

Genesee Valley Hunt Collection

A Finding Aid



W. A. Wadsworth and His Hounds, Ready for The Chase, Genesee, N. Y.

Livingston County Historian's Office

5 Murray Hill Dr.

Mt. Morris, NY 14510

February 2023

Prepared by Madeline Friedler, Deputy Livingston County Historian

I. Collection Summary

Title	Genesee Valley Hunt Collection
Collection No.	C215
Extent	42 files, 3.78 GB
Date Range	1877-1919
Abstract	<p>This digital collection comprises of newspaper clippings, fixture cards, photographs, maps, and articles relating to the Genesee Valley Hunt in Geneseo, New York. In 1876, Maj. W. Austin Wadsworth organized and became Master of the first foxhunt in the Genesee Valley, along with Charles Carrol Fitzhugh as Huntsman. These materials were collected by the Hunt's historian and chronicle the club's early development.</p>
Languages	English.
Access and Restrictions	<p>Use of the documents in this collection is for serious research. Additionally, all documents should be handled with care. The collection may be accessible by advance request and permission from the Livingston County Historian's Office.</p> <p>To arrange to conduct research with the documents in the collection, contact the Livingston County Historian by mail at: 5 Murray Hill Drive, Mount Morris, NY, by phone at (585) 243-7955, or by e-mail at Historian@livingstoncountyny.gov.</p>
Copyright	Some materials may be subject to copyright. Researchers are required to seek written permission from the copyright holder to reproduce and/or publish materials under copyright.
Preferred Citation	Use of the collection material in print or online publications should be cited as follows: "Genesee Valley Hunt Collection. Livingston County Hunt. Courtesy of the Livingston County Historian's Office, New York."

II. Biographical and Background Information

The first Genesee Valley foxhunt occurred in 1876 with Major W. Austin Wadsworth (1847-1918) as Master of the Hunt and Charles Carroll Fitzhugh as Huntsman. A Harvard graduate and veteran of the Spanish-American War, Major Wadsworth was the son of William W. Wadsworth, who, along with his brother James Samuel, were prominent citizens of Genesee, New York.

The Wadsworth family continued to host the foxhunts with other prominent families of the area, such as the Fitzhughs, Adams, and Carys. The Genesee Valley Hunt Club emulated those of English gentry by hosting highly exclusive social events. In the beginning, riders would bring their own packs of specially-bred hunting hounds and horses, and the hunts were often followed by ball or banquet. In the twenty-first century, the Genesee Valley Hunt (GVH) maintains its own pack of foxhounds and continues as a members' club, riding on private property with permission and hosting the annual Genesee Valley Hunt Races for the public.

In early 2023, the GVH Historian Linda Gibbs met with the Livingston County Historian's Office to donate a digital version of early materials relating to the GVH. The County Historian's Office took temporary custody of the original collection and Deputy Historian Madeline Friedler scanned all four reference binders into searchable PDFs. She also made separate high-quality scans of any original materials. The original collection is in the possession of Linda Gibbs, GVH historian.

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Volume 1	Genesee Valley Hunt Reference Binder, 1877-1891
Volume 2	Genesee Valley Hunt Reference Binder, 1892-1899
Volume 3	Genesee Valley Hunt Reference Binder, 1900-1908
Volume 4	Genesee Valley Hunt Reference Binder, 1909-1919

IV. Related Materials

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Books and Articles

- *Fox-Hunting in the Genesee Valley*, Harper's Monthly Magazine, by Edward S. Martin, September 1892
- *Transcription of Alida K. Fitzhugh's 1893 Genesee Valley Hunt Diary*, Researched by GVH Historian Linda Gibbs
- *Fox Hunting in the Genesee Valley*, Country Life in America, by Frank Sherman Peer, November 1905
- *The Sport of 'Cross-Country Riding*, Country Life in America, by David Gray, November 1907
- *Hunting By Ear*, H.F. & G. Witherby Ltd. London, by Michael F. Berry and D.W.E. Brock, 1954
- *History of the Genesee Valley Hunt, 1876-1959*, a bibliography by Jeanne Menard, 1959
- *Riding to Hounds in America: An Introduction for Foxhunters*, by William P. Wadsworth, circa 1962
- *Around the World In Eighty Years On A Sidesaddle*, The Spiral Press, by Harriet Wadsworth Harper, 1966
- *Foxhunting in North America*, The American Foxhound Club Millwood VA, by Alexander Mackay-Smith M.F.H., 1985
- *Valley Horses*, Volume 1&2, Livingston Republican, by Michael "Mike" Kelley, 1966-1985
 - These are a compilation of articles that Mr. Kelley wrote for the Livingston Republican newspaper
- *Horses and Hounds of the Genesee*, Sporting Art exhibition catalog by the Genesee Valley Council on the Art, 1973
- *Olympic Vet: A Didactic Memoir*, The Castlerea Press. by Joseph C. O'Dea DVM, forward by Olympic rider William C. Steinkraus, 1996
- *Genesee Valley: Land of the Blue Grass Sod*, Volume 1&2, The Castlerea Press. by Joseph C. O'Dea DVM, 2002-2004
 - Dr. Joseph O'Dea (1921-2006) earned his veterinary degree from Cornell University in 1944. After two years in Europe with the US Army, he developed his veterinary business in Avon NY which he operated for fifty years. Additionally, he and his wife Nancy ran successful horse and hunting dog breeding programs on Roscommon Farm. Beyond his hometown, Dr. O'Dea was also the official vet for the National Horse Show at Madison Square Gardens for twenty-five years. He was also responsible for the US equestrian team's horses at the 1956, 1960, 1964, and 1972 Summer Olympics

Photographs, Postcards and Slides

- Photo of the Hunt Ball at Belwood, 1906.
- About two dozen photos of the Genesee Valley Hunt Hunter Trials circa 1940s
- Approximately eight hundred slides from the Genesee Valley Hunt races, cavalry games, parade, trials, meets, and fox hunts spanning 1953-1980
- About two dozen photos of the Genesee Valley Hunt circa 1970s
- About a dozen photos of a Genesee Valley Hunt race meet in 1999
- About a dozen postcards showing Fox hunt and racing scenes in Genesee NY

Programs, Invitation, and Brochures

- Genesee Valley Hunt Horse Show 1896, 1906, 1907, 1908
- Genesee Valley Hunt Club Annual Sports Event 1906
- Genesee Valley Hunt Races 1934, 1941, 1958, 1959, c.1996
- Annual Genesee Valley Hunt Re-union 1887, 1913
- Genesee Valley Hunt Hunter Trials, 1934
- Genesee Valley Hunt One Day Trials, 1960
- Hunt with the Hounds invitation 1964, 1972
- Cub hunting invitation 1974

- Fixture Cards showing time, date, and locations for Genesee Valley Hunt events
 - November 1907
 - November 1908
 - October 1959
 - October 1972

- Genesee Valley Hunt & Horses Reference Binders 1&2
 - History of the Hunt
 - Hunt Clubs in America
 - Connection to Belmont Stakes Race
 - Veterinarians
 - Horses
 - Horse Trails
 - Polo
 - Point to Point
 - Sugarberry Race for Grace
 - Horse Statues
 - The Wadsworth Family
 - The Hunt Ball
 - Breeding Farms & Stables
 - Dog Kennels
 - Draft Horses
 - Local equestrians
 - Pony Races and Clubs
 - Race Meets
 - Cavalry Games

- Catalogue, Genesee Valley Hunt, Inc., Annual Race Meeting and Hunter Trials, 1949
- Map of the Genesee Valley Hunt country, 1957
- Minutes and hound roster, Genesee Valley Hunt, 1972
- Memorial card for Edward D. Mulligan, 1964

- Genesee Valley Hunt Rules

Equestrian Materials not directly related to the Genesee Valley Hunt

- *A Ride to Niagara in 1809* by Thomas Cooper
 - This book is Mr. Cooper's experiences and reflections throughout Western NY as he rode the 200+ miles from Williamsport PA to Niagara Falls NY.
- *Riding: On The Flat And Across Country, A Guide To Practical Horsemanship*, W. Tacker & Co. London, by M. Horace Hayes, 1882
- C192 – The Emmet H. Jennings Collection
 - This collection comprises of 220 photographs and glass negatives of Emmett Jennings (1865-1921) and Ella Durand Jennings (1864-1939), their friends, and relatives in and around Avon, Livingston County, New York. Subjects include horses and various horse-drawn vehicles, including breaks and the Red Jacket Coach. This coach offered a round trip between Rochester and Avon in just 4 hours. More a fashionable statement than true utilitarian transportation, the route included several relays of horses and traveled between the St. George Hotel in Avon and the Powers Hotel in Rochester. The Jennings estate, Charlton, is featured, as well as the home known as the Jolly Farmer. Home life and leisure including horse and carriage events, vacation photographs, and early carriage excursions and picnics are featured. The original photographs are held by the Town of Avon Historian's Office.
- Register of Stallions, Livingston County, Volume 1&2, 1894-1919
 - This includes the name of the stallion, name of the owner, the stallion's pedigree, and description.
- About a two dozen photos of horses, harness racing, and horseback riding at the ½ mile track at Avon Springs, and the horse farm known as Lookover in Avon NY circa 1947. Additionally a program, ticket, and poster for different equestrian events in Avon.
- About two dozen photos of horses and horseback riding in 1963 at the Gratwick property Linwood Gardens in York NY.
 - Also a card advertising William Gratwick's Arabian-Connemara ponies and a poster showing horses advertising a two-day event at Gratwick's property.
- Stud advertisements for several different racing horses