

# CHRONICLES OF ST. MARY'S

*Monthly Bulletin of the St. Mary's County Historical Society*

Vol. 28

May 1980

No. 5

Frederick L. McCoy, President  
Scotland, Maryland 20687

Edwin W. Beitzell, Editor  
Abell, Maryland 20606

Hunting The Fox In Saint Mary's  
by Dr. Eugene Guazzo, ex M. F. H.  
(Reprinted by special permission from the 1979  
Annual Report of The First National Bank of St. Mary's)



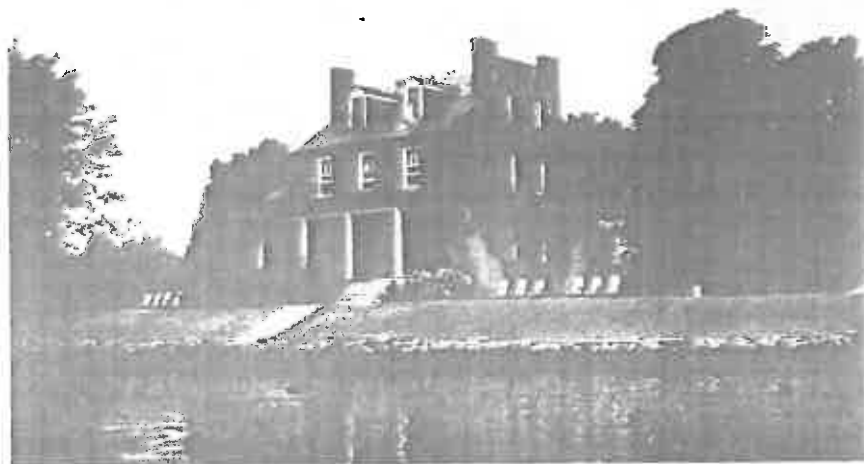
Dr. Eugene Guazzo, Master of the De La Brooke Foxhounds and Huntsman of the pack with his foxhounds, Tower Hill, Belvidere Farm near Leonardtown (1972) - Photo: Dorothy Shannon

Let's talk about foxhunting --- Most people have visions of "Merry Old England" but they could just as well be thinking of Colonial Maryland, and of Saint Mary's County in particular. For just as Englishmen hunted the fox in the Midlands and Shires of England, so also did they hunt on the early manorial plantations and farms of tidewater Maryland. Indeed, Saint Mary's was the first place in the New World where men came together to hunt together for "sport"... that is, their "hunting" was not mainly to fill the larder. It was a means of meeting old friends and making new ones, renewing acquaintances, showing hospitality, discussing the ups and downs of farming; it was a means for the women of colonial days to show their skills of hearth and board, and to open their homes

We must not be too quick to conjure up in our minds pictures of colonial lords and ladies doing all of this. The same scenes of meeting for the hunt, hunt breakfasts, hospitality and conviviality occurred in even the most modest of farm homes. And we must not be too quick to picture our colonial foxhunter mounted on his charging steed, for in the early days of the Colony, much of foxhunting was on foot. The extensive forest and woodlands often made it simply impractical, or impossible, to follow a pack of fox-chasing hounds while mounted on a horse.

In spite of the fact that hunting the fox was a sport that could be enjoyed by many from all walks of life, alas it is about the famous and the influential that most historians write. Thus, the first recorded event of foxhunting in the New World was the bringing of a pack of foxhounds to Saint Mary's County on June 30, 1650 by Robert Brooke, Esquire; he came from Whitchurch, Hampshire, England. A member of the Privy Council and later Commander of Charles County and President of the Provincial Council, he was commissioned by Lord Baltimore the preceding Fall (September 20, 1649) and given 8000 acres as an inducement to colonize the Province. Brooke brought his wife, 10 children, 28 men and women workers, and his pack of foxhounds.<sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>

Robert Brooke settled on the west bank of the Patuxent. He called the manor "De La Brooke" the name it is still known by today. De La Brooke Manor as it now stands, though an old structure (1830), is not where Brooke built his home. The original site is on the bluff about a mile from the river shore; glazed brick can be found there to this day.<sup>6</sup> This pack of hounds (The Brooke Hound) began many of the bloodlines in the famous breeds of later days and today: Walkers, Triggs, Julys, Maupins, etc.<sup>7,8</sup>



De La Brooke Manor, Saint Mary's County, Maryland where foxhunting began in the New World, and where the pack of fox hounds was kennelled that served as foundation stock for all subsequent breeds of American hounds.

#### Elements of The Chase

What is needed to have a fox hunt? At a minimum, four things are needed: A Fox, A Dog (hound), A Hunter, and Land (over which to hunt).

First and foremost, we need a fox! And Colonial Maryland had lots of them. There were two kinds: Grey Foxes and Red Foxes. Both, apparently, were native American foxes, but on this point there have been many arguments over the years.

There has been general agreement that the Grey Fox was here when the colonists arrived, but as to the Red Fox--- Well, get a group of foxhunters arguing about him and the fur flies!

On one side of the argument, many knowledgeable hunters have maintained that the Red Fox was imported from Europe (England). The historical record seems to support this view in that English red foxes had been brought to Talbot County, Maryland in 1783.<sup>9</sup> Other fox hunters insist that there always were red foxes (as told to them by their forbearers) but that the ravages of fox diseases and subsequent lessening of the red fox population caused importations by sportsmen, not only in colonial days, but even up to the present time.<sup>10</sup>

Oddly enough, parts of both arguments are correct. As for the Red Fox, there were importations from England, but those brought here were the European Red Fox. The American Red Fox is slightly different, and these differences can be detected in the structure of the skeleton. Scientific anatomic studies on fox bones found in caves clearly show that the same American Red Fox hunted today is native to the New World, and that this counterpart in Europe did not survive well when brought over here.<sup>11</sup>

At any rate, it seems clear that Colonial Maryland and Saint Mary's County had plenty of foxes, thus easily meeting the first requirement for a fox hunt.

Secondly, one needed a hound, and Robert Brooke certainly got that off to a good start with his pack on the Patuxent. What is not often appreciated, however, is that even without Brooke's hounds, every family probably had a hound! Not often noted is that Lord Baltimore stipulated that those about to journey to the Province have at least one "dog" to a family. The prudent settler would bring a hunting dog to the wilderness, the English hound.<sup>12</sup>

Thirdly, a hunter --- persons like Robert Brooke and his social peers and the many other Englishmen who came to Saint Mary's ... many of whom loved to see and hear a well-bred dog with a fine nose work through the tricks and tactics of the wildest wild animal of them all -- the fox.

And lastly, the fourth element: Land. A country over which the fox and hound can run. "...a land of exceptional beauty, with countless streams, creeks and bays...there are high hills which provide panoramic views of the fields, woods, rivers, and islands...its woods and waters abound with wildlife, and songbirds are everywhere."<sup>13</sup> Truly, a perfect place to run a fox!

And so, early Saint Mary's County had all the elements for The Chase. So successful was the blending of these that soon the sport spread to the other colonies. From Maryland, it spread principally to Virginia, and these two states still retain many foxhunting traditions that date from Colonial days.<sup>14</sup>

#### Accessories to the Foxhunt

Of course, what has been outlined above, are the "bare bones" of a foxhunt: a fox, a hound, a hunter, and land. There are additional elements, to be sure; "accessories," shall we say, to improve The Chase. Ample foxes, for instance.

It helps to have lots of foxes, and Saint Mary's has them. It may surprise some (including seasoned foxhunters) to learn that the average annual "harvest" of wild fox pelts from Southern and "Central" Maryland is 5000! (3500 reds and 1500 greys).<sup>15</sup> Of this amount, Saint Mary's alone yields from 600-1000, and probably many more.<sup>16</sup>

It also helps to have many hounds on a fox chase. Not only are more noses better than one, but there is the added element of music! To hear a pack of 30 or 40 foxhounds in full cry on a crisp Autumn morning is a never forgotten experience. Even the Great Bard was moved, and what fox hunter can help but wonder what English pack was heard that inspired:

My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind,  
So flew'd, so sanded; and their heads are hung  
With ears that sweep away the morning dew;  
Crook-kneed, and dew-lapp'd like Thessalian bulls;  
Slow in pursuit, but matched in mouth like bells,  
Each under each. A cry more tuneable  
Was never holla'd to, nor cheered with horn,  
In Crete, in Sparta, nor in Thessaly.

Shakespeare, "Midsummer Night's Dream"

Another "accessory" to hunting, as Mr. Shakespeare noted, is the hunting horn. From time immemorial, the outward sign, the token of the huntsman has been the horn. It is his means, other than his voice, of communicating with his pack. The huntsman also, by blowing various sounds and rhythms on this horn, can keep the followers of the chase informed of the progress of the hunt and what is happening.

Hunting horns in Saint Mary's are unique in both Europe and America in that they are conch shell horns. Where or when they were first used or where they came from is a mystery. That they have been used for a very long time is irrefutable. I have been shown shell horns well over a hundred years old that have been passed from fathers to sons.<sup>17</sup> It is reported that some families have conch shell hunting horns over two hundred years old. As for their origin (the conch is not native to the Bay area) many hunters are of the opinion that the English brought them to the County, and one would presume this was via Southern Florida or the West Indies since, of course, the conch is not native to England either. The conch shell horn is also used in Virginia and reportedly in Arkansas.<sup>18</sup>



Linwood J. Trossbach (First District) holding an old conch shell foxhunting horn. Unique to Saint Mary's, some of these shell horns are hundreds of years old.

The English hunting horn is also used in Saint Mary's, but it is not used by the foot hunter. It is a straight-tubed copper horn about 10 inches long gently widening to a bell of about two inches. It was (and still is) used by huntsmen of "formal" organized hunts. I was shown a lovely old silver English horn that was somewhat larger (about 14 inches long) and had an added feature in that it could be disassembled into two parts making it convenient to pocket when not in use. It had been passed down in the Dent Family for generations.<sup>19</sup>

The hunting horn adds an element of music to the sounds of the hunt most difficult to describe. To hear the cry of the huntsman cheering his pack to the line of the fox, and the piercing, wailing notes of the horn carried by a chorus of hound voices is that supreme moment of foxhunting that must be experienced to be believed.

Another embellishment to fox hunting is the horse. For many, the horse is the embellishment; and were it not for an interest in horses and horsemanship there would be countless thousands of present-day fox hunters who would know no more about a hound or a fox than that garnered from Aesop's Fables or Doyle's "Hounds of the Baskervilles."<sup>20</sup> Horses for foxhunting come in all sizes, shapes, and breeds. At a minimum they must have two requisites: they must be sound and they must be fit. They also should be able to safely jump fences, ditches, man-made "panels" (jumping places constructed in fence-lines), logs and fallen trees, small streams, and be able to clamber up banks or descend them with agility. In other words, a horse for foxhunting must be able to go cross-country, to follow hounds.

Ideally, he should be a quiet animal and should never kick a human or a hound or another horse regardless of how excited he or his rider may be ... especially in those tumultuous moments when hounds are away on a fox, the huntsman is bellowing his hounds to the chase and encouraging them with the horn and anywhere from 20 to 40 mounted foxhunters are jockeying into position to follow the hounds!

Almost all mounted foxhunters are members of "formal" or organized hunts (some 200 in America of which there are 25 in Maryland and one in Saint Mary's<sup>21</sup>). Many foot hunters also ride to hounds, and vice versa, but the horse is seldom used anymore by hunters who bring their own hounds together to form with other hunters' hounds a larger pack.

Using horses (and even mules) was the custom a generation or two ago in Saint Mary's, but with the advent of the automobile, paved roads, barbed wire fences (it is a rare horse can be trained to jump a barbed wire fence.), and the phasing out of horses on the farm, almost all hunting, ironically, reverted again to foot-hunting as it was done in the earliest of the colonial days. Many of today's hunters who follow their hounds by pick-up truck and on foot, fondly remember the days when a good horse was as essential to foxhunting as a good hound.

Finally, we come to that last embellishment to add to ample foxes, lots of hounds, hunting horns, and horses! Other Hunters! That is, other men and women who enjoy the sport and enjoy doing it and talking about it with one another. Who like to discuss and argue the breeding of hounds and horses and relive in memory those special hunting days of the past. To visit in one another's homes before and after the hunt, to go to the hound and horse shows and field trials and steeplechases, and cheer their huntsmen in horn-blowing contests. The social aspects of foxhunting make it that special sport that so fits Saint Mary's, that says so much about what is best in rural country life.

Now that the nuts are taken  
And the vale is cleared of corn,  
Now that the wind has shaken  
The last leaf from the thorn,  
Now, with the woods forsaken  
And the empty fields forlorn,  
Let the desolate spaces waken  
To the music of hound and horn!

-----Ogilvie

#### Partial Listing of Foxhunters, Hounds, and Horses<sup>22</sup>

The listings which follow, are by no means complete, nor has any attempt been made to list every foxhunter, hound and horse. In the beginning of compiling such a list, it became clear that hundreds of names would be on the list. and so names were chosen that kept coming up again and again, or that someone insisted had made real contributions to the sport and its lore. For the same reasons only a few hounds and horses are listed. Another means of shortening the list was to start at about the year 1900.

It is very likely that some names are misspelled, along with people living in the wrong places, but this is a "word-of-mouth" list, and as always with such things, much is left out, and much more is forgotten.

#### First District (St. Inigoes)

Linwood J. Trossbach; hounds Kaiser, Lady, Mop, Rascal, Checkerboard, Peanuts; Mop (a dog hound) out of Lady: These two hounds had great influence on breeding in the County. Mr. Trossbach saw his first foxhunt in 1914 at the age of 8, and was so thrilled that he has been foxhunting ever since. A meticulous studier of hound studbooks and a follower of hound shows and field trials, he enjoys the reputation of being one of Saint Mary's great foxhunters.

Arthur Hammett  
Clarence Wise  
Dan Wilkerson  
Pembroke McKay (Master of the St. Jerome's Foxhunting Club)

Bernard Clark  
Angerburt Beal  
Hollis Pembroke

Second District (Valley Lee)

John Lynch  
Michael Aud  
Vernon Hewitt

Third District (Leonardtowntown)

Frank J. Coombs, Sr.; hounds Nellie, Plowden  
Joe Marion "Buck" Gough; hounds; Linwood, Skylight Jack Goldsborough  
Alfred Trossbach  
R. Bascom Broun  
Aubrey Bowles  
Aleck Loker  
"Booby" Wood  
Archie Wood  
Valley Greenwell

Foley Drury



Alfred Trossbach (Third District)  
with his championship fox hounds and  
their day's winnings at a field trial  
and bench show (1977)

Fourth District (Chaptico)

Henry Russell  
U. Lee Maguire  
Wallace Thomas  
Eugene Guazzo (Master of the Wicomico Hunt and the De La Brooke Foxhounds)  
hounds; Gunner, Ambre, Gizmo, Gadget; horse "Bourbon" (gelding)

Robert Anderson  
Brent Davis  
Wilson Thomas

Albert Anderson  
Harold Davis

Fifth District (Mechanicsville)

Zach Graves; hounds Bugler, Captain, Driver, Champion, Leader, Rex, Kate;  
horse "Winnie" (mare)  
Willard Graves; hounds Miss Blue plus hounds listed with Zach Graves (his father);  
horse "June" (mare), also rode mules  
Lawrence Walter "John L." Graves; hounds as with his brother, Willard  
Walter "Buggs" Graves; hound Little Joe  
Gwynn Williams; hounds Cobb, Coolidge, Red John, Rocket, Lady, Big John, Parker  
Alfred Morgan; hound Lena  
Will Morgan  
Edith Williams; rode to hounds, black mare  
Joseph Hill; horse "Mack" (gelding)  
Phillip Long



Willow Glen Gadget '77 by De La Brooke Gunner '73 x Willow Glen Ambre '75; a present-day Maryland "American" Foxhound, "A hound that carries as little superfluous weight as the thoroughbred horse, yet has sufficient bone on which to hang ample muscle" Willow Glen Kennels, Maddox, St. Mary's County, Md., 1978 (Unfortunately, this photo does not show her feet)



Lawrence W. "John L." Graves and Zach Graves (his father) with Bugler, Captain, Driver, Champion, Leader, and Rex after a successful hunt at "Keech's Rest" the Graves farm in the Fifth District. (early 1930's)



Marian Graves Blair and Doris Graves Moeller with two grey foxes that have "met" Grandpa Zach Graves' foxhounds (late 1930's)

Pelham Long; followed hounds with buggy  
Jack Burroughs; horse "Kate" (mare)

Mr. and Mrs. Burr' rode to hounds

Henry Fowler; (Master of the Wicomico Hunt and the De La Brooke Foxhounds)  
horse "Drifter" (gelding)

Glen Wood; (Master of the De La Brooke Foxhounds) horse "Chipper" (gelding)



Gwynn Williams' (Fifth District)  
great foxhounds Cobb and  
Coolidge, doing what hounds do  
best when not hunting (1930's)

Sixth District (Leonardtwn)



Charles H. Knott's (Sixth District) hound Major ... probably the only foxhound ever  
to be painted in oils and then put on display on Fifth Avenue. This picture was  
taken in the 1940's and given to Mr. Knott by the owner of Sotterly Plantation, who  
greatly admired the dog as well as Charles Knott's prowess as a huntsman and



Walter "Flug" Norris; hounds Clara, Dagnet, Dupont, Neats; Clara (a bitch) was a gift to Mr. Norris from Willie DuPont, Master of the Foxcatcher Hounds, Elkton, Maryland; Clara greatly influenced breeding in the County  
Charles H. Knott; hounds Slim, Major, Captain; Mr. Knott was for many years the manager of Sotterly Plantation and was responsible for the importation of many good hounds, some from the Virginia Hunt Country near Middleburg.

Richard "Sharpy" Knott; hounds Slim, Dell, and other hounds with his father Charles H; Miss Charlotte Knowland, of the Foxcroft School, Middleburg, Virginia, gave Dell (a bitch) to Richard when he was a boy. Dell did not prove to be a very good hunting hound, but because of her fine blood lines was bred to and produced great hounds that influenced breeding in this County.

Jack Dorsey  
Zavier Spalding; hounds Rex, Tricksey  
John Garner, Sr.; hound Girlboy  
Edward Garner; hound Muggins  
Louis Garner, Sr.; hounds Garner, Little Dig  
John Garner, Jr.

Wallace W. Bowles, hounds Sifter, Driver  
George Clark; hounds Ritchie, Captain (part bird-dog, but a great hound)

Upton Thompson  
William Bowles

Ernest Knott; hound Black Leader  
Chapman Thompson; hound Tobey  
Robert Garner  
Louis Garner  
Irvin Garner  
Ralph Abell; hound Watch  
Alvin Hayden; hounds Rush, Red Leader  
Clarence Evans  
Washington "Washy" Wilkerson  
Frank Knight

#### Seventh District (Milestown)

Edmund Plowden; Mr. Plowden had many hounds, and was both a foot hunter and also followed hounds on horseback. He had a custom of "farming-out" his hounds to various friends and acquaintances at the end of hunting season, and then collecting up all of them the following Fall when he would reassemble his pack. He would then go foxhunting in various parts of the County from Chaptico to Point Lookout, providing great sport to all who hunted with him. He also fox hunted "formally" and was a member of the St. Jerome's Foxhunting Club (First District).

#### Eighth District (Bay)

George Thompson  
Robert Thompson  
Matt Trimble

**Acknowledgments:** Thanks to the following who were of particular help not only by showing interest in this article, but also in helping to gather material and in other ways: Shelby Palmer Guazzo (my wife), Jean Palmer (my mother-in-law), Edwin Beitzell, Robert Pogue, Catherine Cawood, Linwood Trossbach, Adelaide Norris Trossbach, Flug Norris, Richard Knott, John L. and Anita Graves, Dotsy Barber, Alexander McKay Smith (ex M. F. H.), Charles E. Fenwick, Valentine C. Wilson (ex M. F. H.), Aleck Loker, Joe Marion Gough, Michael Humphries, Gwynn and May Williams, Bradley Dorf, Carl Kopel, John Murphy.

#### Footnotes

1. Wilstach, Paul, "Tidewater Maryland" Tudor Publishing Co., New York, 1931 p. 92
2. J. Blan van Urk; The Story of American Foxhunting, Vol. 1, 1940, p. 28 ff
3. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. 11, 1956, p. 925
4. Slater, Kitty; The Hunt Country of America, Barnes & Co., 1967, p. 17
5. Ristau, William; "The Sportsman Who Brought Fox Hunting to America" Sunday Sun Magazine, March 15, 1964 (as reprinted in The Chronicles of the Horse, Middleburg, Va., Sept. 8, 1972, p. 10)
6. Long, J. Horace, Sr. (b. 1910) of Maddox, St. Mary's County, Md. whose family has long been associated with owners of De La Brooke Manor, was kind enough to show me the original site (1976). It is located on land now owned by the R. E. A. (Southern Maryland Electrical Cooperative).

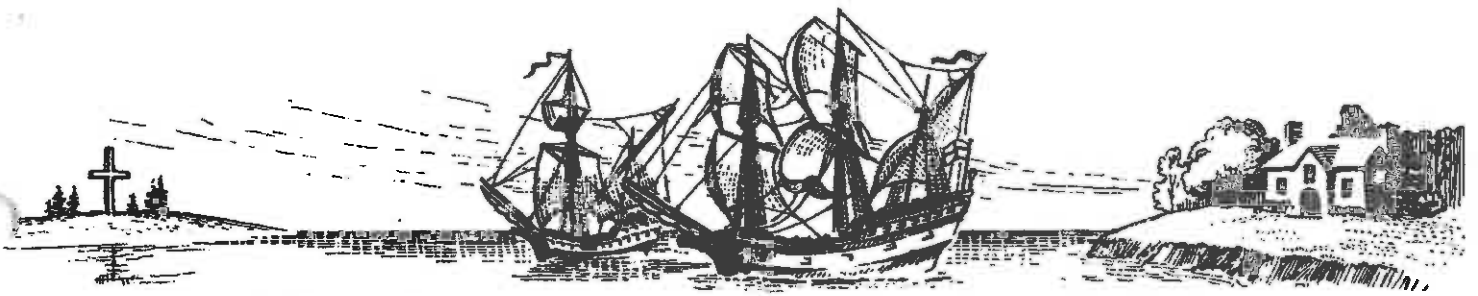
7. Thomas, Joseph B.; Hounds and Hunting Through the Ages, Garden City, N. Y. 1937, p. 55
8. Newman, H. W.; The Maryland Dents, Dietz Press, Richmond, Va., 1963, p. 37 f
9. The Walker Hound, A Pack of Foxhounds Is A Wondrous Thing, Garrard County (Kentucky) News, 1973 (as placed in the Congressional Record by the Hon. Tim Lee Carter, June 14, 1973)
10. Trossbach, Linwood J. (b. 1906), an eminent fox hunter of Scotland, St. Mary's County, Md., clearly remembers his father telling him, "There were always red foxes." Presumably, Linwood's father had been taught the same by his father before him, and so on.
11. Pursley, Duane; Chief, Wildlife Mgt. Services, Dept. Natural Resources, Annapolis, Md., Oct. 28, 1979 (Personal communication)
12. op. cit. J. Blan van Urk, p. 28
13. Pogue, Robert E. T., Yesterday in Old St. Mary's County, Robt. E. T. Pogue Publ., Bushwood, Md. 1973, p. 10 f
14. op. cit., Ristau, William
15. op. cit., Pursley, Duane (Caught by professional trappers, and reported to the Dept. of Natural Resources)
16. Uglow, Norman; Norman' Fur Co., Ridge, Saint Mary's County, Md., Oct. 1979 (Personal communication)
17. Graves, Walter Z.; Huntersville, St. Mary's County, Md., 1972
18. op. cit. Thomas, Joseph B., p. 49
19. Gough, Lettie Marshall Dent and Dent, Fannie Jo; "Burlington Farm" Avenue, St. Mary's County, Md. (1970)
20. Unabashedly, I admit, I came to foxhunting via the horse.
21. Baily's Hunting Directory 1978-79, J. A. Allen and Co., Ltd., London 1978 (It should be noted that this directory does not list all of the organized "formal" foxhunting clubs of America, but only those affiliated with the Masters of Foxhounds Association of Boston, Mass.)
22. It is with profound apologies to anyone reading this, if I have left you, your hound or your horse out. As a fellow foxhunter, I trust and hope we'll all be together when they blow that final "Gone Away" ... and will then, God willing, make my apology personal.

#### EDITOR'S NOTES

Although it is well established that Robert Brooke brought over a pack of foxhounds to the Maryland colony in 1650, the words fox, foxhound, hunting, etc., are not found in the index of the early volumes of the Archives of Maryland. However, foxes are listed among the animals mentioned in the 1635 Relation of Maryland and fox hunting has been a favorite sport in St. Mary's County for over 300 years. The favored sports of the early colonists receive scant mention in the official records of the province other than a bare mention of bowling at ten pins, the throwing of dice, a fondness for "burnt" brandy and George Talbot's falcons (Wilstach, Tidewater Maryland, p. 83). But we can be sure that our English forefathers brought with them all the favorite pasttimes of "Merrie old England".

It has been much desired to include the story of fox hunting in the Chronicles of St. Mary's, but it was not until our 28th year of publication that it came to pass. We are much indebted to Dr. Eugene Guazzo and Joe Marion Gough for their permission to reprint the foregoing excellent and well documented account of fox hunting in St. Mary's County.

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**Foxhunting at Belvidere Farm**

by John W. Hoxie, Enterprise Managing Editor

(Reprinted from the Enterprise of March 12, 1980, by special permission)



George Imirie, followed by Robert Hoyer, leads the pack of foxhounds as the De La Brooke Foxhounds W begins a foxhunt at Belvidere, the farm owned by Oliver and Betty Guyther in Medley's Neck. In the rear are Charlotte Pope and Hoyer's son Stewart.

Were it not for the pickup trucks and horse trailers, the scene might have been the same 200 years ago.

breeches, hats and black boots groomed their mounts as the early morning sun promised a chilly but pleasurable fox hunt across farmlands bordering the Potomac River in Medley's Neck south of Leonardtown. Down the road from the barns, two dozen foxhounds peeked through round holes in a barn-shaped kennel on the back of a truck and, as fox hunters say, "spoke" in eager anticipation of the chase.

It was the time of preparation for another foxhunt at Belvidere, the farm owned by Oliver and Betty Guyther. On hand for the hunt were members of De La Brooke Foxhounds W, the only Maryland hunt club south of Upper Marlboro.

"We're not out to kill the fox," Betty Guyther explained. She said she could recall only two times the De La Brooke hounds actually ran down a fox and killed it.

"We're just out for the chase," said Robert M. Hoyer, one of the two joint masters of the foxhounds and huntsman for the club. The hounds, he said normally "put the fox up a tree" or they "put him to earth", meaning they drive him into his hole.

A good chase is what the foxhunters seek - a chance to test their horsemanship and skill with the hounds as the fox leads them on an unpredictable ride through woods and fields and across streams and fences.

This is a thrill no other equestrian event offers, but it demands much from each rider, especially from those who lead the hunt. The safety of the hounds, horses and riders is their responsibility and they take it very seriously.

There are specific tasks for the more experienced and active members who make up the staff. The other members of the hunts comprise what is known as the field.

Hoyer, as huntsman, accompanied by staffers known as "whips," moves ahead of the field with the hounds as they try to catch the scent of the fox.



Whipping in the hounds to assemble them for the start of the hunt are, from left, Stewart Hoyer, George Imirie, Charlotte Pope and Robert Hoyer.

Harry E. Taylor Jr., the other joint master, serves as field master, staying with the field and tending to the safety of horses and riders.

On a formal hunt, the most experienced riders, including the masters, wear "colors" - scarlet coats, white or canary vests, white breeches and black boots with tan tops, if they are men, or black coats with royal blue collars and gold piping, canary vests, buff, canary or rust colored breeches and black boots with patent leather tops, if they are women. All who have earned colors wear brass buttons on their coats and vests.

The rest of the field wear black or oxford gray melton coats with black collars and buttons, canary vests, buff, canary or rust colored breeches and black boots without tops.

"We are very strict about attire and grooming (of the horses)," Hoyer said. Largely this is tradition, he said, but also it is a courtesy to those on whose land the club hunts to provide an impressive scene.

"If you're going to have standards, you ought to maintain them," he said.

He also pointed out the functional attributes of the hunt attire. "The coats are warm. The stock (scarf) can be used as a splint. The boots offer protection. ... It's functional, but there's a lot of tradition behind it."

Traditions among those who "ride to the hounds" go back over 300 years and across the Atlantic to England. They are maintained in all of the 128 recognized foxhunting clubs of the United States.

A well-attired hunt field giving chase is a scene that has inspired many an artist. At Belvidere the mounted field in red and black coats, the hounds and the well-groomed horses and ponies recalled their prints and paintings.

Traditions were well maintained by the De La Brooke W.

Before bringing the hounds from their truck-barn, Hoyer greeted the field, making introductions and admonishing the members on punctuality. Then he discussed where he would "cast the hounds" in the hopes that they might catch a scent. Acting whips that day were George Imirie and Charlotte Pope.

After the hounds were released, Hoyer, the whips and young Stewart Hoyer "whipped them in" and led them down a road toward the Potomac, followed by the other riders.

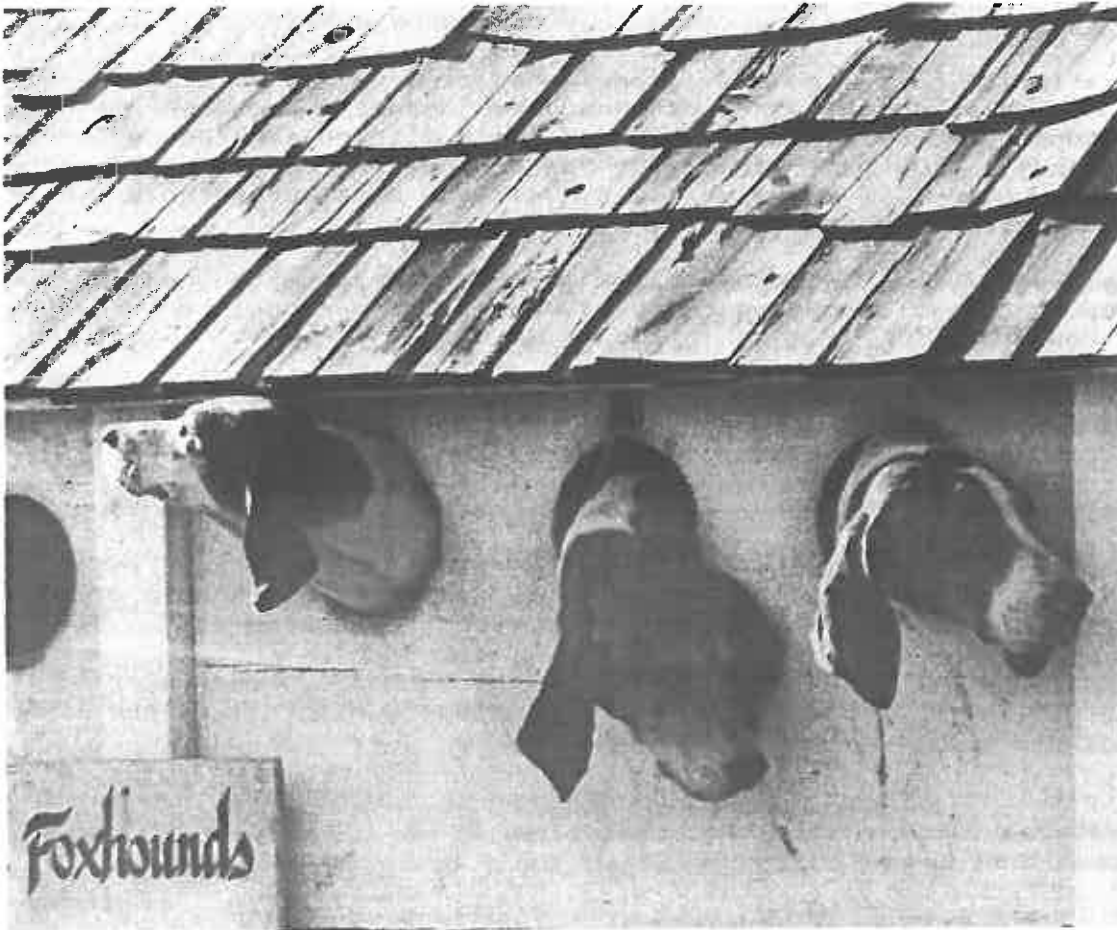
The departure was orderly, but just as the last rider had left the barn area, the hounds doubled back, hot on the scent of a dog that had been left behind near the barns.

It was one of those unpredictable events that frustrate the staff but heighten the excitement of a hunt meeting.

The first on the heels of the hounds was Taylor who galloped between the cars, trucks and horse trailers to drive the hounds back to the road where they started out. The whips finally recast the hounds, the stray dog was put in a horse stall, and the hunt began again.

The field was divided into a fast and slow group. When the hounds caught a scent, the fast field was to follow with the staff while the slow field held back, moving more slowly and not taking the jumps. In the slow field were young children accompanied by experienced adults, riders on "green" (inexperienced) horses and "green" riders.

Near the field also was another group, not on horseback, who followed the meet in cars and trucks. They are known as hilltoppers.



Prior to the foxhunt, foxhounds peek from the windows on their truck-mounted farm.

Usually, the hounds catch the scent of a fox, Hoyer said, but on the Belvidere hunt the scent they caught was different. As Hoyer and the whips worked the hounds in the "cover" (woods), they picked up the scent of a deer and chased after it.

The entire field moved quickly across the Guyther property and across the road to the edge of property owned by someone who has not given permission for hunting.

The field stopped there. The club does not hunt where it has no permission. "We're very strict about that," Betty Guyther said. "Only by accident would we go on other property."

Some of the staff carefully went along the edge of the field in search of the hounds as Hoyer called them with his horn. Hilltoppers also were dispatched to look for the hounds along the roads, but few were found. The hunt now became a search for the hounds which took the riders over much property without success. Finally the masters gave up and returned. The few hounds with them were "trucked up" and the members of the staff and field retired to the Guyther home for the traditional hunt breakfast, a hearty meal prepared by the breakfast committee.

Most of the hounds had returned to the truck before the guests left, but it was two or three days before all were assembled and returned to their kennel in Mt. Victoria where they are cared for by the club's professional kennelmaid Judy Goldsmith.

She lives near the kennel which is on a 15-acre lot owned by the club. ...

It had not been a typical hunt.

Usually, Hoyer said, the hounds do "get up a fox", providing a good chase for the members. Sometimes, there is more than one chase before the masters decide to retire.

The hounds are bred to seek the scent of foxes and they are trained to work together in a pack by members of the staff.

Starting two weeks after the close of the Nov. 1 - March 15 hunt season, members of the staff and other club members walk with the hounds, teaching them to respond to their names and commands. In September, cubbing season begins and the hounds are taken out by the staff on horseback. These walking and cubbing sessions are held at least twice a week.

Other off-season activities for hunt club members include trail rides, horse shows, point-to-point races and a hound show.

During the hunt season, hunts are scheduled twice a week at locations in St. Mary's and Charles County. This year the club met at Belvidere, Mr. and Mrs. Holger Jansson's Mulberry Fields and Mr. and Mrs. Robert Cammack's Hampton, all in Medley's Neck; Norton Dodge's Cremona and Louise Parlett's Patuxent View Farm, both in Mechanicsville, and Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Ellis' Bushwood Manor in Bushwood, as well as farms in the Mt. Victoria area of Charles County.

Members of the club include those who ride and social members who support the club, host meets and enjoy conviviality with the members. Most are from St. Mary's, Charles and Anne Arundel counties, but some are from as far away as Northern Neck, Va. and Montgomery County.

Foxhunting tends to be a family sport involving most or all family members.



Robert E. Cammack and his son Joseph ride together in the slow field. Here they are returning from the hunt.

All members of the John McFadden family of Medley's Neck hunt together, for example. Their involvement began when Kathy McFadden hilltopped several hunts after moving to the county about nine years ago. She had always enjoyed horses and by Thanksgiving of their first year in St. Mary's County, she had five horses on her farm.

"John had never been on a horse 'till he met me," she recalls. But he soon learned to ride as did their two young children who first mounted equines at the ages of two and four.

The McFaddens were social members of the club for a couple of years before starting to ride on the meets. Now all ride together.

Betty Guyther's father was a foxhunter who taught her to ride but she had not joined a hunt club until after she was married. Former state senator Henry Fowler asked her to join the club when it was first started in 1962 and she has been an active member ever since.

Three of her five children also rode with the club but her husband was not interested.

Mrs. Guyther now is chairman of the membership committee.

Both she and Mrs. McFadden feel children should be experienced riders before they join the hunt field.

"Someone who is a very new, beginning rider should not hunt," Betty Guyther said. "Nor should a timid rider" Kathy McFadden added.

Both agreed that a child who is an experienced rider should be able to join at least the slow field when he or she is about nine or 10 years old.

Inexperienced adults also can make it - with practice. Harry Taylor, for example, discovered fox hunting while driving his daughter to and from meets. When she grew up, he decided to try it.

Now he is a master of the foxhounds.

## CLUB HISTORY

### Three Names Since '37

Although the traditions followed by members of the De La Brooke Foxhounds W go back three centuries, the club started in the 1930s with what Dr. Eugene Guazzo, former master of the foxhounds, calls "a group of convivial friends having a mutual interest and the resources for making riding to the hounds possible.... lots of land."

In his historical notes on the club, he recalls that land was in southwestern Charles County.

By the late 30s, he says, the meets became more organized. "If we are to choose a 'founding year,' he suggests, "it would be 1937." The club then was known as the Charles County Hunt.

Things went well for the club until the outbreak of World War II. According to Baily's Hunting directory, Vol. 64, 1970-71, the club disbanded for the war and was not really put back together until 1962 when it reorganized as The Wicomico Hunt. (Bailey's reorganization date was in error, Guazzo says, and should be 1963).

"The Wicomico Hunt finds its origins in the former Charles County Hunt which



was organized in 1937 and was disrupted by World War II, the last hunt being on December 7, 1941, when after a particularly successful day's hunting with a long run and a kill close to kennels, the field returned to find the United States at war," the directory account says.

"Re-establishment after the war as part of the organization of a 'country club' was not viewed as satisfactory arrangement by the hunting members and the group formed a separate organization and incorporated it under the laws of Maryland as The Wicomico Hunt, Mt. Victoria, Maryland. This was in 1962." (sic)

The name "Wicomico" was chosen, Guazzo says, "because there were many members who were from St. Mary's County and it was felt that 'Charles County Hunt' was not representative, so the name of the juxtaposed Wicomico River (part of the boundary between Charles and St. Mary's counties) was proposed and accepted."

But this name did not stick either.

On the Eastern Shore there had been another hunt club by the same name that was founded in 1929. Even though this club disbanded in 1935, its name was duly registered and recognized by the Masters of Foxhounds Association and its hounds were entered in the association's Foxhound Kennel Studbook. Studbook entries for "Wicomico" were denied any future use except for hounds from the Eastern Shore club of that name.

It was not until the local Wicomico club members requested entry of their hounds into the studbook that they learned of the earlier club. So that the club's hounds could be registered, the club decided to change its name. Seven new names were proposed and of them, De La Brooke was chosen and the W was retained as a reminder of the club's past, Guazzo says.

Reasons for selection of the name are cited in one of the letters of proposal to the club's board of directors:

"In selecting a name we must keep in mind that we are asking for hunt country including Charles, Calvert and St. Mary's counties. We should also keep in mind that fox hunting in the New World began and was first done right here where we hunt. Thus, our name should have recognizable historic significance.

"In the history of riding to hounds in colonial America, the name of Robert Brooke, commander of Charles County and president of the Provincial Council, has a permanent place. He came here from Whitechurch, Hampshire, England in 1650 bringing his entire household including servants, furnishings and his private pack of foxhounds.

"From this pack of hounds, known for two and one half centuries in America as the Brooke Hound, came the foundation stock for practically all established breeds of American hunting hounds: Walkers, Triggs, Julys, Maupins, Birdsongs, etc. These can be traced back to this first pack of hounds here in Southern Maryland over 300 years ago.

"Robert Brooke is recognized as America's first M. F. A. (master of the foxhounds). He settled on the west bank of the Patuxent River, landing there on June 3, 1650 at a place he named 'De La Brooke.' Thus it is known to this day. It is the same place over which we follow our hounds every year."

The name was changed to De La Brooke Foxhounds W on Oct. 2, 1972.

Registration of the club with the Masters of Foxhounds Association followed on Jan. 25, 1973.

"Two years later in 1975," Guazzo's account concludes, "De La Brooke sought final approval for full recognition by the Masters Association and, on January 29,

1976, after final examination, inspection and review, was granted full recognition status ... thus joining 128 American hunts and 560 other hunts of the world in an international bond of friendship, sportsmanship, cooperation and fellowship in the abidance and furtherance of our grand sport."

The club is run by a board of directors elected by the membership.

For the 1979-80 hunt season, the officers are Col. Thomas C. Blake Jr., president; William R. Eisaesser, vice president; Hames H. Steel, secretary, and Howard A. Lancaster, treasurer.

The board selects the masters of the foxhounds who this season are Robert M. Hoyer and Harry Taylor. Former masters include Henry J. Fowler, Dr. Guazzo, Charles Duvall Smith, Bennett Grain and William D. Zantzinger.

EDITOR'S NOTES

As mentioned in the Notes to the May issue of the Chronicles of St. Mary's, we have waited for 28 years for an article on fox hunting in St. Mary's County. Now we have hit the jackpot with a second article on the sport done by John W. Hoxie, Managing Editor of the Enterprise. We are indeed delighted to reprint Mr. Hoxie's account and thank him for an excellent piece of work.

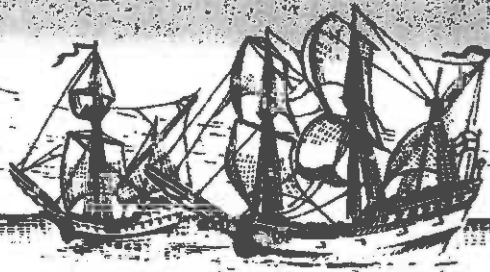
Undoubtedly, equal space should be given to the Hunters of deer, rabbit, quail and raccoon. Nor should the Sport-Fisherman be neglected. In the case of the latter, likely some tall stories can be told - one that happens to be true is the memorable day, December 3, 1973 when Capt. Hatch Dent, with Bennie Dent, John Linton and the writer boated 600 pounds of rock fish, in the good ship "Hush Puppy", in the lower Potomac.

\* \* \* \* \*

A List of Alienations and Transfers in St. Mary's County from the Sixth day of June 1786 to the Seventh day of March 1829.  
(Continued from May 1980, Volume 28, No. 5)  
(Compiled by Charles E. Fenwick, Sr.)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Folio</u>
McWilliams, John	To Henry Allstan Church Swamp - 150 a. Taken from James Mareman to satisfy a debt due Rich <sup>d</sup> Llewelin.	Mar. 5, 1810	148
McWilliams, John late Sheriff	Deed to Stephen Milburn P <sup>t</sup> Fosberry Plains - 155 a.	July 9, 1811	167
McWilliams, John former Sheriff	Deed to Joseph Gough All the right of W <sup>m</sup> Bennet of in and to his lifes estate to a tract of land called Piles Woodland - 200 a.	Jan. 19, 1813	175
McWilliams, John F. Shff.	Deed to Joseph Sanner All the right &c. of Ign. Poole & Susanna Poole to one half of a Mill & Mill Seat	Sept. 21, 1813	180
McWilliams, John	Bill of sale to Timothy Harrington One Negro man Tom 53 yrs.	Aug. 31, 1813	184
McWilliams, Jn <sup>o</sup>	Deed to W <sup>m</sup> Bruice Trumans Lot Little Worth together - 190 a.	May 10, 1815	190

(To Be Continued)



# Chronicles of St. Mary's

Quarterly Magazine of the St. Mary's County Historical Society

VOL. 52 53

Winter 2005

NO. 4



# Christmas in the Country in the 1930s and 1940s

By Louise Cusic Bennett

I was born and raised in Hollywood, Maryland on a farm where grew, it was said by some, the prettiest tobacco in St. Mary's County. The house in which I began my life was ancient. Standing amidst rose bushes, cattle grazing in a meadow nearby, the house's design was reminiscent of Maryland's colonial homes. It was an ordered and cozy place. Everyday my mother would polish the chimneys of the oil lamps until they glistened. She would gather lavender which grew in abundance on the farm to sweeten the household linen. And she would prepare meals which earned her a reputation as a good cook. In was in this house, on this farm, that I spent many happy Christmases.

We enjoyed Christmas Eve most of all. On this day my brother would go out into the forest to chop down a tree, a cedar, and we would put it up and decorate it that evening. I can remember the corner in which we put it; it was to one side of the fireplace in our sitting room. We had no lights, just ornaments and tinsel, but to us the tree just looked so beautiful it's top brushing the ceiling. And the fragrance of fresh-cut cedar was wonderful. The icicles were usually placed on the tree by the children of the family. Most presents were not wrapped. After the children went to bed, mother would play the

role of Santa Claus arranging each child's gifts on a separate chair placed about the sitting room. Christmas treats such as oranges, tangerines, apples, nuts, hard candy plus small toys were placed in two stockings pinned together and draped over the back of each child's gift-laden chair.

Midnight Mass was also a big part of that day. After mass we would return home to have stuffed ham and biscuits or other Christmas delicacies.

On Christmas Day we children played with our toys. At 1:00 in the afternoon, we had our Christmas dinner with just our immediate family present. As evening came on we enjoyed our Christmas in the glow of oil lamps.

This quiet Christmas Day was followed by a week of visiting and entertaining guests. My mother baked 15 to 20 cakes in preparation for the holiday, so there would be plenty to offer those who came calling.

When World War II began, Christmas took on a bitter sweetness, as we worried about those who would be fighting across the sea before very long. Still, even then, Christmas was a time of great joy in St. Mary's. Those who lived those times, who remember those times, are truly blessed.

## Box Hunting in St. Mary's County

By Joyce Bennett

If you listened closely a few years back while some old time folks talked, you might have heard about a man named Gray Fox Hayden, St. Mary's County's unofficial fox hunt chieftain acclaimed for his knowledge of dogs, horses, foxes and of the habits of these and of his fellow hunters.

Gray Fox, when it was time for the hunters to give up the chase, would chant out:

*Come on boys and lets go home  
And leave poor fox alone.  
'Cause we've run him in the morning,  
(Response chanted by hunters: "God knows!")  
We've run him in the evening,  
(And all: "God knows!")  
So come on boys and let's go home,  
And leave poor fox alone."*



There were other verses and responses, plaintive, old timey, made up for the occasion, like Gregorian Chant in simplicity and ease of singing harmony. But they are forgotten, lost.

In the late 1890s and early 1900s, hunts traversed great distances. One old gentleman recalled that hunts went so far afield that the hunting dogs sometimes took a week getting back home. He

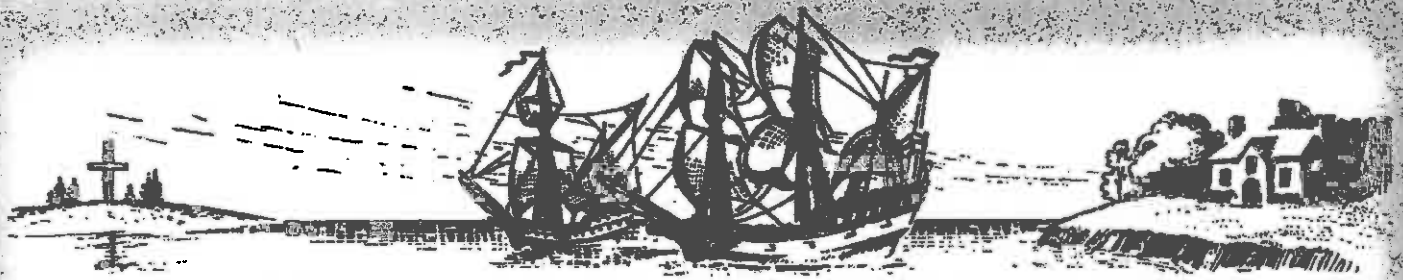
only when the old red fox had led them into Charles County. Red foxes were reputed to be faster and more cunning than gray foxes. The same old gentleman was overheard to say that he saw a hound pursue a red fox into a hole: The fox bit the hound through the lip, the latter backing out of the hole pulling with his bitten lip the fox along. The hound was forever held in high esteem for his valor, receiving the outside cut and close proximity to the fireside in his later years.

### More on Hunting in St. Mary's

Another interesting personality from Old St. Mary's was Irvey—there is no consensus on his surname—a man of African descent, who was heard to say in the 1920s (according to oral tradition):

*"Fine winter morning, N---- looking good,  
Ax on his shoulder, Heading for the wood."*

Irvey knocked rabbits on the head with a hard pine club tipped with a knot: Extraordinarily patient, he would sneak up on them by slow degrees. He could throw his knobbed stick with deadly result on small game. And, eerily, he could call other people's dogs away from their owners at will. Though hunched and crippled, Irvey was



# Chronicles of St. Mary's

Quarterly Magazine of the St. Mary's County Historical Society

VOL. 55 54

Summer 2006

NO. 2

## Fox Hunting's Early Maryland Beginnings



*An unknown artist rendition an a 17th century fox hunt*

# A History

By Tenley Martin

**F**ox Hunting, as is known to us here in the "New World" stems almost entirely from the tradition that we associate with Great Britain and Ireland. It is unclear as to exactly when the tradition of hunting for sport with the aid of hounds began; however based on various obscure written records of the culture that have been unearthed, hunting has always been held in high regard throughout the entirety of British history. The earliest currently known mention occurring in a document by Strabo in the First Century A.D., who makes a note of the superiority of British hunting hounds in one of his many writings (Thomas 1928). Later, in the Ninth Century, there is a brief mention of hunting, as being an essential part of the training of nobility. Five hundred years later, circa 1360, mounted hunting is first mentioned in a lengthy English romance epic poem of unknown author called "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight" (Thomas 1928). Even though obviously these written documents provide only mere mentions of the sport and nothing conclusive about how it was organized or about any of the rituals, the fact that it was mentioned in known writings indicates that hunting with hounds has persisted in making up a significant part of British culture for quite some time. Throughout the history of Great Britain, as well as that of America, the position of women has been primarily, one of a submissive presence, most of the time not possessing options equivalent to those of men. However, in the realm of hunting, history has demonstrated, in many cases, a semblance of equality, aided perhaps by the fact that there are records of many women being fond of the sport. Most notably, Queen Elizabeth I was notorious for having enjoyed not only hawking but the mounted fox hunt as well, which she participated in well into her later years. A certain Lady Salisbury, in the Eighteenth Century, was actually the Master of Foxhounds for the Hertfordshire Hounds until the ripe age of 78. Unfortunately, in the early Nineteenth Century, it became unfashionable for women to fox hunt. Thankfully, this hiatus lasted only a short while and hunting for women became again socially acceptable by the Mid-Nineteenth Century (Thomas 1928); thus re-establishing, to some extent, an equal footing between men and women for the good of enjoying the sport of fox hunting.

Like British Fox Hunting, the sport has existed in the "New World," since the outset of the American culture as we know it. Another similarity between the two hunting traditions is that the first mention of "New World" hound hunting appearing not in detailed specific historical writings but as a mere

side-notes in documents intended for ulterior purposes. The first mention of our beloved cultural phenomenon in the New World comes not from British descent, but Spanish, contained in an excerpt from the diary of one of DeSoto's retainers, dated 1539. The entry cites simply that DeSoto's voyage had included the importation of hunting hounds and horses- the hounds for game, the horses for hunting Native Americans, admittedly unorthodox (Thomas 1928). Although the value of these small references in random writings cannot be denied, the first record of real value regarding hound importation was of certain Seventeenth century voyage to none other than the Great State of Maryland, thus thwarting the common claim and misconception that fox hunting started in Virginia (Thomas 1928). Enter the hero, and perhaps we might refer to him as the Father of American Fox Hunting. Robert Brooke, born in London in 1602, was the son of a Member of the British Parliament and a member of an affluent and well-respected family (Thomas 1928). Robert, himself, grew up to be a member of the Privy Council, and to flash forward a bit in our story, eventually became the Commander of Charles County, and President of the Provincial Council. But back in England, he resided at a lovely manor in Whitechurch, Hampshire, England. However, a fortuitous event, both for him and the future of fox hunting, was awaiting him, on September 20, 1649, when Brooke was offered 8000 acres of "farm land", by a certain Lord Baltimore as an incentive for him to pick up and relocate to assist in the colonization of the province of Maryland- now the property of the family Calvert (a.k.a. the Lords Baltimore) (Guazzo 1980). The Calvert's requested Brooke because he was from a well-to-do family and they were looking for people of means to start farming the land and leading the colonists. True to his agreement, Brooke, in early 1650, departed for the Crown Colony of Maryland aboard his own, personal sailing vessel, with his wife, 10 children, and 28 men and women workers. Being of an affluent family and naturally a fan of sport, Brooke could of course not leave England without his entire pack of hunting hounds (Thomas 1928). Finally, on June 30, 1650, Robert Brooke arrived at his new home, about 20 miles from the mouth of the Patuxent River, his pack of hounds (and children) still in tow, marking the arrival of the first pack of fox hounds onto North American soil (Thomas 1928). Brooke settled himself and his family on a plot of land located on the west bank of the Patuxent River, appropriately christened De La Brooke Manor, in none other than what would become St. Mary's County (Guazzo 1980). De La Brooke, in St. Mary's County, thus became the birthplace of fox hunting for sport in

the "New World," and Brooke the first Master of Foxhounds (Thomas 1928).

Brooke built his manor home, as the story goes, on a bluff that overlooked the river between 1650 and 1660. The extensive farm extended from a place now called T.B., MD all the way down to Horse's Landing. T.B., definitely a funny name for a town, actually stands for Thomas Brooke, most likely named after our hero's father. A house of that name still exists to this day, and while it is in fact on the same plot of land (although now 20 acres, versus the original 8,000), it is not the original house. The current De La Brooke Manor was built around 1820 or 1830. Although most, if not all historical publications regarding this subject, will inform you that the location of the original Brooke house is not known, I have been told by Dr. Eugene Guazzo, whose significance will be noted later on in this document, that while unbeknownst to the authors of history books, local residents do know where it is. Upon mentioning the dilemma of the location of the Brooke house to one of his patients, Dr. Guazzo learned that this particular man, of the last name of Long, had in fact grown up in the old Brooke house. The Longs had worked the De La Brooke farm and had been associated with the owning family for many years. Mr. Long and Dr. Guazzo jumped in an old pick up and drove out on De La Brooke Road, down the road to the river by Copsey's Crab house, and upon reaching the bottom of the road stopped and got out. Mr. Long walked to the right of the relatively new De La Brooke Manor, up to the bluff overlooking both the new manor house and the Patuxent River and stated that upon that site had been the original De La Brooke Manor. Most traces of the old house had been eradicated, and the well had been filled in to prevent the inevitable fall of an unsuspecting person, but the ground is speckled with Seventeenth Century glazed bricks that mark the ghostly traces of the beginning of a legend and the continuance of an age-old tradition.

Perhaps Robert Brooke's most lasting legacy is not himself, but his hounds. The now practically mythical family of the Brooke Hound that began with the 1650 importation has since become the basis for many of the most prominent breeds of hounds in America (Thomas 1928). The hounds that have evolved from this single pack are notorious, not so much for their speed as extreme speed is not practical in the densely-wooded country of Maryland and Pennsylvania, but for their superior noses, exquisite voices, and incredible packing abilities. (Thomas 1928).

The system of hunt organization in the New World was a direct result of the British wanting to meticulously continue the time-honored traditions of the hunt field, passing them on through the generations. (Thomas 1928). However, one difference in Colonial America, unlike in Britain, was that fox hunting

was no longer reserved for the upper classes; hunts, breakfasts, and hospitality in general occurred in even the most modest of homes. (Guazzo 1980). Additionally, even though the Brooke was the most well-known and probably the largest importation of hounds at the time, most settlers had at least one hound. In fact, Lord Baltimore had specifically instructed that those relocating to the Crown Colony of Maryland bring at least one "dog" per family. Logically, most of those moving to an untamed wilderness would have brought a hunting dog, in all probability, the English Hound. (Guazzo 1980). There were two types of foxes that are now prevalent in Maryland, the Red Fox and the Gray Fox. However, there is much skepticism as to whether the Red is, in fact, native to the East Coast. During colonial times, the only type of fox known to the settlers were Grays, which flourished from Maine to Florida. Red Fox was most likely imported from England; in fact there are several documented records to this effect. In 1730, sixteen Red Foxes were imported by a Mr. Smith to the Eastern Shore of Maryland. A gala ball was held in Chestertown in the foxes' honor, to which gentry from Maryland and Virginia were invited. Match races between the two groups were held, followed by the release of the foxes. (Slater 1967).

Although similar in principle, fox hunting in America and Great Britain could be quite different in practice due to the new challenges that the colonial terrain presented. Often, fox hunting was done on foot because the dense forests and sporadic wetlands created endless impossibilities for the horse-bound hunter (Guazzo 178). The isolation of colonial farms and the collective hardships also lead to the almost instantaneous breakdown of class-bound social structure. Fox hunting provided a social outlet for convening with old friends and meeting new ones, it allowed the host to show off their hospitality, and discuss the triumphs and hardships of farming (Guazzo 1980). Fox hunts also provided an opportunity for women in the colonial days to show off their cooking and hosting abilities, and open their homes in hospitality to old friends and, oftentimes, complete strangers. This activity allowed a social opportunity that would come few and far between given the distances apart farms were and the intense work involved in merely surviving the untamed colony of Maryland.

From Southern Maryland, fox hunting spread like wild fire to the surrounding colonies of Pennsylvania and Virginia. The first mention of hounds in Virginia coming with yet another brief mention on the historical record in a 1691 report of a Dr. Philip Alexander Bruce, entitled Social Life of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century. This account noted that Michael Dixon was called before a magistrate for a complaint that his pack of "dogs" had a tendency to attack passersby. Michael pleaded innocent maintaining that they were necessary to protect the

colonists from wolves, foxes, and other varmints (Thomas 1928). Finally, in 1766, the first officially organized hunt was recognized in Philadelphia; Gloucester Hunt Club composed of 27 men of the city's finest families (Thomas 1928).

With the business of the origin of New World hunting taken care of, we leap 350 years, give or take a few, from Robert Brooke's arrival on this land, ironically enough to roughly the same location to the formation and growth of another hunt club; though perhaps not as well-known as Brooke's hounds, equally important to those that belong to its ranks. De La Brooke Foxhounds W, began its recent history most likely around 1939 as the Charles County Hunt and was perhaps associated with the Hawthorne Club. Its last recorded hunt under that name occurred on December 7, 1942. It appears that after the final hunt, that somehow coincided with the one-year anniversary of that Day which Will Live in Infamy, the Charles County/Hawthorne Hunt, like so many other social activities, fell victim to the desperate demands of World War II and ceased to operate. After the War ended and life returned to its pleasant normality, in 1961 the Charles County Hunt was reorganized by a Mr. Bennett Crain, renowned for masterminding the construction of Route 301 (Old Crain Highway) which runs from New York to Florida. However, this time the club included members from St. Mary's County who did not like the idea of assuming the identity of their neighboring county.

A compromise, the members chose to name the club after the river that draws a line between the two counties- now the Wicomico Hunt Club. The Club moved its headquarters and its seven hounds from the Hawthorne Club to the kennels of Mount Victoria, a manor owned by Crain just south of the Harry W. Nice Bridge.

In 1971, a medical doctor by the name of Eugene Guazzo became the Master of the Wicomico Hunt Club, at that time barely more than a loose social confederation that met to hunt under vague traditions with hounds of unknown breeding. In the next two years, a major undertaking was assumed to bring the hunt back to its origins and traditions. In 1973, the Wicomico Hunt decided to register under the Master of Fox Hounds Association- a national hunt/hound stud book registry. However, upon officially submitting the application to the national organization, the club was informed that there was, unbeknownst to anyone from Wicomico, an already registered hunt club on the Eastern Shore of Maryland by that same name. When stud books are involved, repetitive names are not appreciated lest there be confusion with bloodlines further

down the line. Essentially, the MFHA informed the Wicomico of the West that, since the Eastern Shore hunt had claimed the name "Wicomico" back in 1920, if the southern Maryland hunt wanted to enter the stud book they would need to change their

image, convincing a tradition-oriented social organization to change its name would be unheard of and created quite the uproar. Some members were offended beyond repair and essentially responded "To Hell with it" and were content with their current state. Other members really were devoted to nationalization because they wanted to become involved with hunt races, hound shows, and such. Finally, it was decided, under recommendation by Dr. Guazzo and agreed upon by the members, to rechristen the club as De La Brooke Foxhounds W: De La Brooke in honor of Robert Brooke who was ultimately responsible for the advent of the sport in the New World, and W in recognition of the hunt's former name, Wicomico. Fox hunters are notoriously meticulous when it comes to revering their collective heritage. Needless to say, De La Brooke Foxhounds W was accepted into the MFHA, and assigned territory including Charles County, St. Mary's County, and the grand majority of Calvert County.

Dr. Guazzo remained Master until the 1975/76 hunt season when he gave up the reins to Glen Wood. Wood applied for full recognition under the MFHA- the final certification and approval of a hunt club. It required a "Keeper of the Hounds" to come down and ride with the club and assess them, to ensure that standards have been met. This event occurred on a frigid day in January when it was all of 10 degrees out, but nonetheless, that year De La Brooke became recognized under the Board of Directors of the MFHA, an honor that can only be undone by a major violation of the organization's standards. Currently De La Brooke has 75 families in its membership, with six on the waiting list to join. They have two professional staff members- the huntsman and a whip, as well as a volunteer Master of Foxhounds, Field Secretary, and four other whips. They usually attend three hound shows a year in the Pennsylvania/Maryland/Virginia area as well as hunt team competitions that consist of relay races over a course of 3'6" jumps. Over the years, De La Brooke Foxhounds W has existed in harmony with the time-honored traditions and has flourished amongst the memories of Maryland's rich fox hunting legacy.

I think perhaps the best explanation of the true nature of fox hunting and its participants was stated by a fellow named Joseph Thomas in his explanation of fox hunting entitled, Hounds and Hunting Through the Ages. Thomas describes hunting as "a primitive faith, a 'survival'" (Thomas 1928); using "primitive", not with a negative connotation, but as a description of the fox hunter's "faith" in a tradition that has spanned over centuries, a "survival" from a more structured, yet simpler time, a reflection of our culture's history. This philosophy is reflected by the participants of this sport, people who are only too happy to revert to the world of Robert Brooke and who take great pride in the traditions and history that define their unique