

Archives & Manuscript Collections
National Sporting Library
Middleburg, VA

**F. Ambrose Clark
Scrapbooks
1921, 1933**

Name: **Clark, F. Ambrose (1881-1964)** **MC 0031**

Materials: Scrapbooks

Dates: 1921 and 1933

Volume: 2.0 cubic feet (Document boxes 1-2)

Donation: Gift of Edmund S. Twining III, 1998

Usage: Unless otherwise stated by NSL staff, these records are open for research without restrictions.

Biographical Note

Frederick Ambrose "Brose" Clark was born into a very wealthy New York family in 1881. His grandfather, Edward Clark, was an attorney who had helped Isaac Singer to sell his new sewing machines in the 1850s; this partnership provided Clark with a sizeable fortune, one which allowed his grandson, F. Ambrose Clark, and his brothers to enjoy a life of leisure. Clark began his sporting career by riding to hounds and being an amateur jockey; he later would become more famous as a successful owner. He enjoyed great success in steeplechasing; his stables were victorious at the American Grand National, Belmont Park, and the National Hunt Cup. An avid foxhunter, Clark served as MFH of the Meadow Brook Hounds of Long Island in the 1920s, and rode to hounds at his various estates in New York, Aiken, South Carolina, and Melton Mowbray in England. Clark was a member of the Jockey Club since 1919 and twice president of the United States Racing Association. His estate at Broad Hollow was the home of the Meadow Brook Cup from 1926 to 1941. A serious fall from a horse in the mid-1950s ended his riding days, but did not dampen his love of the sport.

In 1902 Clark married Florence L. Stokes, a daughter of the president of the Manhattan Life Insurance Company. Miss Stokes was also a racing enthusiast, and she would often be at Clark's side at sporting events. However, she maintained her own racing stable, and often proved to be a strong rival to Clark. When the Irish Kellsboro Jack won the English Grand National in 1933 it was Mrs. Clark's victory and not her husband's, although he led Jack into the winner's

circle at her request. A year earlier, Clark had purchased Jack and had begun his training; however, everything appeared to be going wrong, so in order to break the streak of bad luck, Clark sold the horse to his wife for a pound. After Florence's death in 1950, Clark purchased several horses from the dispersal of her stable.

In 1952, Clark married Constance Davis Millar, an English widow; it was she who was by his side when F. Ambrose Clark died in his sleep on February 26, 1964 at the age of 83. Having no children from either marriage, Clark had devoted his time and affection to his nephews. The younger Clarks were avid polo players, participating in matches at Meadow Brook. The polo fields at Meadow Brook, frequently traversed by F. Ambrose Clark, had hosted international polo matches between the American Polo Association and the Hurlingham Polo Club of England. The Hurlingham Club, which today is one of the oldest polo clubs in England, had been established in 1873, and in 1886 had played its first international match against the Newport Polo Association of Newport, Rhode Island. Play was suspended during World War I, but the international match returned to England in 1921; Clark was one of the many fans in attendance. The American team, which won both games that year, featured the son of one of the original members of the 1886 Newport team.

Collection Description

The F. Ambrose Clark Scrapbooks consist of a photograph album and a scrapbook of newspaper and magazine clippings. The photograph album contains photographs of the international polo match between the Hurlingham Polo Club of Hurlingham, England and the American Polo Association in June 1921. The scrapbook chronicles the victory of Mrs. Clark's horse Kellsboro Jack at the 1933 British Grand National through articles in American and British newspapers and magazines from mostly March and April 1933.

Series and Subseries

- I. Photograph album, 1921** **1 album**
 Black and white photographs labeled with white ink on black paper. Features photographs of the teams (including individual photographs), the ponies, the matches, and the ceremonies surrounding the event (including the arrival of King George V and Queen Mary). A commemorative program is pasted on the front page.
- II. Scrapbook, 1933** **1 album**
 American and British newspaper and magazine articles regarding Kellsboro Jack and Mrs. F. Ambrose Clark, pasted into large green scrapbook. Articles cover the actual race as well as Kellsboro Jack's retirement shortly thereafter. The unusual transfer of Jack from husband to wife is featured prominently.

Container List
MC 0031

I. Photograph Album

<u>Box</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
1	Photograph album of US vs. England polo match	1921

II. Scrapbook

<u>Box</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
2	Scrapbook about English Grand National	1933

This collection was processed by Michele M. Tourney, July 2004.