

Archives & Manuscript Collections
National Sporting Library
Middleburg, VA

**Meadow Brook Hunt
Scrapbooks
1895-1906**

Name: **Meadow Brook Hunt (est. 1881)** **MC 0013**

Materials: Scrapbooks

Dates: 1895-1906 (bulk dates 1895-1902)

Volume: 0.5 cubic feet (1 document box)

Donation: Gift of Mrs. John J. MacDonald, 1972

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

Historical Note

The Meadow Brook Hunt was established in Long Island, New York, in 1881 by a group of hunting enthusiasts that included William Jay, August Belmont, Winthrop Rutherford, and William R. Travers. The pack had been established a year earlier at the instruction and expense of Belmont Purdy, who had commissioned J. Burke-Roche to purchase Irish harriers for drag hunting on the island. Beginning with Purdy, the hunt saw five Masters between 1881 and 1893, at which time Frank Griswold combined his Queen's County Hounds with those of Meadow Brook. Griswold served as MFH for three years; his successor was Ralph N. Ellis, who served from 1896 to 1902. During his tenure Ellis introduced the hounds to foxhunting; he also purchased his own pack of American hounds and started taking them out on alternate days. However, his successor, Foxhall Keene, returned to the use of English hounds with little success. Until the election of J. E. Davis in 1910, the Hunt languished under poor hunting conditions and flagging interest. However, under Davis the Hunt began to foxhunt in earnest. New American hounds from Virginia were introduced into the depleted packs, and Thomas Allison was tapped to serve as huntsman. Under the management of Allison, Davis, and his successor H. I. Nicholas, the Hunt once again began to flourish. Their work was continued by Harry T. Peters, Sr., elected MFH in 1926; he served in this capacity until 1946, at which time the Hunt was dissolved due to loss of hunt country through urbanization.

However, in 1955 several former members of the hunt founded the

Meadow Brook Hounds Pony Club to continue the pursuit of equestrian sport. Today the Club is a thriving organization, carrying on in some small way the tradition of the original hunt.

The signature color of the Meadow Brook Hunt was a robin's-egg blue.

Collection Description

The Meadow Brook Hunt Scrapbooks collection consists of two bound volumes of memorabilia compiled by Ralph N. Ellis during his tenure as MFH. The first, a photograph album, contains photographs of hunt meets for the 1895-1896 season. The photographs are mostly action shots of the hunts, some of which have been identified by Ellis. The second scrapbook is a minute book and hunting diary kept by Ellis to record the events of the Meadow Brook Hunt between 1895 and 1906. The album includes handwritten accounts of hunts as well as meet schedule cards and newspaper clippings. The two albums have been arranged chronologically with the photograph album coming first.

Series and Subseries

- I. Scrapbooks, 1895-1906** **1 document box**
- A. Photograph album, 1895-1896**
Sepia tone images of Ellis on "Baritone," "Tristan," and "Rollo" with the Meadow Brook Hunt, mostly shots in the field with the pack. Also shown are individual members of the hunt.
- B. Minute book / hunting diary, 1895-1906**
Consists of descriptions of hunts: schedule card pasted on page opposite handwritten account of the weather, path, result, etc. Entries for 1897-1899 are more in-depth.

Container List

MC 0013

I. Scrapbooks

<u>Box</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
1	Photograph album	1895-1896
1	Minute book / hunting diary	1895-1906

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