribou* developed into a good rabbit dog and for eight years was the constant companion of his owner.
>
> During the winter of 1889, on a cold morning with six inches of snow and a crust strong enough to walk on, *Caribou*, his

owner and Senator Rufus B. Dodge, with his thoroughbred registered beagle, *The Hound of Baskerville* sallied forth to hunt white hare. *Caribou* jumped a hare while we were getting out of the sleigh and lead *Baskerville* on body scent for fifty yards; for the next three hours, the beagle followed the hare track seldom faster than a walk, with *Caribou* following, most of the time trying to make out the line, but was only successful where there was a little light scattering of snow on the crust. The future Master of the Sir-Sister Beagles, then and there, resolved when he was through college to own a pack of beagles."

The history of beagling goes back into dim antiquity but by the fourth century before Christ, there rose a writer imminently capable of preserving for posterity the joys of the chase. The great Greek general and historian Xenophon in his *Essay on Hunting* gave us an account of ancient hare hunting that is as fresh today as it was two thousand years ago. From his essay and my travels in Greece, I have tried to reconstruct a day with his kennels which follows:

Being a private pack, the meet of Mr. Xenophon's Hounds on the Plain of Marathon, some twenty miles from Athens, was not cried in the market place, but invitations on clay tablets, suitably embossed with a hare's head, were sent by liveried slaves several days in advance to his closest hunting companions. Ten couple of his best Castorian hounds and an experienced net man were assembled on the grassy Plain near the rustic temple of Diana.

It was a fine day of late fall, with just enough breeze blowing in from the Ionian Sea to cool the sunny pastures, and ruffle the clear surface of the brook which bisects the Plain. Mr. Xenophon greeted his friends, called a few favorite hounds by name, and ordered the hunt to start. *Porpax* and *Thymus* soon had a hare started and, the pack honoring, the hunt was on. Hounds were trained to drive the hare in great circles and eventually, after tiring her, push her into the nets which had been rigged

by the net man. The Field made no attempt to follow but reclined under trees near the nets and enjoyed the music. To quote the ancient Greek's feelings on the matter, "so charming is the sight that to see the hare tracked, found, pursued and caught is enough to make any man forget his heart's desire."

Tracing the beginning of hunting from the time it was invented by the gods Apollo and Artemis, Xenophon enlarges on the advantages of hunting in the education of youth. "The first pursuit that a young man just out of boyhood should take up is hunting and afterwards he should go on to the other branches of education if he has the means."

Discussing hounds, Xenophon said that those used should be of two kinds, the Castorian and the Vulpine. The Castorian was so called because the god Castor paid special attention to the breed, making it a hobby. The Vulpine on the other hand was smaller and was believed at the time to have been developed from a cross between a dog and a fox. Xenophon did not think much of most Vulpine hounds and described them as "hooked-nosed, grey-eyed, blinking, dull coated, and unsound of feet." He added that "Hook-nosed hounds often had great difficulty biting the hare." Skirters also gave him trouble. "Some of these merely pretended to hunt, while others, out of jealousy, perpetually scamper about together beside the line."

The net of it was that Xenophon was a Castorian hound man and goes into great detail on his reasons for the choice. Some of these passages are strongly suggestive of the American vs. British hound arguments of two thousand years later.

"The head should be light, flat and muscular; the lower parts of the forehead sinewy; the eyes prominent, black and sparkling; the forehead broad."

"When tracking they should hold their heads well down and smile when they find the scent. Then lower their ears and give tongue freely, dogging the hare's steps wherever she goes."

The Athenian bench standard of the day seems to have set

some store by color, but Xenophon, like all good hound men, did not care about exteriors if hounds hunted well. He did say, however, that the color of a hound "should not be entirely tawny, black or white, for this is not a sign of good breeding; on the contrary unbroken color indicates a wild strain."

His observations on scent would have warmed the heart of Beckford. "The scent of a hare lies long in winter owing to the length of the night. There is no scent in the early morning whenever there is a white frost or the earth is frozen hard. A heavy dew obliterates scent by carrying it downwards; and storms, occurring after a long interval, draw smells from the earth and make the ground bad for smells until it dries."

The current expression of the "March Hare" must also have been extant in Xenophon's day as he says: "Scent is most irregular at the full of the moon. Hares, enjoying the light, fling themselves high in the air and jump a long way, frolicking with one another."

While there were no game laws as such, the young leverets were always presented in honor of the goddess Artemis. It was believed that the hare had poor sight, due in some respects to the fact that it went so fast that "she glances at an object and is past it in a flash before she realizes its nature." For this reason she was not too hard to force into the nets.

Xenophon gave the hare full credit as a beast of the chase and said "if she ran straight, she would seldom meet mishap and in a fair run she is seldom beaten by hounds due to her speed. Indeed there is nothing in the world of equal size to match the hare as a piece of mechanism."

Describing the hunted hare Xenophon waxes poetical: "Here is proof of her agility. When going quietly she springs—no one ever saw or ever will see a hare walking—bringing the feet forward in advance of the fore-feet and outside them; and that is how she runs. The scut is of no assistance to her in running for it is not able to steer the body owing to its shortness. The hare

does this by means of her ears; and when she is roused by the hounds she drops one ear on the side on which she is being pressed and throws it aslant, and then bearing on this she wheels round sharply and in a moment leaves the assailant far behind."

Many civilizations have waxed and waned since this ancient beagler's day, but the hare has proved quite able to withstand the ravages of time. If anything, she has improved her prospects as an excerpt from one of my hunting diaries of 1940 will show.

We met on a cold clear Sunday morning at eleven of a December's day at the home of Mrs. Roger Lapham at New Canaan, Conn. Fourteen couples of hounds had been drafted for the day's sport as the Lapham fields were large and I wanted to draw them carefully. Despite the biting weather, a field of fifty people turned out for the hunt. Drawing west from the house, the hounds jumped a strong hare who took them for a fast twenty minute point before she took to a hard road and temporarily threw them off her line. Old *Dinah,* the best road hound I ever owned, patiently worked out the line and finally hit it off perhaps a quarter of a mile down the pike. As several cars had passed in the meantime, and gas fumes virtually obliterated the scent, her performance was little short of miraculous. The hare then doubled back and gave us another hard run of better than an hour before hounds were again brought to check when the line ended on the shores of a small pond. The pack immediately spread out and covered the shores for some minutes without any success. Then *Rover,* another steady old hound, entered the water and swimming up a narrow brook which ran into the pond suddenly opened for all he was worth. The hare had evidently swum across the pond and then up the brook before she took to the fields again. (Hares have no fear of the water and often when pressed will swim great distances to throw off hounds.)

The hard run and the icy water had taken a lot of the stuffing

out of the hare and soon afterwards the hounds hit her line. Beyond the brook we saw her struggling through a fence on the far side of a big field.

She looked dead beat, but, as we were subsequently to find, was far from it. There was another macadam road on the other side of the fence and the hare took to it like the path to salvation. Just then a huge trailer truck came rumbling around the corner and despite the curses of the whips proceeded to lay a blanket of gas fumes between hounds and their quarry. *Dinah* again took over but a precious half hour was wasted finding the place where the hare had left the road. At last the line was straightened out and the hounds got away on it with a great crash of music. They seemed to think that the hunted hare was failing and their reward near at hand. They were quite wrong for we had another hour's gruelling chase across semi-wooded and swampy lowlands before the gallant hare was found and broken up. The distance covered was approximately ten miles and the time almost three hours. I did not note who got the trophies but I did list the names of those in at the kill. Among them were Mr. and Mrs. Boyd Kegg, Miss Louise Warren, Miss Mary Woolsey, Mr. Northam Warren, and Mr. Warren Wheelwright, all of New Canaan, Mrs. David Challinor of Darien and Miss Betty White of Mount Kisco, in addition to the four whips and Bill Pederson, the field master.

CHAPTER IV

Horse and Gun in China

The following sketches of sport in China fall into three periods—1935-36 when I was shooting there; 1944-45 when I was stationed there during the war; and 1948-49 when I represented the Economic Cooperation Administration in Nanking. None of these years could be said to be quiet ones for China. Hardly had Chiang Kai-shek cleaned up the war lords before the Japs were on his neck and soon after the finish of that war, the Communists started their development which culminated in the fall of Shanghai in 1939. Perhaps it was because sport in China was inevitably laid against this background that it was doubly appreciated.

Among the more unique hunts of the world was the Shanghai Paper Hunt. As its name implied the hunt was a paper chase, dedicated to galloping and falling over a bizarre and picturesque country. I remember with awe and a comforting feeling of my still whole frame, a hunt of early December of 1935.

The terrain was flat, dotted with ancient grave mounds and bisected with tidal creeks and lagoons, along whose banks grew graceful willows. The average water jumps were about ten feet wide over ditches many feet deep in slime. For one of our hunters this was not much of an obstacle, but for a thirteen hand China pony it took some doing. The cotton and beans had been picked and the early wheat was in, but the country was still "blind" and one never knew when an innocent patch of weeds was going to cover a bog.

On the evening before the place of meeting was announced,

the Master (whose name escapes me) gave a party at the Race Club where we made up a pool on the horses hunting.

The Master accompanied by his helpers laid the paper. The course was marked by a mixture of colors. Green alone was used for bridges where the hunt necessarily had to proceed with care. These bridges were the half moon type and it took slow and careful negotiating to scramble up one side and slide safely down the other. Purple paper indicated a ford. The course was about ten miles with three or four checks, where the paper was lifted.

We met at three in the afternoon, covered as Mr. Jorrocks often said, "all over with creeps." I was mounted on a sure footed little pony that didn't seem to mind my weight and was keen to go. The field numbered about fifty riders with a generous sprinkling of pink coated veterans who had earned their colors by winning previous meets. Near the start was an old yellow temple in a grove of bamboo and grouped around it were a host of blue-clad Chinese peasants, gathered with their children to see the sport and laugh at the "foreign devils."

At the signal to start we sat down in our saddles, crammed on our hats, and let the ponies go. The first jump was a boggy old canal with rotten banks. On both sides of me men came doleful croppers. And so it went until the finish flags were in sight and we made a last dash for victory. I forget the first man between them but I know I came in not too far behind him and was so happy to be on the ground again that I wouldn't have traded places with the winner.

Since I owed so much to my pony I made it a point to find out all I could about the breed, and learned that the China pony, more accurately called the Mongolian pony, is considered by experts to be the direct descendant of the wild horse of Europe and Asia, and is undoubtedly the closest link extant to the prehistoric "Tarpan." While found from Mongolia to Central Asia, the finest breed of these ponies comes from the famous

grass lands of the Chihli and Shansi borders. These were the "Imperial Pastures" of the Manchu Emperors from which they drew their cavalry chargers. Another breed much used by the Manchus came from the Kurulen River basin, bordering Siberia.

The present day pony, recognized for racing and paper hunting by Europeans, is a cross breed which originated a century and a half ago during the Napoleonic Wars. At that time Cossack officers imported thoroughbred stallions for their breeding farms along the Don, and descendants of these strains became popular in Turkestan and the borders of China. Another source of outside blood was provided by Arab stallions left behind by foreign troops. After the Taiping Rebellion, Indian horses were sold in Tientsin for $60.00 a dozen. Many of them subsequently became sires on the Mongolian Plains.

The true Mongolian pony ranges in height from about twelve to fourteen hands. He has a large head, short ewe neck, deep chest, short legs, long body, thick hocks, sloping hindquarters, long shaggy coat, and thick, low-set tail. In contrast, the cross-bred is a far more beautiful animal, having a small head, large eyes, slim neck, round hindquarters and shapely legs. He is also speedier, but does not compare to the true China pony in stamina, courage or bigness of heart.

The China pony has all the qualities a sportsman and soldier most admires. He can bear up in both the torrid heat and the Arctic cold of his native steppes. He has undaunted courage, great weight carrying ability, amazing cleverness over rough country, and the inner determination to get home first which is the real mark of the true racehorse. During my three trips to China, I have had many occasions to test these ponies.

The sportsmanship of the China pony was admirably illustrated by Dr. Davis in his book, HISTORY OF THE SHANGHAI PAPER HUNT CLUB. During the Christmas Hunt of 1926, the pony *Wild Chance* belonging to Mr. Sparke was taken to the meet but his master decided at the last minute to ride another

pony. *Wild Chance* took a very dim view of this, and, jerking the lines out of his mafu's hands, dashed along with the field. No one could stop him and none could catch him. He strictly observed all the rules of paper chasing, waiting his turn at the bridges, taking every jump, and interfering with no one. He finished well up in the card. As one wit put it, "he deserved a carat (Gold)."

There are many stories of the endurance of the China pony. Mr. Sowerby rode a pony named *Swanee Bill* on the Clark Expedition in 1910 which carried him one hundred two miles in thirty-six hours. The combined weight of the rider and equipment was over two hundred pounds and the same pony had previously, as a pack pony, carried two hundred catties, roughly two hundred sixty pounds of tobacco, from twenty-five to thirty miles a day, year in and year out, between Honan Fu and Sianfu.

In 1903 there was a great race for China ponies from Tientsin to Peking. The winner, ridden by Mr. Summer, weighing one hundred sixty-eight pounds, completed the distance in seven hours and thirty-three minutes. Just before the last war, Lt. Col. Souvoroff rode a white pony named *Almas* from Shanghai to Nanking and back, a distance of seven hundred miles in sixteen days, an average of forty-five miles a day. In Nanking, I thought that the Communists' advance might inspire me to try the trip myself.

The biggest leap for a China pony on record was twenty-one feet, cleared by Mr. Middleton's *Coronation* in the 1903 Handicap race run at Shanghai.

The history of the Shanghai Paper Hunt goes back nearly a hundred years to the suppression of the Small Swords revolt against the Dragon Throne in 1855. At that time Shanghai was only a settlement, but a few hardy spirits started riding across country. These early rides were steeplechases with the extra hazard of never knowing when one would run into a band of Taiping

rebels. The sport was heady, however, and with the final suppression of the Taipings in the lower Yangtze Valley in 1860, it was decided to form a Club for the purpose of paper chasing, and the Shanghai Paper Hunt was born. Since then its history, barring the Japanese occupation and the present crisis, has been a long and illustrious one. The last official Hunt took place in 1948, one year previous to the Fall of Shanghai to the Reds.

The first recorded hunt took place in December of 1863 and was won by Mr. Augustus Broom on a pony called *Mud*. Not a pretty name, but as the country then was accurately described as a dismal swamp, he probably harmonized with his surroundings. In the early days the first man to finish who gave his word to the stewards that he had jumped every barrier or ditch was acclaimed the winner. This was later amended to include touching the red cowl of one of the men who laid the paper line. A favorite starting place was the Grand Stand at the Race Course and the finish was the Bubbling Well. A chase run over these locations today would be about as easy as hunting the fox across Times Square.

The effect on the Chinese of the Paper Hunt was vividly described in the December 15th, 1866, issue of the *North China Herald*. I quote: "Among the various proofs of madness which Chinese have daily opportunity of noting against the Anglo-Saxon race, few must appear to them more conclusive than Paper Hunting. Pheasant and snipe shooting, at great expenditure of time and labor, when both these birds might be bought in the market, is rank folly; throwing a ball at a man in order that he may knock it away to give a third the pleasure of running after it is an example of strange eccentricity; but for two men to gallop frantically over field and creek at imminent risk of life and limb, for the mere purpose of scattering bits of paper which others take delight in following up under similar circumstances is pure madness."

The most famous master of the Shanghai Paper Hunt was

Mr. Frank Maitland, who reigned from 1887 to 1897. When acting as paper layer he was almost caught by the field, but foiled them by plunging his pony into the Soochow Creek and swimming this formidable body of water. He was merciless to careless riders and admonished one young thruster with "Damn it, sir, you would ride over a bed of geraniums." In 1894 his weight increased to 224 pounds, too much for the jumping capacities of even the peerless China pony. As it is a rule that the paper layer must take every jump himself, the master had to retire.

Like hunts everywhere there was the problem of the land owners in the early days of the Club. Some irate peasants took to singing the "National Preserve" at hunters and a letter was addressed to the British Consul asking him to take up the matter with the Chinese authorities with a view to compensation. This proved entirely satisfactory to both sides. The entire claim filed for 1889 was only $18.00. To further soothe the feelings of the Celestials, the Hunt constructed bridges over many of the creeks and in many cases repaired dykes.

In addition to the Shanghai Paper Hunt, three packs of hounds flourished at various times in the history of the Settlement. In 1864 Mr. R. C. Atrobus imported a pack of beagles from England and hunted them on foot after native hare. (Attention National Beagle Club.) In 1875 ten couples of drag hounds were imported from the Dumfriesshire Kennels and hunted by a committee. In the early 1900's a pack of badger hounds was also imported and the master, Sir Edward Pearce, was reported as showing fine sport on the fighting Chinese badger.

My next exposure to the Celestial Kingdom was during the war when I was executive officer of the South China Command of the Office of Strategic Services with headquarters at Chikiang. The terrain did not lend itself to motorized transportation and while I was never able to persuade my superiors actually to

equip a cavalry unit, we worked frequently with Chinese irregulars who were mounted, and I learned something about the amazing abilities of Chinese horses.

I remember a visit with General Wu Shih Chou of the Chinese Service of Supply in an old fort in our area. He had ordered the best available types of local horses to be brought there for my inspection. Many of these were not of local breeding, but were nevertheless available for military purposes.

The first horse shown me was a pure Arab of approximately fourteen hands. The breed was introduced ten years ago and used widely for prestige purposes. The dappled coloring and general compact appearance appealed strongly to the Chinese generals. No oats are grown in this section of China, however, and the diet of rice straw and corn did not seem to be sitting well in this desert charger. In fact, he looked decidedly poorly despite a careful grooming.

Next was a Mongolian pony. I knew something of this breed having, as I said above, ridden them in Shanghai before the war and had a good opinion of their staying capacities. They come from a relatively flat country and the flinty mountains of South China had left their mark on this pony's hooves. Like most Chinese horses, he was shod only in front and hind hooves were badly battered. The pony stood thirteen hands, and had a tremendously powerful set of shoulders.

The third type of pony was a cross between an Arab sire and a Mongolian mare. It seemed to me that the result lacked most of the virtues of both its parents. The thick Mongol neck was there and the compact Arab coupling, but the legs were poor and the general impression was not one of strength.

The last animal I saw I liked immediately. The Yunnan-Kweichow pony, also known as the Southwest Breed. Actually a small, ten to twelve-hand horse, this little animal when carefully bred is perfectly adapted to mountain work. He is capable of carrying two hundred pounds for thirty miles a day over

country that would floor a Montana cow pony. He thrives on rice straw and a bit of corn and has a docile and affectionate nature. The price was high, 200,000 CN dollars (about $200 U.S.) but well worth it. Asking price, incidentally, was a great deal higher but reasonable agreements can be reached when there is enough wine.

The general told me that a big effort was being made to improve the horses of Southwest China. Government stallions stood free of charge to anyone with approved mares, and government veterinarians made constant inspections of the breeding farms. As I was talking through my interpreter, who knew nothing of horses, it was a bit difficult to get technical information, but I gathered that the two diseases most prevalent were glanders and a swelling of the lymph glands of the throat. The former could be inoculated against, but the latter appeared to be inherited and not much could be done against it. By law, horses so afflicted were shot.

During the inspection, Mr. Ho, mayor of the town, arrived and invited us to dinner at his home. Up to the start of the Sino-Japanese war, races were held by a local jockey club of which he was president. The purses ran up to 100,000 CN and the highest price paid for a selling plater was 500,000 CN.

In those days both the Japanese and the Chinese used cavalry which proved just as useful as it did in the days when Genghis Khan conquered half the world on the backs of ponies. Horses do not drink gasoline nor do they need roads and the logistical situation was such that horse transportation was about the only means of moving over great stretches of back country.

The China pony had probably the toughest life of any cavalry charger in the world. His feed, when he was fed, was rice straw, plus whatever he could pick up from the devastated countryside. He carried a soldier with rifle, a pack, and extra ammunition—a dead weight of at least one hundred eighty pounds. His saddle was wooden and often improperly blanketed,

and his bridle was rusty and sharp. Despite these handicaps he marched thirty miles a day for an incredible number of days and was worn to a virtual skeleton before he finally went down for the last time.

Chinese soldiers on the whole had very little feeling for their horses, with the possible exception of the Mohammedan cavalrymen of the Ninghsia war lord, Ma Hung Kwei. General Ma was proud of his mounted divisions and made each trooper personally responsible for his mount. A good deal of Arab blood was introduced into the Ninghsia horses and some of them were remarkably fine looking animals. They were shod with flat, light shoes that could be adjusted by the trooper himself.

Some Chinese officers, however, had a real feeling for horses and I remember an incident shortly before the Japanese surrender that brought this home to me.

Tethered to a stump a few li behind the lines stood a respected prisoner of war. He had been a prisoner for so long that he had all but forgotten his Japanese name and answered to one that would have made his erstwhile stablemates of the Imperial Cavalry School at Tokyo paw with fury. He got his name and his new owner at Taierchwang, greatest Chinese victory of the late war. I could not praise him too much or the general who owned him would have had to offer him to me, but I evinced sufficient interest to get the story.

As everyone who has studied the Sino-Japanese war knows, General Sung Che Yuan laid a very neat trap for the Japanese on the Tientsin-Pukow railway. He let them advance between two prongs of his army and then snapped the trap shut. Some twenty-five thousand Japs were annihilated in three days and among them a certain cavalry regiment. The commander of this unit was conducting a scouting reconnaissance some miles in front of the main body when the attack came. It was early morning and the mist was low over the rice fields. The advance patrol which included the commander was cut off before he

could even send a trooper back with news of the attack. He and all of his men were shot, and their horses, some five hundred of them, captured.

The man who ambushed them was my friend the general, then a major and a good judge of horseflesh. Japanese horses were real horses, not Mongolian ponies or Yunnan miniature horses. They had strong Arab crosses and when well made were as compact and big boned a mount as any cavalry charger in the world. The major looked them all over and chose the best, renaming it *Taierchwang* after the little village nearby.

At first *Taierchwang* did not like the new deal. He missed his oats, he missed his bran mash, but most of all he missed the old leisurely pace of the Japanese advances. His new owner had nothing to feed him but rice straw and his new owner's campaigns were anything but comfortable. He had to chop the thin grass of the mountains, to grow a thick coat against the cold, and learn to stand stock still with the other guerrilla horses when danger was near. Once, the general told me with a smile, he was stolen by bandits, but the bandits did not live long enough to ride him.

As the long weary war wore on, *Taierchwang* made a name for himself as well as for his master. With each advance in the latter's rank, there was more money for the horse which resulted in better feeding and grooming. In a country where the average horse is a bag of bones he was doubly admired and on the day his master was made a general, he was given the crowning glory of a new yellow saddle with silver mountings.

"When it is over," said the general, waving his hand back at the jagged line of a burned village where the fighting was going on, "I am going to take *Taierchwang* and myself up to my home north of the Yellow River. There he will end his days eating all the oats he wants."

This rather rare Chinese love of horses does not extend to

the fox, however, and I recall an incident at a little village a few miles behind our lines.

For some reason the hamlet was still intact and except for a patrol sleeping in one of the four farm houses, the village seemed remote from the war. The women nursed their babies on the doorsteps, the old men pulled silently on long bamboo pipes, and the quiet of evening lay over the ripening paddy fields. After a dinner of rice and "C" rations, I posted a guard and took a stroll along the road. It was wild mountainous country reputedly full of tiger as well as other assorted game, and I wanted to see if there were sufficient pheasants calling to warrant trying for a brace early the next morning.

The road climbed a winding course along the side of a cliff and then debouched into a mountain glen of some fifty acres. A cavalry platoon was camped there and the sergeant in charge invited me to drink tea. We sat against the wooden saddles and watched the camp fires begin to twinkle on the lines far below us. A little brook ran through the meadow and at its upper end was a ledge of rock. I happened to glance toward it and rubbed my eyes. There stood a fox, a big red dog fox, with his brush sweeping out like a peacock. The sergeant saw it too, and, grabbing his rifle took a quick aim. Instinctively I knocked the barrel up and the shot went far above its intended victim. The sergeant spluttered a bit but was too polite to show anger. I felt pretty foolish and made him take five hundred dollars (about 75 cents). I could not understand what he said but the word "hu li" linked with "ding qua qua" kept coming up. The latter means very good and I found out later that "hu li" is the thief of the world and should be destroyed.

Hu Li has a poor time in China. He is trapped, shot and generally regarded as an enemy of mankind, except during the cold weather when his coat brings a small price. Indigenous to most of the country, he seemed a great deal larger than either

the English reds or the American greys. I could not see him well due to the failing light but he appeared a deep russet color, and well muscled up.

As I mentioned previously my last trip to China was in 1948 when my job as Special Representative of the Economic Cooperation Administration kept me most of the time in Nanking, the capital. A stable of former Japanese horses was maintained there by the Officers' Moral Endeavor Association, of which jovial General Huang was president. He believed that riding was good for officers whether cavalrymen or not, and anyone could hire his mounts. They were a sad lot in more ways than one, but I managed to find several exceptions, mainly because these particular horses were reputed to have bad manners. I then arranged to have them fed properly and discovered to my pleasure that they were thoroughly good rides.

Riding outside the city was somewhat circumscribed due to the prevalence of roaming Communist bands, but Purple Mountain, the burial place of the first Ming Emperor and Sun Yat Sen, was still within the guarded perimeter and made a very pleasant trip.

I rode through the city to the great wall and out through massive stone gates built by the first Ming. About a mile outside I passed under a pylon with an inscription carved on it to the effect that all officials must dismount and lead their horses into the city. The country was flat valley until I came to the beginning of the Purple Mountain range, where the land rolled gently upward to the base of the mountain. Here were the tombs and some beautifully carved statues including a series of granite dogs, horses, and elephants arranged in an approach to the Ming Tomb. Local legend has it that if one can throw a stone on top of the stone elephant and the stone remains there, one will have a son.

Above the tomb I climbed a narrow path to the summit and all of Nanking lay below with the Yangtze River a thin grey

line beyond. The city, an airport, and a considerable amount of farming land is enclosed by the Ming Walls, so that theoretically it would be a hard place to take by direct assault. Actually, however, the surrounding mountains and the hills along the Yangtze dominate it completely and a good artillery man could drop a shell anywhere he pleased.

One evening as I rode back in the twilight, I stopped at a little Buddhist monastery for green tea and cakes. The old monk in charge strangely enough spoke some French and told me that before the first world war a group of Englishmen from one of the Yangtze gunboats had staged a steeplechase along the base of the mountain. A lot of them fell and everyone had a grand time, including the Chinese boys who caught their horses.

Aside from riding, shooting was one of our favorite sports in Nanking. The Yangtze swarmed with wildfowl and the flat lands along its banks held a multitude of pheasants as well. To cope with this challenge a group of us from the various embassies founded the Nanking Hunting Club and held regular Sunday shoots. The president was Dr. John Fonseca, Portugese Minister to China, and a fine sportsman of the old school. Chester Ronning, counsellor of the Canadian Embassy, was one of the vice-presidents and I was the other. Among the members were the British Ambassador, Sir Ralph Stevenson, John Jones, counsellor of the United States Embassy, Thomas Cory, Robert Anderson and Dr. John Packard, also of our embassy; Ralph Stipout of the Royal Netherlands Embassy and Donald Cummings of the Chartered Bank of Hong Kong and Shanghai. There were three lady members, Miss Tessie Wong, hostess of the Canadian Embassy, Mrs. Stipout and Mrs. Beatrice Jequier, wife of the Swiss chargé d'affaires. In addition, Dr. George Yeh, under-secretary for Foreign Affairs in the Chinese government, frequently joined us.

We took turns being host for breakfast, and what breakfasts

they were! The Chinese are surely the world's best cooks and we often left the table barely able to lift our guns and climb into the cars for the trip to the shooting grounds. The favorite ducking area was near the Screw Bridge Village, a hamlet on the banks of the Yangtze about ten miles north of Nanking. Only Dr. Fonseca had a retriever so we hired Chinese peasant boys to fetch and carry the game. One of the most appealing was a little fellow of about twelve whom I nicknamed Mao Tze Tung (in case the Reds won) and immediately attached him to me as my personal bearer. I became so fond of him, in fact, that shortly before I was forced to leave Nanking, due to the Red capture of the city, I established a little trust fund to put him through school and college.

The ducks usually lay in flocks out in a great swamp bordering the River and we would spread among the bush and take a devious course after them along the raised foot paths. A slip often meant immersion to the waist in the icy water. How our boys were able to plunge into it and retrieve the ducks without catching pneumonia was a marvel of nature.

We always lunched at a native restaurant in the village and used to bet on the number of bowls of rice that Mao and the other boys would consume. The little fellows would shovel in food until it looked as if they would burst and our only regret was our inability to feed the rest of the village children as well. All of them had almost broken their necks to try and serve us and all were obviously hungry. Sometimes we would take the Standard Oil launch and drifting down the river, shoot huge bags of ducks. On one such trip, shortly before the Communists took Nanking, we were mistaken for a Red patrol boat and fired upon by the Nationalist shore batteries. Fifty caliber bullets were splashing all around before we were able to run out of range.

On another occasion I had to go down river on an inspection trip, and, learning that there was excellent shooting near my

destination, took along my shotgun. After looking over the engineering work on the dykes, I was driven over to the village of Tsai Shih, the birthplace of the poet Li Po and the place where the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove wove their philosophies for the Tang Emperor.

The day was perfect. Huge white clouds against the bluest of blue Chinese skies. Just enough wind to drive the Yangtze fog off the river and thousands upon thousands of ducks disporting themselves near the little island off the village. A sampan was soon hired and I sailed forth to battle.

Next to the Punjab ghils of central India and perhaps the Nile Valley I had no better duck shooting anywhere than in the Yangtze Valley. Mallard, broadbill, canvasback, pintail, teal, to say nothing of their bigger cousins the goose, brant, and swan, abound on the broad expanse of the great river. Normally they have little to fear. The Chinese occasionally mount a cannon loaded with rusty nails on the bow of a sampan and let go at a flock feeding on the water, but there is only one salvo and the duck population is always well ahead of the market hunters.

The sampan glided slowly and silently in the light wind and I was among the ducks before they knew it. Up with a wild whir went literally hundreds and the roar of my gun was almost drowned out in the beating of their wings.

The bag was satisfactory. Four mallard and a goose, with another old gander winged but making his escape in the reeds. So it went all of the early morning and by the time the sun was well up I stopped the killing and returned to the village for lunch and sightseeing.

I lunched in a little restaurant near the banks of the river on sweet and sour fish, roast pork, scrambled eggs with peppers, bamboo shoots, steaming bowls of rice, and duck soup, washed down by tea and a delicious yellow wine which was stronger than it tasted.

The temple of Tsai Shih is dedicated to Li Po and makes as

little pretense of grandeur as its hero. Li Po was not impressed by even a Tang Emperor and once when the Emperor was passing by and asked the poet to come and see him, Li Po declined, saying that he was drunk and couldn't possibly make the appointment. There are two statues of him in the temple, one showing him seated sedately writing poetry and the other showing him obviously under the influence of strong drink reclining on a bed. The legend below the latter says blithely "to everyone who is drunk, greetings."

I shot a few more birds on the evening flight and left the Village of Colored Stones just as the moon was rising over the mountains. No wonder Li Po drowned when trying to embrace her reflection in the Yangtze.

Following my escape from Nanking, I was hospitalized in Hong Kong for some months and it was not until July of 1949 that I was able to get up and around. One of my first trips abroad was to the race course where I attended the last meet of the spring calendar.

The day was a fine one and a record crowd of more than ten thousand saw the little Australian mare *Lucky Jane* win the Lantao Handicap and pay the holder of the sweep ticket on her 855,571 Hong Kong dollars (about $151,000 U.S.), the biggest prize money in the hundred years' racing history of the Colony.

The Happy Village track is the most spectacular in the Far East. Situated in a natural bowl of meadows surrounded on three sides by hills, the course affords excellent visibility to thousands of non-paying Chinese fans as well as to the occupants of the spacious Jockey Club.

My wife and I were guests of Captain Caslett, M.C., O.B.E., commander of the cruiser *London*, whose valiant effort to rescue the sloop *Amethyst*, while she was under Red artillery attack on the Yangtze, put him in the hospital with shrapnel wounds.

There were seven races on the card, all for Australian ponies of various ratings. Not a single favorite won, with the result

that the average win on the mutuals for the day was $32.24 for a two-dollar ticket. A record total of $2,739,400. went over the counters. Contrary to popular legend in the United States, Oriental racing enthusiasts are no more inscrutable fans than their opposite numbers at Belmont Park. They scream just as loudly for the winners and swear just as hard at the losers. Some, in fact, go into floods of uncelestial tears.

The big race of the day, the Lantoa Handicap, was a good race in any country. Fourteen starters left the barrier (they were actually flagged) with the favorites, *Empress Delight* and *Top Hat*, holding strong leads until the home stretch, when the little chestnut mare came tearing up from fourth place and won by three and a half lengths. *Lucky Jane* was not even an outside favorite and paid forty-eight dollars on the nose.

About this time I happened to notice a small group of men at the south end of the area enclosed by the track. They appeared to be intently engaged and never once glanced at the horses or the crowds. Closer examination revealed them to be middle-aged Britishers playing their Saturday afternoon game of cricket. If I had suddenly seen boys of Louisville High School carrying on a baseball game on the infield of Churchill Downs during the Derby, I would not have been more surprised. No one else thought it queer, however, for, as the captain said, "Some like cricket and some like racing."

Another innovation was provided by a little group of Chinese women who wandered out on the track after each race and gently replaced turf kicked up by the ponies by tamping it down with their feet. They reminded me of solicitous caddies in the wake of indifferent golfers.

The Hong Kong Jockey Club records go back only to 1849, but racing in the Colony started in 1845, and before that devotees of the sport used to sail over to the neighboring Portugese colony of Macao and watch races there. In the early days Arabs, Indian waler and Manila ponies, as well as Australians, were

raced. China ponies were not introduced until 1856. Since the last war, only Australian ponies have been run, probably due to the difficulties of importing other types.

That racing was a great event in the early life of the Colony is attested by the account of the meeting of February, 1858, written by a correspondent of a London paper. "Three days out of the year the great Joss to whom British and Chinese alike bend the knee is neglected. I allude to the divinity of China, the almighty dollar. The Celestials actually cease buying and selling during their New Year, and John Bull emerges from behind his counter to enjoy the races and rest from his toils."

Describing the crowds of nearly a century ago, the correspondent continues, "The flat plain was studded with all manner of nations—English, American, French, Malays, East Indians, Marines and Celestials. Umbrellas were in such abundance that, seen from a height, you fancied the place was filled with animated mushrooms, or, from their various colors, fairy tale toadstools."

The author also noted that the Celestial fair ones were out in force and dressed with the greatest neatness and taste. He added that the crowd differed from a race crowd in England primarily because of its lack of intoxication and its quiet conduct. In conclusion, he mentioned that on the last day of the meeting the Celestials themselves had a race on native ponies. Thirteen riders started, but only five finished, due to the inability of the shop-softened Chinese to remain on their quadrupeds.

Hong Kong is the last stronghold of racing in China. The fine tracks at Peking, Tientsin, Hankow and Shanghai were never reopened after the last war, and the Communists show no inclination to revive the sport.

CHAPTER V

Hounds and Retrievers in Maryland

On my return from China in the summer of 1949, I moved to Easton, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and decided to build up the Kingsland Beagles again. Since I intended to hunt this pack mounted, I needed larger hounds than the fourteen inch beagles that I had been hunting in Connecticut prior to the war. My appeal to my fellow masters was generously answered, particularly by Morgan Wing, master of the Sandanona Beagles of Millbrook, New York, who sold me some excellent hounds at very reasonable prices, as well as presenting me gratis with several more. I also purchased some hounds from Paul Wilson, master of the Ellson Beagles of New Castle, Delaware, and elsewhere was able to recoup some of my old blood from the descendants of hounds which I had given away when I went to war in 1940. The pack hunted during the season of 1950-51 was a small one but was helped out by *Upland Countess,* a basset of sad expression but great perseverence, and *Ferdie,* a dachshund which I imported from Hong Kong, where he used to mascot the Fan Ling drag hounds, a bastion of sport in the Far East.

The memorable day of this season was a joint meet with the Morgan Wing's Sandanona which was returning from triumphs at the National Beagle trials at Aldie, Virginia. Meeting early on a misty November morning the joint pack was drawn through the Austin woods where a roving bunny bethought himself of his burrow five fields away and lit out closely pressed by *Sandanona Baker* and *Merrymaker,* while the rest of the joint pack joined in the chase with a crash of music that shamed the Ring Chorus of the Metropolitan. At the bank of the Tred

Avon River the rabbit made good his escape while a brace of nonchalant black ducks showed so little fear that they did not even take to the air.

We then drew the neighboring estate of Halcyon and immediately found another bunny. Less fortunate than the other, he allowed himself to be caught and broken up by the hounds after a twenty minute run. August Martenson, my kennel huntsman, and a recent arrival from Latvia, was in at the kill, and, after giving a Viking yell, opined that "das ist der blitz-krieg der rabbit."

Inspired by this primitive utterance, *Bismarck*, a recent importation from the Treweryn Beagles, who had never to that moment shown any interest in anything but eating, suddenly spied a cat and, opening with a blood curdling cry, led the mystified pack a fast chase to a pine tree where the startled cat sought sanctuary. It was then that *Bismark* showed his true spirit. Springing into the lower branches of the tree, he climbed monkey-like after his prey, and, grabbing her firmly by the tail, dragged her wailing into the jaws of the waiting pack.

Cats and cotton-tail rabbits, however, show but limited sport and since foxes are plentiful and as my hounds seemed to prefer them to the lesser game, I decided the following year to give them some coaching in the shape of a foxhound pilot. Through the kindness of Arthur Bryan, master of the Bennets Point Foxhounds of Queenstown, Maryland, I secured the services of *Trumpet*, an ancient, but wise old bitch, and, after numerous experiments with a few hounds to see how really persuasive she actually could be, I took her out with the full pack.

At the first draw, a dense clump of oak and willow at Pecks Point, *Trumpet* threw back her head and let loose a challenge that must have given pause to the foxes for miles around. The beagles honored and with a crash of music tore through the cover and out into the open pastures where they ran straight for the river. The horses, glad of the burst, let themselves go and

leaped the stiff pasture fence as if it were a fallen log. The fox then doubled back and gave us some good music but little progress for another half hour. The beagles, however, were settling nicely to the line and added a fine alto chorus to *Trumpet's* basso profundo.

Finally forcing the fox out of the woods we had a grand chase across the pastures again before Reynard tired of the sport, and, with a swish of his tail, dove into his earth.

The advantage of hunting beagles instead of foxhounds in a country such as the Eastern Shore is found in the ability of a mounted man to stay with them. Cut by numerous rivers and laced with wire, the land presents great difficulties to the rider. It would, in fact, be utterly impossible on horseback to stay anywhere near a pack of even the slowest foxhounds. Most of the local farmers own foxhounds but hunt them by car. They know the places where a fox crosses the roads and when they want to stop the hounds they simply grab them as they start across the open. This sort of sport has lots of music and mobility as they can take hounds anywhere regardless of the wire, but to me it lacks the incomparable fun of hunting hounds from a horse.

By the start of the 1951-52 season, hares were introduced into the country and afforded excellent sport before they were liquidated by the local foxes. One of the best days with one of these hares was the final meet of that season. My hunting diary of March 29th records as follows:

When the Bard of Avon spoke so feelingly of "the winter of our discontent" he made it quite clear he was not a foxhunting man, and it is surprising that good Queen Bess, who was a keen rider to the Buck Hounds as well as master of a fine pack of pocket beagles, did not correct him on the matter. The passing of winter, and with it the end of the hunting season, must have been as nostalgic a time four hundred years ago as it is today.

Spring comes quickly to the lands along the tidal rivers of


Paul
Brown

the Eastern Shore of Maryland and the last meet of the season was held against a verdant background. Out over the river flights of geese noisily announced their passage north; and deep in the recesses of Normandie woods foxes turned their thoughts to other things besides chickens.

No matter how good or bad one's hounds are, there is always a feeling of satisfaction in viewing them at a meet. The babbling puppies have yet to demonstrate their ignorance and the old hounds have not yet had to face the inevitable fact that their legs have grown slower than their noses. Like a doting parent, the master is prone to forget their vices and remember their virtues. Clustered around his horse, the pack is a bright picture of his fondest hopes.

Ten couples of hounds met at the gates of Tred Avon Manor. The field was for us a large one, and everyone had made a special effort to turn out themselves and their horses as smartly as possible. In addition to my whips, Mrs. Herbert Austin and my daughter Rene, it consisted of Mr. Charles Schuck, field master; Mr. Arthur Bryan, master of the Bennets Point Fox Hounds; Mr. and Mrs. John Caskey, who formerly hunted with Ox Ridge of Darien, Conn. and their daughter Miss Mary Tison; Mrs. George Barner and her daughter Pamela; Mr. and Mrs. Robert Cox; Miss Crissy Youst; and Miss Phillippa Crowe. There was also a group on foot and a number of cars.

Moving off from the gates of the Manor, we drew the thirty acre field of Pecks Point that lies next to the Tred Avon River, where Milton Blades, the hunting farmer who farms the Point, reported he had seen a hare the previous night. The field, under the able direction of the field master, spread out in a line so that they covered far more of the area than I did with hounds. The hares we hunted, jack rabbits, were apt to sit very tight and I was not surprised when a jack jumped up almost under the hooves of one of the horses, after I had drawn over the same place with hounds.

First leading us a fast chase along the edge of the river, where she took advantage of the sandy beaches, the hare then dove under a fence and tried to foul her scent by running through a large herd of cows. The ruse was successful for a time and ten precious minutes were gained by the hare before hounds unravelled the puzzle, and drove after her across the fields to the country road that bisects the peninsula where we hunt. The hare ran the road for about a mile and it was only due to the fine scenting abilities of *Kingsland Durham* that the pack was able to own the line. The hard surface plus the gasoline fumes of passing cars made the job one for a veritable Sherlock Holmes of the canine race. Finally headed by a car, our quarry darted into Perkins Lane and hounds had a grand twenty minutes hunting in the woods, where their cry echoed and re-echoed under the pines.

As Nimrod said "it's the pace that kills" and by this time the horses were lathered and the day had become hot. A motorist reported moreover that she had viewed the hare running slowly and stumbling at the fences. I did not want to kill so blew hounds in and called it a day.

The season in retrospect was a good one. Hounds went out fifty-one times and had only four completely blank days. In addition to hare, red foxes and cottontail rabbits were also hunted. Deer have started to come into the country but so far have given us no trouble. Scent was uniformly good during October and November and fairly poor in December and January. March, with its prevailing wetness, gave us the best scenting. The longest run of the season was provided by a red fox in early October. Hounds put him to ground after two and a half hours of almost continuous running.

On the invitation of the Kingsland, numerous groups of local foxhunters brought hounds to hunt our country. One misty morning in January, a total of thirty-six couples ran a red

fox for nearly five hours on the Point. My old hunter, *Smokey*, who used to go all day with Mr. Stuart's hounds at Unionville, Pa. without turning a hair, was so tired by the ordeal that I had to take him home and join the farmers in their truck.

Aside from Wilbur Hubbard's Kent County Foxhounds, the Kingsland is the only recognized pack to hunt the Eastern Shore of Maryland. The response since its introduction to the Shore in 1950 has been most heartening. With only one exception the land owners have cooperated to the fullest. Trapping of foxes has virtually ceased in the areas where hounds hunt and every effort has been made to preserve the limited supply of hares.

Much as I like hunting my own hounds, it is always a pleasure to visit other packs, and last season my wife and I had an interesting day with the Kent County Foxhounds. Scenting was not good and we did not have much of a run but I learned a great deal about the hunting history of the county and the hounds that are bred there, from Wilbur Hubbard, the master.

Back in 1650 Robert Brooke introduced a black and tan hound that did great execution among the plantation foxes. The old Brooke strain is now almost extinct but it formed the basic stock for the Trigg and Walker hounds and is undoubtedly one of the foundation strains of today's Penn-Marydel hound.

Kent is the oldest county on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. People have been hunting there since Colonial days and many farmers have had hounds for generations. It has always been noted as a good foxhunting section and members of organized packs in other sections have often gone there to hunt. The Green Spring Valley went there each season for many years and were frequently joined by members of the Elkridge-Harford. George Brice, one of the outstanding hunting men of his generation, came from Kent County, and had much to do with maintaining interest and enthusiasm in the sport. In 1914 he took

his whole pack to Far Hills, N. J., where he showed excellent sport for over a generation. He and many other members of the Essex have frequently returned to hunt in Kent County.

Fox hunting has changed and the horses of the plantation owners have been superseded in most cases by the truck. This is especially true of the Eastern Shore where there is now only one recognized pack of foxhounds still hunting on horses in the traditional English manner, Mr. Hubbard's Kent County Hounds.

Wilbur Ross Hubbard comes of old Kent County stock, and his family has farmed land and hunted foxes for the past two hundred years. He began hunting as a child with neighboring farmers and twenty years ago organized his own hounds. Starting with ten couples of local hounds, he subsequently bred himself a very creditable pack. The pack was recognized in 1934, following a visit of Henry Vaughn in behalf of the Masters of Foxhounds Association.

Hounds met at ten at the kennels. Fifteen couples, under the able stewardship of Arthur Brown, the huntsman, and his two assistants, also Arthur Browns. One whip is the huntsman's son and the other no relation but of the same name. The field consisted of Mrs. M. L. Parr, a member of the Green Spring Valley field, down for a week-end; Miss Marian Grieb; Mr. and Mrs. Paul Gildersleeve, late of Homer Gray's Rombout; Misses Sally Smith and Ann Russell, two young ladies of Chestertown, my wife and I. With the exception of the Gildersleeves, Miss Russell and ourselves, who vanned our own horses, most of the field, as well as the hunt staff, were mounted by Mr. Hubbard. Six colts by his stallion *Esterling*, were in the Field and a very good looking group of young horses they were. Frank Minor was on one of these youngsters which he was schooling for Mr. Hubbard. This one was a bit green but a big jumper, like all of *Esterling's* colts.

Clear blue skies and a rising thermometer did not augur well

for scent, especially since there had not been a decent rain for some days, but the hounds burst into cover with a will and began an earnest quest. Several puppies, as all puppies will, did a bit of babbling, until one of the Browns taught them better. They drew blank and we moved on to a wooded valley along the Almshouse Stream. Down on the bank a fox was moving and *Redman*, *Music* and *Shadow* announced the good news with tuneful gusto. The pack honored and we had a good burst of galloping before the big red fellow went to ground. Stopping earths in a country with covers as large as Mr. Hubbard's is almost impossible, but despite the disadvantage, Mr. Hubbard told me that runs averaged better than forty minutes for the season. Subsequent draws produced no sport but the country was lovely, and it was interesting to see it.

Unlike Talbot County, where I hunt my beagles over land as flat as a billiard table, Kent County in the neighborhood of Chestertown has a gently rolling terrain. The fields are mainly large, averaging, I should say, about fifty acres each. Cultivation runs mostly to spring wheat and barley, which does not suffer too much from occasional galloping. "Lets the air in," said Mr. Jorrocks as he plowed up a new corn field with *Artaxerxes*. There is lots of wire, but Mr. Hubbard has carefully paneled the country and even gone so far as to fill in paths across the swampy places.

Following the hunt, the Field was entertained by Mrs. Hubbard, the Master's mother, at a sumptuous breakfast.

While harriers are certainly the fastest way of pursuing the hare, one of the most charming is to hunt them with bassets, and across the Bay in Western Maryland where the placid waters of the Monocacy River flow through the red clay country of Carroll County, the ancient sport of hunting hares with basset hounds is now flourishing. Under the able mastership of Charles R. Rogers, of Upperco, twelve couples of these bell-mouthed hounds, known as the Timber Ridge Bassets, are

providing sport for large fields of enthusiastic followers. I will describe a meet of 1948.

The hounds met at the Hollow Rock Farm estate of Victor Weybright, near Taneytown, at eleven in the morning. Despite lowering skies and a dropping barometer, a field of more than forty turned up for the sport. Among the followers were Mr. Weybright's house guests, Lord and Lady Bearsted. Lord Bearsted's son is Master of the Warwickshire Foxhounds, and has a world famous collection of hunting prints.

Mr. Rogers, who hunts hounds himself, was ably assisted by Edward Boblitz and Sue Bailey, whips. Mrs. Bailey, in fact, seems to have achieved that rare combination in lady whips—charm plus efficiency. Drawing south from the mansion house, the hounds raised a hare in the wheat fields and led us a fast chase to a check about a mile beyond. Unlike beagles, which race faster than a man can run, bassets, due to their very short legs, can be kept in view most of the time. Their music is the deepest in the hound world, and may be described as a veritable basso profundo compared with the tenor notes of the average beagles and foxhounds.

After a fast chase, the hounds made good on the check and pushed their hare to a view. Despite some artful dodging, the hare was headed by the field and the hounds broke her up after a really fine thirty-minute hunt. The pads were given to Mr. Weybright and me. Several younger members of the field were blooded.

The next hare was found in the woods bordering the Monocacy, and led us an echoing chase along the banks for nearly an hour before she turned inland and went to ground in a fox earth. The Timber Ridge Bassets hunt the countries of both the Carrollton Hounds and the Green Spring Valley by permission of the Masters of these packs.

I was particularly impressed with the work of *Timber Ridge Doll '46,* a seven months old puppy with a face straight from

Thurber, who hunted like a veteran. *Upland Bosco '45* also did yeoman work on a cold line. Perhaps the most appealing member of the pack was *Upland Butch '45*, who, due to an illness in his youth, was unable to hunt after the first few runs. Suddenly sitting down in the middle of the field, he raised his sad eyes to the Master and asked unmistakably to be carried. From then on he saw the hunt placidly from the arms of a husky boy.

Following the hunt, Mr. and Mrs. Weybright entertained the field at a sumptuous tea, enlivened by a horn blowing contest and series of death whoops startlingly rendered by the two whips.

On another occasion, in 1952, I hunted with the Timber Ridge when the age-old ceremony of blessing hounds was re-enacted at Chartley, the estate of Joseph W. Shirely in the Worthington Valley of Maryland. No less than two gentlemen of the Cloth and a Crucifer officiated and the bassets, living well up to their ancient French lineage, behaved as sedately as the most punctilious church warden could desire. Long ears drooping with humbleness and a sad eye fixed adoringly on Charles Rogers, the Master, the pack presented a picture of rapt attention that would have done credit to St. Hubert.

Victor Weybright, honorable secretary of the Hunt and one of its founding fathers, aided the Reverend Nelson Rightmyer and the Reverend Austin Schildwachter in the services. Particularly effective was his reading of Shakespeare's tribute to hounds:

> "My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind,
> So flew'd, so sanded; and their heads are hung
> With eares that sweep away the morning dew:
> Crook-kneed and dew-lap'd like Thessalian bulls;
> Slow in persuit, but match'd in mouth like bells,
> Each under each. A cry more tuneable
> Was never hallo'd to, nor cheered with horn."

It was a perfect day for hunting, with blue skies, clear, crisp air with just enough tang of frost to keep one moving. A field of more than eighty showed up for the blessing in addition to the hunt and made a half moon circle around the padres and the hunt staff. The whips on the side were Charlie Rogers' pretty wife, Mena, and his attractive mainstay, Sue Bailey. Ellwood Boblitz also whipped and Joe Shirely acted as field master.

Moving off from the meet, hounds first drew Spook Meadow, an old Negro burying ground, and soon put up a cottontail which gave us a fast fifteen minutes before he vanished under a tomb stone. Progressing down hill from the cemetery, the master next hunted the main pasture where a band of Mr. Shirely's famous Clydesdales eyed the strange proceedings with dignity. Near Bond Avenue another cottontail was located by *Timber Ridge Fancy '51* (*Cindy Lou* by *Upland Bosco*) whose elegant cry drew all twelve couples charging after her. This bunny was made of sterner stuff than her predecessor and the hounds hunted her for nearly forty minutes before she went to ground at Shirley Roost Ridge.

As the afternoon progressed scent deteriorated and by four all of us were happy to call it a day and head for Chartley where Mrs. Shirely gave us an excellent breakfast.

Bassets are not the only sporting interest of the Rogers. At dinner that evening two red tail hawks, *Beauty* and *Patience* were brought in and gave us a fine exhibition of indoor flying. At one point your correspondent was mistaken by *Patience* for her dinner and had his forehead well scratched, a sort of medieval blooding that all hawk fanciers have to put up with. These majestic birds, which are in reality native chicken hawks, have been trained by Mena Rogers and are flown at rabbits and rats.

In addition to the basset pack, Charlie also keeps three couples of July hounds which gave us a midnight fox hunt when we turned them loose. The evening was too short to do anything

serious with his fighting cocks, but we did manage an amble on his two Sicilian donkeys and some fancy tooting on his French stag hunting horn.

As Victor Weybright so succinctly put it, the Rogers keep a veritable "ecological menagerie" which in easier terms means a kind of balanced aquarium where every form of life lives peacefully and happily with its neighbors.

Today there are two packs of bassets hunting in America. The Timber Ridge, and The Tewekesbury of Peapack, New Jersey. The Timber Ridge is recognized by the National Beagle Club. While there is some doubt as to the original importer of bassets to America, general credit is given to Mr. Gerald Livingston of Long Island who imported his first basset from France in 1921 and followed it up by a draft from the Walhampton pack of Major Godfrey Heseltine of Leicestershire in 1923. When Mr. Livingston gave up his pack before the recent war, he sold some of his hounds to Mrs. Andrew Porter of Easton, Maryland, who in turn sold a draft to Charles Rogers to form the foundation of the Timber Ridge.

Another of the early basset packs in America was that of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Bissel of Wilmington, Delaware, who started their pack in 1933 with a draft of a couple and half from Mr. Livingston and subsequently imported drafts from the English packs of Dr. Morrison of Market-Harborough and Major De Lisle-Bush. He was told at the time that these were the only basset packs hunting in England. From 1933 to 1940 Mr. Bissel hunted his pack as the Stockford Bassets and at one time had thirty-five couples in kennels. The pack was shown by Mrs. Bissel at the Westminster Show in Madison Square Garden and won reserve against leading foxhound and beagle packs. In 1940 he sold his pack to Mrs. Porter, retaining only a few couples to hunt with his beagles.

Mrs. Ellsworth Ford is, however, the only master of bassets who is a poet as well, and her recently published TROPHIES OF

ARTEMIS is a classic of hunting literature. Her lament of her hounds in her poem *The Horn* is the kind of verse that all hunting men can appreciate.

> "No longer does the lip curve to the horn;
> The lip remains impassive as a sleeping thing,
> Irresolute and dormant without flex or quest,
> No longer host to horn.
> My hounds lie numbered on a hill,
> Long dead, beneath wild grasses;
> So I leave the copper to its tempered sting.
> The heart its own morasses."

Mrs. Ford named her hounds after jewels and logically called her pack the Bijoux Bassets. At one time just prior to the last war she had ninety couples of hounds in kennels.

The basset is a French hound of ancient origin, said to have been originally bred in the departments of Artois and Flanders. There are four distinct types of these hounds now extant in France; the Artois, Vendeen, Blue Gascon and Fawn Breton. The Artois basset is the most common, due mainly to the breeding efforts of the Comte Le Couteulx de Canteleu and Monsieur Lane. They are used exclusively for shooting in France and, to the best of my knowledge, are only hunted as a pack in England and the United States.

One of the best known English packs was that belonging to the late Lord North. A keen man to foxhounds during his younger days, Lord North finally had to give up riding but not his sport, and ended his days following the bassets in a pony carriage. When they killed, he was lifted by his grooms and carried into the field to observe the breaking up of the hare.

The first basset hounds imported to England from France came as a present to Lord Galway in the early eighteen-seventies. These were the strain bred by the Comte Le Couteulx and became the ancestors of most of the hounds now hunted in Eng-

land and America. Sir Everett Millais imported a fine dog hound named *Model* in 1874 and had a great deal to do with popularizing the breed. It was Sir Everett who, wishing to breed bone into the delicate in-bred bassets of his day, artificially germinated a litter of puppies by crossing a basset bitch with a bloodhound sire.

The litter turned out basset in confirmation, but blood hound in color. The progeny were then bred back to a pure basset, and in the third generation the descendants regained all the basset characteristics. They also regained the bone and size that had been sacrificed by too much inbreeding of the original types.

In conclusion, I will quote from a basset lover of the last century, who wrote of his hounds . . . "They take their time over the run and the linked sweetness long drawn out may last as long as a fashionable comedy; but slow and sure, like the tortoise of the tale, does oftentimes accomplish its ultimate end, and a hare coursed by basset hounds eats uncommon tender."

Before closing this chapter on Maryland I must say something of wildfowl shooting on the Eastern Shore and the retrievers that add so much to the sport. Chesapeake (Indian for Mother of Waters) Bay is one of the world's great natural feeding grounds. Extending with its tributaries over more than five thousand miles of shore line, the shallow waters of the Bay enclose endless acres of wild celery, eel grass, wild rice, coontail, and widgeon grass, the perfect diet for ducks and geese.

In order to cope with these myriad flocks of wildfowl the early settlers of the area developed the Chesapeake Bay Retriever, America's only native sporting dog.

Several years ago I purchased a pair of Chesapeakes and, soon becoming a confirmed admirer of the breed, started inquiries as to their history. There is very little literature available but luckily I was able to enlist the help of John McKenney, of Centreville, Maryland, an acknowledged author-

ity and a well known judge at retriever trials. The following information about the origins of these dogs is drawn from him and THE CHESAPEAKE BAY RETRIEVER, study of the breed by Albert W. Harris of Chicago, and from local legend here on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. While the authorities do not agree as to the crosses originally responsible for today's Chesapeakes they do concur that the Newfoundland strain was the dominant part of it.

By the early nineteenth century the natives of Newfoundland were using two well established breeds of water dogs for both retrieving fish, which had fallen dead out of the dories, and hauling nets. The larger of these dogs with a long, rough, brownish coat was called the Newfoundland and the smaller, with a short, smooth, black coat, was known as the St. Johns Water Dog, or Labrador. At this period the Port of Poole was carrying on a trade of cod fish with England and it was only natural that some of these fine water dogs should have found their way to the mother country.

The Third Earl of Malmesbury, one of the earliest British importers, wrote the Duke of Buccleuch in 1887 that, "We always call mine Labrador dogs and I have kept the breed pure as I could since the day I had the first from Poole. The real breed may be known by their having a close coat that turns off water like oil, and, above all, a tail like an otter." It is said every Labrador in Great Britain stems from these importations. So much for the Labradors, but what of his big brown cousin?

The first recorded evidence of Newfoundlands in the Chesapeake Bay area comes from a letter written in 1807 by a certain George Law who says that while aboard the ship *Canton* they fell in with a British brig in a sinking condition and took off her crew. Also on board were two dogs, a male and a bitch which Law subsequently purchased from the British captain and gave to friends in Maryland. The male named *Sailor,* a big rusty red dog, strong and well made, went to John Mercer of West

River and was later bought by Governor Lloyd of Wye House, Talbot County, Eastern Shore. The bitch, *Canton*, went to the Western Shore to Dr. James Stewart.

We are concerned, however, with *Sailor*, reputedly the ancestor of the Chesapeake and here the authorities do not agree. Mr. McKenney makes a strong case for the crossing of this dog with the Brooke strain of foxhounds. Robert Brooke imported the first pack of Englished fox hounds to the colonies in 1650 and the breed was very popular on the Eastern Shore. Like Kerry beagles they were not entered exclusively to fox and undoubtedly served as gun dogs as well. They were red in color, high in courage, independent and persistent, with a fine nose and great endurance.

Mr. Harris, on the other hand, makes an equally strong argument for the crossing of Newfoundlands with Irish Water Spaniels. Mr. Harris, however, does not directly connect *Sailor* with the Irish strain and infers that today's Chesapeake stemmed from earlier crosses of Irish Water Spaniels and Newfoundlands in other sections of this country or in England. The fact that both breeds were primarily water dogs and that the wavy outer coat of the Water Spaniel appears even today in Chesapeake lends strength to his case.

In the Colonial period vast flights of wildfowl migrated twice yearly across the Chesapeake area and bags of a hundred or more ducks per gun were not uncommon. I have seen early Virginia laws stating that it was illegal to feed slaves canvasback duck more than twice a week.

It took a rugged and tireless dog to retrieve such masses of game and only the hardiest of the local specimens stood the test. Thinly clad dogs died of pneumonia and poor swimmers were crushed by the floating ice. The result of this survival of the fittest is mirrored today by the official description given by the American Chesapeake Club.

"There are three unique features which distinguish the

Chesapeake from other breeds in the United States. The first is the fact that he is of American origin. The second is his water resisting coat, consisting of a short, harsh, wavy outer coat nowhere over one and a half inches long and a dense fine undercoat like fur, containing an abundance of natural oil. The third is the breed's distinctive personality. The Chesapeake will work really well only for the person he acknowledges as his master."

On the bench judges look for a thickset, heavy-sterned, powerful individual with round skull, broad between the eyes, shallow stop, and a long deep muzzle, pointed but not sharp. The dogs should stand between twenty-three and twenty-five inches and weigh about seventy-five pounds. The eye is a shade of yellow, and the coat varies in color from dark brown to straw color. Black or a large amount of white is outlawed, as is feathering on the legs, or tail. The breed was accepted for registration by the American Kennel Club in 1878.

But perhaps the finest attribute of the Chesapeake is his undying keeness. As John McKenney so aptly put it: "The Chesapeake does an amazing thing. He sets a standard of his own worth as a member of a duck team. He demands that his gun kill him ducks. He puts the hunter on the spot. As a result of his ruling many clumsy marksmen return to shore disgruntled, duckless and dogless, too, because his dog has adopted a more successful neighbor in an adjoining blind."

CHAPTER VI

Sladang and Tiger in Indo China

Back in the jungle fastnesses of the Empire of Annam, French Indo China, there survives today the biggest horned animal in the world. Standing six feet at the shoulder, and carrying a spread of pointed horns four feet from tip to tip, the Sladang, or Gaur, as the French call him, is far larger than either the African buffalo or the biggest of the Canadian moose. There is scientific reason to believe, moreover, that the Sladang was roaming the forest of Southern Asia in remote antiquity and was contemporary with the giant Aurochs.

The Sladang, along with the tiger and the old bull elephant, has a reputation for toughness, but most big game hunters agree that of the three, the Sladang is the hardest to kill. Nine times out of ten all wild animals will run at the sight, sound or smell of man, but the tenth they will charge, and the same bullet that will rip through a tiger's skull or stop an elephant may be effectively deflected by the skull of the Sladang bull. In color, he is coal black with white stockinged legs and yellow trimming inside his ears and along his belly.

The country inhabited by the Sladang herds is rough and uneven, partly covered by dense jungle but affording open pastures in the higher altitudes where they can find fodder. The plateau of Lang-Bian, in the south central part of Annam, is one of their favorite haunts, and it was there that I hunted them. Before describing the actual hunt, however, I should like to sketch in the background of the expedition.

Through friends in the Royal Geographical Society in London, I was given a letter of introduction to the Marquis André Guidon

Lavalleé, a great French hunter and owner of estates in southern Indo China. I did not have sufficient funds to hire one of the professional white hunters of the seaport city of Saigon, so any success crowning my efforts was due largely to the kindness and advice of the old Marquis. I stayed at his chateau for several months before starting my expedition and I believe that without his patient training and instruction, I would not have been able to accomplish my mission.

About the middle of July, 1935, I set out from Lavalleé's with ten bearers, a cook, and four Moi trackers. The Moi are the aborigines of Annam and provide some of the finest trackers in the world. Little men, seldom more than four feet in height, and armed only with cross bows, they will lead a hunter nearer to the big animals than most of us care to go. My head man, Tu Sai, had both courage and brains and gave me complete loyalty throughout the many trying months ahead.

My purpose was to secure big specimens of Gaur, banting, sambar, tiger, etc., for various museums, and incidentally to do some anthropological work among the Moi villages on the way. I planned to make a trip of about six months and hire bearers locally as I needed them. My general direction was to cross Annam and end up somewhere on the Mekong River in Central Cambodia, a total distance of about six hundred miles.

"La Chasse de gaur se fait avec les pieds, plus qu'avec la carabine," Lavalleé had often said to me, and no truer words were ever spoken. Without seven-league boots, it's a mountain climber's job even to catch up with the game. Five months had passed since I said goodbye to my friend, and it seemed to me that I had climbed every mountain in Annam. I had shot elephant, banting and sambar, but never had a decent crack at a Gaur. I had crossed the Lang-Bian Plateau and striking into the range beyond, found tracks of a large herd of Gaur. Tu Sai estimated about thirty, and the largest Lavalleé had ever seen numbered half that. I tracked them for a solid week. Up endless

rock-scarred mountains and through a nightmare of bamboo thickets where we were lucky if we made a few miles in as many hours. It was back-breaking work and invariably followed by disappointment. Once I caught up with the herd in impossibly thick cover and heard them crashing all around me without seeing a single black form. Another time I had an excellent shot down a ravine but missed, due to the tiny deflection of a tree. The bullet barely grazed the bark but, at that speed, it was enough. In the ground were the huge imprints, but not a sign of blood. The Gaur was rapidly becoming a phantom which led me deeper and deeper into the jungle, only to fade away when I came up to him.

The hunt had taken a good deal out of me by this time, and I was resting at a lone Moi hut in a forgotten valley. Its name was Nu Kia, and the owner was in some remote way related to Tu Sai. A wilder and lovelier place could not be found. The stream tumbled into a deep blue pool before the door and the mountains seemed to stand challenging guard above us. The single family of the hut must have been influenced by their surroundings, for they took on something of its dignity. The old father, still straight as his weathered arrows, received me with a smile and sweeping his hand toward the peaks, said all was mine. He might have been a chatelain of old France presenting his king the freedom of his estate. His wife had borne many children and was near her end with fever. I gave her an injection of quinine, but it seemed futile. She was tired, and when a Moi woman decides her time is up, she prefers to die gracefully.

In the morning, I woke with a splitting headache and a fever. I had staved off a bad attack for a long time, but I knew the signs and immediately doubled my usual allowance of quinine. It proved to be a severe attack of malaria and lying there sweating and shivering, I lost track of time.

Tu Sai nursed me with touching care. One or the other of the

Moi was always at my side and despite their ignorance of such things, managed to give me my pills and make me take them. I probably owe them my life.

The fever finally left me, but I was weak and listless for many more days. Tu Sai made me a bamboo chair to sit in under the shade of the palms, and, when I was stronger and could go down to the river, amused me by catching the little fish of the brook in his hands. For awhile I ceased to think of the outside world at all. Somewhere beyond the mountains, white men lived and events took place, but here life was as calm and meaningless as the white clouds on the peaks.

My strength picked up slowly but steadily, and the day came when I had to be on my way. I knew the fever would recur and I had to shoot my Gaur before it did. It was hard to leave Nu Kia, and I was sad when I said goodbye. The old father offered me his two grown sons as trackers, but I refused. Tiger lurked on the hillsides, and he needed them for protection. I was down to five boys besides Tu Sai by then, but we had little left of our original supplies and they were not adequate for more men. I had long ago finished my last tin of herring. In one battered five-gallon can was just enough arsenical soap to pickle a Gaur's head.

I managed to scrape together a few presents and distributed them on my last evening there. To the father I gave my wrist watch, which had ceased to be useful to a man living by the sun, but it still ticked in a most intriguing way. I told him to wind it when the sun was dead overhead; and to this day, he is probably peering up at the sky in the stifling noons.

Before the next dawn, I had started my trek, and by the time the sun had burnt over the ridges, the valley was a misty line of river far below us. My sense of direction was always poor, and if I had not had Tu Sai to guide me, I would have been hopelessly lost long before then. Between him and the compass, how-

ever, I had managed to keep a general bearing and figured that we must have not nearly completed the half circle which I had planned on leaving Lavalleé. There were no signs of the Mekong River from the top of the mountain, but distance is deceiving in the tropics, and it might lie a few days' march away. Tu Sai thought about three, but said it would mean hard going on the high places. There fed the Gaur, and we started climbing.

The fever had weakened me more than I thought and in addition, my last pair of rope-soled shoes was worn to tatters. The first day we made little more than five miles, and that evening I knew that my health could not stand many more marches. Two of the boys had been scouting ahead of us and I was just falling asleep when one of these arrived, breathless and excited. "Kebey, kebey," (the Moi word for Gaur) he shouted, and stretched his arms to indicate a huge spread of horns. I gathered that an old bull was feeding somewhere above us, and my heart pounded. It was tomorrow morning or never. I slept fitfully, dreaming of a ghost Gaur whom I chased on an animated can of arsenical soap.

We picked up the trail just after dawn and found it easy to follow. The old bulls fear nothing from the tiger as they wander lonely and proud over the peaks, and this one certainly seemed to be taking his time. Here he munched the grass by a brook, there he clipped the shoots from a bamboo sapling, and often ahead of us were the piles of warm droppings. Tu Sai was hot on the trail. We followed him through the blazing noon and far into the afternoon. Ordinarily, I should have insisted on the mid-day siesta, but this was my last chance.

Then suddenly I saw him through the bushes not thirty feet away. He saw me at almost the same time, and the great horns swept downward. I drew a long breath, and fired into the massive forehead. He reeled sideways and I saw a spurt of blood fly over the eyes. Only for a moment did he hesitate, but the

shot must have cost him most of his sight, and he charged away. There was a rush as the great black form thundered by me a good ten feet away and crashed off into the jungle.

We waited the requisite half hour to let him bleed and weaken, and then started cautiously in pursuit. For a while his trail was obvious as a steamroller. He had simply crashed through the brush in a straight line. Small trees were snapped at the root, and the dark red stains were everywhere. As we progressed farther, however, these became fewer; and the fear seized me that he might be getting away. Then common sense prevailed. No animal could take that much lead in his forehead and live for long. The pursuit had drained all my strength and I began to feel faint. Tu Sai gave me his shoulder for another half mile, but it was no use. I couldn't go on; and had to make camp on the trail.

For the next two days, I had another bad attack of malaria, and only on the morning of the third day was I conscious enough to lift my head and see the Sladang head. Tu Sai and the other trackers found it the day following my shot. The bull had run an incredible distance before he died. I was using a .405 Winchester with a shock force of four thousand pound feet. The steel plated bullet had entered high on the skull, driven along the edge of the brain and lodged in the neck.

The horns measured just under four feet from tip to tip, and seventeen and a half inches at the base. The weight of the head, taken off at the shoulder, was such that it took six men to get it into camp. The hide was nearly ruined by a leopard who must have fed shortly after the beast died, but the skin of the neck and head was untouched, except for some old deep scars running between the eyes. Years ago a tiger must have lost his life between those horns.

Months later, after my return to Saigon and a stay in the hospital, I again visited Lavalleé. Tiger are far from scarce in this section of Annam. In fact there are many old or deformed tigers

in Indo China who prey off the villages and Lavalleé wanted if possible to rid his Moi friends of such a one.

We had our first report of a man eater at high noon of a blazing hot day in June. The thermometer in my tent stuck somewhere above the hundred mark and sleep would not come. Except for the angry buzz of mosquitoes, deprived of a meal by a net, the jungle was quiet. Far up in the Sao trees, the monkeys forgot their gossip and dozed. The lean dogs of the nearby village lay stretched under the raised huts like limp sacks, while above them, the Moi villagers snored so loudly on the little platforms of their shaky homes, that the bamboo stilts seemed to vibrate gently in the heat.

The village where he was reported to have recently made off with a young Moi girl in broad daylight was about twenty kilometers away. Armed only with cross bows and a rare muzzle loader, the little Moi tribesmen were powerless against a killer, and had learned from long experience that the old Frenchman was their only hope of getting rid of it. Lavalleé had killed over thirty man-eaters during his long life in the colony and was as anxious as I was to get me a shot at one.

His knowledge of tigers and their ways was profound, and while the mid-day heat held us sweating on our cots, he told me some amazing and sinister facts about the big cats. Tigers literally decimate some of the villages. One tigress in the Dalat section of Annam was held responsible for the deaths of forty-five people over a period of less than two years. In every case, however, where the man-eater was subsequently shot, he or she proved to be either suffering from some form of injury which prevented hunting normal sources of food, or to be so old that any form of nourishment was preferable to none. Obviously the fat sambar deer and the succulent pig of the jungles made better meals than the scrawny natives.

Besides his Moi name of "Kliou," the tiger is called "Ong

Cop" by the Annamites. The word Ong means sir, and is used in reference to only two animals: the big cat and the elephant which sometimes smashes the huts for sheer deviltry. The natives fear and, therefore, respect them.

The tiger has really tremendous strength. Lavalleé said he had seen one of the great brutes drag an elephant calf some ten meters. On another occasion, one of his old and feeble water buffalo was killed and actually pulled over a mud wall four feet high. Despite his strength the tiger rarely attacks anything which might endanger him. He gives a wide berth to the full-grown Gaur and elephant, and would even think twice before he tackled a banting bull or a tame water buffalo in his prime.

He is not a coward, but, unless wounded, seldom attacks the hunter. He seems to sense danger with an almost uncanny faculty, and will go for the unarmed native woman where he would slink under cover from a white man with a gun. His vision and hearing are extremely acute but his sense of smell is almost non-existent. The reason lies in his diet. Kliou seldom eats after the kill. He drags it away and hides it until it begins to decompose. Then, when the carcass reeks and the bugs swarm over it, the lord of the jungle enjoys his meal. The effect on his sense of smell is obvious.

For the same reason, the slightest scratch from a tiger's claws or teeth is almost certain poisoning. Natives die in a day from what appears to be a superficial wound; and those few white men who have managed to get out to a hospital have usually lost an arm or a leg. A hunter Lavalleé knew got a badly infected finger which finally had to be amputated as a result of a slight cut he received while cleaning a tiger's skull.

During his hunting hours, a tiger moves slowly, probably at not more than three or four miles an hour, visiting the water holes and meadows where the smaller game gather. After a kill, he drags the body away to the thickest and darkest part of the

jungle he can find, and stays near it till he has devoured it. A tiger will eat even the bones, grinding them to splinters between his teeth.

There is a great deal to be said about the tiger's so-called growl. When wounded, he gives forth a decided roar, but in the jungle, his call very much resembles that of a deer. On several occasions I had heard this strange barking sound and mentioned it to Lavalleé. He listened for a while and said the regularity of the repetition could have come only from Kliou. Some of the Mois believe that the tiger purposely imitates the deer to lure them. When he approaches the bait, the tiger often gives a mewing sound like that of a cat.

In French Indo China, the tiger is not driven into a ring of elephants and shot from a howdah, as in India; nor is he banged at from the comparative security of a tree, as they do in Malaya. The professional hunters of Annam have worked out a very complete and scientific system of ground miradors or blinds, but in that section of the Moi country where the tigers have virtually never heard gun fire, they can be, and are, shot from the scantiest of natural cover, over dead bait.

The case in hand, however, seemed like a difficult one. The tiger was a man-eater and, according to the Mois, had never been seen except by those who did not survive to describe him. He had snatched three people, one of whom was a man, from the surrounding jungle during the past three months, but had never ventured so near the village before. This time either hunger or over-confidence had made him unusually daring, and his recent raid had been in broad daylight. The Moi girl was taking her baby to the river for washing when he sprang out of the jungle not five hundred yards from the village. In all probability she never had a chance to scream. Her husband, looking for her, saw the great pad marks, blood and a torn patch of clothing.

The Moi's attitude toward the tiger is curious. He will defend himself against it, but seldom, due to his deep superstitions,


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actually go out to hunt it. In his religion, the little man believes that Kliou embodies strong powers of evil and accepts him as a necessary part of a precarious existence. Lavalleé said he had never been able to persuade a Moi to accompany him on a tiger hunt, but that he had seen one fire arrow after arrow at a full-grown cat which followed him. This was a brave fellow and an exception. Most of the Mois simply give up and die quietly when Kliou charges.

We laid our plans carefully. The carcass of a recently-shot banting made a fine bait and we detailed men to bring it in and chain it to a tree at the foot of a small gulch leading in from the river. The noise of the water would be a help in covering our accidental movements and, situated high on one bank, we would have an advantage if the tiger decided to charge.

There was nothing to do until Kliou had begun to feed on the bait, and we idled away the next two days in the village. I opened a rough clinic at our hut and tried to patch up those of the villagers who would trust me. The first case was a man with a terribly swollen hand. He never moved when I cut and thanked me gravely as I bandaged it.

Malaria, however, is the great scourge of the Mois. Three out of five of the babies die of it, and if it were not for the fact that the average Moi girl has one every year, the little people would have vanished centuries ago. The full-grown seem to have developed a sort of resistance to it, but up to five or six years the mortality is frightful. The mothers were afraid of my hypodermic and would not let their children be stuck until I gave myself an injection of quinine in the arm. Finally they gathered courage and I punched a half dozen of their sunken-eyed babies. A few cried, but the majority seemed to be already on the edge of coma.

On the third morning, a Moi reported that the tiger had fed during the night. The banting had been mauled and despite the steel chain tied to the back bone and then to a great Fromager

tree, had been literally pulled apart. One of the legs was missing. That night I was to wait in the thicket above the carcass. Lavalleé wanted to come too, but I knew if he did, he would be the deciding shot and I wanted to settle that tiger myself.

It is difficult to tell for certain when Kliou will feed, but three times a night, at about nine, midnight and near dawn, is a good average. He is never very far away from the kill even when not eating. I decided, therefore, to go out to my blind after dinner and settle down for the evening. I took my helmet light and after prolonged testing, rigged it so that the beam would stream down my sights. It made objects visible a good hundred feet away. Instead of my heavy rifle, I took the shot gun loaded with solid lead slugs. They have a terrific shock force at close range and are more effective than the faster drilling shells as they flatten soon after penetrating the skin.

By seven, I was settled as comfortably as possible with a small opening in the blind for my gun and a forked stick to rest it on. The vigil had begun, and somewhere down there in the grey shadows of the ravine, Kliou was hiding. The hours wore on and although he did not come, the mosquitoes did. I had bathed my face and hands with citronella, but I think the bugs of Indo China like its taste. They crawled down my neck, biting rapturously enroute. They made a play room out of my hair and generally drove me crazy. They seemed to know that I dared not move. Twice, before the luminous dial on my watch showed midnight, I heard a faint crackle in the jungle, but it ceased immediately. It was pitch black, despite the feeble rays of a new moon, and I was beginning to wish heartily that I had let Lavalleé come.

Then above the murmur of the river, I heard a barely audible movement in front of me. It sounded as if something was being dragged very slowly over the grass. I waited with my heart pounding. The sound came again and more distinctly. Down in the ravine, something was trying to move the carcass. I groped

for the switch and pressed it. In the full glare of the beacon, a tiger crouched over the bait. He was sideways to me and raised his head as the light struck him. I fired, almost without aiming. He gave a spring into the air and fell on his belly, the blood gushing from his neck. The second barrel followed the first, but he merely quivered.

I could have shouted; but Lavalleé's repeated warnings about keeping quiet and staying still a long while after the animal appeared to be finished, raced back to my mind, and I lit a cigarette instead. For what seemed hours but was only about five minutes, I watched him and then, carefully reloading, approached. The eyes were closed and a pool of blood was rapidly forming under the tawny head. One great paw still hung over the carcass, but its claws were drawn in. Kliou was quite dead.

Lavalleé had heard my shots and was waiting for me at the trail, with a group of Mois. He took the news with elation but the Mois merely grunted approval. In their minds, even a dead tiger was not a thing to speak lightly about. They swung him on a long bamboo pole with the legs tied together, and eight of them bent under the enormous weight. Silently we picked our way back to the village.

In the morning Lavalleé and I went over him in detail. He measured nearly four meters, or about ten feet, from the tip of his nose to the end of his tail; and Lavalleé estimated his weight at about eight hundred pounds. He was an old tiger judging from the dullness of the claws and the yellow broken teeth, and it was Lavalleé's opinion that he had grown too feeble to catch jungle game.

It is fatal to wait too long before skinning as deterioration sets in quickly in that humid climate. We set to work in the early dawn and I watched Lavalleé's method with interest. He lifted the coat off with the paws, ears and lips left adhering to the skin. They take a good deal of special work in cleaning, and it is better to leave them on till the main job is over. The Mois helped us

clean out loose pieces of flesh and rub away the fat of the coat, but Lavalleé himself attended to the paws and head with particular care. He used a pen knife and not the tiniest bit of meat escaped him. The skin was then carefully washed of all impurities and stretched on a bamboo frame where we rubbed it well with arsenical soap while still wet. The skull we took to the river and left it. A few days later the fish had cleaned it white as a bone. It was far from good taxidermy, but sufficient to preserve the pelt till my man in Saigon could get at it.

Lavalleé had to start back to his chateau in the morning. We dined together sadly. I had grown very fond of the fine old fellow and the thought of the jungle without him was not inviting. His constant good humor, and untiring answers to my questions were a source of very real pleasure. Furthermore, without his aid in helping me with the Moi language and advice in handling the natives, I should never have been able to push on alone. He took my banting, sambar, ivory and tiger trophies with him to send them down to Saigon for me. At the ford of the river we shook hands. I never saw him again.

Ten years later, word reached me that he had been killed in 1941, resisting the so-called peaceful infiltration of his country by the Japs.

Born in 1855, in the Vendée, he was educated in private schools and later graduated from St. Cyr Military Academy. His father died soon afterwards and he retired from the army to his estates, where he devoted himself wholeheartedly to hunting and farming. He often pointed out that during the French Revolution the peasants of the Vendée fought for the King and he attributed this to the fact that the nobility of that section lived and hunted with their people.

Politically he was a staunch monarchist, giving time and money to the gallant but futile effort to restore the French Kings. Around 1900, an abortive effort was made by his party to

put the Duke of Guise on the throne and, while little attention was paid to the attempt, the Republic was annoyed and the Marquis, along with some others, was exiled from France for life. He was then middle-aged, and the prospect of his Far Eastern estates must not have been pleasant, but he packed his guns, portraits and the old Royalist flag of the Bourbons and went. From the day he arrived, to the time I saw him, he remained on his estates, having no contact with the government at Saigon, which he heartily despised. He met his wife, an Annamite princess, while a guest of the Annamite Emperor and, with her and his three children, he lived among his hundreds of native retainers like a kindly feudal lord in a forgotten world.

His knowledge of hunting was profound, especially stag hunting which he had evidently done nearly all his life until he left France. He had a very old copy of LIVRE DE CHASSE, Gaston de Foix's classic of the sport, and often read me passages to show that, despite progress in other fields, mankind knew very little more about hunting now than they did in the Middle Ages. He possessed a great many oil paintings of hounds, mostly of the large staghound types, and took a delight in telling me their histories. He had hunted his own pack, an unusual thing for a gentleman in that day. When he migrated, he brought several couple of staghounds with him but the heat was too much for them and all soon died.

He continued to hold *le grand cerf* in high esteem, however, and his collection of antlers from stags he had shot in the jungles was the finest I have ever seen. In fact, there was virtually no animal of that section of Annam that he had not killed—sladang, banting, black and spotted leopard, and numerous tiger and elephant. To see him at well over eighty years of age marching along a jungle trail with his ancient but beautifully balanced rifle on his arm was a great spectacle. The natives worshipped him and had an uncanny belief in his powers with the gun, stating flatly that he was able to kill "Con Coh," the ghost tiger.

His end, as related to me by a British friend who heard the story in Saigon and later escaped from Singapore to England, was typical. The Japs were not at war with France; they simply demanded and got rights to move in troops and take over. The Foreign Legion resisted on the border, and was wiped out almost to a man. Then the Japs started down-country, arriving eventually in the Marquis' country. The details of what actually happened were not clear but evidently the Jap commander insulted Madame La Marquesse and old Guidon Lavalleé quietly took down his sword and ran him through. The Japs shot the old gentleman and his family and burned the chateau.

The sequel had to wait a few years more, but I should hate to have been a Jap soldier retreating across the jungle vastnesses of Annam towards the end of the war. The little Moi hunters have long memories and numerous picturesque ways of avenging a master and friend.

CHAPTER VII

Hare Hunting on Nantucket

If Mr. Jorrocks were alive a few years ago, he would not have had to take the string out of his hat at the end of the season. He would have flown *Artaxerxes* to Nantucket Island, fifty miles off the coast of Massachusetts, and spent the summer ambling behind the harriers.

The Nantucket Harriers, perhaps unique in the sporting world, used to hunt only during the summer, beginning their season early in July and closing it late in September. To my knowledge their only competition during the hot months was the Bermuda Hunt, but this was merely a paper chase where pink coats but no hounds gave but a faint flavor to the proceedings.

Hunting started on the Island in 1925, when Mr. Justice of Willow Grove, Penna., first imported hare from Kansas and began operations with ten couple of harriers. Unlike the European hare, the Kansas variety is grey in color and very fast. Her disadvantage is that she waits till hounds are all around her and then gives them a sight chase for awhile instead of stealing away before hounds arrive, as her English cousin will. This is hard on the young entry, as it tends to make them run by view.

The moors of Nantucket are similar to Exmoor in England, with the difference that the going is better, as there are no bogs. Almost all of the Island, which measures fourteen miles by four, is hunted, and, except for a little wire, which is well panelled, there is virtually no place where a horse cannot go. There are no fox, and gunners keep the deer down to reasonable proportions.

The Island was settled early in the seventeenth century and

became for a long period the whaling center of the New World. The tall ships of Nantucket were seen on the seven seas, and it was not until the end of the last century that the last full rigger sailed from the Island. Many of the descendants of the captains who chased Moby Dick, the fabulous white whale, are still living in the towns of Nantucket and Siasconset. The Indian aborigines, however, were moved to the mainland twenty years ago and only the crumbling ruins of their altar rocks remain on the moors.

Although formal hunting ceased in 1948, the Master, Mrs. W. W. Trimpi, of Somerville, New Jersey, who has reigned for the past twelve years and developed a fine type of hound for the Island work, still brings a few couple to the Island each summer to hunt on foot. The last season I hunted with them (1948), four brace were accounted for and there was not one blank day. Hounds went three days a week, and consisted of twelve couple of sixteen-inch beagles, which were fast enough to kill occasionally but not fast enough to race the hare to death.

The field was usually not over fifteen riders, and the only formality necessary was green shirts and hunting helmets for the master and whip.

Hounds met at seven in the morning on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. At this time of day, a light mist always hung over the moors and scent was invariably good. On really foggy mornings, it was necessary to ride almost on hounds' sterns to keep them in sight, as the fog drowns sound and visibility drops to less than fifty feet. An eerie quality was added to hunting in the fog by the cries of the gulls, which rose even above the roar of the surf. The Island is dotted with small lakes, and over the years the hare have learned to swim them with surprising agility. I have seen a hare easily outstrip hounds in the water of these ponds. Hare will also sometimes enter the Atlantic and try to foil their line by running along the wash of the surf.

I had the great pleasure of hunting with the Nantucket Har-

riers for three summers from 1946 through 1948, and the added fun of serving as whip the first two seasons and field master the third. As I mentioned above these hounds are not true harriers which usually stand seventeen inches, but over-sized beagles. All of Mrs. Trimpi's hounds came from Richard V. N. Gambrill's, Vernon Somerset pack of Peapack, N. J. Outstanding in the pack was *Spokesman,* a big, beautifully marked dog hound with one of the best noses I have ever seen in action.

It was, of course, difficult to maintain horses on the island and if it had not been for the successful efforts of Mrs. Louis Greenleaf of Greenwich, Conn., Secretary of the hunt, in persuading Ted Wahl, manager of the Round Hill Club stables in Greenwich, to spend his summers looking after the Nantucket stud, we could not have had swung the hunting.

Keeping the horses was not the only problem attached to Nantucket hunting. If Mr. Jorrocks had reason to complain at the length of time it took to get from London to the meets of the Surrey Foxhounds—a matter in those days of some ten miles jogging on the ample back of *Artaxerxes*—I often used to wonder what he would say about the travel difficulties facing the hunter who weekends on Nantucket.

I left New York on a late Friday afternoon plane with the fond hope that it would proceed direct to the Island, in say an hour and a half. But there is invariably fog over Nantucket, so one was wafted to Boston. There then followed a long train or taxi ride to New Bedford, which was home to the whaling fleet but hardly a warm port of call to anyone else. The Nantucket steamer was due in three hours, but lost a rudder. The rudder was replaced, and I proceeded for five hours on a choppy sea. At four-thirty in the morning, more than twelve hours after I left New York, I arrived, buoyed only by hot coffee and the none-too-comforting thought that hounds met at seven, less than a cat nap away.

Such was my condition when I showed up for the meet on

Saturday, the third of August, 1946. Everyone looked bright. Hounds with three days of pure sloth behind them, romped over the grass of the Trimpis' lawn with gay abandon. My hunter, *Maddox*, seeming to sense the unfitness of his rider, went into a series of mild bucks. Mrs. Trimpi and the whip, Sheila McCreery, eyed me suspiciously with the look one gives the inveterate toper. There was no field out.

The wind was favorable and hounds found in the first field we drew. The hare had not been travelling for twelve hours and proceeded to show us a rare burst of vigor. For no less than thirty-five minutes she wound her cheery way over the enclosed fields, never once breaking for the moors. The wire is panelled, and we had more jumping than we had to do all the month of July.

Puss finally tired of her figure eights and gave us the slip on the macadam road, making sure first that a truck covered her tracks with a nice antiseptic coat of gas fumes. At nine the master kindly called it a day, and I found myself a good sand dune for sleeping.

"There is no more melancholic ceremony," said Mr. Jorrocks, "than takin' the string out of one's 'at at the end of the season," and, while we of the Nantucket Harriers did not sport the same hat winter and summer, our sentiments were just as sad when the final day of summer hunting rolled around.

Hounds met at the kennels at seven with the Master and me making up the field. It was an almost perfect morning for hare hunting. A thick fog hung over the pastures with just enough wind from the sea to keep the air cool and scent holding.

Drawing the planted fields behind the Bartletts' farm, hounds found quickly and soon had a strong jack racing for the open moor. I glanced at my watch, ascertained it was seven fifteen, and settled in the saddle. Conditions were right for a long gallop and puss did not disappoint us. Making a straight point she

ran nearly two miles to the ocean, turned right handed among the dunes and led us for another mile along the beaches. There the thunder of the surf drowned hounds' voices and only by riding on their sterns could we stay with them.

In the soft sand hounds gained on the hare and we saw her twice as she topped the white hillocks a thousand yards ahead. The pace was telling and she broke again for the moors, this time toward Miacomet Pond. Hounds checked among the watery marshes along the banks of the pond and it took a good fifteen minutes to unravel the line. *Barmaid* finally hit it off and we had another straight run on grass before puss made her next bid to shake us in Bartlett's big corn field. Seldom have hounds been able to own the line on its cold plough, but the fog held and we worked her through the field into the open again.

By this time hounds had been running with only one check for nearly fifty minutes and we knew that another fifteen might mean a dead hare. Becky decided to whip off with the satisfaction of a good hunt well run.

Hounds went out thirty-five times that summer, and despite the sharp drop in the number of hares seen in other seasons, had only one blank day. *Monitor* was the only casualty. He died on the Cape but lives on in his puppies who turned in excellent first season records.

One of the best runs I remember was that of Monday, July 14, 1947, when luckily we also had our biggest field. Sixteen riders including some distinguished members of other hunts were out. Among them were Virginia Bryce, Peggy Wemple and Agnes Fowler of the Essex Foxhounds of New Jersey; John Cowperthwaite, Master of the Reddington Foot Beagles also of New Jersey; Morgan Wing, joint master of the Buckram Beagles of Long Island; Wooderson Glenn, field master, and Eleanor Van Allen of the Millbrook Hunt of Millbrook, New York. Woody Glenn, incidentally, sailed over from the mainland with the aid of only a Texaco road map.

Becky Trimpi, the Master, moved off at seven sharp with nine and a half couple and drew the downs near the kennels. In less than five minutes, a big jack was afoot and led us a long straight gallop to the sea, a distance of about three miles. At the dunes hounds checked and Becky let them work out the line slowly along the beach. Scent was catchy, with the wind off the Atlantic whipping it away on the powdered sand. After ten minutes of diligent search, puss again jumped to view and led us back across the moors to almost the exact spot she started from. Hounds then hunted her to a field enclosed with wire mesh where neither they nor horses could follow. Three more hare led us shorter chases, and both riders and horses were weary and lathered when Becky called it a day at ten-thirty.

Old *Beamish,* perhaps the best known hound of the pack, had to be put down after the hunt. She was over twelve years old and could not stand the pace. *Beamish* was known as "the alarm clock" due to her habit on hunting mornings of waking up everyone in the Master's house at exactly the right time to dress for the meet. Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays, *Beamish* gave violent tongue at six A.M. and slept peacefully on the other four days. It is hoped that her puppies, *Bellman* and *Barmaid,* will also learn to tell time.

The Nantucket hare often took to the ponds when hard pressed by hounds and I remember one particular day during the summer of 1948, when we sat on our horses and cheered one over. The hare had been hunted vigorously for over an hour when she spied the cool expanse of Miacomet Pond and immediately dove in. The pond was about a quarter of a mile across at the sea end and, as there were small waves on the surface, hounds could not see her doing her Kansas crawl, but sitting on our horses on a bluff we had an excellent view. Several of the older hounds started to swim out but the wind had blown all suggestion of scent off the water and they soon gave up. The Master

never allowed hounds to hunt a hare that had taken to the water, so we drew for another.

It was also during the summer of 1948 that the Sandanona Beagles, a new pack composed entirely of the wedding presents of Ann and Morgan Wing, held their opening meet, July 14th, at Altar Rock. Four couple were hunted by Morgan, with Ann and myself whipping to him. The field consisted of my daughters Phillippa and Irene. Phillippa's progress was somewhat impeded by her beagle, *Beauty*, who came along on a leash and took as much interest in hunting as *Ferdinand* did in a bull fighter.

Altar Rock is the highest point on the Island and served two hundred years ago as the sacrificial block of the now extinct Nantucket Indians. They could not have chosen a more beautiful place. The moor falls away from the rock in rolling carpets of green gorse, spotted here and there by wild roses and purple thistle. Three small lakes glisten in the hollows, and a great variety of moor birds dart about the bushes. The sea and the bay are just visible on two sides and the sky meets the moor on the others.

From a hunting standpoint it was not a successful day, hare being scarce and the field picking flowers, but few packs could begin their hunting career in a lovelier setting. It reminded me of some of the very early prints of beagling in Somerset, where the artists caught the blues and yellows of the south country moors and almost forgot to include the hounds and hunters.

The Sandanona stem from almost all the best known packs in the country. Oliver Iselin, master of the Wolver Beagles of Middleburg, Virginia, donated *Baker* and *Ringer*. Joe Child, master of the Waldingfield of Boston gave *Piper*. *Durable* and *Durham* came from John Baker, master of the Buckram on Long Island. Chetwood Smith, master of the renowned Sir Sister Beagles of Boston sent two hounds, names unknown,

while Tom Greer, master of the Bethel Lake Beagles of Sewell, New York, and Horatio Ford of the Whitford Beagles out in Cleveland, Ohio, also sent four-legged presents.

By permission of Frederick Bontecou, Master of the Millbrook Foxhounds, the Sandanona, during the winter months hunts at Millbrook, New York. The Millbrook area, incidentally, is one of the very few in the country where European hare are found. They were released there thirty years ago by a German businessman who missed the fauna of Bavaria.

The name Sandanona originated with Morgan Wing's great grandfather, who built a house by that name in Millbrook in 1810. The name lives today through the Sandanona Pheasantry, which belongs to Morgan's father, where I have had some excellent shooting.

CHAPTER VIII

The Puckeridge Hounds

Despite the ravages of two wars, confiscatory taxation, and rigid austerity, hunting is still a way of life in rural England. Instead of fading into history like most other symbols of gracious country living, hunting has not only survived, but has as strong an appeal today as it did in the balmy days of the Regency. The appeal, moreover, is not only to those who hunt themselves, but to the thousands of small farmers who never mount a horse, but without whose support the noble science would be as dead as the Dodo Bird.

Major Maurice Barclay, joint master with his son of the Puckeridge Hounds, hunts a country twenty-five miles square on the borders of Hertfordshire, Essex and Cambridgeshire. Some six hundred farmers with holdings averaging about a hundred acres each, inhabit this area and only a fraction, fifty at the most, actually follow hounds. The great majority receive nothing from the hunt but an annual field day and the aesthetic pleasure of seeing hounds and a field of eighty people cross their lands. Broken fences and poultry losses due to foxes are, of course, made good by the hunt committee but last year claims came to less than three hundred pounds sterling.

Occasionally a man settles in the country who does not believe that the glories of a passing hunt make up for the inconveniences and serves notice that hounds must stay away. The problem of winning him over is left entirely to his neighboring farmers who have never failed to show him the error of his viewpoint. A Scotsman, new to the country, once suggested to the Major that the hunt pay him rent for riding over his land.

The Major pointed out what such a precedent might mean to the hunt and let the matter rest. A short while later the Scotsman called to say that he not only did not mind the hunt crossing his place, but would like to walk a puppy.

The Puckeridge Hounds are for several excellent reasons one of the outstanding packs hunting in England today. Not only have they been bred on the same principles for the past fifty-six years, but they have been bred by three generations of the same family. The late Squire, Edward E. Barclay, died in 1948, after a hunting career of more than seventy seasons, eighteen of them with foot harriers and beagles and fifty-two as master, or joint-master with his son, of the Puckeridge Foxhounds, which he took over in 1896. The present joint mastership of the pack is held by Major Maurice Barclay, and Captain Charles Barclay, son and grandson of the Squire. Three-year-old Thomas E. Barclay, the Captain's son, will someday inherit a magnificent pack and considerable responsibility.

The Puckeridge is one of the few packs of pure English hounds left in the kingdom. Since 1925, when Isaac Bell, master of the South and West Wilts, bred his popular Welsh strain, crosses from these rough coated hounds have been widely used. The result is that Major Barclay has a difficult time finding outcrosses and has had to restrict his breeding to the Brocklesby, Woodland, Albrighton, and Tyndal. Conversely these packs use Puckeridge blood and *President '48* has been put to many of the Earl of Yarborough's Brocklesby bitches.

The Major, who was recently elected Chairman of the Masters of Foxhounds Association of Great Britain, and who has judged at the Royal Peterborough Hound Show since 1913, hunts a cold scenting country and as a result constantly strives for that trio of hound virtues—nose, tongue and drive. His efforts have been fully justified for the Puckeridge is a consistent winner at Peterborough, and has an enviable record in

accounting for foxes. Twenty-seven brace were killed during the past season.

A Sunday afternoon at the kennels is a great pleasure to any lover of foxhounds, and was of particular interest to me as I had hunted with a greatly reduced Puckeridge pack during the war. Forty-four couple are now maintained, of which fourteen couple are entered hounds and eight and a half couple unentered. They are a wonderful lot to look at—sloping shoulders, straight but not knuckled over forelegs, fine heads and a general identity of conformation that stamps all Puckeridge blood as clearly as Belvoir tan used to mark these famous hounds of the Belvoir.

I was particularly impressed with *Puckeridge Poetry*, a really beautiful bitch that took a first at Peterborough. *Gravity '51*, by *Woodcock* out of *Graphic*, was another superb bitch. She is very fast and usually leads the pack. *Willing '47*, by *Chaplain* out of *Wonder*, is also a fine bitch. The two dog hounds that I liked most were *Playmate '49* by *Woodcock* out of *Peaceful* and *Corncrake '50* by *Workman* out of *Courtly*.

The kennels, first erected in 1901, are a model of what a good hounds' home should be. Ned Paxton, the kennel huntsman, assisted by two helpers, keeps his yards clean enough to eat off and his boiling room like a canine Ritz.

When the late Squire took over the Puckeridge from the Hon. L. J. Bathurst in 1896, the pack was a pretty scratch lot. No one, in fact, could possibly have produced today's perfection without careful selection and outcrossing. The Squire's first move was to use Belvoir blood and those were the days when the Belvoir was the best pack of foxhounds in the world. Every hound in today's kennel goes back to *Belvoir Wethergauge '76* and *Fallible '74*.

The next successful step was the using of *Grafton Woodman '92*. The best Warwickshire blood came in 1903, through *Tem-*

pest and in 1909, through *Ruler*. Fresh crosses of Belvoir came again with *Rifleman* in 1915, and Warwickshire again in 1922, through *Wethergauge's* sire, *Sultan*. Belvoir was again used with *Wilful* in 1923, but since the late war, the Belvoir strain has deteriorated sadly.

To sum up, it can undoubtedly be said today's pack combines the best working strains of the English foxhound. Every hound in the kennel goes back many times to the great hounds of the past century. In addition to the Belvoir and Grafton ancestry, today's hounds trace to Lord Coventry's *Rambler '73* and Lord Henry Bentinck's celebrated stallion hounds *Dorimont '60*, *Contest '84*, *Tomboy '45*, *Comus '44* and to his great brood bitch *Crazy '40*, who was one of the founders of his celebrated Burton pack.

That the Puckeridge is as fine a pack as it is today, is a triumph of not only Major Barclay, but of the farmers of his hunting country. If, during the course of the second World War, any farmer had complained to the War Agricultural Committee that hunting and its necessary demand for foxes was in any way interfering with the war effort, hunting would have unquestionably ceased to exist. The war did, or course, result in a drastic curtailment of the Puckeridge establishment. The Major hunted his fine dog pack for the last time September 4th, 1939, and the following day only a few couple of this great pack, into which had gone so many years of work and study, were left alive. It was a blow that both the Masters and pack took a long time to recover from.

Rising agricultural prices have, of course, been reflected in the increased cost of maintaining hounds. The forty-four couple which I had the pleasure of viewing in the Puckeridge Kennels in the summer of 1952, are as fine and fit a pack as it has ever been my privilege to admire, but a large part of their diet consists of potatoes. Ground oats are also fed, and, mixed with water and broth, make an excellent meal. Flesh is, of course, hard to

come by and if it were not for the constant support of the farmers, hounds would go hungry for it. Old horses, cows, goats and sheep are invariably sent to the kennels. The Major in his position as Chairman of the County Agricultural Association, is in somewhat of an anomolous position. On the one hand he urges the farmers to preserve their livestock and on the other, to send it to the hounds.

The Puckeridge country has some problems with wire but most of it is unfenced farm lands, where ditches and hedges are the only obstacles one meets on a run. The land on the whole is rich and highly arable which makes the going heavy but also keeps the fields from being turned to pasture with the concomitant necessity of wire fencing to keep in the cattle. There is, of course, some wire. The Major said that rather than panel such area, the hunt has been putting in hunting gates, which the farmers like, and being too high to jump, are not apt to be damaged.

While the Puckeridge Hounds are the property of the Barclay family, the hunt is actually run by a committee. There is no set fee for the privilege of hunting, but a group of ninety-three guarantors have agreed to be responsible for an assessment up to ten pounds each, in addition to the long list of regular subscribers. The hunt runs on a budget of about $12,000 in our money. Considering that a kennel huntsman and a professional whip are maintained as well as a large and elaborate kennels, the cost seems very reasonable.

Hounds went out seventy-five days during the season of 1950-51 and accounted for twenty-seven brace of foxes. Captain Charles Barclay, the son of the Major, hunted hounds. Typical of the sport shown was that of January 14th, when a fox was found at Hazel End Wood, hunted consistently for two and a half hours on a great circle and finally rolled over near where he was found. The distance covered was in excess of fifteen miles. Not content with this run, hounds drew Lye

Woods in the afternoon, found another fox, and killed him after a fast hour and ten minute run at Manuden Mill.

The hunt is particularly fortunate in having Michael F. Berry as its chronicler. In his famous book A HISTORY OF THE PUCKERIDGE HUNT, published by Country Life of Covent Garden in 1950, Mr. Berry, who has hunted all his life with these hounds, presents a graphic and charming picture of the lares and penates of an old British hunt. The beginnings of all such institutions are clouded in antiquity but it may fairly be claimed that foxes were being hunted in the Puckeridge country in the early years of the Eighteenth Century. Remember that it was not until 1781 that Peter Beckford set out the principles of hunting as we know them today. The first hunting family of record was the Calvert family of Hertfordshire. It is recorded that one of the Calverts sent a card to his earthstopper in 1733. The Calvert family continued to live in the Puckeridge country and hunt the foxes there till 1909, when the last of them, Felix Calvert of Furneux Pelham Hall, moved away. As some of the younger branches of this family emigrated to America, it is entirely possible that the Calvert family of Maryland came originally from the Puckeridge area.

As I mentioned above, I had the great pleasure of hunting with Major Barclay during the late war when a day with hounds was the best kind of rest that a man could have, and my notes of those days bring back the good times he gave me. I remember particularly a cubbing morning in late August of 1943, when one of the biggest harvests of the war years was almost in. Here and there an island of late barley still billowed in the morning wind, but elsewhere the shocks of wheat, oats and corn marched like orderly armies over the fields. In the woodlands the oaks and hazels showed the first faint yellow beginning of the color to come.

Hounds met at Washall Green, near the ancestral home of the Washington family which gave America not only a great states-

man but a great fox hunter as well. Major Barclay, the Master, was hunting seventeen and a half couple while his daughter, Pamela, and I were whipping to him. The field was small but select. Colonel Slingsby of Indian army fame, and his daughter, Laura; Bob Gardiner, the veteran retired huntsman of the Puckeridge; Squire Edward Barclay, joint master of the Puckeridge, and still in the saddle at 83; Miss Marriage, one of the hunt's next oldest members on a good looking wild-eyed colt; and Jean Williams, aged 11, on a tiny but purposeful pony.

Stocking Pelham Hall Wood was the first draw, but the yew thickets proved blank and the Major jogged hounds on to Laundry Gorse where sport began. Scarcely a moment after hounds had been cheered into cover, a whimper told that business was afoot, and, the pack soon honoring, we had a grand chorus of music. Except for the Major, all of us were stationed around the cover to head the cubs. The first bid came soon afterwards, when a brace broke from the gorse hedge and streaked for the cornfield where I was standing. Despite some hard galloping, they refused to be turned and the Major, calling hounds, soon rolled one over in the next field.

Proceeding to Patrick's Wood, hounds put up a buck, one of the fallow deer which broke out of parks early in the war and are now wild. The old hounds paid not the slightest attention but it was necessary to do a little explaining with the whip to a few of the young entry. English packs on the whole are remarkably steady to deer and I have always wondered why we have so much trouble over them in America. My own hounds would play with a doe in the kennel yard but nothing short of hanging would stop them from running a deer in the open.

The next draw, Violet's Spring Wood, produced not a cub, but a good sized vixen, who gave us a fast half hour before hounds lost in Stocking Pelham Woods. Scent had been getting progressively worse and at ten the Major decided to call it a day. We rode home for a real hunting breakfast of fruit, eggs, bacon and

coffee. It had not been too successful a hunt from a cubbing standpoint, but as Nimrod said: "No time at cover side is really wasted."

Later that fall, while hunting with the Puckeridge, I witnessed an epic battle between the hounds and a badger. It was a perfect scenting day and soon after hounds were cast in the home covers a big dog fox went away and led us a stiff chase for the best part of an hour. He then went to ground in deep earth cut into the bank of a dry stream. Old Williams, the earthstopper, soon arrived with *Betty* and *Harry,* the hunt terriers, and, aided and abetted by several willing Italian prisoners, who had been working in the adjoining field, began ejection operations.

The earth narrowed below the entrance, and it was only with the greatest squeezing that *Betty,* the little terrier bitch, was able to get through. For a time we heard her worming her way along the passage under our feet but the sounds died away and a deep and ominous silence followed, unbroken by even the usual muffled barks of a terrier at work. All this time the Italians had been enlarging the entrance but the deeper they got into the bank, the more futile the undertaking looked. Great roots impeded progress and the soil was of a hard clay variety. Old Williams finally decided that the direct approach was no good and directed that a new hole be driven down from the top of the bank in the hope of striking the passage near its end.

This shaft was easier to dig and after thirty minutes hard work the head of the pick suddenly sank through into the passage and landed on something soft. Before anyone could stop him, one of the Italian prisoners put his hand down and groped around. Then everything happened at once. The Italian let out a shriek and lunged backward out of the hole with an enormous badger clinging to his arm, while fastened securely to the badger's hind foot was the bloody and dazed *Betty*. Scarcely had they cleared the hole than the dog fox burst forth behind them. He ran straight into hounds and was broken up immediately. In

the meantime, the badger, despite blows from everything we had handy, refused to loose his steel jaws from the Italian's cuff and blood was beginning to ooze through his heavy coat. Finally a well directed cut on the nose from the Major's hunting crop persuaded him to let go.

Hounds by this time had finished their fox and before we could whip them off, attacked the badger in a mass. He was ready for them. With one lightning snap, he fastened on a big dog hound's shoulder and bit it almost clean through. Other hounds got their teeth into his fur but never so much as tore the skin. The heavy coarse coat and constant movement of the huge beast, completely outwitted them. Hound after hound attacked, only to limp back licking his wounds. The Major and I were almost wild by this time, but by dint of unmerciful lashing managed to round up and drive back the hounds. This left the badger free to turn on poor *Betty* who still had her needle like teeth fast in his rump. Before he could turn to annihilate her, however, the other Italian, with a personal courage far beyond ours, drove his pick axe into the badger's skull. It was all over but the shouting.

We rewarded the Italians liberally, washed the dazed and heroic *Betty*, and walked hounds slowly home. Before leaving, I cut off one of the badger's pads which now adorns my home in Easton. The inscription reads:

Puckeridge Terriers
Italian Prisoners

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37 Pound Badger

One and a half hours

Much as I enjoyed hunting with the Puckeridge, I have equally happy memories of the rides the Major and I used to

take around his estate. He farmed a large area and we used to ride over it to see how the work was progressing and incidentally take a peek at the fox earths.

On a clear spring evening in early May, we rode over to the main earth at Battles Wood. The week had been a long one for both of us and it was more than good to be in the saddle again and leave behind, even for a few hours, the business of war. Word had come that a litter of cubs had been bred in that earth and we wanted to look at them.

The hunters seemed to sense our mission and trotted gaily over the turf of the home pastures. A brace of partridges rocketed up from under foot; young rabbits darted for the hedgerows, and an old hare eyed us gravely from her form. In the blue distance rose the spire of the village church. For this little while we forgot the war and shared the peace of the lovely English countryside. Brent Pelham with its thatched cottages and orderly gardens slipped behind. Outside the Cock at Stocking Pelham, the farmers, chatting after work, raised their hats. Borden Priory, with its yellowed Tudor walls, vanished into the yews of the park. The bowling green of Maggots End was crossed, and Battles Wood loomed dark ahead.

The old earth stopper met us at the gate and held the horses while we made our way on foot into the wood. Chestnut, yews and oak threw their long shadows over us; pheasants called in the shrubbery and a flight of pigeons wheeled in to their night's resting place. The earth was a strong stone one and before it, tumbling about on the pebbles, were the five cubs. We had approached carefully and they had no idea they were being watched. The game they were playing was obvious. One, perched defiantly on a big stone, was the king of the castle and the rest were trying to throw him down. Suddenly there was a faint rustle behind us and the cubs shot for the entrance and dove in. Some place, back in the bushes, a worried vixen was signaling.

On the way home we stopped at a farmer's cottage near Bentfield Grange to see about some wood chopping. The business over, we were about to ride on when the old farmer stopped us and said, "Master, I want to walk a brace of puppies this spring." I could hardly believe my ears. It was almost impossible to feed one's own dogs in war time England and here was a man, obviously too old and too poor to hunt, and yet asking to help the Hunt the only way he could.

"Why do you want to, Tom?" said the Master.

"It's this way Sir," said the farmer; "Hunting is part of this county, part of our lives here, and I guess those London fellows just don't understand that we will give up a lot to keep it."

"Thank you, Tom," said the Master.

Hunting, I thought, with men like that behind it, would never die in England.

CHAPTER IX

Otter and Hare Hunting in England

If the immortal Jorrocks had known about otter hunting, he would not have feared that desolate period of spring and summer, when fox hunting, perforce, must stop. Instead of sulking in the flesh pots of Great Coram Street, he would have been splashing his way along the streams of Surrey in pursuit of that ancient and honorable "beast of venerie," the otter.

On previous trips abroad before the war, I had always hoped to have a day with one of the many packs that then hunted the rivers of England, but it was not till the spring of 1943 that the chance came. An inspection tour for the 8th Air Force in the south happened to coincide with a meet of the Courtenay Tracy and a letter from Miss Jane Boutcher, the Master, assured me of a welcome. My appetite for otter hunting was further whetted by staying the night before at the Red Lion Hotel at Salisbury, an otter hunter's center since the Fifteenth Century. The manager, after providing me with a dinner of some excellent venison, capped with a good glass of port, offered me one of his own poles for the morrow's sport.

Since otter hunting varies a great deal from either fox hunting or beagling, it might be well to go first into a few of its peculiarities. The pole, mentioned above, is a very important part of an otter hunter's equipment. About six feet long and shod with steel at both ends, it affords him a means of both sounding his way along the rivers and of prodding the various holes which might hold quarry. It is also used as a tally of the otter killed, the owner notching it after the manner of two-gun

Pete after each kill. The brush of the otter is known as the "rudder."

The country hunted by otter hounds is very extensive. Bound as they are to the rivers, it is necessary to range great distances. The Courtenay Tracy, for instance, hunts the entire counties of Surrey, Hampshire, Dorset and Wiltshire. The duties of the field are also more involved than in other forms of hunting. After an otter is tally-hoed away the field is split, half going up stream and half down to head the otter in case he tries to break away. This is not easy as there is nothing an otter likes more than diving between one's legs, and, as he is under-water, his chances of getting away with it are excellent.

We met at the Nunton Bridge over the Ebble River, four miles away from Salisbury. The Huntsman, Mr. Byron Day, who also holds the position of Master of the New Forest Beagles, arrived with hounds at ten-thirty. He was dressed in approved otter-hunting livery of double peaked green deer-stalker hat, on which was pinned an otterpad mounted in silver, green coat, gilt buttons, green waistcoat, white serge breeches, scarlet tie, and green stockings. The hounds consisted of eight couple of English and Welsh foxhounds and a very workmanlike pack they were. I recognized some of the Puckeridge blood among them and a strong strain of rough coated Curre breeding.

The field, besides the master, Miss Boutcher, consisted of her mother and sister and about half a dozen others of us. It was not a good day for any kind of hunting, the wind being strong and gusty with rain clouds banking over the west, but we were all feeling well set up from the news of the fall of Tunis and were bound to enjoy ourselves. Morgan Wing, joint Master of the Buckram Beagles of Long Island, and at that time a captain with the ground troops in Africa, had had several good days with this pack the previous year, and we were hunting the same stream where he saw a fine otter killed.

Drawing up stream, hounds soon opened on a drag. The wind

had grown to a howling gale by this time, however, and the hounds could not own the line. After trying both sides of the river for some time, the huntsman gave it up and we swung back overland for a down stream cast. Marks of otter's pads, called "the spur" were discovered on a sand bar and the pack was cheered to them, but rain had been falling for some time and whatever scent must have originally been there was quite washed away. Further casts also proved fruitless, and, as it was noon by then and we were close by a little village pub, the master decided to call it quits for lunch.

While we munched sandwiches and drank the good ale of the pub, the master told me something of the history of otter hunting and otters. The sport is a very ancient one and was fancied by King John among others, whose Master of the Game kept the Royal Otterhounds. The old books list otter as true "beasts of venerie" along with the hare and the deer, while they class the fox as vermin. The Courtenay Tracy hunt was started by a gentleman of that name in 1887, and it is one of the oldest recognized packs still hunting. The war, with its necessary limitation of travel, proved too much for most of the other packs and only this one and the Hawkstone, up north, were left to carry on the sport for the duration.

About the otter themselves very little seems to be known. Traveling always at night and changing their "holts" or homes often, they might never be suspected to exist in a river if it were not for the hounds that hunt them. Their diet consists of frogs, eels and fish but they evidently do not make heavy inroads on the trout or they would have been soon trapped by fishermen. It was the opinion of the huntsman that despite the heavy kills of recent years there are now just as many otter on his rivers as there were fifty years ago.

The type of hound used is usually a Welsh or English foxhound that is too slow for the faster quarry. These hounds are then entered on otter and soon take to swimming instead of gal-

loping. The slower they are the better, as scent is very catchy on water, and any hound that flashes would be worse than useless. They are also trained to stay close to the bank of the river and to plunge in on the slightest provocation. The trail or "drag" of an otter is usually picked up on the bank, but the quarry soon takes to the water, where he is chivied from pool to pool. When tired, the otter comes ashore again and it is usually then that he is killed.

On another trip to our Air Force installations in the South of England, I was the guest of the officers of an Airborne Division, that was then in training on Salisbury Plain. I was just about to turn in after a tiring day when my host asked if I would excuse him while he went to the kennels. Eagerly accompanying him I was delighted to find that the Division maintained a small pack of harriers which they found most useful for keeping the men in condition.

The hounds turned out to be the famous Quarme Harriers, a pack that has won wide recognition in the West country for the past eighty years, and the following morning I had a fine early run with them.

Almost white and about sixteen inches in height, they were strongly reminiscent of the old southern type of hound so often seen in the English sporting prints of the last century. Slow but very sure, they stick like leeches to the line. On two occasions I saw fresh hare get up between hounds and the hunted quarry without drawing a single harrier off the original line. Their cry is much deeper than the average harrier pack I have hunted with and has a ringing musical quality that compares favorably with staghounds.

The Quarme Harriers are supposed to be bred down from the Amory Staghounds. Parson Frouds, a sporting churchman of the early eighteen hundreds, took a keen interest in the strain and did much to standardize it. In 1860, while Vicar of Knowstone, he became the first master of the pack which was

then kenneled at Quarme, Devonshire. He was succeeded by a Mr. Chorley who ruled till 1900, when hounds were taken over by Maj. Gregg, later master of the Devon and Somerset Staghounds.

The last master before hounds were presented to the Airborne Division, was Miss May Aston of Exford, Somerset. While stag hunting there, I met her and picked up some amusing sidelights of the pack's history. The hounds were evidently great travellers. In 1909 a gentleman from the Island of Cyprus bought a draft of ten couples for the announced purpose of hunting wild goat with them. No reports have ever come back from the island as to his success but judging from my own experience of Greek goats, no hounds are necessary to track them. In fact, any position except that of up wind is uncomfortable.

A draft was also imported to India by Mr. C. L. Gregg and hunted at Ootacamund, where they were always in the first flight after jackal, although much smaller than the balance of the pack which was made up largely of foxhounds. The Indian kennelmen who looked after them were reported to have become so fond of the Quarme draft that they named their children after them.

While hunting on Exmoor under Miss Aston's mastership, the pack put a stag to bay, and, in addition to their high tally of hares, accounted for one and a half brace of foxes. Hounds hunted two days a week and the field was made up almost entirely of farmers. Walter Sanders, the kennelman, is still alive and hale at Exford after putting in fifty years with the pack. After the war, I understand that hounds were returned by the Airborne Division.

The Eighth Air Force Bomber Command Headquarters was situated at High Wycombe, Bucks, within virtual halloaing distance of the kennels of the Old Berkeley Beagles and through the kindness of Mr. Frederick Robinson, the Master, a good many officers and men took part in the hunts.

The country hunted lies mostly in the Vale of Aylesbury, where James the First used to hunt his cry of beagles and a lovely valley it is. Mr. Robinson met me at the kennels at Sheepscote Dell, and a cleaner, more efficient brick lodging house I have never seen. Despite difficulties of feeding, walking puppies, etc., twelve couple of well set up, level, sixteen inch beagles were maintained. The kennel huntsman, Dick Burden, was formerly huntsman to some leading fox hunting packs, and accordingly kept his establishment like a miniature Quorn. Considerable harrier blood was introduced during the past ten years with the result that the hounds, especially dog hounds, have excellent bone and foxhound type heads. They look more like small harriers than our conception of beagles.

After a thorough inspection of the kennels and a most interesting chat with Burden, the Master said it was time to walk to the meet six miles away. We set out through the black hedges and arrived in good time at the Red Lion in Little Missenden where the meet was scheduled for one o'clock. Quite a field were waiting for us. The old squire on his electric tricycle, several generals, and an assortment of other army men and women. Most remarkable of all was the wife of a general, at least seventy, who whipped in shorts and sweater. Incidentally, I never saw her lose hounds all afternoon.

The first cast was in Penn Woods. The very woods where William Penn came from, and where Disraeli liked to walk and shoot. Unlike most of our woodland, the Penn Woods are cleared and park-like, affording good running conditions for hounds and field. Soon after entering the fringes of the forest, a strong jack hare was jumped by a member of the field and hounds bent to her line with a crash of music that echoed and re-echoed along the wooded aisles. These woodland hare are so light in color that they look very much like a fox. I saw the yellow streak as she went away.

We hunted this hare for about an hour, during which time she

doubled twice on her line, once within a few feet of me. She was huge, perhaps twice as big as the average Kansas Jack that we hunt in the States. Following the second double, she appeared to be tiring and I am sure we would have rolled her over if a fresh hare had not jumped up almost in the middle of the hounds. Thus it went all afternoon. Wonderful music, fine hound work, but so many hare that it was impossible to work one to her death.

Walking home with the complete satisfaction of a good day's hunting behind me, I couldn't help thinking that no matter how much agitation there always is against hunting during wars, the people of the Vale of Aylesbury will never give it up. It stood to them as it did to many of us, as another damn good reason for winning the war.

A good many universities and schools in England maintain packs of beagles and one of the most famous of these is the Trinity Foot Beagles of Cambridge. Supported by the undergraduates for the past ninety years, the Trinity Foot has a history that not only makes interesting reading but at times takes on the excitement of a detective story.

In October of 1940, the pack was lent by the Trustees to the officers of a regiment of the Dorset Territorials. For six months reports were received from the master. Then came an ominous silence that lasted more than two years. Letters were returned unopened and enquiries proved futile. For all practical purposes both the regiment and the pack vanished into thin air. This sad state of affairs was finally ended by the sagacity of one of the trustees, Major Maurice Barclay, who figured that no matter where they were, the officers would still be interested in reading *Horse and Hound*. He therefore advertised in this journal and sure enough, shortly heard from the commanding officer of the regiment that as of January, 1943, the pack was going strong.

I was staying with the Major when he received the good news

about the discovery of the Trinity Foot and I learned the pack's history. The Barclay family have been closely associated with it for three generations. The late Squire Edward Barclay, father of the Major whipped into the Trinity Foot in 1880. He told me he kept his own pack of beagles near Cambridge at the same time and hunted them four days a week as well as whipping for the T.F.B. Major Barclay was in turn, master from 1906 to 1907, and his brother, Major Geoffrey Barclay, from 1912 to 1913. The Major's son, Captain Charles Barclay, held the office in 1939.

The Barclay interest in beagling, however, probably stemmed from a famous walker of a much earlier period. While visiting the Major I was shown a picture of a certain Captain Edward Barclay who in 1820 walked 1,000 miles in 1,000 hours for a 1,000 guinea wager. According to the inscription he won his bet and romped across the finish line in fine form to the cheers of 10,000 enthusiastic spectators.

The Trinity Foot is particularly lucky in having a biographer who covered its history for the fifty years from its founding in 1862 to 1912. F. Claude Kempson, M.A., in THE TRINITY FOOT BEAGLES, published in 1912 by Edward Arnold of London, produced a model for hunting journals. The old book has not only charm and humor, but quite a bit of philosophy as well. Even in those days beaglers were regarded with some scepticism by those who did not participate in the sport. In the University the small group of sportsmen were known as "Barbarians" and the great majority of disapprovers as "Philistines." Lending weight to the latter viewpoint was the undeniable fact that Cambridge, along with most old English universities and schools, had an ecclesiastical background and an earlier deep-seated prejudice against field sports. "No scholar, fellow, chaplain, or other minister or servant shall keep hunting dogs, nets for hunting, ferrets, falcons or hawks," reads one of the Eaton Statutes.

While beagling by undergraduates at Cambridge actually began in 1862, the advent of the Trinity Foot Beagles as such took place in 1867, when W. E. Curry of Lismore Castle, Ireland, brought his pack over from the Emerald Isle. Curry, unlike his predecessors and successors, was a Don of the University, and as a teacher was able to devote more time to the establishment of the pack than a student. He was evidently a very remarkable man in many respects and inspired deep friendships. When he finally gave up the mastership, he sold the pack to a group of undergraduates for the nominal price of forty pounds.

Next to the founder, Rowland Hunt, known as "mother," did the most to establish the pack. He was responsible for the erection of permanent kennels and instituted the wearing of green velveteen hunting jackets. A member of an old Salop County family, Hunt had a crest that embodies a dog of uncertain breed, and used to say that ancient and honorable as the canine appeared, he would draft him on sight as a beagle. Hunt established such cordial relations with the farmers that he was able to account for 67 hare his first season of 1880, and 88 hare and a fox during his second.

According to Baily's Hunting Directory, the present master of the TFB (1951-52) is R. L. Hancock and the Honorary Secretary is G. C. Bartram. Fifteen couple of fifteen inch Stud Book beagles are maintained and hounds meet Tuesdays and Saturdays. Paul Clifton, writing in a recent issue of *The Field*, says that careful breeding policies have been followed since the turn of the century with the result that the pack is remarkably level and business like. The pack has had some success at Peterborough, winning the stallion hound class with *Proctor* in July of last year, but the accent is definitely on performance.

CHAPTER X

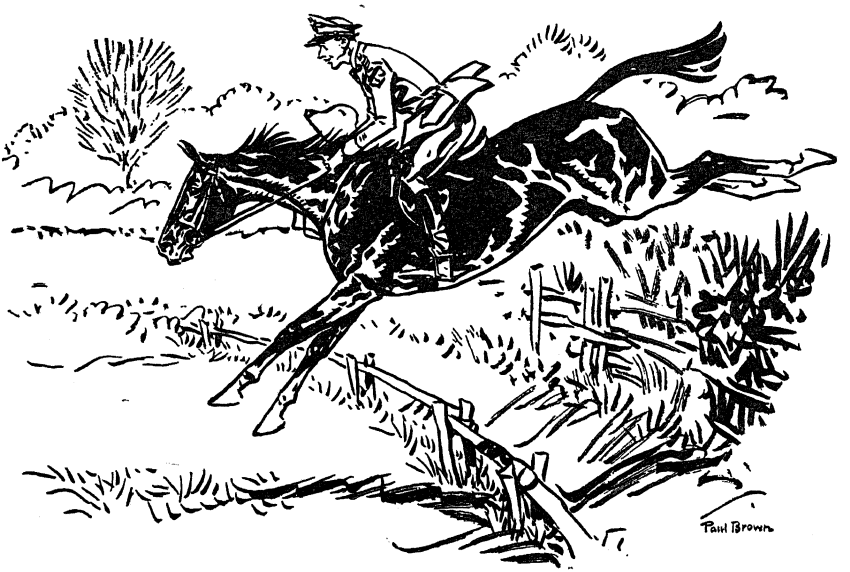
War-Time Hunting in England

Hunting in England during the dark pre-Normandy invasion days of 1943, could hardly be called a sport. The only purpose was to keep foxes down with a minimum of hounds and expense. Members of the Home Guard, older women, girls, and men on leave from the forces made up the fields. Hunting was, in a very real sense, a trust to be carried on for the day of victory.

Among the many war-time masters was Lady Hilton Green, master of the Cottesmore. During the week she worked in a canteen on the East India Docks, a prime Luftwaffe target, and how she had sufficient energy left by Saturday, not only to hunt but attend to the multiple duties of a master, was a mystery to me. On several occasions she invited Lt. James Kerr, former master of the Rose Tree Hunt of Pennsylvania, and me to hunt with her and I remember a Friday in September when we settled ourselves in the Leicestershire express bound for Melton Mowbray.

The train was crowded, and as often happens in war time, a good many of the third class passengers seeped through to first. Among these was a ragged, foxy looking man, smelling of strong drink, whom we both liked instinctively. Finally my curiosity got the better of me and I asked this reincarnation of James Pigg whether he liked hunting.

"Hunting," said he; "that I do, sur." He then paused and added, modestly, "I be bred by an earth stopper out of a kennel huntsman's daughter." Such an introduction needed no further qualification and until he fell asleep, he regaled Jim and me with tall tales of hunting in the grass country.


Paul Brown

Hounds met the following morning at Ranksborough Gorse, and had barely entered this famous cover, whose foxes live again in many a hunting ballad, when an old 'un broke from the bordering hedge and set sail for the open. Norman the huntsman, cheered hounds to the line and Jim and I were treated to a fast five miles straight across country. My horse was not a valiant leaper and it took several refusals, which almost put me in the ditch, to get him over the first blackthorn hedge. Those hedges are most deceiving as they look low, but the underbrush hides the ditches both before and behind them so that unless one's hunter takes off far back, he is apt to cave in a soft bank as he rises for his leap.

Cold Overton Fish Pond was then drawn blank, and as it was past noon we sadly turned our horses home. We had to be back on duty the next day and there was only one afternoon train from Oakham. Unfortunately we were too late to accept an invitation to tea with the Earl of Lonsdale. The old gentlemen was then 83 but still hale and hearty. I was particularly sorry not to see him as the history of the Cottesmore is more bound up with his name than that of any other.

Back in 1666 Viscount Lowther, whose descendant, Sir William Lowther, became first Earl of Lonsdale, brought hounds down from Westmorland to hunt the Cottesmore country. In those days the whole of the country was grass and points of fifteen to twenty miles were recorded. Sir William hunted the country from 1788 to 1802, and Col. Henry Lowther, afterwards Lord Lonsdale, had it from 1870 to 1876. The present Earl was Master from 1907 to 1913 and again from 1915 to 1921.

During the war the Cottesmore country was more than two-thirds under plough and only an occasional stretch of open greensward remained to remind one of the days when it took the best horse bred to stay with the flying bitches.

It was not until the following year that I had another day's hunting in the Midlands.

"Butcher's yours, Billesdon Coplow, ten Saturday," was a wire that must have mystified the telegraph clerk but meant a great deal to me. To wit, the good old Thoroughbred hunter belonging to the Melton butcher that I rode in September with the Cottesmore, was engaged, and the Quorn was meeting at their most famous cover. The fact that Billesdon was a good twelve miles from Melton Mowbray and I didn't have the faintest idea how to get there, was not important.

The five forty-five train from St. Pancras on Friday might almost be classed as a hunter's special. Lady Hilton Green, Mrs. Idina Mills and Jim Kerr were on it enroute to the Cottesmore and they introduced me to Captain Eric Crossfield, who was also bound for Melton, who cheerfully agreed to pilot me to the Quorn meet the following morning.

The Bell at Melton has been a fox hunter's pub since Meynell's time and I wasn't a bit surprised when the old porter said I would stay in the Meynell room next to Capt. Crossfield in the Cottesmore. Mrs. Mills flanked us in the Fernie, while down the hall, the training girls, who handled the local remount depot, were distributed in what might be called the provinces of the Atherstone, Pytchley and Fitzwilliam. Following a stiff night cap, we all repaired to our various countries for the night.

At eight-thirty sharp Captain Crossfield and I clambered onto our hunters in the old cobbled yard of the Bell and trotted through a sleepy Melton into the open country. It was a glorious winter morning with the sun driving the early mist off the flat fields and just enough breeze to keep the air cool. On either side of us the country stretched away for mile upon hunting mile and I was glad to see that only about every third field was under plough.

We jogged along fast to Thorpe Satchville, where I heard that Mrs. Otho Paget was still keeping a few couple of her husband's famous beagles, and then on to Quenby, where Sir Harold Nutting, former master of the Quorn, lives. By this

time it was past ten, and striking overland, we soon raised the dominant hill of Billesdon, on whose green slopes a flash of pink told us that hounds were trying.

Major Phillip Hubbersty, the acting Master, greeted us. George Barker was hunting fifteen and a half couple and from the way they were making good every yard of the cover, we had high hopes of a run. It was blank, however, and it was not till hounds were drawn down to Botany Bay, which is divided from Billesdon by only the road, that a questing whimper told us that a fox was moving. In war time the idea is to kill all the cubs possible, but with a field of only about two dozen it is impossible to watch as large a cover as Botany, and before we knew it a fox had broken out of the cover and galloped away.

Hounds were soon blown out of the woods, and settling to the line were away to Scraptoff Gorse. Checking in this cover for a few minutes, they made it good and we had another fast breeze to Hungerton Fox Holes, where the fox turned and headed for the village of Keyham.

The butcher's horse was not a reliable leaper and a big blind blackthorn with a tricky take-off proved our undoing. I took him in fast, as he had been trying to refuse and he jumped crooked. The girth, which was none too tight, turned and I came down on the far side of the hedge to find myself sitting on nothing. The resulting pitch was a bit hard and it was a while before I started feeling for breaks. Nothing hurt but my ribs, and I was pleased to look up and see the kind-hearted butcher's horse trotting back to find me. He stopped almost on top of me and stood like a statue while I straightened the saddle which had slipped under his belly and finally hoisted myself on again. Hounds were running many fields ahead by then, but a lucky road allowed me to catch up with them.

The fox went to ground in a drain in the valley below Keyham and we had about an hour's wait till the terriers arrived. During this rest period I had a good chance to see the hounds.

They were a very level lot and have been bred carefully for so long that there was a striking similarity between individuals. The huntsman told me that they were being fed almost entirely on flesh with the result that they are well muscled up without the fat that comes to so many war time packs from potato feeding.

With the arrival of the terriers the job of bolting the fox was short, but, being war time, grace could not be allowed and he was quickly broken up by hounds. I was given a pad. The rib then started to throb a bit and Captain Crossfield and I decided to call it a day. We got as far as the village of Beeby, where, through the kindness of Mrs. Arthur Gemmell, I was able to secure a ride to the doctor's in a car. He took a picture and said it was a clean crack of two ribs with no complications. After a strapping up I was as good as new.

Before dinner at Mrs. Van Rensselaer's at Melton, I had a chance to refresh my memory on the history of Billesdon Coplow and its famous run. It seems that on the 24th of February in 1800, hounds found a fabulous fox in this cover and ran with it far into the Fernie country.

The Reverend Robert Lowth took part in the run and published his immortal poem about it thirty years later. Some sporting writers think that Hugo Meynell was not present at this run, but that his son Godfrey was acting master. In any case the Billesdon Coplow Run took place during the last year of Meynell's mastership and it is due to the writings of Lowth and to fragments from Nimrod that we know as much as we do about the "father of modern hunting."

As Thormanby wrote, "The Meynell of tradition looms dimly through the twilight of the past, a vague shadowy figure, of giant proportions indeed, but as indistinct in outline as the figure of King Arthur, seen for the last time by Guinevere through the gathering murk and mist ere he went down 'to that great battle in the West'."

BAILY'S HUNTING DIRECTORY is a most useful book. It lists not only the locations, but all pertinent facts on the foxhounds, harriers, staghounds of England, and it was my habit to never be without a copy when I went on inspection tours of the 8th Air Force.

Early in the winter of 1943 I happened to be at one of our Bomber groups in Lincolnshire and thumbing through the book, found that I was within a few miles of the Earl of Yarborough's Brocklesby Hounds. A phone call to the Earl arranged an early morning date and while I did not have time to hunt, I was able to see the huntsman draft hounds for the day's sport and learn something about the pack.

The mist of early morning was just lifting from the fields of Lincolnshire and the quiet of dawn lay over the flat green pastures when I drove over to the kennels.

Parker, the huntsman, met me at the ivied wall of the entrance and we proceeded immediately to the lodging houses. He drew the bitches first and a prettier sight I have yet to see in England. I was somewhat familiar with the general type, having seen drafts from the Brocklesby many times, but I had not seen the best which are never drafted. With Belvoir tan heads set on graceful necks and fine sloping shoulders, the twenty odd couple of ladies were startlingly alike. I don't believe that there was an inch difference in their size. Few dog hounds were kept but all were very good looking though a bit heavy for my taste. The descendants of *Ringwood, 1788,* have certainly not let their famous ancestor down.

After spending all the time I dared in the yards, I was shown around the rest of the kennels. The trophy room was unique. Instead of mounting the masks in toto, only the lips of foxes were displayed. These, arranged by hunting seasons on boards dating back to 1843, looked much like a collection of butterflies. The best year, according to Parker, was back at the turn of the century when more than eighty brace were accounted for.

The Brocklesby, however, dates far earlier than that. In 1714 Mr. Charles Pelham became first master of the hunt, and his nephew Charles Anderson Pelham was created 1st Lord Yarborough in 1794. The present Earl is the fifth of his line to maintain these hounds. With the exception of the Duke of Beaufort's, the Brocklesby is today the only pack that remains in the hands of its founding family. This, coupled with the fact that it goes back further than any other without break or dispersal, may well give it the title of the oldest pack now hunting in the kingdom.

The fame of the Brocklesby blood is attributed quite as much to their huntsmen as to their noble masters. Since Tom Smith the elder started hunting them in 1746, the pack has been ruled by a succession of famous huntsmen. His son, "young Tom Smith," succeeded him in 1761, and it was largely due to his careful breeding that the pack became one of the best in England. Will Smith took over in 1816, and showed the very best of sport for twenty-nine years. Nimrod Long and Will Dale were also fine huntsmen and hound breeders.

The best hound bred by common consent was *Rallywood, 1842*. This famous sire, according to the "Druid," virtually made the Belvoir, and his blood flows today in many of the best lines in the country. It was said of him that he never led the pack, but always got to the end of great runs. The same epitaph that was written for Mr. Osbaldeston's *Tarquin* might well be used for *Rallywood:*

"Beneath this stone my favorite foxhound lies;
Stop, all ye sportsmen, here, and wipe your eyes.
Tho' not the only favorite of the pack,
From him no false alarm or in his duty slack."

Every reader of *The Chronicle* has delighted in the contributions of A. Henry Higginson, M.F.H., but few of us have been lucky enough to know him. The fortunes of war and the kindness of Mr. Higginson gave me this opportunity. It was, in fact, due to a reply of Mr. Higginson's to a letter of mine published in *The Chronicle* that I found his address and wrote him.

Stinsford House, Dorchester, Dorset, has, as Mr. Higginson said, a long and inviting latch string. It is the kind of house where the walls and the book cases call the fox hunter. On the walls hung masks of fabulous foxes dating back into the last century, and Mr. Higginson called his butler with a silver horn.

Hounds met the morning after my arrival at the Down Golf Club at eleven. Thirteen couple of bitches were hunted by Will Jackson. As it was to be the last hunt of the season there was a very good turn out for war time. A good two dozen of us prepared to enjoy ourselves.

The first fox was found in a heavy gorse soon after Jackson cast hounds, but scent proved almost totally absent and after a fine initial burst of music, hounds were quite unable to own the line. Mr. Higginson then signed to Jackson to draw Bincombe Heath. The wind was blowing a small gale and I would have bet that hounds could not have found, but by dint of careful working of the more sheltered sections of the cover, another fox was bolted. Unfortunately it was a short run, for inside of ten minutes hounds had him and Jackson let them break him up.

Hounds had barely started on this pleasant reward, when another fox was viewed from the same cover, and the pack, racing to the halloa, were away on a burning scent toward Sutton Poyntz. This looked like the real thing, and, settling myself on the very able hunter that Mr. Higginson had provided, I had a grand twenty minutes of galloping before hounds marked to ground on the Foote farm. All the time the wind was blowing like blazes and how hounds held the line across those gale swept

Dorset Hills, I don't know. Subsequent draws proved unprofitable but the country was lovely and to anyone like me, cooped up in airplanes and offices, the best kind of change. Before going into more details about Mr. Higginson and the South Dorset Hunt, I want to say a few words of well deserved praise about his whip. Ann Sismey was the wife of an officer in the Middle East and in addition to being a Lt. Col. in the Red Cross, did all the whipping and a good part of the kennel work of the hunt.

The South Dorset hunts a part of the country made famous by Squire Farquharson, so aptly described in Mr. Higginson's book THE MEYNELL OF THE WEST. It is a varied country, providing almost every kind of hunting from stretches of downland and easily negotiated valleys to rough highlands. There seemed to me to be very little plough even for war time, and, while there was some wire, it was not conspicuous.

The Hunt's history started with the break up of the country after the reign of Squire Farquharson. His former territory was divided into the Portland, the Cattistock and the South Dorset. The first master was Mr. Radclyffe who took over in 1858. He was followed by his son, and in 1887 by Sir Elliot Lees. Mr. Higginson, after nine seasons with the Cattistock, assumed the joint mastership of the Hunt in 1942.

There were then three joint masters of the South Dorset and it was an arrangement that worked out especially well in war time. Each of the three agreed to hunt his part of the country and provide stabling for the other two. Hounds were sent on the night before, with the result that not only was a very large area hunted, but all subscribers had their money's worth without impossibly long hacks.

The hounds showed their Welsh blood in their lightness of color and Mr. Higginson told me afterwards that Sir Edward Curre's breeding has been used extensively. The hound list also noted crosses from the Duke of Beaufort's blood. Mr. Higginson was responsible for the introduction of Welsh blood into the

Cattistock with such excellent results that during his best season 1936-37 hounds accounted for 104 brace of foxes, a truly remarkable record.

Soon after my visit to Mr. Higginson I went on a long tour of British and American Fighter stations in the south of England and during the month's trip managed to get another good day with hounds.

Through the kindness of Sir Frederick Carden of Stargroves, Newbury, an ex-Master of the Craven Hounds and the father of an old friend of mine from India days, I was not only supplied with a good hunter but thoroughly briefed on the history of the hunt.

It seems that more than two hundred years ago the 4th Lord Craven established a pack of hounds to hunt his own broad acres and the surrounding country in Berkshire. Little is known today of the sport shown, but some records of the fixtures have been preserved and it seems that The Bell at Boxford was a favorite meeting place. Times have changed since the first Craven pack met there in 1739, but the scene that greeted me before the old Inn door was strongly reminiscent of the sporting prints of the eighteenth century. The huntsman, Will James, despite the fact he was clean shaven, could easily have passed in his weathered scarlet for one of John Warde's famous hunt servants, and the field of elderly farmers had a definitely Jorrockian air, born of jovial faces and impressive girths. The hounds themselves sat in a dignified circle as if they realized the length of their pedigrees.

At that time the hunt was run by a committee of four, of which Mr. Southby, the secretary, and Mr. Franklin, acting master, were out. Following introductions, we moved off down the lane and then out onto the turf of Boxford Common. The hounds, some twenty couple, were soon cheered into cover while the rest of us galloped to vantage points around the big woods.

I had barely taken up my post when a cub broke from the

hedge bordering the cover and headed overland with the pack well bunched on his line. There was no way to turn him, so, waiting only for James to charge out of the cover, I settled down in the saddle for a run. The field were too scattered to get away with us and we had it all to ourselves for a good four miles of rolling plough and pasture. As exciting a burst as I have ever had in England followed. The cub was nearly full grown, and despite the fact that he was in view almost the whole way, never seemed to lose his lead until the end. Hounds running with breast high scent drove him through the next cover and finally rolled him over in the adjoining potato field. We arrived just as they killed and were able to save the brush.

Butchers Wood, the next draw, also produced a galloping cub, but his career was cut short by a cur who turned him into hounds soon after he broke cover. Chapel Wood was then tried but proved blank and since it was almost noon, hunting was stopped for the day. On the way home I stopped for lunch at the home of a sporting farmer who turned out to be a perfect mine of information on the history of the Craven.

While never a fashionable country, the Craven has been ruled by some of the most conjurable names in hunting, and because of its difficult scenting conditions, has almost forced the breeding of exceptionally tender nosed hounds. Perhaps the most famous of those by-gone masters was John Warde. "The father of fox hunting," as he is often called, Warde was one of the last of the old school of hunting. While a contemporary of Hugo Meynell and Smith Barry, he looked with disdain on the type of huntsman who killed his foxes by sheer pace, and bred large slow hounds with wonderfully good noses who could be counted on to kill their quarry by sheer hunting ability rather than by speed and casting on the part of the huntsman. He took the Craven country in 1814 and hunted it till 1825, when he retired at the ripe age of seventy-three.

Another famous master of the Craven was "Tom" or "Gentle-

man" Smith to distinguish him from the well known hunt servant of that time. Not only did he write the two classics of hunting THE LIFE OF A FOX and EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF A HUNTSMAN, but was the inventor of the "all around my hat" cast, used by every huntsman today.

One of the British liaison officers attached to the 8th Air Force was a very keen fox hunter and being engaged to a girl who hunted with the West Kent, he kindly persuaded me to join them for a Saturday's sport. We drove out from London at five in the morning and by the time we were in the saddle the rising sun was gilding the battlemented towers of Knole Castle and the deer were stirring in the forest aisles. It had rained during the night and the turf had just that degree of spring that takes the jolt out of the hardest gallop, but does not make the going too soft. In short, one of those rare September mornings in England when Diana smiles on those who serve her.

The meet was at the Porto Bello pub on the London highroad. Arthur Martin, the huntsman, smiled benignly from his cluster of 13 couple of hounds, and the joint master, William Rodger, courteously introduced me to the small field. Cubbing is not the most exciting season of hunting but it is apt to draw those who have an interest in hounds as well as in galloping over fences, and the odd dozen out appeared both keen and knowledgeable.

The first draw, Abbots Wood, produced a brace of cubs which gave us a good half hour's chase before they went to ground. Little or no stopping can be done in war time, and even with a plethora of foxes it is hard to kill in the big covers of that section of the West Kent country. Spaced nearly out of sight of each other, we were barely able to surround the woods and I am sure that a good many bright cubs must have departed via the foot high clover fields. Once I thought I had caught one in the act, but it proved to be a hare sneaking from her form.

Blowing hounds out of Abbots, we jogged over to Bloom-

field Wood, another large cover. By that time I was assisting the whip, a charming old fellow named Lenthall, who turned out to be the father of Alfred Lenthall, the huntsman of the Devon and Somerset Staghounds. Between us we managed to keep the young entry off hare but they did bolt an occasional bunny.

Bloomfield Wood is cut with rides and full of foxes. Scarcely had Martin cheered hounds into cover before a questing whimper told that the Thief of the World was on the move. "It's old *Buttercup*," said Lenthall, "and she knows her cubs." *Buttercup's* opening chant soon followed, and, the pack honoring, we had a fast gallop along tree hung paths. A little later my hunter shied sharply, barely avoiding hitting a scurrying cub, and since music dried up soon afterwards, I am sure we scared the scent out of him. By eleven the sun was hot, and, hounds being unable to carry a line even in the woodlands, it was decided to call it a day.

Riding home with my hostess, Miss Peggy Crocker, who, in addition to being at that time an officer in the Wrens, was a most informed girl about hunting. She told me that in 1776 John Warde of Squerries hunted a pack of foxhounds over most of the country now belonging to the hunt. In 1793 Sir John Dyke took over, and moving the kennels from Westerham to Bromley, started a reign of masters by that name. It was during the mastership of Sir Thomas Dyke in 1835, that the hunt became officially known as the West Kent Hounds. On the death of Sir Thomas the hounds were taken over by Mr. Forrest and since then some thirty masters have carried on.

Fifteen couple of hounds were maintained in kennels near Sevenoaks. The blood was Four Burrow with drafts from the Tiverton and Croome. The problem of feeding was greatly simplified by the fact that there was a medical experimental station near the kennels and the horses, after doing their bit for typhoid, were well boiled for the hounds.

Most of my inspection trips were done by air and on a rare sunny morning in late February of 1943, when I was flying over Shropshire, I happened to glance down at the countryside and saw on the ribbon of road a thousand feet below, a cluster of dots surrounding the toy figure of a man. My pilot had noticed them and being a hunting man himself, we dropped down for a look-see. There was no mistake about it, a pack of hounds was being exercised and not so far from the airport to which we were going.

That evening, I read my old 1939 BAILY's and ascertained that Colonel A. French-Blake was master of the South Shropshire Foxhounds. Kennels were well within the taxi radius of Shrewsbury and the Master kindly agreed to meet me there the following evening and let me help exercise.

The drive over was full of color to any reader of Nimrod. We passed Berwick Castle, where the gypsy's curse still denied the eldest son his birthright; bridged the Severn where John Mytton, although unable to swim himself, followed his hounds across on his old hunter, *Victory*. The stream is what Jorrocks would have called "a navigable river, or h'arm of the Sea," and how the Squire's horse managed the current is a moot question.

Colonel French-Blake and his kennel man, Bullfinch, met me at the door of the kennels and seemed as delighted to see me as I was to see them. It was a hard and sometimes thankless job to carry on with hounds in war time England and anyone with the interest to come and see them was always very welcome.

Fourteen couple of bitches were maintained. The basic blood was Welsh, stemming mostly from Curre, with strong outcrosses of Brocklesby and some Belvoir. All were in good condition and I couldn't help thinking that it pays to keep a few hounds fit rather than try, as in some other packs I have seen, to carry more hounds than one can manage. I was particularly impressed with *Rosebud*, an almost white bitch who whelped four exact counterparts of herself last spring. I would hate to have had to tell her

daughters apart, or her from them in the field. No dog hounds were kept.

A good old hunter was saddled for me and we rode out with hounds to the pastures beyond Annscroft. It was nearly ten by then and the quiet of the evening lay over the fields. The Welsh mountains were burnt gold behind us and far up on the little range of hills in front we heard a hound open. "It's old *Henry*," said the Colonel. "He hunts a lot at night and if we are not careful we will be having some trouble with these."

Hounds were definitely interested by then and it was only by some sharp cracks of the whip that we restrained the young entry. The cry of the small pack—there could not have been more than two couple—rose and fell on the night wind, and I felt a strong desire to join them. The Colonel felt it too for he suddenly wheeled his mare and said, "How about taking these home, and bicycling up to the hills for some music?"

It was almost dark when we returned. The little pack were still driving their fox and we had no difficulty in keeping parallel to them in the lanes. Henry, a jovial Shropshire farmer, loomed up in a light cart and we loaded the two cycles into the back. Not since college days, when I used to hunt with Will Thraves in the mountains near Charlottesville, Virginia, have I listened to hounds at night. The cry of these Welsh hounds was in fact strangely reminiscent of the Trigg and Walker strains back home and had little in common with the thin tongued packs of the Midlands.

After a good hour's run the fox went to ground, and, as I had to fly south early in the morning, the Colonel and I regretfully pedalled home, but it was an evening to remember and one which some day I should like to describe to our night hunters half a world away.

With the end of the war and the advent of the Labor government there were sweeping changes in England. Parliament was dominated by men from the cities with little feeling for the

country way of life which they erroneously associated with wealth and privilege. A bill was subsequently introduced in the House which would have virtually signed the death warrant of British field sports. That the bill was killed at the second reading by a vote of 214 to 101, was not due to any change of heart on the part of its adherents, but to the pressure emanating from the farmers and the fox hunters.

So moved were one group of country gentlemen that they organized a march on Parliament which was immortalized in the sporting journals as the Piccadilly Hunt, and was favorably compared by no less an authority than Fred Unwin, the well known hunting scribe of *Horse and Hound*, to such history making rides as "Bringing the Good News from Ghent to Aix" and Lady Godiva's bareback ride through Coventry.

The originator of the idea is an unsung hero but the merit of his plan was quickly recognized and a group of fifty farmers was soon pledged to join the Crusade. F-Day, February 25, 1949, dawned rainy and cold as the squadron mounted their horses at Hyde Park Corner and settled themselves for the hunt. Drawing Piccadilly Circus first, they ran up Regent Street to Oxford Circus and then down Oxford Street to Marble Arch. After a breather they forged on through the green expanses of Hyde Park to Grosvenor Mews and wound up at Hyde Park Corner. A petition was then sent to the House of Commons and the fox hunters, their work well done, repaired to the Horse and Hound Ball for some well earned stimulants.

The recent dinner in London to commemorate this gallant event was attended by 130 enthusiastic fox hunters, including masters and ex-masters of the Croome, Worcestershire, Cotswold, North Ledbury and Ludlow. Plans were laid for even greater mounted assaults on the Commons if the danger arose again. The master of ceremonies, Mr. Len Bennett, the sporting agriculturist, closed the evening with "home" blown by the master of the North Ledbury.

CHAPTER XI

Stag Hunting in England and France

Stamped deep in the black earth of the mangold field were the "slots" or hoof marks of a stag. The harbourer scrutinized them and told me quietly that the marks were new. We tied our horses and followed the trail down to a potato field. Here the stag had fed and fed wastefully, taking only one bite from each uprooted tuber. At the far end of the field he had scrambled the hedge and left a barely perceptible line down an upland pasture to the bracken tangle of Brimblecombe Break. Returning to our horses, we made a wide and careful swing around the cover. No marks led out. Our stag was harboured, at least for the time being, for tomorrow's hunt.

Hector Heywood, the harbourer of the Devon and Somerset Staghounds, had a fascinating if arduous profession. For four months of the year, while the wild red stag are hunted, it is up to him to select and track down suitable quarry as near as possible to where hounds will meet. From July 15 to October, only "warrantable" stags five or more years old, are fair game. Hinds, which are not harboured, are hunted from November to the middle of March and there are six weeks of spring stag hunting starting in April.

In many cases Hector never saw the stag so he had to be an expert in judging the slot. After ascertaining that it is in a certain cover, he had then to watch to see that it did not move before hounds are laid on. Harbouring takes place the day previous to the meet with another check on the morning of the hunt. Upon him, quite as much as on the huntsman, depended the

day's sport and in war time, when every hunt must result in a kill, his job was even more important.

Through the kindness of Mrs. Hancock, the Joint Master, I was furnished a wonderfully sure-footed moorland pony for my expedition with Hector. He met me at ten at Rhyll, Mrs. Hancock's home, and as we jogged up onto the moors told me something of himself and his life's work. Born in the village of Dulverton, in Somerset, he had spent his entire life on the moors, learning the ways of the deer from earliest childhood. In 1937 he became harbourer and during the war worked a sixty acre farm in addition to his duties as harbourer.

The country Hector covered embraces roughly those sections of Devon and Somerset known as Exmoor and its environs, an area of about two hundred square miles. It is a land of wild heather and gorse-covered moors, rushing streams, and heavily wooded valleys. Villages are few and far between and one can ride for miles over the rolling uplands without seeing a farm house. Largest of these uplands is the Exmoor "forest," which is not a forest at all but a great stretch of deserted moor. The rainfall is heavy and the going in some places extremely tricky due to bogs made by unseen springs. The safest way was to follow the paths made by the little Exmoor sheep and ponies, but on foggy days no one but a native could find his way across the moors.

The deer, according to Hector, spent their days in the wooded valleys and only came onto the open moor and cultivated fields to feed during the late evening and night. It was often possible to see them at dawn and twilight with the aid of glasses and when this was so the harbourer's job was made far easier.

The farmers were another source of information as to the whereabouts of deer. They reported to Hector all damage to their crops and it was up to him to decide where the deer were making the heaviest inroad and should therefore be hunted first. The farmers were paid compensation for this damage by the

hunt and were also given the venison of the quarry killed, but of far more import to most of them was the opportunity to hunt themselves. There were no keener sportsmen than the moorland farmers, and, in the last analysis, it was due to their support that stag hunting carried on during the war.

One might well ask why the deer were not stalked and shot and the answer is that this was tried at the start of the war and given up as a bad job. Without the help of hounds it was almost impossible to find and move the herds. The Ministry of Agriculture recognized this and left matters entirely up to the hounds for the duration, an arrangement that worked out extremely well for all concerned. The herds were reduced to a point where there were not more than a few hundred left on Exmoor and two days hunting a week easily kept the herds under control.

The sun was setting when Hector and I completed our circuit of Brimblecombe Break. On the hillsides the purple of the heather was streaked with gold and down in the valleys the oak forest sighed darkly in the evening breeze. On the highest ridge I turned my horse for one last look at the cover. Somewhere down there in the shadows the stag rested. Would he return there after his nightly feast? Hector thought so and by that time I had an abounding faith in Hector.

Despite a light drizzle, the skies over Exmoor showed patches of blue when hounds met at Molland Moor Gate early in October of 1943, and Mrs. Hancock and Miss Abbott, the Joint Masters, with whom I rode to the meet, prophesied good scenting. A field of fifty odd, made up mostly of sporting farmers, were clustered around hounds. Alfred Lenthall, the huntsman, gave a touch of scarlet to the welcome picture as he tipped his cap to the Masters, and my friend Hector greeted us with the assurance of a man whose work is well done. He had been up at dawn and told us that the stag we harboured yesterday had not moved from Brimblecombe Break.

Unlike fox hunting, where the whole pack is used to draw for

quarry, only a few couple of hounds, known as the "tufters" are drafted for starting the stag. Then, when he is well away, these steady old hounds are stopped and the balance of the pack brought up and laid on. The privilege of riding with the tufters is reserved for the oldest and wisest members of the hunt and I felt greatly honored when Mrs. Hancock told me to go along with them.

With Hector leading, our little cavalcade moved off and was soon threading its way down the bracken-covered slopes of the Break. We moved quietly in single file, but the horses shivered with excitement and as we drew nearer to the hillside where Hector had last seen the stag, I was nearly as jittery myself.

Suddenly the line in front of me stopped dead and a farmer pointed down the slope. At first I saw nothing but the tangled three foot bracken. Then, just below a stunted oak, I saw the curve of antlers—in fact two sets of antlers. Hector quickly dismounted, and strode straight down to the trees followed by the huntsman and hounds. When almost on top of him, the stag bounded up and stood for a moment facing us. Then he was away with hounds making the valley ring with their wild music. Not till after the hunted stag had left, did his companion, an equally fine buck, rise calmly and trot off. He seemed to know the pack was not for him.

One of the purposes of using tufters is to head the stag onto the open moor, but the present recipient of our attentions had other ideas. Galloping down to Coombe Wood, he turned sharply at the line of the trees and disappeared into Leigh Wood. Hounds raced him through them and he ran on to Botternaux Mill, Hall Wood, Molland Station, and Kings Wood. Then he skirted Molland village, crossed the fields of Red Lands and finally swung towards open country at White Post. Here Alfred, the huntsman, stopped the tufters and we dispatched the whip to bring up the pack and field.

With a crash of tongue the twenty-five couple of staghounds

hit the line and we were away. By the time the sun was beating on the dripping uplands I had a grand view of the whole hunt, as we spread out over the billowing heather of Soggy Moor. Far across the valley the stag was a brown dot against the purple hillside, while hounds, well bunched with Alfred racing close behind them, followed at perhaps half a mile. There is nothing to jump on the Moor but there are very bad bogs and a riderless horse in the surging field proclaimed that someone had already come a cropper. My hunter, *Percy* by name, had pulled like a steer early in the meet but the two hour run with the tufters had taken a lot out of him and I now let him pick his own way across the heather. Over the long swells of the moor we galloped, slid down the intervening gulleys and scrambled the opposite banks. He never fell once and as hounds checked at the Dane Brook, we were among the first flight of the field.

The stag cooled or "soiled" in the rushing water of the stream and hounds were at fault for perhaps fifteen minutes. Then old *Sapper* picked up the line and we went away again to Zeabrucks, down through the oaks of Slade Wood, back to the Dane Brook and then quite suddenly the stag came to bay under the White Rocks.

With his heaving hindquarters protected by the cliff face and his magnificent antlers menacing the pack, the stag was prepared to take on all comers. Even the fact that his horns were heavy with velvet did not entice the pack to attack and they all kept a respectful distance. Those misguided humanitarians who say a stag is afraid of hounds and is pulled down in cold blood should have been at the Dane Brook on that hot August afternoon. He had run for nearly five hours and was quite ready and willing to fight it out. In peace time the stag is often given his liberty after such a run, but during a war the hunt can exist only for the purpose of killing, and the huntsman, much against his will, gave the coup de grâce with his knife.

It was a wonderful pair of antlers, with twelve points, or, as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stag hunters say, "all his rights" and "three on top both sides." The stag was apparently about ten years old and in fine condition. The feet, or "slots" were then removed and I was lucky enough to be presented with one, which I subsequently had mounted. The head was also cut off to be sent to the kennels for curing and the venison was divided among the farmers. Even dressed there must have been four hundred pounds of it.

Very tired but very satisfied, we rode back along the stream to the village of Dulverton. It had been a great day, and we looked forward to drinking the age old toast of Exmoor—"Prosperity to stag hunting."

The village of Exford in Somerset enjoys the distinction of being the hunting center for eleven packs of hounds. From the comfort of the Crown or the White Horse Inns one can hunt in peace time with no less than three packs of staghounds, five packs of foxhounds, and one each of beagles, harriers and otterhounds. But the village's real fame came from the Devon and Somerset Staghounds whose kennels adorn the upper part of one of its cottage-lined streets.

The day following the hunt I walked to the kennels and spent the afternoon with Alfred Lenthall, the huntsman, making a thorough inspection of individual hounds as well as going out for exercise with them and watching feeding.

Despite the name staghounds, the Devon and Somerset of today have no staghound blood in their pedigrees. All are of pure foxhound breeding with the best lines traceable to famous foxhound packs. Since 1825 when the last pack of staghounds was sold, the pack has been almost entirely recruited by drafts of big hounds from the Brocklesby, Belvoir, Mr. Fernie's, the Quorn, Warwickshire and Puckeridge.

Among the stallion hounds who had the most influence was *Dragoon '25,* son of *Brocklesby Dragoon,* who was lent by Lord Yarborough to Col. Wiggin, the then Master. Mated with

D. and S. *Harmless* his progeny did much for the pack. *Tiverton Actor '24* was used often as was *Puckeridge Whipcord* of about the same time. A draft in 1918, from the Garth included another bitch named *Harmless*, who, mated with *Heythrop Comus*, also left a stamp on the bloodlines.

The war time pack consisted of twenty-eight couple of big foxhounds. *Sapper '38* was used as the stallion and a very good looking hound he was. In color the hounds ranged from Belvoir tan saddles to lemon and white, but in size they were very level. Unfortunately they were not in the stud book. Discipline was well maintained and it was a pleasure to watch feeding. The kennels, built in 1867 by Mr. Bisset, were a model of intelligent planning and Alfred kept them scrupulously clean.

According to the chronicles regular hunting on Exmoor started about 1510, when Henry VII granted to Sir Edmund Carew of Mohun's Ottery, Devon, a lease of the forest for his life. The hounds used were probably those described in Baillie-Grohman's MASTER OF THE GAME. Slow and powerful with deep tolling voices, they took a very long time to kill their quarry. Mention is also made in the records of greyhounds, which were evidently also used when a quicker kill was desired. In those brave days cross bows and hunting staves were "appurtenances of the Chase" and the deer must have taken quite a beating.

In the time of Good Queen Bess, Hugh Pollard, Esquire, of Simmonsbath was Ranger of Exmoor and kept a pack of staghounds for hunting the royal game. Her Majesty was so fond of the sport that she is mentioned as following hounds at sixty-four, an age at which few lady stag hunters of today are able to enjoy it.

Nimrod, while hunting on Exmoor in 1824, described the toast drunk after a stag was killed. A silver cup was placed in the stag's mouth, secured with a cord so it could not fall out, and then filled to the brim with ale. The person drinking

grasped an antler in either hand, and bringing the whole head to his lips, drained the mug. If he failed to do so he was fined. Nimrod also notes that in earlier times a person who left the field before the stag was killed was fined.

The year after Nimrod's visit, the pack was sold to a German Baron, and with the passing of the last pure staghound pack from the country, the early history of the sport may be said to have ended. For some years after that Exmoor went unhunted, and it was not until 1837 that Dr. Charles Palk Collyns organized a committee to form a pack. They named it the Devon and Somerset Stag Hounds which, under eleven able masters, has carried on to the present day.

While stag hunting in England has an ancient tradition, it is comparatively modern compared to the sport in France. In fact, ever since the son of the Duke of Guienne saw a stag with a cross between his horns late in the seventh century, and was subsequently canonized as St. Hubert, stag hunting has been the traditional "grande chasse" of France. Whether or not he actually saw this heavenly quadruped is a moot question, but since he was hunting on a Sunday he felt the vision to be a sign and subsequently became bishop of Liége and founded a monastery. The monks of St. Hubert's were just as keen as their abbot and continued for centuries to breed a fine type of staghound, selected carefully for nose and hunting qualities.

In the summer of 1952 I had the pleasure of seeing the kennels of the Marquis de Roualle who bred one of the best staghound packs in France. Great black and white hounds, standing many inches higher than foxhounds and even dwarfing the Devon and Somerset staghounds of southern England, the pack looked capable of dealing with a fair sized elephant much less a stag. These hounds belong to the category of "Chien d'Ordre" or full sized hounds bred for running their quarry without guns. The "Briquets" are smaller and used mainly with guns and the Bassets are, of course, the best known of the

French gunning dogs. While many of the old French strains of the "Chien d'Ordre" have been debased, the "Saintongeois" and the "Poitevin" have been kept fairly pure and from these two lines stem most of today's French staghounds.

Sir John Buchanan-Jardine in his excellent study HOUNDS OF THE WORLD says that only three of the "Saintongeois" strain survived the Revolution. The Marquis de la Porte-aux-Loups who owned them was forced for political reasons to flee his chateau but before dashing to England he charged his faithful agent to preserve the strain. Only three hounds survived, a bitch named *Minerve* and two dog hounds, *Melanthe* and *Fouilloux*. Breeding alternately from the twin sires, a new pack was built up. Commenting on the pack, the Comte le Couteulx, a contemporary, said: "Larger, handsomer and nobler than all other French breeds, free from all crosses for more than thirty generations, the real 'Saintonge' hound has a deep chest, lean flank, tapered stern, and arched loin. Of gentle disposition, and without ambition, he hunts along without hurrying, trusting in his stamina and astonishing scenting powers." The pack was later given to the Comte de Saint-Legier who used them to hunt wolf.

The pack of the Marquis de Roualle has a good deal of this old Saintongeois blood but there is also a strong admixture of English foxhound. The kennel huntsman told me that the English crosses helped to speed up the pack and dilute the inbreeding so prevalent in French stag packs.

The Marquis hunts roe deer in the forests of Chantilly twice a week from October to March. The forests are public property but no shooting is allowed and there is a plentiful supply of deer. Fields are usually large and while there are no fences the forest is full of fallen trees and dense brush which sometimes makes the going difficult. Unlike the deer forests of the Vendée, there are not many "allees," or cut rides, where one can canter in the clear.

A few miles from the kennels lies the famous chateau of Chantilly and its equally famous stables. Built of stone and decorated with carved marble by the Prince of Conde, the stable was started in 1719 and finished in 1735. With room for three hundred horses under its cathedral-like roof, the Ecurie de Chantilly is the nearest thing to a horse palace on earth. On the walls still hang a forest of stag heads some of which I noticed go far back in the annals of hunting at Chantilly.

Another memorable shrine for the sport-inclined visitor, is the Museum of the Chase at the village of Senlis. There is a fine display of French hunting history on view. Boar's heads, their yellow fangs protruding, hang in serried ranks while graceful stags gaze placidly above them. There are mounted heads of wolves, fox and a lone hare. The old uniforms of scarlet blue and gold are preserved in glass cases, and a special display holds examples of the development of the ornate French hunting horns.

The Museum was financed by the sportsmen of France and I could not help thinking that perhaps the glories of the hunt will be maintained there long after the sport itself may have passed to the realm of the Dodo Bird, for stag hunting in France is far more of a rich man's sport than it is in England.

This is, in fact, the basic difference between stag hunting in the two countries. In France it is still an expensive and exclusive sport. The country hunted, with the exception of the great public parks like Chantilly, consists of private deer forests, such as that of the late Duchesse d'Uzes. Few peasants have either the leisure or the money to take part in the hunts. In England, on the other hand, a large part of the field always consists of sporting farmers who breed a horse or two for their own enjoyment, allow the stags to rut in their crops, and thoroughly enjoy the hunting.

CHAPTER XII

Trout, Salmon and Mahseer

Certain fishing trips stand out in one's memory above all others and in the following four sketches I have attempted to present my pleasantest days with rod and reel. The locale shifts from Kashmir to Scotland and from Alaska to Florida, but since angling is pretty much the same all over the world I have taken the liberty of grouping these stories in the same chapter.

The Valley of Kashmir is beyond any doubts one of the most spectacularly lovely places on earth. Set in the lap of the Himalaya Mountains, the highest in the world, it has attracted sportsmen from the days of the Mogul Emperors. My first view from the top of the Murre Pass was unforgettable. Between snow capped mountains and ringed by vast forests of deodar and pine, lay the sparkling lakes and rivers of the Valley. The altitude of a little more than 5,000 feet does not affect the climate as the mountains defend it from both the icy blasts of wind of the Himalayan range and the scorching winds from the plains of India.

In the late summer of 1936 I left the heat of Rawalpindi and drove over the Pass to Srinagar, the capital and seat of His Colonel Highness, Sir Harisingh Ji Bahadur, the Maharaja of Kashmir and Jammu, to whom I had letters of introduction. My plan was to spend several weeks fishing the waters of the Dal Lake and adjacent streams and then make a "shikari" into the mountains to shoot ibex and markhor.

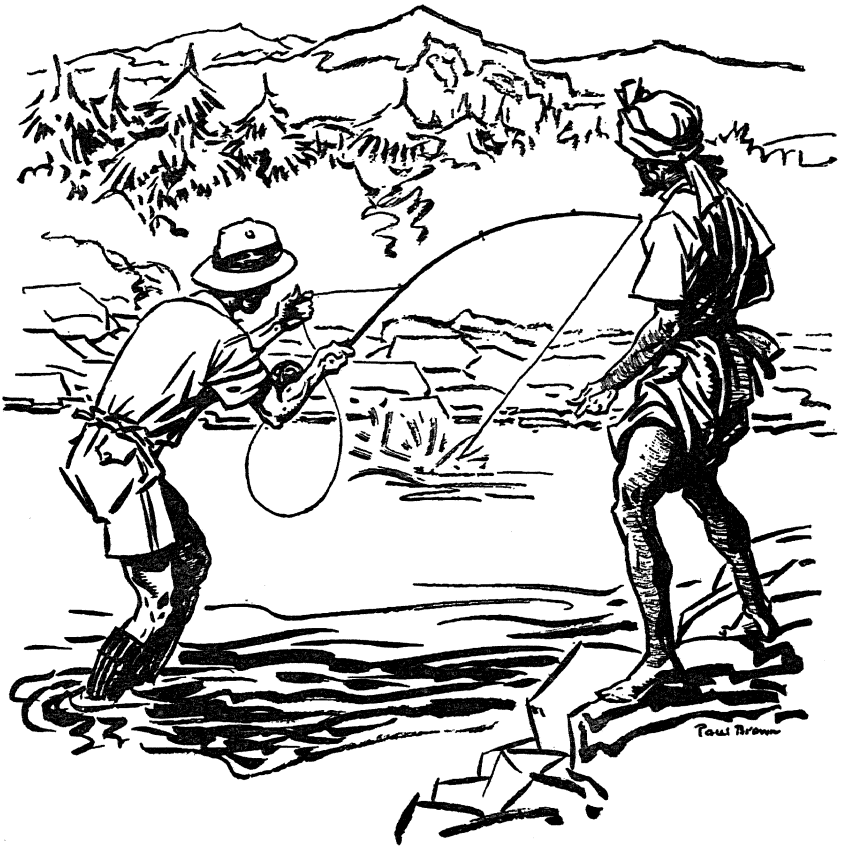
There were numerous good hotels in Srinagar but by far the most mobile way to live there was in a house boat. After scouting around I hired the *Ritz*, a miniature floating palace

consisting of two bedrooms, a dining room, sitting room and pantry, plus a kitchen boat and a skiff. A staff of two personal servants and five boatmen came with the outfit. The cost in U.S. money was a little less than three dollars a day and I was told that for another modest consideration that I could have the services of a dancing girl to while away the hours when I was not fishing.

While it was possible to catch some trout and a variety of coarse fish as well in the Dal Lake itself, the Dal Gate Pool and the channel from the Gate to Gagribal were reported to hold some big rainbows. When I tried the Pool the water proved to be mirror still which gave me a fine view of the reflected snow peaks but was not conducive to dry fly fishing. The Kashmir trout are an extremely hungry lot, however, and on my second cast I hooked a fine four pounder that gave me an interesting ten minutes before my boatman netted him. The trout was very long for his weight and the flesh when I ate it later was as pink as a salmon. The Dal Gate's waters were one of the reserved areas for which I paid a nominal charge. The rest of the morning produced five more good rainbows and gave me a ravenous appetite for the trout curry which, to my horror, was served up by my cook boy before I was able to explain to him that a trout tastes pretty fine all by himself.

I also fished the Lidar River, a wide, swiftly running stream that held some big trout, but was so fast at that time of the year that I lost several good ones in the rapids. I was fishing with a Hardy five ounce rod and a very light leader and broke four of the latter in the day's sport. My best catch was a six pound brown trout that had broken the leader but was so exhausted that I managed to scoop him up by his gills from the shallows.

The great fish of the Indian rivers is not the trout, which is an importation, but the mahseer, a scaled barbel, that often runs to over a hundred pounds. After a surfeit of trout I journeyed to Shadi-pur on the Jhellum River and had a go at these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big fellows. The Jhellum is a snow river rising at Wular Lake in the high Himalayas and carries a very heavy stream of water. While one can fish certain stretches by skiff, I preferred to wade the shallower reaches. I used a casting rod and a spinner with twenty pound strain bass line.

A small army of Kashmiris came to see me start, and, while only a few spoke Hindustani, a language of which I had a feeble understanding, I gathered that each one was offering to show me the exact spot where I could hook into a fish as "big as a pony." Waving them away I set out, accompanied only by Sirdar, my Ghurka bearer, whom I kept with me all the time I was in India and who proved just as much at home on a stream or in the jungles as he did in the best hotels of the Raj.

The first pool I tried was a deep semi-backwater of the river. Casting far out to the line where the main stream was running I drew the spinner in slowly. When it was almost back to me there was a great surge and a mahseer hit it with a crash that nearly pulled the rod out of my hands. I gave him line freely and then struck him hard—too hard, for the line parted and I never had a glimpse of him. Subsequent efforts in this pool failed and it was not until late in the afternoon when the sun was already well below the mountains and it was starting to get chilly that another fish took my lure. This time I was more careful and landed a fine fifteen pound mahseer. Sirdar was just as jubilant as I was and carried it flapping on his shoulder to the nearest hamlet where we could rent ponies to carry us back to the car.

The Dal Lake itself abounded with many kinds of perch and it was a never ending source of pleasure to me to take the skiff, and after catching a good mess of fish, land and eat lunch at one of the famous gardens. I liked particularly the Garden of Gladness at Nashat. Built in the fifteenth century to please the wife of a Mogul Emperor, the garden consists of a series of marble terraces with ornamental pools from which cascades of water

flow down to the lake. On the topmost terrace is the marble pagoda where the Emperor used to sit with the lucky wife. The flowers and acres of green lawns were kept in perfect condition. I liked Nashat better than the Garden of the Shalimar famed for the pale hands of its dancing girls. But time was running out; my group of hill men were organized for the shooting trip and I had spent more time on the lakes and rivers of Kashmir than I had planned. They form a unique fisherman's paradise.

My next angling tale lies half a world away on the Devron River of northern Scotland where I took a week's leave during the early days of the late war.

I had written first for reservations at the Fife Arms Hotel at Banff and had been assured by return mail that I could lease a stretch of the river for a nominal sum from the estate office of the Duchess of Fife. The night I left London there was a big raid and it was a double pleasure to sink into my sleeper on the Edinburgh Express and leave the bomb-rocked city.

Of all types of angling none is more influenced by weather than salmon fishing, and I was assured by a bevy of disgusted British colonels that nothing short of dynamite would raise a fish on the Devron. The water was low and only three salmon had been killed in the preceding ten days. To add to this pessimistic viewpoint it was cold and drizzling. I had secured the services of Rene, an elderly ghilly with a dour Scots expression and a great understanding of the ways of the salmon, and we sallied forth together into a far from promising dawn.

My tackle left a good deal to be desired. The rod was an old greenheart lent me by an RAF friend, who never fished, and was as heavy as a Tartar pole. The reel, line and flies were purchased at Hardy's in London but I had no waders and the icy water soon numbed me from the waist down.

Our beat began at a pool just below the ford where I was told Bonnie Prince Charlie crossed on his flight to the coast and

I tried a light grey fly whose name in dialect was new to me. The water was black and whipped to small waves by the bitter wind. After half an hour's fruitless casting I was ready to call it a day, but Rene was optimistic in his grim Scotch way and kept urging me to try again. Just as I lost all feeling in both legs and had definitely decided to quit before I got my death, I felt a strong tug on the line, and, pulling by sheer reflex action, hooked a fish.

Then the battle began. The pool was far too deep for me to wade more than a score of yards from the bank, yet when I had given the salmon all of my available line and was down to my last ten yards of backing I said to hell with it, and, plunging in, waded out to where the water was lapping under my arms and continued to fight the fish at this depth for nearly half an hour. The excitement warmed me marvelously and I soon forgot how cold I was.

All this time Rene had been shouting directions at me, none of which I understood but it finally came to me that he was telling me to work the fish into the shallows at the far end of the pool where he could do some good with his gaff. This I eventually managed to do and saw Rene with unerring eye hook my salmon and carry it triumphantly ashore. The fish tipped the scales at a little better than twenty-one pounds and was by all odds the best salmon taken so far that season on that particular beat.

Back at the hotel the colonels were as delighted as I was and we drank to the fish in numerous bottles of beer, Scotch whiskey at that time being obtainable every place but in Scotland.

From Banffshire to Alaska is another sizeable jump and the two countries aside from salmon have little in common. Juneau did have a fully stocked bar, however, and I found it an excellent place to discuss where to fish.

The size of a trout or a salmon is magnified somewhat when seen through the bottom of a whiskey glass, but the tallest tales of the bush pilots, the cannery men, and the trappers harbor

germs of truth. In a country one-fifth the size of the United States with a total population that would fit snugly into Niagara Falls, New York, or Rockford, Illinois, Nature has growing space. The great brown bear tips the scales at three-quarters of a ton; there is a bounty on American eagles; and the world's biggest ice cap, aside from the polar regions, spawns its glaciers near the earth's longest chain of volcanoes. In fact, everything in Alaska is in superlatives, and when Dean Goodwin, bush pilot and guide, promised my wife and me all the cutthroats we could catch within an hour's flying time of Juneau, we took him up.

Taxiing up the harbor, the little pontooned Aeronca lifted herself into the air and started a long climb into the mountains. Just north of the town lies the Mendenhall Glacier and we decided to take a spin over it and the surrounding peaks before starting for Admiralty Island and the trout lakes.

The world of spruce, hemlock and yellow cedar gradually fell away beneath us and rounding a spur of the mountain we found ourselves over the glacier. A great river of brownish white ice, lightened here and there by vivid blue crevasses, it gives a strangely sinister impression. Towering over the forests and the infinitesimally tiny town of Juneau, the age-old glacier seems to threaten the lesser works of man.

Rising higher we topped the glacier head and saw stretching away to the horizon serried rows of snow-capped mountains. I have seen the Alps, the Himalayas, and the Andes, but there is something in the sheer uncompromising ruggedness of the Alaskan coastal range that is unforgettable. If it were not for the perpetual snow they could well be the jagged peaks of some burnt-out star.

Flying close to the rock face we saw two goats feeding on a little square of green vegetation on a slope where only a goat could survive. The angle must have been more than forty-five degrees, but with the approach of the plane both bounded lightly up to the ledge above them.

Turning southwest from the glacier we laid our course for Admiralty Island, one of the largest of the sea islands on that section of the Alaskan coast. Below us lay the waters of Stevens Passage which forms a section of the Inside Passage, the great island-guarded waterway of Alaska. Dean spotted a whale and took us down fast enough to see the monster wave his tail in a dive. A bit farther along the Passage we saw two eagles attacking a shoal of herring.

Florence Lake, located near the southwest shore of the island, appeared from the air to be little more than a pond surrounded by forest on the ocean side and by peaks inland. Goodwin made a tight turn and we were soon skimming the lake itself which proved to be several miles long and about a fourth as wide. Taxiing to the upper end where a stream tumbled away into a ravine, we hitched the plane to a tree and assembled our fishing gear. In addition to his rod, Goodwin carried a .405 Winchester and an old Colt revolver. He explained that the big browns don't usually molest anyone but there is always the chance of a nervous female with cubs.

This precaution was almost immediately justified as the first tracks we saw while working our way along the shore were those of a bear. Goodwin assured us that they were not those of a big bear, but since they measured fourteen inches from claw marks to heel, I was just as glad we had the guns. The bear had been browsing on the wild cabbage and had chewed up a lot of it. Further along the trail we also found tracks of the little Sitka deer.

We started fishing at five but as July twilight in that latitude does not even begin until ten, we were early and no fish were rising. Wet flies, however, were very effective and with the first cast my wife and I had two fifteen-inchers on the bank. They were long, thin, and brilliantly colored trout, with ravenous appetites. The limit was fifteen each so we used the smallest possible flies and shook off all of those lightly hooked.

The stream formed a pool soon after it left the lake and I tried it with dry flies while a lazy beaver continued to swim at the upper end. Such a guest in the pools of Eastern Canada would have sent the trout to hiding, but the cutthroats paid no attention to him and kept on hitting my fly at every cast. They were not big trout, ranging from twelve to fifteen inches, but on a light rod they showed fine sport and I lost quite as many as I netted.

Out in the lake itself the glass smooth surface was beginning to be punctured by resounding smacks and we decided to take a shot at the big babies. The bottom was very soft and, although the lake was shallow at this end, it was not possible to wade far from the bank. Even so the trout were there in force and at the first cast what appeared to be the virtual grandfather of cutthroats rose completely out of the water and hit my Coachman a sock which severed the fly from the leader in the air. The second fly, a Golden Miller, was equally attractive and just as ineffectual from my standpoint. I hooked the fish but after a short run he tied himself around a rotten log, with which the lake abounded, and made good his escape.

The third attempt, a Black Gnat, did the trick and after ten minutes' tussle I landed a seventeen incher just as the sun suddenly dropped behind the peaks. The big fellow made our legal limit of forty-five trout for the party and we decided to call it a day.

Flying home in the long twilight, which really never ends this time of year, Goodwin told us a lot about the game and fish of Alaska. The largest carnivores on earth, the Alaskan brown bear have attained weights of seventeen hundred pounds, and skins measuring twelve feet in length have been stripped from them. They are sometimes called Kodiak bear, probably due to the fact that the Russian fur hunters first procured skins from that island. Despite the fact that they have been hunted steadily for the past seventy years, the supply seems to be hold-

ing up well and Goodwin, not a man given to exaggeration, told me he could virtually guarantee a shot at one inside a week's time.

The cost would vary somewhat according to the number of men in the party, but $125 per day is the minimum. This covers the plane, camping equipment and food, and probably a rifle if the hunter does not want to lug one with him.

The two best times to hunt browns are in the fall just before hibernation and in the spring just after it. Unlike our little black bears in the Eastern states, the browns come out of their caves as sleek and fat as the day they enter them. The easiest place to find them is to watch the streams when they are feeding on salmon. After the fish run they are apt to climb into the mountains where it is difficult to get at them.

Hunting as well as fishing in Alaska is greatly simplified by flying. The trip into Florence Lake by boat from Juneau would have taken a day, and probably the best part of another would have gone to breaking a trail from the coast to the lake. Furthermore, twenty-foot tides and sudden storms make it very difficult to operate from a boat unless it can be tied to a dock. The light plane equipped with floats or skis can usually drop into a protected lake when the going gets tough. In more than ten years of flying in Alaska Goodwin hasn't had a bad crack-up, and most of his work is done for cannery men who want to get where they are going quickly despite the weather. The entire fabulous salmon catch is canned in something over three weeks' time.

Back at Goodwin's cheerful house on the outskirts of Juneau, we cooked the trout in butter and corn meal and dispatched seven apiece. Never have I tasted better trout. It was past midnight and we had had only a sandwich for lunch. The final luxury was a watermelon, which in Alaska is literally worth its weight in gold.

I have never cared as much for salt water fishing as for fresh, but when an opportunity came to try for bonefish on the Florida

Keys I went along with considerable curiosity, and although I did not catch one on that trip, I learned something about this frequently misrepresented fish.

Albula vulpes, the bonefish of angling fame, is in fact a breeder of contention. Even the description of it in Webster's Standard Dictionary is said by experts to be inaccurate, and other so-called facts about it were also found to be based more on legend than history. For instance, one hears frequently in the North, that the bonefish is the fastest, fightingest prize of Southern salt water fishing, yet the professional guides of Islamorada, who have spent their lives fishing on the Florida Keys, rank him below the Permit, a husky cousin of the Pompano. Rumor also has it, that bonefish are inedible, but I found the flesh delicious, and locally esteemed as a good fish. Lastly is the often repeated bit of lore (usually accompanied by a solemn shake of the head by the man who has caught one) that only an expert fisherman can hope to catch a bonefish. The fact is that my fishing companion, whose only previous piscatorial triumph had been to catch a small trout on a worm, hooked, and landed in less than ten minutes, on light tackle, a fine nine and a half pound fish.

Despite the debunking and the Permit, the bonefish is a worthy and elusive foe and on the recommendation of Dana Lamb, a fellow member of the Anglers' Club, my wife and I and a friend, Stuart Higley of New Canaan, Conn., decided to try for him in early March of 1952. Reservations were made well in advance at Dick Williams' fishing camp, an attractive set of bungalows at the village of Islamorada, about seventy-five miles equidistant from both Miami and Key West. Some of these cabins had a special advantage as they were efficiency units, containing stoves and ice-boxes. The local restaurants were geared more to tourists than to fishermen so one could save quite a lot by home cooking. The rates were about the same as a good motel with the added advantage that Williams himself was an

excellent bonefish guide and saw to it that his guests were "fished" as they say on the Keys, by experts if he could not guide them himself. He booked us with John Russell and Harry Pinder, natives of Islamorada and bonefish guides of long experience. The fishing charge was $30 per day and boats were limited to two anglers in addition to the guide. It was also possible to rent one's own boat and outboard motor for a nominal charge, or even to fish from the shore. In addition to the elusive Permit and bonefish, one could also tackle the tarpon and the numerous deep sea fish of the reefs.

The haunts of the bonefish were in both the Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico, watery divisions defined by whether or not one was on the east or west side of U.S. Route 1, the road to Key West. Like the magic of the International Date Line, the mere passing under a bridge brought one to another ocean. Actually the west side of the bridge was known as "The Lake" and the east side was technically the Caribbean Sea. Both sea areas were similar, however, and provided stretches of unbelievably lovely water. The wide shallow seemed to reflect predominant light greys while the channels showed up bright green, and the occasional ocean holes appeared milky white. The net effect against the pastel blue-green skies was one of great harmony and beauty.

The individual flats had names and distinct virtues of their own. Billy's Lake, Rabbit Island flats, Lignum Vitae flats, The Swash, Tea Table flats, all became familiar to the bonefisherman and fish caught in one or the other of the designated areas added luster to them. There seemed to be no certain rule as to which side of the bridge to fish, but the wind had a bearing on the matter, as had the tides. Not being a guide I will not presume to define those correct proportions of elements that made for happy fishing.

Higley and I met Russell at the dock at eight-thirty and boarded his light sixteen foot ply-wood skiff, powered by a fast

twenty-five horse power outboard motor. Just forward of the stern was a small platform where Russell stood when he poled the boat. Standard equipment included two sets of light tackle and the day's supply of shrimp for bait.

Opening up his Johnson motor, Russell took us tearing through a mangrove-bordered channel to the lake-like expanse of Tea Table flat. There he turned off the power, and seizing a pole about fifteen feet long with a spade-shaped end, proceeded to pole us quietly forward. The water was gin clear and not more than two feet deep. On the bottom grew green sea grass and occasional sponges. Long, thick "hound fish" sometimes lashed the usually calm surface, and often the dark shadow of a shark or barracuda passed near us. Gulls and pelicans occupied dignified perches on channel markers, and nodded gravely to us. The mangrove-bordered islands which we passed were wooded and Russell pointed out the rare Lignum Vitae as well as the commoner Poison Wood, White Torch, Crabwood and Snakewood trees.

The bonefish is extremely cautious and the greatest care must be taken in stalking him. A thud against the side of the boat is enough to flush him. After a short time we found the location of fish by the "muds" stirred up by them as they foraged along the bottom for crabs and shrimps. Anchoring the boat by forcing his pole into the sand and then tying the skiff to it, Russell instructed us to cast our lines about twenty feet on either side of the nearest "mud." The tackle consisted of six ounce glass tips on medium length two-handed casting rods, Shakespeare or Pflueger reels with star drags, and eighteen pound nylon lines. Russell said it was often possible to attract the bonefish by his sense of smell and in order to produce a finer aroma for him, broke off the shrimp's head and then ran the hook through both it and the tail. Some ten inches above the bait was a three-quarter ounce lead sinker. Despite the delicious offering, the bonefish did not favor us, and after numerous additional stalks

we decided to take time out for lunch and questions on the history of the sport.

John Russell was a quiet man of sixty-four who had spent his life on Lower Matecombe Key and remembered the summer of 1904 when three gentlemen from Louisville, Kentucky—Colonel H. L. Martin, John MacFaren and H. C. Derett initiated the sport of fishing for bonefish on rod and reel and eventually thereby changed the economy of his island. They came on the schooner *Bonefish* and soon spread the fame of this gamest of salt water battlers. In those days Islamorada was a farming community of seventy-five souls. Pineapple and limes were raised and sent by schooner to the markets of Mobile. If the wind was right one could sail to Miami in two days or otherwise take a week tacking up the coast.

The fishing stories of the three gentlemen from Kentucky probably lost nothing in the telling and by the opening of the railway to Key West in 1912 the fame of Islamorada as a base for bonefishing was well established. Among the earliest arrivals was George La Branche, who built his first house on the Key in 1913, and has since become an acknowledged authority on bonefish and bonefishing.

The pleasant world of sport has not always been a placid one. In 1935 the worst hurricane in America's history, drove in from the Gulf of Mexico and claimed more than 800 lives on the Keys. Russell's wife and children were among the missing and he himself was barely able to survive. A wall of water more than twenty feet high completely destroyed all buildings and foliage on Lower Matecombe Key. Yet most of the survivors still live and work on Islamorada.

The afternoon produced many more "muds" but not one of the finicky bonefish would fall for our bait.

The following three days' fishing were handled by Harry Pinder, another native of the Key. Pinder was thirty-two and had spent four years in the Navy. He differed somewhat from

Russell in his methods of fishing. Pinder, for instance, believed in using a whole shrimp for bait. He thought that the activity of a live one more than made up for the additional smell of the freshly killed. Despite the change in offering, the bonefish continued adamant and it was not until the last day of our stay that our luck changed.

We were fishing at Shell Key flat at ten-thirty in the morning when my friend Higley's line suddenly gave a brace of convulsive jerks. He hit the fish hard and found himself hooked to a strong puller which gave him a stiff though limited battle. Eighteen pound strain line, plus a reel with the drag screwed down, is a hard combination for any fish to beat. Nicely netted by Pinder, the prize proved to be a nine and a half pounder, several pounds above the average caught in those waters. A brilliant silver color and powerfully muscled, the bonefish is a fine looking fish by any standards. He has no teeth and gets his sustenance by sucking crabs, shrimps and other small crustaceans into his mouth and then crushing them by a series of bones in his throat. Bonefish are said to be able to exert a pressure of seventy-five pounds and can easily crush the tough shells of conch and clam.

Not all bonefishermen use bait and Mr. La Branche has perfected a method of taking them on flies. In order to use flies, however, it was necessary for the fish to "tail" that is to show their tails above the water so that the fly caster can locate and drop his lure near them. When the fish can only be located by the "muds" they stir up, fly fishing is not so effective as a fish may move quite a way before the tell tale mud rises to show where he has been. Only once during our four days' fishing did we see fish tailing and then only for a short period. Unfortunately I did not have either a fly or spinning rod with me at the time.

John Russell told us that the supply of bonefish in the waters adjacent to Islamorada is steadily decreasing and he believed this was due to netting by the mullet fishermen. Mullet make

"muds" also and it takes an expert to know the difference between them and those originating from feeding bonefish. The nets used frequently kill the bonefish so there was no way of rectifying one's mistakes by releasing the netted fish. Pinder on the other hand attributed the growing rarity of fish to the noise of the outboard motors, and thought that the fish had been scared farther back into the vast feeding grounds between the Keys and Cape Sable on the Florida mainland.

There seems to be no doubt, however, that bonefish were getting rarer within easy water commuting of Islamorada and various methods were being employed to stop the trend. A stiff fine is levied for netting, but it is hard to find the culprits and harder to convict. The majority of sportsmen are helping by releasing all fish not wanted for eating or mounting.

Little seems to be known of the early life of the bonefish. Roe fish have, of course, been taken but no one I asked had ever seen a bonefish of below three pounds, nor strangely enough, have smaller specimens shown up in the nets of the mullet fishermen.

I was not able to consult any of the local ichthyologists but Mr. La Branche had made a study of the fish and pointed out the obvious fault in Mr. Webster's definition. According to that venerable source, a bonefish is simply another name for a ladyfish. Mr. La Branche avers, however, that a ladyfish is a large-eyed, tooth-bearing, surface feeder, while our friend the bonefish is a toothless, small-eyed, bottom feeder. To the layman they hardly seem cousins.

The bonefish is a widely respected barometer in that area of Florida. When a storm is coming the fish school up and race for deep water. So intent are they in this dash, that they ignore power boats and charge through their wakes.

Bonefish are also found in the Bahamas near Bimini and along the east coast of Cuba, and in Bermuda. Some years ago I caught several small bonefish near Cohimar, ninety miles from

Habana. *Dixonina,* formerly a rare and little known species of bonefish has recently been discovered to be fairly common at the mouth of the Rio Grande River in Jamaica. The *Dixonina* differs from the *Albula vulpes* in that it has a whip on its dorsal fin and a black "U" shaped marking on its snout.

The largest bonefish caught for the record in Florida was boated in late February by a party fished by Cecil Green. It weighed 13 pounds, 13 ounces. According to the FISHERMAN'S ENCYCLOPEDIA the world record was caught by C. M. Cooke, III, at West Molokai, Hawaiian Islands, on June 8, 1949. There are no authentic records as to how fast a bonefish will take out line, but the experts say that calculators attached to free running reels have clocked the first run of a strong bonefish at fifty miles per hour.

The winter months of December, January, February and March are really the worst time to fish for bonefish. Starting in April the fish congregate on the shallow flats and tail beautifully far into the summer. Then is the time to fish for them with flies and then is the time one will be sure of catching them. The statistics show that during the winter period the fish caught average less than one per day per angler. Even with this relatively slim chance of success the bonefish offers a superb challenge and in my humble opinion is well worth the gamble.

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