

1

Land of Liberty

The English invented personal liberty without any theories about it. They value liberty because it is liberty.

(Alexander Herzen, in Tom Stoppard's *The Coast of Utopia* 2002)

Thoroughly Modern Minna

Minna Burnaby had a good season in 1909–10. On 25 October she enjoyed ‘two nice gallops’ at Ashby and on 29th she took a ‘nice little turn around the Vale’ at Dalby. In November she hit a ‘good hunt’ at Long Clawson, a ‘capital 40 minutes’ at Wymeswold, and ‘top speed’ in ‘glorious country’ at Seagrave. December saw a ‘splendid day’ at Ab Kettleby, a ‘capital day’ at Hungarton, a ‘Bully Day’ at Goadby, and a ‘topping day... fast up to Halstead’ on New Year’s Eve. On 14 January she went full tilt for seven minutes in a high wind at Quenby before finding the scent again at Baggrave and running up to Ashby Pastures ‘then right handed missing Thorpe ran fast up to Barsby and along the brook...’¹ Over the year Minna was pleased to report that *The Kid* had gone ‘divinely’, *Repidan* ‘deliciously’, and *Bodkin* ‘top hole’. In eighty-two days’ fox-hunting she took eight falls.

The Leicestershire parishes that marked Minna’s glory days were small and, in the winter months, obscure. The landscape, by any measure, was modest. The fox she hardly mentions, dead or alive. What Minna liked was what Minna did: chatting at the meet, walking the hounds, ‘lots of jumping’, and clear runs on cold sunny days. What Minna did not like was anything that clogged the scent or slowed the field: road, frost, rain, snow, wind, fog, fence wire, steep hills, stiff hedges, too many riders, too few foxes, ploughy fields, rabbit holes, woodland, and ‘coffee shop’ at the covert (‘did nothing but stand about... while a wholesale slaughter of cubs went on’). Minna was not one to hide her feelings. It was a ‘poisonous’ day for her when her horse went lame at the Noel Arms, and ‘vile’, ‘dreadful’, ‘miserable’, and ‘absolute Brute’ at other times. Yet it was ‘joyous’ for her when her horse ‘jumped at least 100 fences’ in one outing and there were other moments when it was impossible to know what Minna really liked except the risk

¹ Minna Burnaby’s Hunting Diary, 1909–10: Leicestershire Record Office (LRO), DG 51/2.

of not knowing what will happen next. She had ‘real folly on the new mare’ [who is] ‘a clinking hunter and jumps too beautifully’, while *The Kid*, one of her favourites, ‘nearly sacked me off! Was as near the floor as makes no matter’.²

Fox-hunting was never as fast and flowing as its writers and artists liked to depict, but Leicestershire had achieved a reputation for style and speed long before Minna Burnaby. In 1843 the great sports journalist ‘Nimrod’, a tad too eager perhaps, said it was ‘as nearly approaching perfection as nature and art can make it, and its fame may be said to have reached the remotest corners of the civilized world’.³ The least we can say is that Leicestershire’s notorious ‘double oxters’ fences were a long leap into the unknown. When the Pytchley Hunt’s 16 stone Waterloo veteran went over no matter what (‘Where’s Wyndham?’), the county’s reputation for risk and excitement was safe for another day.⁴

There had been a time when hunting foxes had been, and still was in many places, an unseemly scramble. Riders kicked along, or got off and went on foot, or did a bit of each. Leicestershire on the other hand was famous for light riding over fast, open country, country as near to aristocratic parkland as could be expected. Expert horsemen like Osbaldeston, Caprilli, and Nolan made the ride quick (knees high, stirrups short), enclosure and the shift to grazing made it firm, and a low undulating country made it pleasant.⁵ Traditional fox-hunting, according to Beckford in 1798, depended upon the hounds and, ‘it may be objected’, upon the huntsman who, ‘generally speaking, is an illiterate fellow’. For Siegfried Sassoon in 1928, fox-hunting was ‘lyrical, beautiful, ecstatic’.⁶

Leicestershire took the cream of wealth and fashion.⁷ There is no mention of fox-hunting in Burton’s 1777 *Description* of the county, but in that same year Charles Dormer was joshing Fortescue Turville that his Warwickshire hounds were ‘even’ as good as Turville’s Leicestershire hounds, and in 1782 we find the Leicestershire man being told by a London friend how he ‘longed many a one of these fine mornings to have been with them a galloping over that fine country of Leicestershire’. Three years later we find the Prince of Wales trying to establish a hunt at Woburn ‘more fashionable than *even* Mr. Meynell’s’ in Leicestershire, and by 1795 Nichols’ county history described it as ‘celebrated for hunting’.⁸

² *ibid*, DG 51/4, 51/3. Ethel Greene’s Northumberland Hunting Diary (1895–1901) shares much the same hunting likes, dislikes, and adjectives: LRO DE 2101/128.

³ Nimrod, *Hunting Reminiscences* (1843) p.26; Cecil, *Records of the Chase* (1854) pp.115, 148–51.

⁴ Carr, *English Fox Hunting* (1976) p.87. ‘Double oxters’ had two rails, two hedges and a ditch. High blackthorn hedges were called ‘bullfinches’.

⁵ Hoskins, *One Man’s England* (1978): 60 per cent Leicestershire enclosure was mainly parliamentary for fatstock in the north and east of the county (p.82).

⁶ Sassoon, *Fox Hunting Man* (1928) p.274; Beckford, *Thoughts on Hunting* (1798) p.5.

⁷ Nimrod, *The Chase* (1837) p.14.

⁸ Nichols, *History and Antiquities of County of Leicester* (1795) vol. i, p.lxcii; Burton, *Leicestershire* (1777); letter, Charles Dormer, Warwickshire, to Fortescue Turville, Leicestershire, 11 January 1777: LRO DG 39/1096; letter, George Talbot, London, to Fortescue Turville, 12 March 1782: LRO DG 39/

Leicestershire was on its way to being not only fashionable but legendary. Around the same time that Robert Lowth (1800) made fun of the crowds of riders who came jostling for a place at the meet, John Hawkes (1808) began the great tradition of Leicestershire fox hunters talking about each other. His book went through six editions up to 1936. Page's *Victoria County History* defined Edwardian Rutland (adjoining Leicestershire) as an earthly paradise, 'famous in the annals'. Nimrod had spotted its raw appeal early on:

I repeat, it is some trial of nerve...to look before us at a strong blackthorn hedge, five or six feet high, with a rail or wide ditch to boot, and 'who knows what' on the other side; but still more so, if at this time we look behind us, and see two or three of our friends running away with their horses, or their horses running away with them – for the difference matters not – roaring out at the top of their voices, 'Go along Sir; pray go along! We shall be left half a mile behind!!'⁹

Leicestershire had coal mines in the north-west, textile factories in the towns, and village manufacturing all round, but to the riding fraternity it was above all the home of five great fox-hunting 'countries'. Their borders could change but generally speaking to the south there was the Pytchley near Lutterworth, to the west the Atherstone near Market Bosworth, and in the east three hunts, the Cottesmore, north of Uppingham, the Belvoir, near Belvoir Castle, and the Quorn near Loughborough stretching north over the Soar into Nottinghamshire. Melton Mowbray served as an eastern hub, its national communications network (turn-pike 1760s, canal 1790s, rail 1830s) good enough to supply hunt tourists with all the food and fodder they could manage. When it came to reputation, no hunt matched the Quorn. In 1912 its 300 riders crashed through into the fourth great network of national communication, the cinematograph.¹⁰

To be the master of fox hounds (MFH) was a mark of extraordinary distinction. Hunts knew their masters by name, rank, and the order in which they followed one another. The Quorn started with the founder, Boothby, in 1698 (obscure); Meynell in 1753 (legendary); Sefton in 1800 ('polestar of fashion'); Assheton-Smith in 1812 (hundred falls a season); Osbaldeston in 1817 (hundred fights a season); Goodricke in 1831 (died hunting Irish otters); Suffield in 1838 (hopeless

111; letter, Mr. T. Potts to 'Mons Turville Gentilhomme Anglais, Nancy', 27 September 1785: LRO DG 39/1158.

⁹ Nimrod, *Hunting Reminiscences* (1843) pp.36, 48; Robert Lowth, 'Billesdon Coplow Hunt' (1800) 4pp; Hawkes, *Meynellian Science* (1809); Cecil, *Records of the Chase* (1854) p.115; Page, *VCH Rutland* (1908) p.305. There was usually a lot of reference to having the 'nerve' to ride. Alice Hayes told her lady readers that a Master of Hounds had once told her 'that his nerve was so bad that he positively prayed for frost': Hayes, *The Horsewoman* (1903) p.245. p. lxcii.

¹⁰ In 'a sort of hunting Saturnalia': Bradley, *Shire to Shire* (1912) p.135.

but not desperate); and Sir Harry Greene in 1843 (first county man).¹¹ Developed through Sir Thomas Boothby, his wife's grandfather, by Sir Hugo Meynell, a Derbyshire landowner and MP, the Quorn became famous on a rising tide of moneyed young men looking for fast packs and high performance horses. Nimrod, who had never seen him hunt, said Meynell was a great rider, a sort of Beau Nash of the saddle, part of the eighteenth-century taste for fashion.¹² Commonly known as 'thrusters', young men came up from London to ride hell for leather.¹³ By the time of his retirement in 1800, and contrary to legend, Meynell had not invented fox-hunting, or made it scientific, or showed it how to go, but had succeeded in turning Quorndon Hall ('neither very large or magnificent') into a 'first rate London Tavern'.¹⁴ He called himself, or got others to call him, the first fox hunter in the land,¹⁵ and he let it be known that this was the place where between November and March every year, London 'poured forth her abundance'.¹⁶ To Scarth-Dixon in 1921, the Quorn was so fast you could fly. To Arthur Mee in 1937, fox-hunting was born there, although actually it wasn't.¹⁷

In 1832, England's first sporting journalist, Pierce Egan, dedicated his book on sport as 'the Mirror of Life' to George Osbaldeston, twice Master of the Quorn. Osbaldeston was a difficult man, deeply unpopular in Leicestershire. But it was said that his most redeeming feature was that he had the mark of a 'True Meltonian', 'bang up' to it, an 'Out and Outer' and an 'Out and Out Meltonian' at that.¹⁸ Egan was followed, as the doyen of sports journalists, by Charles Apperley, or 'Nimrod'. Mighty Hunter, Son of Cush, and Grandson of Noah, Nimrod was a former cavalryman turned horse dealer who thought Meltonians were the best and wasted no opportunity in saying so at a guinea a page.¹⁹

¹¹ Scarth-Dixon, *Quorn* (1921) provides the full list, pp.24–30; Cecil, *Records of the Chase* (1854) pp.126–34; Nimrod, *Hunting Reminiscences* (1843) p.30.

¹² Nimrod, *The Chase* (1837) p.310.

¹³ And were 'content to be strangers': *The Times*, 7 March 1952.

¹⁴ Throsby, *Selected Views* (1791) p.310.

¹⁵ Nichols, *History and Antiquities of County of Leicester* (1800), vol. iii, p.101.

¹⁶ Throsby, *Selected Views* (1791) p.311.

¹⁷ There is plenty of evidence that medieval lords hunted foxes for pleasure as well as vermin: Middleton, 'The Myth of Hugo Meynell and the Quorn', *Sport in History* (2005) pp.2–8; Scarth-Dixon, *Quorn* (1921) p.10; Mee, *Leicestershire and Rutland* (1937) pp.1–2.

¹⁸ Egan, *Book of Sports* (1832) pp.223–4. Pierce Egan (1772–1849) was a London compositor before becoming the country's first pre-eminent sporting journalist. His popular series *Life in London* (1821) tells us half the story in its sub-title: *Life in London or, the Day and Night Scenes of Jerry Hawthorn Esq and his elegant friend Corinthian Tom, accompanied by Bob Logic, the Oxonian, in their rambles and speers through the Metropolis*. Well served by George and Robert Cruikshank's illustrations, *Pierce Egan's Life in London* (1824) eventually merged with *Bell's Life in London* (1822) to become 'the most voluminous single record of 19th century sport': Denis Brailsford, 'Pierce Egan', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (ODNB). Egan is an under-rated writer and we will return to him later.

¹⁹ Nimrod, *Hunting Tours* (1903) pp.2–5; Nimrod, *Hunting Reminiscences* (1843) p.26; Itzkowitz, *Peculiar Privilege* (1977) pp.14–15. Apperley (1778–1843), or 'Nimrod' went to Rugby School and served in the Light Dragoons. He followed Egan after his first piece, 'Fox-Hunting in Leicestershire' (1822), doubled the sales of *The Sporting Magazine*. The *Magazine* paid him large sums to act as a gentleman correspondent. He was known as 'Pomponius Ego' to his rival Robert Surtees: Norman

Henry Dixon, or 'Druid', represented the next generation of hunting journalists paid large sums to massage rich men's egos. Although the Druid preferred to bump along in a gig, not on horseback, he understood the hunt's 'immense scope for anecdote and disquisition' and, along with mid-century sports writers such as R S Surtees, George Whyte Melville, and Bromley Davenport, he spread the story far and near.²⁰

There was only one story: faintly mocking and adoring at the same time it was all about English hunting heroes. Their stories were almost as long as their runs:

Racing men are bad enough but I have heard ladies, who are perhaps the best judges of volubility, affirm that for energy, duration, and the faculty of saying the same thing over and over again, a dialogue between a couple of fox hunters beats every other kind of discussion.²¹

Robert Surtees' 'Mr. Sponge' is fiction's most famous Meltonian even though he is a fraud. Whyte-Melville's novelettish comedies are full of men riding big horses with clumsy feet and cigars sticking out of their mouths (the men's, not the horses'). Sir Samuel Stuffy, Hon Crasher, Major Brush and Captain Struggles all like the simple things of life, especially themselves. Sassoon remembered how he and his hunting cronies took their names out of *Mr Sponge's Sporting Tour* (1853)—from Lord Scamperdale to Jogglebury Crowdey. Every page of Whyte-Melville's *Market Harborough* (1861) was an opportunity for the hunt to see itself through its own cigar smoke.²²

Gash, 'Charles James Apperley', *ODNB*. Chapter 39 of Surtees' heavily satirical *Mr Sponge's Sporting Tour* is called 'Writing a Run'.

²⁰ Druid, *Post and the Paddock* (1856) p.116. Henry Hall Dixon (1822–70), or 'The Druid', Rugby School and Trinity College Cambridge, chose racing as his sport and Newmarket as his town, but did much for fox-hunting too. A practising lawyer, Dixon wrote mainly for *Bell's Life* and *The Sporting Magazine*.

²¹ Mr. Sawyer in Whyte Melville's *Market Harborough* (1861) p.42. George Whyte-Melville (1821–78), Eton College and Coldstream Guards, was a Scottish comic novelist and poet who wrote indefatigably about hunt heroes and heroines from *Digby Grand* (1853) onwards. He died riding with the Vale of White Horse.

²² *ibid*, p.139; Sassoon, *Fox Hunting Man* (1928) p.167. Sassoon said he knew an elderly colonel who 'modelled himself on . . . the Whyte Melville standard . . . and coloured prints of a slightly earlier period' (p.180). Robert Smith Surtees (1805–64) was a Durham landowner and fox hunter. Although he never acknowledged writing as a profession he was one of the most influential comic writers of the century, succeeding Nimrod as hunting correspondent for *The Sporting Magazine* in 1830, and, supported by John Leech's illustrations, inventing those irrepressible hunters 'Soapy' Sponge and John Jorrocks. We can see the origins of his Mr. Sponge in Peter Pasquin's *Day's Journal of a Sponge* (1824). As well as Egan, Nimrod, Surtees, and the Druid, there was Cornelius Tongue, or 'Cecil' (1800–84), now forgotten, who spent his life turning sport into literature, including the *Fox Hunter's Guide* (1847) and *Records of the Chase* (1854).

Sports writers had their own way of writing and were known for it.²³ Assisted by a burgeoning sporting press keen on saddle room sayings, old saws and tall stories, hunts fostered their own mythologies.²⁴ On 24 February 1800 the Quorn ran twenty-eight miles at Billesdon Coplow and never forgot it. A generation later, Nimrod could say that he thought the best introduction for any young man of fashion was to be found at Billesdon Coplow (population: two), and in 1912 Bradley was recalling the run as if it had happened only yesterday.²⁵ Occasionally, readers were reminded that long runs could kill horses as well as riders. Nimrod put ‘The Death of Edwin’ down to a true Meltonian:

The scent appeared better and better; indeed, the pace had been awful since the check in the wind-mill field. I looked back twice and could only see four, and then there were but five besides myself with the hounds. ‘This is beautiful’ I said. ‘Divine!’ shouted L. I could not help giving them a cheer which I don’t often do. Ten minutes more, however, began to tell tales. We crossed the brook under Norton-by-Galby, and went as straight as a line for Rolleston Wood. ‘Ha! Ha! Another ox fence’ said I to myself as we rose the hill in Galby field . . . catching fast hold of his head I sent him at it manfully: but the ditch was broad and deep, the hedge thick and plashed, and the rail beyond them strong. Neither was this all . . . the drop must have been seven feet at the least, and he had to struggle to keep his legs, for he must have cleared more than seven yards in length, or he would not have got over it at all. It told upon him but I soon got him upon a headland and standing up in my stirrups took a pull at his head, which recovered him wonderfully before he got to the end of the ground, which was 60 acres or more. In short, he cleared a high gate into the Uppingham and Leicester road, a little to the right of Billesdon, and a large straggling black thorn-hedge and ditch out of it with apparent ease to himself. ‘This cannot last long’, I said, ‘I wish the fox would die or that *Footpad* [his second horse] would make his appearance . . .’²⁶

Places mattered in hunting legend that wouldn’t matter anywhere else.²⁷ Billesdon Coplow, Oadby Toll Bar, Tilton Wood, John O’Gaunt’s, Ram Jam Inn, and a score of other Leicestershire meeting points appear again and again, while revolutions in printing technique took hunt prints (penny plain, tuppence coloured) into almost every home and public house.²⁸ The Alken family were the little masters of hunting art, Henry popularly known as ‘Ben Tally Ho’. Thomas Bewick’s first

²³ Both sentimental and sporting ways of writing were acknowledged popular forms: see trade cards, Thomas Rowlandson engraving, in John Johnson Collection, Bodleian Library, Sport Box 9.

²⁴ Quorn Hunt Scrapbook: LRO, DE 3030/29.

²⁵ Nimrod, *Hunting Tours* (1903) frontispiece; Bradley, *Shire to Shire* (1912) p.153, p.115, p.172.

²⁶ Nimrod, *Hunting Reminiscences* (1843) p.51.

²⁷ From among the many: Pennell-Elmhirst, *Cream of Leicestershire* (1883).

²⁸ Ray, *Illustrator and the Book* (1976) pp.178–81; Snelgrove, *British Sporting and Animal Prints* (1981) pp. ix–x.

important wood cut ‘Old Hound’ was presented to the Royal Society when he was just 22. His famous *History of Quadrupeds* (1790) featured Northumbrian hunt tales. The celebrated engraver John Scott made his bread and butter out of hunting scenes. If not all of the scenes were polite (‘just get over the gate’), they were popular. Manufacturers sold their pots and plates through a lot of olden time good cheer featuring hunting horns and punch bowls. By the 1840s fox-hunting was a mainstay of adult light fiction, and by the 1860s it was being rewritten as an English Tory idyll.²⁹ When linocut appeared as a modernist art form in the 1920s, it did fox hunters too.³⁰

So popular was the genre, sometimes horses and riders were painted with their faces left blank.³¹ Who hadn’t heard of the Donnington Run or Baggrave Spinney? Who didn’t know that all riders wore pink (even though they didn’t)? Who doubted that double-oxters were difficult and only to be found in Leicestershire?³² So strong was the hunting hold on the upper class nation, some declared its wiles and ways part of the constitution.³³ Mr. Churchill became Prime Minister in 1940 in a race against a man who said he’d rather be an MFH.³⁴

First came the MFH, usually rich if not titled, and very much the dignified part of the constitution. Colonel in chief and paymaster general, he was, for the day, lord of all he surveyed. Then came the huntsman, usually the only professional in the field, the efficient part of the constitution and responsible for the hounds, which he counted in couples. It was his business to make the pack physically fit and biddable, and convention had it that he blew the horn.³⁵ Then came the whippers-in, answerable only to the huntsman, breaking up riots and generally enforcing order in the pack. Then the field, anything from a dozen to a few hundred riders, all under the MFH and not allowed to pass him or cross him. Then the hunt servants, who did what they were told, including ‘stopping earths’

²⁹ *Sporting Magazine*, 1863, p.450; May, *Fox-Hunting Controversy* (2013) p.125. On the Alkens and other hunt artists, including Henry Thomas and Henry Gordon, see Ralph Nevill in *The Connoisseur*, August 1905, and Alken (YCBA 1949); Bewick in Uglow, *Nature’s Engraver* (2006) p.275; Scott in Welford, *Men of Mark* (1895) p.358; and generic scenes in John Johnson, Bodleian, Trade Cards.

³⁰ Sybil Andrews, ‘Full Cry’: ‘Modernist British Printmaking’ at Dulwich Picture Gallery, *New Statesman*, 2–15 August 2019.

³¹ ‘Blank: The Property of his Grace the Duke of Ancaster’ (Bowles & Carver, St Paul’s Churchyard, nd); John Johnson, Bodleian, Trade in Print and Scraps, vol. ii.

³² Four plates, colour, Alken Jnr., engraver Charles Hunt (London, Laird, Leadenhall Street, nd).

³³ ‘Hunting, unlike other forms of sport [but just like the British Constitution], has no written rules of its own for the guidance of the uninitiated’: de Broke, *Sport of Our Ancestors* (1921) pp.18–20, and Hayes, *The Horsewoman* (1903) p.309.

³⁴ Edward Wood, Lord Halifax, in Shakespeare, *Six Minutes in May* (2017) p.325. Lord Hartington said he’d rather win the Derby than be Prime Minister: Strachey, *Eminent Victorians* (1918) p.246.

³⁵ The huntsman was a ‘menial servant’ earning £100 to £130 a year, and used to being patronized. He was better off than local domestics however and, with house and regular wages, better off than many skilled workers in the towns. But he had no independence. Dick Burton was a long-lived and much honoured Quorn Huntsman who rode with Assheton-Smith and Nimrod. *Eclipse* magazine remembered him as a ‘great favourite’ forced by a bad back into retirement ‘to his little property... *we forget which*, at Quorn’ (*Eclipse*, 5 January 1863). [Italics mine].

(denying the fox the chance of going to ground the night before). Last came the hunt followers; on foot, unnoticed, and unmentioned. Apart from the huntsman who earned a little bit more than the servants, and the farmers, who earned about five times more, those in the saddle earned at least twenty times more than those who ran behind.³⁶

Lady riders, who found themselves hobbled by a fiendish saddle and a mass of buckles and pins, did not wear red and were generally invited to keep out of the way.³⁷ Nimrod once heard a female rider rebuked by the master for calling a hound 'pretty'. 'Handsome' does it, she was told.³⁸

For a long time sporting ladies were seen as oddities. Gravelot's picture of a woman out hunting for game makes her look every inch a gallant in her long coat and boots until we realize that the gun over her shoulder is cocked and everyone ought to keep his head down. Mrs. Inge inherited the mastership of the Atherstone Hunt from her father in 1914, and other women took leadership roles during the war too, but instruction manuals for lady hunt riders were as much about how to look as how to ride. Not that men were unconcerned about how men looked, but mostly they made the rules.³⁹ Munkwitz reckoned there were twenty-five female MFHs before 1914, and thirty-three by 1918. Every woman who rode was supposed to be grateful as well as graceful.⁴⁰ There's no sign of it in Minna's journals it has to be said, but then Minna had married the MFH. Not one to call a hound 'pretty' in the first place, no one was going to rebuke her if she did.

In spite of fox-hunting's reputation for male boorishness, women loved to ride. Thomas Turner's sister wrote to him from Sapcote. In a letter full of horses and hounds ('We have a new hound. Its name is Matcham') she had to tell him that she'd got bold at leaping and didn't mind going at a stile.⁴¹ Manuals came to

³⁶ These figures are based on agricultural rents only, and exclude urban rents and non-agricultural investments, which were high, and in 1867, getting higher: Allen, *Industrial Revolution* (2017) pp.65–6.

³⁷ Women usually wore blue or grey, very subdued: Hayes, *The Horsewoman* (1903) pp.309–11, 90–124. Most women rode side-saddle. Designed by men but never used by them, it must have taken women hours to get ready and if they were going to do it according to the manual they needed assistance. Mrs. Hayes does not spare the details. She does however show Miss Emmie Hayes of New Zealand jumping an appalling vertiginous wire fence side-saddle (fig. 102).

³⁸ Pittman *Nimrod's Hunting Tours* (1835) p.688.

³⁹ May, *Fox-Hunting Controversy* (2013) p.41. Gravelot, 'Sporting Lady' (YCBA, nd); Mrs. Inge took over accompanied by her son in law for the duration of the war and was followed by her daughters: Page, *VCH Rutland* (1908) pp.279–80. Munkwitz: paper, 'Riding Habits', CESH, De Montfort University, 6 September 2016.

⁴⁰ Stirling Clarke, *Ladies Equestrian Guide* (1857), Greville, *Ladies in the Field* (1894), Hayes, *The Horsewoman* (1903). Women comprised about 10 per cent of the daily turnout in Leicestershire in 1878 according to Itzkowitz, *Peculiar Privilege* (1977) p.56. The *Manchester Guardian* thought the growing presence of female riders was deplorable (12 December 1900). Yet according to *The Times* (7 March 1952) women and girls were a tiny minority of riders until the growth of subscription packs and pony clubs from the 1920s.

⁴¹ Letter to Thomas Turner, nd (eighteenth century): LRO DE 718/D/96/iii.

recognize that riding a horse was good for your health.⁴² They sometimes recognized that women brought special qualities of horsemanship.⁴³ Fox-hunting was modern and euphoric and dangerous and so too, on occasion, were young women who were instructed how to compel the horse, to animate him, and make him do it.⁴⁴

That all this was personally liberating rather complicated matters. Horse riding offered women the freedom to go where they pleased.⁴⁵ Free from prying eyes and flapping skirts, where else could a young woman—or indeed an older one—find the same excitement?⁴⁶ Later on, a small coterie of young women would find it climbing Alpine peaks (club founded 1907) and many more would eventually find it playing school lacrosse or college cricket, but when girls really wanted to fly, they went as *riders*. In jumper and jodphurs Amy Johnson was the most famous woman in the world. She carried a Browning and a hundred rounds in her bag.⁴⁷

Hunt convention had it that skirts and riding aprons must not show that the lady had legs, while side-saddles offered the slightly contradictory view that if she did have legs she must not open them. George V banned army officers' wives riding astride, and by the 1930s it was still uncommon enough to be noticed. Women were advised that although 'riding astride has become popular with some', 'the breeches should be exactly like a man's and show four buttons above the boots'.⁴⁸ Minna's friend Lady Warrender rode long legged.⁴⁹ But none of this mattered once a woman was up and riding. 'Seated as we are high in the air, surrounded by the pure atmosphere, and inhaling it, our elasticity is increased, and an indescribable sense of happiness pervades the whole frame'.⁵⁰

Equestrian guides talked about a lady's 'seat' but Catherine Walters talked about her 'bloody arse'.⁵¹ Hyde Park was the place to take it.⁵² Courtesans rode there every day except on Sundays. Walters, or 'Skittles' to her friends, stitched into a riding habit that had been made to measure against her naked body, rode

⁴² 'After which a cigarette in a lounge on the verandah may be indulged in': Mrs. Martell, 'Riding in Ireland and India', in Greville, *Ladies in the Field* (1894) p.21; Stirling Clarke, *Ladies Equestrian Guide* (1857) p.36.

⁴³ Stirling Clarke, *ibid*, p.49.

⁴⁴ 'Let's face it, given the chance, who would not want to go really fast on a horse?': Victoria Pendleton, World and Olympic cycling champion, *Sunday Telegraph*, 13 March 2016. It seems all hunts had two or three women who could do these things: Stirling Clarke, *Ladies Equestrian Guide* (1857) p.181, p.212.

⁴⁵ From Mary Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret* (1862), and Dorre, *Cult of the Horse* (2006) p.81.

⁴⁶ Ladies were advised to sew lead into their skirts: Carr, *English Fox Hunting* (1976) p.174; Greville, *Ladies in the Field* (1894) Preface. In India, 'you'd go through the villages...': MacMillan, *Women of the Raj* (1988) p.158. Just at the point that fox-hunting was banned, riding and hunting changed Jane Shilling's life with a passion she didn't expect: *The Fox in the Cupboard* (2005).

⁴⁷ Amy Johnson, Photo Collection Box 4: Women's Library, London Metropolitan University.

⁴⁸ 'Women's Kit' by 'G.G.', *Polo and Hunting Journal*, Sept 1925.

⁴⁹ Minna's Journal and Scrapbook: LRO DG 51/19.

⁵⁰ Stirling Clarke, *Ladies Equestrian Guide* (1857) p.36.

⁵¹ Blyth, *Skittles* (1970) pp.170–2.

⁵² *Sporting Magazine*, 1862, p.119.

the finest horses prostitution could buy.⁵³ Born into a poor family in Toxteth, she was famous in riding circles for her daring (she was said to have taken a Hyde Park railing for £100) and for turning up at the Quorn in 1861 complete with male entourage. The subject of pornographic fiction, Catherine had her moments. Riding a woman was the oldest sexual metaphor. A woman riding took it further. In his 'The Shrew Tamed' at the Royal Academy, Landseer put them together in a single picture.⁵⁴ Visiting Frenchman Hyppolyte Taine could hardly take his eyes off the Hyde Park girls, short coats 'well cut to the figure'. That some smoked made the prospect even more exciting. Along with tight collars and stiff wrists, the hunt enjoyed an erotic charge.⁵⁵ Riding and smoking were each one of the 'bad paths' a girl could take. Sexual freedom went with personal liberty, and always had done.⁵⁶

We can only speculate about things which even in their own day were not openly talked about. Yet the implication was there all the time. The company was 'racy' as well as horsey. The 'season' was as sexual as well as sporting. Harrods and Harvey Nicks provided the shopping. *Aquascutum* (1853), *Gabardine* (1880), and *Slazenger* (1881) provided the materiel. Early 'pin ups' included female riders and sporting beauties. Splendidly mounted, they go at great pace, stop at nothing, never refuse, and hand the hat round at the end (never looking 'at anything but paper'). 'Ain't he a daisy?' said Lottie to Tottie and Dottie.⁵⁷ Written by 'Lilly White' and 'Georgie Shelley', this is the sort of literature where you can never tell if it is written for the amusement of a certain kind of man or a certain kind of woman. Or both. Along with spa towns, free and easy music halls, seaside hotels, French sorties, and country house weekends, fashionable fox-hunting was free from chaperones and, given the opportunity, there was always the chance that women would encounter men behaving badly or at least, extra-maritally: steady drinking, heavy chaffing, kissy games, pranks, and what not.

⁵³ Taine referred to London's 'meagre' supply of courtesans compared to Paris. London had large numbers of part-time prostitutes however. Friday night in the Strand he referred to as 'a march past of dead women': *Notes on England* (1860–70) p.31. McCreery reckons that prostitution was the most common subject in 18th- and 19th-century prints of women: *Satirical Gaze* (2004) p.49.

⁵⁴ Edwin Landseer (1802–73) 'The Shrew Tamed' or 'The Pretty Horsebreaker': Royal Academy (RA) 1861. He said the breaker was Annie Gilbert, who was well known. Others said it was Catherine Walters. On Walters: Anon, *Skittles. Biography of a Fascinating Woman Never Before Published* (1864). The novel ends with Sir Frederick going hunting with 'Carry' Waters and giving her 'the brush' (fox tail) before they slip off to Brussels. 'A List of Sporting Ladies' (Newcastle upon Tyne, D Bass, 1804) surveys the field of local hacks and fillies. Surtees did not like hunt vulgarity but put women into two camps, 'bolters' and 'rearers' all the same: Bradshaw, 'Surtees' (2002) pp.66–8.

⁵⁵ *Sporting Magazine*, 1862, p.263; Taine, *Notes on England* (1860–70) p.20, p.70.

⁵⁶ Dabhoiwala, 'Lust and Liberty', *Past & Present* (2010) p.108; on bad paths and good paths, *Girls' Own* (1894) and *Seed Time & Harvest* (1908), in Olsen, *Juvenile Nation* (2014) pp.61–4, p.105. On hunting in an erotic way: Nicolson, *The Gentry* (2011) p.110.

⁵⁷ Lottie Tottie and Dottie in *The Joker*, 1, i, Saturday 18 July 1891. Beauties included in *The Girl of the Period Almanack* (1869) price 3d: 'Diana Hunting Club' for November ('very few men can live' with the pace; 'most are found wanting at the kill'); 'Atalanta Swimming Club' for January ('leg gracefully extended'), the 'Hero Rowing Club' for June (thirty-five strokes per minute) and others.

There's not much sign of this in a jolly photograph of the Cumberland Hunt Ball at Armathwaite Hall, Bassenthwaite in 1931. A man at the front holds up a fox skin as the sign of a good day out, and the black ties and ball gowns show a lot of effort went into the evening, but this is a formal picture taken before things started to warm up.⁵⁸

We have to allow for the possibility that for all the young women who chose to attend gatherings of this kind who did not know what they were doing, there were those who did. It's not as if hunts lacked a reputation. It's not as if the county didn't talk. According to Whyte-Melville, Cecilia Dove 'would have passed muster as good looking in London' so 'she ought to have been placarded "dangerous" in Leicestershire'. Jane Shilling found her first hunt euphoric, 'same as being in love'. Rachel Johnson provided the more experienced view of what to expect from a country weekend.⁵⁹ If Mrs. Stirling Clarke could worry about how a girl might fall into the arms of the wrong sort (the groom) in the yard, it is unlikely that she did not worry about the right sort in the field. For a certain sort of cad, girls and horses went together.⁶⁰

Even so, riding bestowed power.⁶¹ Thorneycroft's small bronze 'Queen Victoria on Horseback' (1853) is a young woman sitting side-saddle. But look again as she trots forward; her riding crop is a sceptre and her small brimmed hat a crown. Above all, she is in control.⁶² Margot Tennant, sixth daughter of Sir Charles and Lady Tennant, attended the Beaufort Hunt in 1880. Riding out, she says she went where she wanted. After dinner, she says she was no longer an innocent.⁶³ Like Minna, Margot went hunting and how she fell was her business.⁶⁴

Devoted to the Horse

In 1854 there were about one hundred top-class packs in Great Britain and Ireland, rising to about 150 by the end of the century. Each hunt met five or six times a week. Subscription packs made it considerably cheaper for all concerned,

⁵⁸ Tullie House, Carlisle Record Office (CRO), Acc. No 169.1978.1.

⁵⁹ Johnson in *The Guardian*, 20 August 2008; Whyte-Melville, *Market Harborough* (1861) p.68; Shilling in *The Sunday Telegraph*, 9 May 2004.

⁶⁰ 'The Pious Horse to church may trot / A maid may work a man's salvation / Four horses and a girl are not / However, aids to reformation': Kipling, in Nicholson, *Almanac of Twelve Sports* (1898) p.3; Stirling Clarke, *Ladies Equestrian Guide* (1857) p.75. Morland painted sportsmen coming upon vulnerable women in darkened woodsides: 'The Lucky Sportsman', Snell, *Spirits of Community* (2016) pp.65-72.

⁶¹ Dorre's *Cult of the Horse* (2006) explores its multiple meanings, some contradictory (p.163).

⁶² Thomas Thorneycroft, bronze sculpture: 'Queen Victoria on Horseback' (YCBA 1853).

⁶³ Ellenberger, *Balfour's World* (2015) p.90-1, p.120.

⁶⁴ Mrs. Musters, 'The Wife of the MFH', in Greville, *Ladies in the Field* (1894) p.86.

but still you had to have the time and right connections.⁶⁵ Even if a rider just turned up at 11am (no point starting early), he or she would have preferred an invitation or some sort of acknowledgement from the MFH. Some hunts delivered calling cards. Some printed fixtures. Others advertised in the local press.⁶⁶ Whatever the method—and invitations to hunt could result in invitations to dine—most people knew what was expected. Willoughby de Broke was right. As an expression of a class that liked to think it ruled by personal relationships, not written rules, the hunt was part of the constitution.⁶⁷

In any case, what else was there to do in the country? Over a long winter season, there was always cards, or sewing, or reading or, for outdoor types, looking out of the window. Everyone had dinner and drinks of course, but hunting sharpened the appetite and brought life to short winter days. Richard Jeffries saw it as a ‘gallant show’ followed by a ‘splendid burst’.⁶⁸ Friedrich Engels thought riding with the Cheshire the greatest joy of his life. Henry Greene, another socialist son of the factory-owning classes, concurred. A long hot bath at the end of the day was his luxury of luxuries.⁶⁹

Painters and engravers loved the hunt just as much as they loved the race meeting. You could never go near a hunt in your life and still know that it entailed a Hearty Breakfast, an Excitable Meet, Drawing the Fox, Cracking the Whip, Blowing the Horn, Taking a Gate, Clearing a Bank, Full Cry, Kill, and Coming Home.⁷⁰ What to wear? Craxwell’s for boots, but brown or cream for tops? Kipward’s for coats, but single or double breast? ‘A slang looking red coat is the greatest abomination’, thought Cecil. Sassoon said he kept to ‘the Melton Mowbray standard of smartness’.⁷¹ Scarlet (not for the beginner) looked stunning

⁶⁵ Cecil, *Records of the Chase* (1854) pp.407–8; 431–2; *Bailey’s Magazine of Sports and Pastimes’ List of Hounds* (1895). Subscriptions varied enormously. Against the Quorn’s 1919 rate of £35 a day, the Pytchley charged £25 a year for gentlemen and £10 for ladies: Hayes, *The Horsewoman* (1903) p.306. Munkwitz (‘Women and Fox Hunting’, *Sport in History*, 2017) thinks there were about 400 hunts in 1913–14, which means she must be including lower-grade packs (p.400).

⁶⁶ Hunt calling cards: 18th and 19th century: John Johnson, Bodleian, Sports Box 9, and LRO DG 51/109–21. Hunt advertisements, for example: *Newcastle Chronicle*, 1810–11 and *Newcastle Courant* 1820–22.

⁶⁷ de Broke, *Sport of Our Ancestors* (1921) p.3; Sassoon, *Fox Hunting Man* (1928) frontispiece. On the iconic status of the country estate to a class who spent a lot of their time in London: Ian Warren, ‘English Landed Elite’, *English Historical Review*, February 2011.

⁶⁸ Jeffries, *Hodge and His Masters* (1949) p.96.

⁶⁹ Greene, *Pack My Bag* (1952) p.60; Engels, in Ashton, *Little Germany* (1986) p.62. Dormer wrote to Turville at Bosworth Hall asking what young Mr. George did through the winter: ‘does he give the preference to his Gun or his Hunter?’: LRO DG 39/1542. See Janet Mullin, *Gaming and the English middle classes 1680–1830* (2015).

⁷⁰ Henry Thomas Alken specialized in the full day out, see for instance his *Hunt in Five Prints*, with C. Bentley (London, S & J Fuller, Sporting Gallery, Rathbone Place 1828): John Johnson, Bodleian, Sport Large Box, and Trade Cards Box. See numerous works, for instance in the Yale Centre for British Art (YCBA), by, among others, Neil Cawthorne (1936–), John Dalby (active 1826–53), Lionel Edwards (1878–1966), John Ferneley (1782–1860), Edward Hull (1823–1906), Benjamin Marshall (1767–1835), Francis Calcraft Turner (1782–1846), and John Wootton (1682–1764).

⁷¹ Cecil, *Records of the Chase* (1854) p.389; Sassoon, *Fox Hunting Man* (1928) p.171.

in a frosty landscape. Black looked marvellous against a steel blue sky. Out with the hunt, gentlemen had a chance of resembling a natural aristocracy: widest view, bravest mount, not a creditor in sight.⁷²

Slightly downmarket, Surtees' Mr. Jorrocks was President of a Free and Easy at The Pig in Trouble in Oxford Street where 'members may take all sorts of liberties with each other'... 'all sorts of jokes'... 'call each other names, play tricks and practical jokes—like the officers of the 46th'. Jorrocks, the Cockney Grocer & Tea Dealer turned MFH, first appeared in *The New Sporting Magazine* in 1831. A figure of fun who was also capable of seeing things as they actually were, he thought fox-hunting was the sport of kings and the office of MFH 'the highest pinnacle of exhibition'. But 'enough of the rhapsodies let us come to the melodies... wot will it cost?'⁷³

Riding was the first division of labour. The sports and pastimes of the poor simply did not include it.⁷⁴ The sports and pastimes of the rich most certainly did, and they did not go quietly.⁷⁵ Alken's *Six Meltonians* (1811) had them 'slapping' and 'swishing' their way across the country. According to Keith Thomas, riding well and bearing arms was early modern England's 'supreme proof of manhood' and there can be no doubt that that didn't change for most of our period.⁷⁶ Strutt put gracefulness at its heart. (Rowlandson put weak knees and falling off.) Matthew Arnold recognized field sports as the pre-eminent sign of gentlemanliness in the 1860s. Everyone could forgive a man who rode well.⁷⁷

Most people did not ride. Some worked with horses and enjoyed them, some contrived to work with horses in order to enjoy them, but rarely for sport. There were an estimated 200,000 pit ponies in British coal mines in 1900. Boys were not allowed to ride them (though they did).⁷⁸ The regular army's crack regiments were cavalry and its most modern regiments were horse-drawn (by 1917, it stabled

⁷² Burke, 'Appeal to the Whigs' (1791) pp.100–1.

⁷³ Surtees, *Hunts with Jorrocks* (1854) p.66, p.500, p.62. Jorrocks asked 'vot's an MP compared to an MFH?' (p.87).

⁷⁴ Strutt, *Sports and Pastimes* (1801) p.19.

⁷⁵ See Gould's 1895 cartoon of the 'Tory Village': Readman and Cragoe, *Land Question* (2010) fig 10.1, p.191.

⁷⁶ Thomas, *Ends of Life* (2009) p.44. He identifies riding and bearing arms as the supreme virtues to be replaced by the 'technical qualifications of an occupational group'—in other words, professional soldiers (p.69).

⁷⁷ Jeffries, *Hodge and His Masters* (1949) p.99; Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (1867–9) p.105; Strutt, *Sports and Pastimes* (1801) p.9; Rowlandson, 'Horses and Riders' (1799): John Johnson, Trade & Print Scraps Box 2.

⁷⁸ The partial exceptions were stable lads, jockeys, cavalry regiments, and members of the Royal Company of Artillery. It's unlikely that boys went down the pit to ride ponies although working with horses was always a good reason to take an apprenticeship: see the obituary of Albert Marshall (1897–2005), last British survivor of the battle of the Somme, who joined the Essex Yeomanry under age in order to ride, and went on to work for the Essex and Suffolk Hunt: *The Guardian*, 21 June 2005. For the early life of a Georgian stable lad: Holcraft, *Memoirs* (1816). On horses down the mine: Kirkup, *Pit Ponies* (2008). Animal inspections were authorized under the 1911 Coal Mines Act. Very occasionally someone painted a working horse: Charles Towne, 'Billy a Draught Horse age 62', small oil on panel (YCBA 1823).

591,000 horses).⁷⁹ It's true that Nimrod and Alken liked to include the occasional mail coach in their gallery of sporting heroes—the men sitting tough, the horses like titans—but this was not riding or sport. It was hard graft.⁸⁰

From the first European cavalry schools in the seventeenth century, horsemanship was seen as a gentlemanly performance.⁸¹ But there were no cavalry schools in England and riding drew its best men, and its best mounts, from hunting and racing. In England, it was the Light Brigade not the Heavy that stirred the heart.⁸² When the French traveller Taine thought of English power he thought of 'muck foul'd hind quarters'.⁸³ When the poet spoke of 'Desire', he was not talking of women.⁸⁴

Every town and city had its park or common to ride on. Leicester's Victoria Park was the subject of a furious mid-century spat between the county gentry (Tory) who wanted somewhere to ride, and the municipal authorities (Unitarian) who wanted somewhere to stroll.⁸⁵ Fox-hunts and horse races (followed by gangs of riders) could look and sound like military manoeuvres. John Wootton's *George I at Newmarket* (1717) in red coat and sash with riding crop for a field marshal's baton, resembles some of Philippe de Hondt's (1663–1740) pictures of the Duke of Marlborough at war. Wootton's *A Fox Hunt* (1730–40) is also Dutch influenced, and note the touch of menace. Peter Tilleman's *Foxhunting in Wooded Country* (1730) and George Stubbs' *Reapers* (1795) carries the same threat.⁸⁶ What Minna liked most certainly did not include violence, but she enjoyed the distinction of not having to worry about it.⁸⁷

Nimrod knew all about this and was careful to bathe it in a patriotic light. Of the Quorn in 1837 he said 'Bonaparte's Old Guard would not have stopped such men as these'.⁸⁸ And it is worth remembering that as he said these words the Leicestershire Yeomanry (with many Hunt members) was actively repressing radical and trade union movements in the county, and had been doing so since 1794.⁸⁹ The part-time Yeomanry had a poor reputation. In times of trouble,

⁷⁹ Rising from 25,000 in 1914, plus 213,000 mules and 47,000 camels: Singleton, 'Britain's Military Use of Horses 1914-18', *Past & Present* (1993) p.178.

⁸⁰ Nimrod, *The Chace* (1837) pp.83–4; Alken, 'The Driver of 1832', *Fores's Contrasts* (YCBA 1852).

⁸¹ Worsley, 'Cavaliers', *History Today* (2004) p.9. 17c 'manege' is now called 'dressage'.

⁸² Abler, *Warriors* (1999) p.2. ⁸³ Taine, *Notes on England* (1860–70) p.100.

⁸⁴ 'I saw her at Four running loose in a field': Fothergill, *Twenty Sporting Designs* (1911).

⁸⁵ Jeremy Crump, 'Horse-racing and liberal governance', *Sport in History* (2016).

⁸⁶ On raiders: 'under cover of a great hunting' Sir William Selby organized 'a great assembly' to confront Border robber gangs: letter, Selby to Sir William Lawson, 19 May 1606: CRO D PEN/216. See also 'Surveys of Reivers 1542-1550', in Charlton, *North Tyndale* (1871) p.31. Wootton's *Fox Hunt* and *George I at Newmarket* are to be seen in the YCBA. See also Egerton, *British Sporting and Animal Painting* (1978).

⁸⁷ "Those who are held to be distinguished have the privilege of not worrying about their distinction": Bourdieu, *Distinction* (1979) p.246.

⁸⁸ Nimrod, *The Chace* (1837) pp.35–7.

⁸⁹ Raised to repel French invaders, the Yeomanry's six troops (300 men) spent most of their time repelling Leicestershire bread rioters (1795), Luddites (1811), Hampden Clubs (1817), Radical Reformers (1819, 1832), Chartists (1842, 'Battle of Mowmaker Hill'), and workhouse rioters (1848):

magistrates preferred regulars. In Birmingham, calling out volunteers, they thought, would look ‘highly improper . . . particularly obnoxious . . . [and] inflame the minds of the people’.⁹⁰ As for the infamous activities of the Manchester and Salford Yeomanry at ‘Peterloo’ in Manchester on Monday 16 August 1819, their attack on the crowd was in print almost as soon as it happened. Tegg’s ‘Britons Strike Home!’, shows fat soldiers on horses hacking away at thin people on foot: ‘Down with ‘em! Chop ‘em down my brave boys! give ‘em no quarter’. Henry Hunt, the speaker, recalled them slicing into the demonstrators. Samuel Bamford, one of the sliced at, remembered them dismounting, easing their saddle girths, and carefully wiping the blood from their sabres.⁹¹

Fox-hunting represented the power of the county at its most vivid. Assheton-Smith returned to his old mastership of the Quorn and a brigade of two thousand hunters turned up to cheer.⁹² Count Ernst Saxe Coburg, who didn’t understand these things, thought they were cheering him. Assheton-Smith had been introduced to Napoleon’s officers in 1802 as ‘le premier chasseur de l’Angleterre’. Wellington during the French campaign unkenneled his hounds twice a week, ‘as if he had been a denizen of Leicestershire’. There was hardly a cavalry regiment in the British Empire that did not hunt when it could.⁹³ In battle, the cavalry charge was deemed ineffectual without the Full Cry.⁹⁴ Wolseley’s description of a cigar-smoking staff officer in battle riding in full view of the line—up and down, ‘cool to the utmost extent’—was a Meltonian as Meltonians liked to see themselves.⁹⁵ Heavy cavalry was a one way smash.⁹⁶ Light cavalry, like the hunt, was alert, all seeing, free to turn and chase. The hunt knew its power, and cast it across the land. When George Berkeley saw hunters, he thought he saw raiders.⁹⁷ When Daniel Defoe saw dragoons, he thought he saw huntsmen. The British army

Temple Patterson, *Radical Leicester* (1954). Sometimes the Yeomanry caused disturbances rather than quelled them—as for instance, when drunk at the theatre (p.377). Meanings change. On 25 September 1916 Capt. Breacher of 8th Battalion Leicestershire Regiment rallied the ranks by sounding the Quorn Hunt Tally Ho! at Guendecourt, Battle of the Somme: Ts account, LRO DE 6007/376. Leicester City Football Club adopted the Post Horn Gallop before home games in 1941, and the ‘Fox and Crop’ badge in 1948.

⁹⁰ To deter food riots: letter to Home Department (later Home Office), 2 March 1815: Home Office (HO), National Archives 42/143.

⁹¹ Hunt, *Memoirs* (1822) vol. iii, p.615; Bamford, *Life of a Radical* (1848) p.153. ‘The Peterloo Massacre’ as it was called, saw eleven to eighteen killed and over 400 wounded. Tegg’s print claimed to be published on the same day as the massacre: S. Tegg, ‘Britons Strike Home!’ (Cheapside, 16 August 1819).

⁹² 20 March 1840: Itzkowitz, *Peculiar Privilege* (1977) p.86.

⁹³ *ibid*; MacFarlane, *Life of Wellington* (1886) p.114.

⁹⁴ Glover, *Peninsular Preparation* (1963) p.137.

⁹⁵ ‘It is an indispensable qualification for a staff officer that he should be able to ride well’: Wolseley, *Soldier’s Pocket Book* (1869) p.15, 28, 10.

⁹⁶ Just prior to the General Strike in May 1926 the 2nd Battalion Leicestershire Regiment was put on full alert but instructed to be low key and cautious: no machine guns, no swords, and no officer’s chargers: LRO DE 6007/175.

⁹⁷ Quiller Couch, ed., *Oxford Book of English Prose* (1925) p.376.

remained devoted to the horse well into the 1930s. Right into the 1950s, military men dominated field sports.⁹⁸

Not that Minna and friends wanted to ride Leicestershire hosiery workers into the ground. It was just the fox they wanted, and on 8 January 1919 at a meeting in the County Assembly Rooms, the Quorn was reconstituted after a break of five years. Minna's husband Algernon and Mr. Paget of Nanpantan Hall were accepted as joint masters. A month later, Algy thanked the hunt for the honour: no better sport, jolly good fun, must keep the farmers happy, and so on. Both masters had county pedigrees. William Edmund Paget, formerly of the Leicestershire Yeomanry, was the son of a former Master of the Quorn. Algernon Edwyn Burnaby, acting Master of the Quorn, formerly of the Royal Horse Guards, had served on hunt committees since 1905, was the grandson of a former High Sheriff, and son of the man who had given a famous hunt breakfast for the Prince of Wales. Subscriptions were agreed (regulars £35 per day per week, occasionals £50, strangers up to £100), and so were subsidies to the tune of £4,000 a year to Paget and Burnaby apiece.⁹⁹ These were huge sums. First meet would be at Kirby Gate in November, which was accompanied by a nice photograph in *The Daily Graphic*. There's no sign of Minna, but we can see the joint masters and their huntsman paying a lot of attention to the camera; horses and hounds not paying any.¹⁰⁰

As a county councillor and the member for Gaddesby, as a magistrate and occasional supporter of Melton Conservative Association, Burnaby represented his county in the only way he knew but not really in a way that was to his taste. When he talked about the burden of public service etc, this is what he meant: not his bag, do it all the same. As the owner of historic Baggrave Hall however, and as a soldier who had served his country in youth and middle age, and as a gentleman farmer and spokesman for county agriculture through lean times, and as a loyal supporter of the parish church, the village hall, and the Royal British Legion, and as Master of the Quorn—a dashing role which brought all the other roles to life—in all these things Algy was playing to his strengths. In a town and county that could still with some justification claim to be founded on small family firms, and farms, Tory paternalism had, as the sociologists used to say, a material base. Algy's social round was one of a thousand small exchanges, shakes of the hand, looks in the eye, mutterings of encouragement, and so forth, life and soul of a national Conservative and Unionist Party of one and a half million members but many, many more supporters. How he dressed mattered, and was noted. How he spoke mattered, and was noted. How Minna dressed and spoke mattered just the same.

⁹⁸ On the British Field Sports Society: May, *Fox-Hunting Controversy* (2013) p.44. Defoe, *Tour* (1724–26) p.139.

⁹⁹ Quorn Hunt Minute Book, 26 January 1905, 8 January, 5 February 1919: LRO DE 857/1, DE 857/4; *Star*, 27 January 1919; *Sporting Life* (25 January 1919); *Melton Times* (14 February 1919); *Handbook Quorn Hounds* (Melton 1918): LRO DG 51/109–21.

¹⁰⁰ *Daily Graphic* (11 November 1919).

How they spent their money and where they put themselves were not things of small moment although of course that is exactly what they were and why they mattered so much. His family had been there forever. Their wedding anniversary filled Baggrave Hall with guests, not all of them rich. Like Marx's unalienated man, Algy filled his diary with business in the morning, hunting in the afternoon, and public life in the evening. He got around. In a country busy putting up war memorials his record was impeccable, his style Meltonian, his humour droll. As a young army officer he had steeple-chased through the night in a lady's nightdress. As MFH, the nightdress had been discarded but Algy still liked to banter with the ladies: 'don't mind jumping on that hound there! Plenty more in the kennel'.¹⁰¹

Most Conservative supporters were women and, like them, Minna knew how to keep up. Minna knew how to keep up. Small and sharp and American, there was hardly a hair of her head that the local press did not notice. She opened grand bazaars and sales of work. She arrived at garden fetes in a hat and left dinner dances in a shawl. She lined up with the District Nursing Board. She visited Leicester Prison. She judged puppy shows, pony shows, and baby shows, and she enjoyed her more egregious moments in the enclosure at Leicester Races, or being fined £1 for speeding in her coupe in Spencefield Lane. Minna played her part. She rode with the best, learned to fly in jodphurs, played golf in flatties, raised money, distributed alms, and kept a pet fox. When the occasion demanded it, she led the ladies: 'Leicestershire's hard riding women, clad in saturated habits and heavily plastered with mud which made them almost unrecognizable, were nevertheless thoroughly happy when they dismounted at Twyford yesterday'.¹⁰²

It was a full life poured into short winter days, right across the country, a thousand hunts a week, every winter.¹⁰³ It wasn't only about earning a living, or having fun, or patrolling the land, and it wasn't at all about keeping the fox population down. A class that Thorstein Veblen called 'the leisure class' with its roots in 'the higher stages of the barbarian culture' now preferred to see itself as the up-to-date sporting set.¹⁰⁴ What Minna liked was the beginning of the modern era.

Fay ce que voudras

English counties were governed by overlapping circles of landowners, parish officials, clerics, and justices of the peace. In 1884–85 these circles were ruptured, in theory at least, when the franchise was extended to agricultural labourers. Local government Acts in 1888 and 1894 went on to democratize county

¹⁰¹ Obituary, Minna's Journal and Scrapbook, inc. *Horse and Hound*, 31 January 1931 and note, Claridge's 1937: LRO DG 51/19. On inter-war Conservatism: Ball, *Portrait of a Party* (2013) ch 3.

¹⁰² 'Modern Dianas Revel in Mud': *ibid.*

¹⁰³ On ritual as legitimation: Langford, *Eighteenth Century* (2002) p.208.

¹⁰⁴ Veblen, *Leisure Class* (1899) p.1.

administration. Elected councillors stepped forward and county grandees stepped back.¹⁰⁵ But these were also times of agricultural depression and as the value of the land fell and the authority of the gentry wilted, it was one of the great paradoxes of English life that the land came to seem even more important and its symbolic power, perforce, took on extra meaning.¹⁰⁶ In a country rarely given to excessive displays of national identity, the MFH was rural England's prime sporting ornament. Where he led, others followed. When the hunt swept up to the brow of a hill, England belonged to them.¹⁰⁷

Aristocrats were used to going where they liked, and their parks and estates were designed to give them the feeling that they could. The four hundred peers and 1288 great landowners who owned 40 per cent of England and Wales in 1875 certainly didn't lack land or liberty.¹⁰⁸ The Duke of Beaufort's 700 square miles was all a freeborn Englishman could ride in a day. Sir Richard Sutton was fond of saying 'I go where I like' and the Quorn pretty much gave him the opportunity. Four earls of Lonsdale said the same of the Cottesmore.¹⁰⁹

In 1782 the young Prussian clergyman C P Moritz was shocked at the free and easy behaviour of MPs in the House of Commons. They cracked nuts, peeled oranges, called out, stood up, sat down, waved, and generally did what they liked in front of the Speaker.¹¹⁰ Do as you like, go where you like, *Fay ce que voudras* as you like, words carved above the front door of Hambleton Hall in Rutland, built in 1881 as a hunting lodge for Walter Marshall, shipping magnate.¹¹¹ This was a liberty founded on land: not fancy, or an opinion, but something grounded, like the country itself, in what these people owned. For Matthew Arnold, 'Doing As One Likes' was the main theme of English life and part of the anarchy that typified it.¹¹² 'Town Spy' thought if every lady and gent was fined 5s for swearing as they liked, the National Debt could be cleared, with further fines 'for all Oaths at the Groom-porters and at the Horse racing, Prize-fighting, and Cocking . . .'.¹¹³ Tories claimed any Englishman could do as he liked be he a lord or a tinker, and this was

¹⁰⁵ Joanna Innes, in Langford, *Eighteenth Century* (2002) p.131; Cannadine, *British Aristocracy* (1990) refers to 'the inexorable dilution of patrician society' in this period (p.353).

¹⁰⁶ As 'the new rich continued to pour into the countryside': Cannadine, *ibid.*, p.367; Readman, *Land and Nation* (2008) pp.86–94.

¹⁰⁷ For England as an Arcadian ideal and the English gentry as its custodians: Nicolson, *Earls of Paradise* (2008) and *The Gentry* (2011).

¹⁰⁸ Based on Bateman's Land Return, based in turn on Parliamentary Return of Owners of Land, 1875–6, Table 3/2, Land Ownership by Class 1872: Cahill, *Who Owns Britain?* (2001) p.45.

¹⁰⁹ Carr, *English Fox Hunting* (1976) p.115; Page, *VCH Rutland* (1908) p.302. Under the 5th Earl, the Cottesmore comprised 360 square miles.

¹¹⁰ Moritz, *Travels in England* (1782) p.43.

¹¹¹ Words from Rabelais and the Hell Fire Club, Marshall was a sometime member of the Quorn, the Cottesmore, the Belvoir, and the Fernie.

¹¹² Arnold, *Culture & Anarchy* (1867–69) p.83.

¹¹³ Anon., or 'The Town Spy', *View of London and Westminster* (1728) p.4.

undoubtedly true.¹¹⁴ All the tinker required to hunt was a horse, a meet, a certain distinction, £50, and the train fare home.

All was not what it seemed however. Behind the gentry's commanding prospects lay all who would bar their way—from vexed farmers and cursed gamekeepers to angry villagers, huffy landowners, rival hunters, awkward riders and, according to Sassoon, a vicar who stood by his garden gate shouting 'Brutes!' George Osbaldeston's entire mastership seems to have been a battle with those who cut him or crossed him. 'It is almost impossible to give universal satisfaction to the Meltonian', he thought.¹¹⁵ Lord Lonsdale told the Quorn that the first duty of mastership was not sport but managing other landowners:

I should like to lay plainly before you my views as to the position and the duties I am undertaking, that there may be no mistake hereafter. I by no means place the actual fox-hunting as the first of such duties, rather that all consideration and consulting of their convenience be paid to landlords and covert owners, equally to all tenants and occupiers of land. Subject to this, I will try all means in my power to show you sport.¹¹⁶

Which is to say, whatever sport these people enjoyed, it rested upon landlordism.¹¹⁷ Whole estates could be turned to fox-hunting and in the face of all the money and effort that went into it, one shot fox was a violation. Sportsmen called it 'vulpicide', a crime followed in hunt loathing only by 'chopping', which killed them in their covert, or 'bagging', which brought them in in a bag. Why shoot the fox when we want to chase it? Why chop it when we want to kill it? Why have a hunting policy at all when you can bring it in a bag?¹¹⁸

Masters faced an endless stream of bills for covert rents, road tolls, fence damage, drainage, wire, stabling, kenneling, licensing, feeding, vets, tradesmen, and hunt servants, not to mention the boots and bridles, whips and saddles, caps and jackets, and all the dinners that were as much a part of the show as the chase itself. In 1837 master's costs were estimated at a minimum of £2,235 a year or, to put it in perspective, being willing and able to fork out £52 (or a year's income for a farm labourer) to host a champagne lunch in the Bull's Head, Loughborough.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁴ Anthony Trollope, quoted in Carr, *English Fox Hunting* (1976) pp.72–4.

¹¹⁵ Osbaldeston, *Autobiography* (1856) p.110 and pp. 52, 93, 115.

¹¹⁶ Hugh Lowther, 5th Lord Lonsdale, to Quorn Hunt Committee, County Assembly Rooms, Leicester, 1 January 1897 Quorn Hunt Minutes: 1884–1913: LRO DE 857/1. See also Sassoon, *Fox Hunting Man* (1928) p.207.

¹¹⁷ Wentworth Fitzwilliam to Lord Lowther, 25 December 1880: CRO D Lons/21/2/54.

¹¹⁸ For examples of 'vulpicide': *Sportsman's Magazine* (23 January 1847); 'Atrocity in Hunting Field', *Eclipse* (5 January 1863); 'Fox Murder in Herts', *Bell's Life* (13 June 1868). The calling card of the City Hounds promised a bagged fox on 10 April 1799: John Johnson, Bodleian, Sport Box 9.

¹¹⁹ Lunch bill to Capt. Warner, Joint Master of the Quorn, 23 October 1868: LRO, DE 3030/148; for all the bills and all the worries, Quorn Hunt Minutes, 1884–1913: LRO DE 857/1. For costs: Nimrod, *The Chase* (1837) p.15.

The Quorn and Cottesmore were subscription packs where subscribers guaranteed a certain subsidy to the master who in turn paid the kennel bills and managed the country. When he became MFH, Mr. Jorrocks promised to take his hat off only to *paying* subscribers, and was roundly cheered for it, though how strict masters were, or could be, is open to question. The Cottesmore's subscriptions were written up in an old school exercise book. In 1919 the Quorn adopted a complex fee structure that proved ineffectual.¹²⁰ In any case, fashionable hunts didn't really need accounts because they could usually clear debts in a day. In 1884 the Quorn raised £680 at one go in the Bell Hotel Leicester, and £1,000 in the County Rooms the following year. In 1889 the Cottesmore resolved to build new stables and cottages and £7,000 was guaranteed there and then from ten members. A £60 whip round for 'Drew the Jockey', who broke his neck at Brighton Races riding *Pellucid*, finished the matter in moments. He was 21 years old.¹²¹

Algy accepted his Quorn mastership with a gracious speech thanking the farmers for not making too many claims. Mr. Crawford responded on behalf of the farmers.¹²² Disagreements usually turned on the fundamental problem of rearing and protecting animals in order to kill them. No farmer liked foxes (in 1897 the Quorn had to stand a £300 poultry bill), not to mention the associated problem of horses trampling crops, frightening livestock, and getting tangled up in wire. In 1886, two farmers got themselves elected to the Quorn Hunt Committee. At first, they were ignored, then they were resisted, Mr. Roberts carrying the meeting in his view that 'it was better that these matters should be left in the hands of the gentry'. He didn't want any unpleasantness. Neither did the farmers. That is why they persisted although to what end it is difficult to say.¹²³ In 1894, an Old Dalby farmer took MFH Warner and Huntsman Firr to Court of Queen's Bench for trespass and damage after a hundred riders trampled his winter wheat and frightened his sheep and cattle. He claimed the loss of three ewes and thirty-five calves and it would appear that at first the hunt had been unwilling to negotiate—which was unusual because all hunting, not just fox-hunting, was underwritten by a complex web of negotiation and consent.¹²⁴

As for hunting with firearms, up in Cumberland Will Tinker and Norman Parker did not have permission to shoot on Lord Lonsdale's land; but Wilfred Lawson did. James Stainbank had 'a great desire' to keep a greyhound; but Lord Lowther had a greater desire that he didn't. Lord Lowther kept dogs; but couldn't

¹²⁰ There were constant short falls in payment. The hunt did not exist only to chase foxes: eg Quorn Hunt Minutes, 1919: LRO 857/14; and Surtees, *Handley Cross* (1854) p.87.

¹²¹ *Eclipse*, 10 August 1863; Quorn Hunt Minutes, 5 April 1884, 27 February 1885: LRO DE 857/14; Cottesmore Hunt Minutes, 24 July 1889: LRO DG 37/194.

¹²² *Leicestershire Mail*, 6 February 1919.

¹²³ Farmers, Quorn Hunt Minutes, 28 April–19 June 1886: LRO DE 857/1.

¹²⁴ Poultry, Quorn Hunt Minutes, 27 October 1897: LRO DE 857/1; documents relating to high court action of William Willoughby, 21 February 1894: LRO DE 603.

keep them off his tenants' sheep.¹²⁵ Wire fencing was an especially cheap and effective guard for the farmer; but invisible and treacherous for horse and rider. No farmer liked foxes. No hunter liked wire. In December 1903 the Quorn entered into one of its many wire negotiations, this time at Ashby Folville. When negotiations broke down, there was always the ultimate threat of changing tenancy agreements because, in the end, fox-hunting depended upon the deference of English tenant farmers¹²⁶ A country of stroppey peasants would have made it impossible. In February 1915 the British army stopped fox hunting in France after complaints from *les paysans*.¹²⁷

Farmers could be awkward, but in the end, like the hounds, they were usually biddable. The labouring poor showed little interest in fox-hunting except as a chance to earn a few shillings. It was difficult to know why they would want to chase foxes anyway, except as vermin. Whatever the reason, '... as of late it has been a very general Practice of the Labourers and Idle People to take foxes, greatly to the injury of Sir H Harpur's Hunt'.¹²⁸ But some landowners could be very difficult, daring to disoblige other landowners, and rival hunts could be worse. There were bitter disputes during the 1880s between the Quorn and the South Quorn, later called The Fernie.¹²⁹ Disputes like these were almost colonial, centring on borders and resources, particularly covert rights. Cecil laid it down that 'a gentleman resident in the country would be very reluctant to render himself so unpopular [to refuse use of his covert] even if he were not on friendly terms with the master of hounds'. Equally, he opined that no gentleman could be made MFH without 'the consent of the majority of the most influential owners of coverts'. A man who could not bear to see horsemen on his land ought to give up his land, thought Trollope.¹³⁰

But what if Trollope was wrong? What when gentlemanliness failed? What if the landowner did not feel that which all landowners were meant to feel? Given that the fox did not understand the laws of trespass and went where it willed, and given that it was the will of the hunt (an Englishman's liberty) to follow, then the outcome was usually a question of who could get their way—the obliging hunt or the disobliging landowner? In 1820, Mr. Legh-Keck of Stoughton Grange in Leicestershire admitted to the Earl of Denbigh that it was perfectly true that Mrs. Legh-Keck had objected to the Quorn drawing their fox in her spinney.

¹²⁵ Permissions to shoot: CRO D LONS L1/3/9/34–177; letters, Mr. Sowden to Mr. Armitage, 22, 24 September 1750: CRO D LONS/L5/2/11/251.

¹²⁶ Quorn Hunt Minutes, December 1903: LRO DE 859/1; on tenancies, printed letter from MFH to all members and landowners, Blackmore Vale Hunt, Stourhead, 27 May 1896: John Johnson, Bodleian, Sport Box 9.

¹²⁷ Riedi & Mason, 'Leather', *Canadian Journal* (2006) p.492.

¹²⁸ Letter on behalf of Sir H Harpur, Calke, Derbyshire to Mrs. Curzon, Breedon on the Hill, Leicestershire, 13 March 1770: LRO DE 1536/390.

¹²⁹ 'unexampl'd bitterness': Page, *VCH Rutland* (1908) pp.273–5; Quorn Hunt Minutes, 16 February to 7 June 1888: LRO DE 857/1.

¹³⁰ Trollope, *British Sports* (1868) p.74; Cecil, *Records of the Chase* (1854) pp.49–50.

But it was indubitably not the case that her gamekeeper had shot their fox (if indeed it was their fox). Writing to a peer of the realm, Mr. Legh-Keck assured his correspondent that they were loyal supporters of the hunt & & but as a substantial landowner, a longstanding MP for the county, and Lt. Col. Commandant of the Leicestershire Yeomanry, he was clearly not going to be pushed around. Legh-Keck's politics were almost as Tory as the noble Earl's and, firing salvos on his wife's behalf from the battlements of their Leicestershire castle, he must have thought that he had won the day. Not a bit of it. A few days later, the letter from Hell arrived. It came, according to *Bailey's*, from none other than 'the greatest sportsman the world ever knew since the days of the Assyrian Nimrod'. Mr. George Osbaldeston, expelled from Eton, recipient of a good 4th at Oxford, and one day to be thrown out of the MCC but for the time being Master of the Quorn, informed the Legh-Kecks that he was pleased to hear they supported the hunt, that he looked forward to testing their facilities 'in every possible shape', and that he would call upon them at the earliest opportunity.¹³¹

The story of George Osbaldeston's rushing of the Legh-Kecks can be contrasted with the story of Lord Lonsdale's two letters. Lonsdale's pack had been hunting in the Tring and Woburn area (they'd travelled down from Cumberland by train) and had run a fox to ground in another hunt's covert. The local gamekeeper had not minced his words and in their subsequent exchange of letters the two masters disagreed as to what precisely happened next. Major Hope, writing on behalf of the Oakley, accused Lonsdale's party of violating hunt law by digging the fox out. Lonsdale, writing from Carlton House Terrace, St James's, drafted two letters. One said sorry, never do it again, deep regret, *all that*. The other accused Hope's gamekeeper of a fondness for drink and fisticuffs and hinted that even if the fox had been dug out, it was not he the MFH who had ordered it but the Master of Harriers—in hunt etiquette, a completely different thing.¹³² Not every dispute was so finely tuned. In 1860 Mr. Clowes asked the well-named Mr. Packe to contribute £500 towards Lord Stamford's Quorn. Packe took his time before writing back to say no.¹³³

There had been legal judgements in 1786 and 1809 on the line between consent granted and assumed, but sporting men preferred to sort it out for themselves. The

¹³¹ G. A. Legh-Keck to Denbigh, 11 February 1820, and Osbaldeston of Quorndon Hall to Legh-Keck, 20 February 1820: LRO DE 2515, Bewicke Ms; *Bailey's Magazine*, Itzkowitz, *Peculiar Privilege* (1977) p.103. Col George Anthony Legh Keck (1774–1860), of Stoughton Grange, Leicestershire, and Bank Hall, Bretherton, Lancashire, had been forced to abandon his Leicestershire parliamentary seat in 1818 due to his opposition to popular radicalism in the county: Simon Harrett, in Fisher, ed., *History of Parliament 1820–32* (2009). Osbaldeston was in the process of squandering a fortune while living the sporting life.

¹³² Hope to Lonsdale, 28 November 1849, and Lonsdale, draft letters, 30 November 1849: CRO D LONS L1/2/154.

¹³³ Mr. Clowes of Woodhouse Eaves to Charles William Packe, Branksome Towers, Poole, Dorset and Prestwold Hall, Leicestershire, 21 December 1860; Packe to Clowes, 5 January 1861: LRO DE 5047/113/1–2.

Jockey Club and the Pugilistic Society had each been founded to control their own sports in their own way but hunting countries were far more difficult to manage.¹³⁴ An informal hunt arbitration committee was set up at Boodles in 1856 that eventually became The Hunt Masters' Association in 1881, but with no great success. And no wonder. Rules on digging and drawing admitted that drawing was not necessarily the same thing as digging but drawing without digging might require the use of a terrier (which could not be borrowed).¹³⁵

In the end, the hunt's desire to go where it will was not restricted to set permissions inside carefully delineated boundaries. It depended on the dynamic interplay of occasionally head-strong gentlemen managing land they knew and owned, or managing others to manage it for them.¹³⁶ That success in these matters could not always be guaranteed paved the way for more convenient equestrian events in the form of 'Point to Point', or Gymkhana, or National Hunt. Point to Point is cross country racing over fences for amateur riders, often farmers. The phrase was first used in *Bell's Life* in 1874 concerning a meeting convened by the 9th Lancers. Gymkhana, usually for children, or 'eventing', usually for serious riders, is competitive jumping. National Hunt was and is the professional version of Point to Point where race courses are built to resemble hunting countries with water jumps, high fences, dead drops and all the chance of a fall.¹³⁷ Flat racing remained the supreme English sport well into the 1930s, but if the Epsom Derby (1780) brought all sorts of people together, fresh out of London, the Grand National (1839) brought the whole nation together, fresh out of the bookies. Everyone knew about Becher's Brook and Valentine's even if the nearest they came to these jumps was losing a bet.¹³⁸

In a similar vein, 'coursing' (two greyhounds matched cross country against a hare), emerged as another version of hunting without the difficulty, just as greyhound track racing was the urban version of coursing without the hare. Based on betting and breeding but with hounds, both sports dressed in the horsey fashion, raced in the horsey fashion, and bestowed names in the horsey fashion—a mixture of the classical ('Leander'), the popular ('Toddlin Hame'), and the exemplary ('Beeswing'). Cumbrian coursing was dominated by farmers but could be grand enough for gentlemen (Waterloo Cup) and cheap enough for labourers

¹³⁴ Henricks, *Disputed Pleasures* (1991) ch 6. Jockey Club was founded in 1750, Pugilistic Society in 1814.

¹³⁵ Itzkowitz, *Peculiar Privilege* (1977) pp.68–74.

¹³⁶ The fourteen hunting packs of the British Army of the Rhine were disbanded in October 1952 after the Prime Minister acceded to local demands about to be reflected in the Bundestag. British army officers, in other words, could not manage their estates. In 1948 Mr. Churchill had turned out with the Old Surrey and Burstow Hunt on his 74th birthday.

¹³⁷ Cheltenham Steeple Chase, five miles distant, described by Rev. Witts in the 1830s: Witts, *Cotswold Parson* (1979) p.134.

¹³⁸ Horse racing still dominated the front and middle pages of the sporting press into the 1920s. The *Daily Telegraph* said it witnessed an 'annual intermixture of all classes unknown beneath the sun' at The Derby (26 May 1864).

(2s 6d to join a subscription club in 1821). At a meeting at Brampton in 1870, entry fee was 5s on a horse and 1s on foot. If you challenged the judge, fine £5. If your dog got loose, fine 10s. It cost 7 guineas to have your bitch ‘served’ at a stud in 1905.¹³⁹

Classic racing was on the flat by young horses over short distances, headquarters at Newmarket. National Hunt racing was over jumps by older horses over longer distances, headquarters at Cheltenham. Both depended for their popularity on betting and betting depended for its national popularity on rapidly published results, provided by newspapers, including penny results papers like *Sporting Snips* and *Turf Times*. A minor industry of form books and racing manuals allowed punters to repent at their leisure. If National Hunt was fox-hunting without the fuss, or the fox, fox-hunting was National Hunt without the *hoi poloi*.¹⁴⁰ Apart from the betting, racing and hunting had a lot in common, including hard caps, the chance of injury, and aristocratic patronage—especially at the most fashionable venues. Nimrod thought racing, for all its high style, induced anxiety and bad company while hunting induced health and happiness. McKibbin thinks that without the betting, there would have been almost no interest in racing.¹⁴¹ The 1925 Ascot Gold Cup attracted owners Lords Astor, Derby, Rosebery, H. H. Aga Khan, and H. H. Maharaja of Rajpipla. The owner of the winning horse ‘Santorb’ was Mr. Barclay Walker of the Liverpool brewing family. (James) Rhodes was named as trainer and the jockey (Steve Donaghue) wasn’t mentioned at all. In 1932 the Quorn Annual General Meeting attracted a field only slightly less distinguished, including HRH Prince of Wales, Earl Lonsdale, the Marquis of Blandford, Lord Crawshaw, and Miss Fox, naturally.¹⁴²

¹³⁹ Race cards, CRO D/CL/P/9/2 and D/ING/164; studbooks, Wilson, *VCH Cumberland* (1905) pp.457–61; Wensleydale subscription rules 1821: John Johnson, Bodleian, Sport Box 2.

¹⁴⁰ John Johnson, Bodleian, Sport Box 11 and 12; Quorn AGM: LRO DE 857/14. The racing press and art market made much of the crowds: Derby Day was the biggest in the calendar (*Sportsmen’s Magazine*, 7 June 1845) but see Charles Turner (1773–1857), ‘An Extensive View of the Oxford Races’ (YCBA nd), and Thomas Rowlandson, ‘A Crowded Race Meeting’ (YCBA 1805–10).

¹⁴¹ McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures* (1998) p.355; Huggins, *Horse Racing* (2003) pp.8–31; and Eadie, ‘English Horse Racing 1830–60’, Oxford DPhil (1993). Racing sought to encourage gentry money into the towns. See for instance notes on racing in Abingdon borough and at Oxford Port Meadows: Challenor, *Borough of Abingdon* (1898), and *Oxford Journal* (7 August 1819). Nimrod’s reflections on health and stress: *The Chace* (1837) p.119. On hard caps, Alphabet book, *Trades and Characters* (nd 1850s?), John Johnson, Bodleian, Sport Box 10: ‘“H” is for Hunts-man, “J” is for Jockey’. When sportsmen competed for stakes and wagers, riding or walking, they did so in jockey silks and caps. See for instance: Thomas Rowlandson, ‘Capt Barclay’s Rally Match—the Finish’ (YCBA 1809), when the celebrated Barclay wagered W. W. Webster that he could walk 1,000 miles in 1,000 hours for 1000 guineas; and Henry Alken, ‘G Osbaldeston Esq Performing His Wonderful and Unprecedented Feat of 200 Miles against Time’, which he did in ten hours (YCBA 1831).

¹⁴² Ascot Gold Cup official programme 18 June 1925: John Johnson, Bodleian, Sport Box 11; Quorn Minutes, 22 March 1932: LRO DE 857/14.

In hunting, disputes over honour could linger on for years. In racing, turf accountants settled matters in minutes as only money can.¹⁴³

Masters

Masters of Fox Hounds usually put themselves near the upper reaches of a county hierarchy that started with the lord lieutenantcy at the top and ended with a seat on the magistrates' bench near the bottom. In Warwickshire, MFH de Broke put himself second after the Lord Lieutenant—higher than all the big landowners and clergy, and way higher than MPs. Many saw the MFH as an idealization of the independent propertied Englishman, 'one in blood and interest with his tenants' and simple in his tastes even if, being at liberty, 'occasionally running riot a little'.¹⁴⁴

There was no shortage of obituaries that reflected the type. Farquharson of the Dorset, Williams Wynn of the Shropshire, Fane of the South Oxfordshire, Priestman of the Braes of Derwent, Greenall father and son of the Belvoir, Annelly of the Pytchley, Col. Alan Percy of the Percy, and Lord Lonsdale of the Cottesmore (and the Pytchley, the Blankney, and the Quorn) were all portrayed as born leaders, usually with an army background, embedded in their own counties if not always to be found there.¹⁴⁵ Percy rode with his own hounds in his own earldom, but Greenall the Lancashire brewer and Lonsdale the Cumbrian coal-owner hunted far from home. The Quorn specialized in non-Leicestershire men but that didn't matter as long as they were gentlemen.¹⁴⁶ Reciprocity was part of the business.¹⁴⁷ Gifts of game were powerful signifiers; as were fox cubs.¹⁴⁸ Sometimes, gentlemen raised their fists, as when MFH Lord Daresbury (Toby Greenall), formerly of the Lifeguards, took on MFH Captain Filmer-Sanke, same

¹⁴³ Tattersall's was the clearing house for bets on 'Settling Day': Egan, *Book of Sports* (1832) p.184. Pollard's 'Epsom Races. The Betting Post' (YCBA 1834-5) shows hundreds of mounted men jostling each other and bookies alike.

¹⁴⁴ Nimrod, *Life of a Sportsman* (1842) p.349. On being one blood with his tenants, see obituary of Maj Thomas Guy Paget, *The Times*, 13 March 1952. Willoughby de Broke is cited in Cannadine, *British Aristocracy* (1990) p.356.

¹⁴⁵ Farquharson's obituary praised him as a 'landlord, father, magistrate and friend' who hunted at his own expense: *Bell's Life*, 14 February 1858; Williams Wynn, *Eclipse*, 12 January 1863; Col. John Fane, *Sporting Chronicle*, 24 November 1875; Priestman, Greenall, and Annelly, in Bradley, *Shire to Shire* (1912) pp.34-40, 115, 227-30, 172; Percy is in *Newcastle Journal*, 4 October 1930.

¹⁴⁶ Page, *VCH Rutland* (1908) pp.270-1.

¹⁴⁷ We find the Duke of Beaufort asking Fortescue Turville for that 'sole Priviledge' (sic) to hunt which his father had enjoyed: letter, from Gosport camp to Turville at Bosworth Hall. 5 November 1803: LRO DG 39/1602. When the younger Turville was denied hunting rights by Lord Shrewsbury ('answered very coolly') he grumbled at length to his father: letter, 15 October 1808: LRO DG 39/1763.

¹⁴⁸ For example, H. Ainslie to Lord Lowther, 12 September 1829, 23 August 1830, 9 October 1833, and special gift of deer, W. Armitage to Sir James Lowther, and Robert Marker to W. Armitage, 20 September 1750: CRO L1/2/63.

regiment, in a Leicestershire covert, one in collar and tie, the other in flannels and tennis shoes.¹⁴⁹

Not all masters conformed to the hero myth. Hunt mythology worked in its favour, but self-deprecating hunt banter worked against. Many riders were free-loaders out for the day. They may have paid their fees, but not their dues. Worse, they might be poor riders liable to lose face in front of bumpkins on a gate looking for a laugh. Although the main thing was not to be laughed at, or censured, in the land of the Charge of the Light Brigade it was difficult to tell where brave riding ended and risky riding began.¹⁵⁰ Sometimes the chaffing was so strong that those who could ride called those who couldn't Meltonians too, but whatever they were called ('Meltonians', 'Sporting Men', 'Snobs', 'Funkers', 'Foreigners', 'Macadamizers', 'Cockneys', 'Grocers') bad Meltonians were only there to be compared with true Meltonians. As Alken painted it: 'How to Qualify for a Meltonian?' 'Some Do and Some Don't. It's All a Notion'.¹⁵¹ There was a right way to dress (not flash), to take a gate (don't funk), and mix (right tone). You must never get too near the hounds or go in front of the Master. Being unhorsed was the ultimate disgrace, but naturally there was a right and a wrong way to fall.¹⁵² Wrong was all down the horse's neck.¹⁵³ Right was 'fall cool'. *Funny Folks* (12 December 1874) offered 'The Whole Art of Falling from a Horse' in three pages. 'Fall only to rise' it advised, and don't for a minute give the impression of being dead, even if you are.¹⁵⁴ According to Alken, 'Funks' and 'Macadamizers' didn't fancy jumping and went the long way round, very bad funks funk'd in front of the ladies, while sporting Cockneys got hoff and jumped over themselves (not exactly), letting the horse follow on.¹⁵⁵ Osbaldeston got off his horse to fight with stockingers over a badger at Hallaton, with drunks at Sibley, and with an unrepentant vulpicide at Ashby. 'One of the greatest difficulties to be contended with in the Quorn . . . was the behaviour of the stocking-makers and weavers who used to assemble in crowds at the covert side'¹⁵⁶ When things got really bad, the

¹⁴⁹ *Daily Telegraph*, 19 February 1990.

¹⁵⁰ 'the hero ambitious of riding fame, if he should have assisted in passing the hounds beyond the line . . . has not only defeated his own purpose but also interrupted the sport of his companions': Cecil, *Records of the Chase* (1854) p.406. Contrast Nimrod's ideal MFH of the quick eye and gentle pace, with all the miseries that can befall even the best: Nimrod, *Hunting Reminiscences* (1843) p.27; Anon, *Book of Sports* (1843) pp.81-4.

¹⁵¹ Alken, 'How to Qualify for a Meltonian' (YCBA 1819, six plates); 'Some Do and Some Don't: It's All a Notion' (YCBA 1820, seven plates); 'Comparative Meltonians, as they Are and as they Were' (YCBA 1832, six plates). Other nicknames are to be found in Cecil, *Records* (1854) p.242, p.400, p.410; Beckford, *Thoughts on Hunting* (1798) in his Letter XIV, made the same comparisons as Cecil; Barrett Davis (YCBA 1840), 'Fox Hunting: Rural Riders or Funkers?'; Ferneley (YCBA 1829); Johnson Payne (YCBA early 20c); Hall (YCBA 1835); Alken (YCBA nd) 'Quorn Hunt Snob is Beat'; Nimrod (YCBA nd) on being 'Macadamized'.

¹⁵² Aspin, *Ancient Customs* (1832) p.93.

¹⁵³ 'the great difficulty is how to fall well': Alken, 'Some Do'.

¹⁵⁴ Cecil, *Records of the Chase* (1854) p.383.

¹⁵⁵ Alken (YCBA nd) 'Set of 12 Sporting Satirists'.

¹⁵⁶ Osbaldeston, *Autobiography* (1856) p.97, p.99, p.101.

humour turned droll, redolent of the battle field. Overtaken and bumped by a thruster, Earl Spencer asked him if he'd come far to do it. Surtees' MFH Jorrocks caught the mood:

You 'airdresser on the chestnut horse', he roars during a check to a gentleman with a very big ginger moustache. 'Pray 'old 'ard!

'Hairdresser?' replies the gentleman, turning round in a fury. 'I'm an officer in the 91st regiment.

'Then you hossifer in the 91st who looks like an 'airdresser. 'Old 'ard'.¹⁵⁷

Algy and Minna, then, were master and mistress of a strange kingdom adjoining other strange kingdoms. *Sporting Life* (21 August 1847) chose yachting, fox-hunting, and horse racing as the national sports, but of the three, betting on the horses was the only one most people understood. Algy claimed to speak for Leicestershire yet most Leicester people did not know where his kingdom began, or ended, or what really went on there. He claimed his birthright to a kind of liberty they could not know, but liberty was a good place to start in the national story, whoever claimed it. That which the political class claimed for themselves, made it harder to deny for others. Knowing such things was one of 'the secret rules of upper classness'.¹⁵⁸

In 1928 the Quorn's joint master Paget died in a riding accident and his place was taken by Algy and Minna's near neighbour, Harold Nutting. The deal was sealed over lunch at Quenby Hall with Sir Harold and Lady Enid.¹⁵⁹ The Burnabys stayed on for one more season as master and first lady. On Algy's death in 1938, Minna sold the farm. The funeral oration was read by Major Guy Paget, Paget's son (who was himself to die of a fall in 1952). He told of Algy's hatchet face and bright blue eyes, his saddle humour and liking for the ladies, how he puffed but never huffed even though he commanded the largest and most difficult field in the country. Unlike some, he said, Algy was a man who never took his pack home. 'Algy. Was ever a man so mis-named? He was neither bearded nor the Algy of the Music Hall, the effeminate pseudo aristocrat'.¹⁶⁰

All those years ago, in the days of Sir Hugo Meynell, Beckford recognized that fox-hunting was a trifle only to those who did not do it. So it was with the Burnabys. As gentry, their love of honour and horses was the sum of all they

¹⁵⁷ Surtees, *Hunts with Jorrocks* (1854) quoted in Lord Charles Cecil, Lecture to R. S. Surtees Society (2014); Carr, *English Fox Hunting* (1976) p.159.

¹⁵⁸ McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures* (1998) p.2.

¹⁵⁹ Nutting to Burnaby, by hand, 8 December 1930: LRO DG 51/31. Nutting joined on a subsidy of £4,500 a year.

¹⁶⁰ Unlike Lord Lonsdale, that is, Minna's Diary, 14 January, 5 April 1911: LRO DG 51/2; eulogy, Maj Guy Paget, LRO DG 51/36.

pretended to be. Algy wrote himself a note headed 'The Christian Knight'. 'Unless natural', he said, 'he may be a good man but not necessarily a gentleman'.¹⁶¹

As a postscript: Algy and Minna could not have known John Peel and he was no Christian Knight. But he was the most famous fox hunter in the world. A failing Cumbrian farmer who hunted his own small pack with his boon companions, Peel was not even a Blencathrian let alone a Meltonian.¹⁶² In his old grey coat and cross-bred pony, he hunted a world away from the Quorn, and only became celebrated after his death (the *Carlisle Patriot* only gave him eleven lines) when a song about him, *D'ye Ken John Peel?* written in Cumbrian phonetic by John Woodcock Graves sometime between 1825 and 1830, found its way into George Coward's 1866 *Songs and Ballads of Cumberland*. By 1910, a time of intense English regionalism, we find The Border Regiment having adopted the song as its regimental quick march and Cumbrian patriots singing it all over the world, even in Newcastle.¹⁶³

It was the rousing chorus that did it. In response to the call, the singer swears his intention to roam free: 'For the sound of his horn cawd me frae my bed / And the cry of his hounds has me oft times led . . .' In the higher ground of the Lake District, Peel and his men oft times had to get off and walk. In 1818, they walked all through the night.¹⁶⁴ In John Peel country the terrain was badly mapped and hard to cross.¹⁶⁵ It wasn't the same land of liberty as Leicestershire, but it was a land of liberty all the same.

¹⁶¹ A. E. Burnaby, 'The Christian Knight' (nd): LRO DG 51/32.

¹⁶² John Peel, born Caldbeck 1776, farmed Ruthwaite, Ireby, died 13 November 1854, buried Caldbeck parish church. The Blencathra Hunt (f.1838) was the most prestigious in the Lake District, too grand for Peel, but not too grand for his hounds, who were related: Machell, *John Peel* (1926) Foreword. In 1816 Peel and his wife Mary mortgaged their 200 acres, and in 1845 had to sell meadow and waste. In 1860, two of their sons auctioned what was left at the Sun Inn, Ireby, for £1,020: 1816 indenture and 1860 auction: CRO D/IG/31; 1845 title deeds: CRO D/IG/8. That he was the 'Nimrod of the North' but never a Meltonian is the point of the piece in the *Monthly Chronicle of North Country Lore and Legend*, June 1887.

¹⁶³ *Carlisle Patriot*, 18 November 1854. In 1910, along with the sentimental 'The Labourer's Noon Day Hymn' ('each field a hallowed spot'), the Cumberland and Westmorland Association hammered home how well they knew *John Peel* at a patriotic supper in Newcastle: programme, CRO DSO 34/17.

¹⁶⁴ Mitchell, *Men of Lakeland* (1966) pp.42-3, as reported in the *Sporting Magazine*, March 1818.

¹⁶⁵ Rollinson, *Man in the Lake District* (1967) p.121, pp.129-30.

Add Article. Land of Liberty. 1939, Drama/History, 2h 18m. 0 Reviews Fewer than 50 Ratings. There are no critic reviews yet for Land of Liberty. Keep checking Rotten Tomatoes for updates! Audience Reviews for Land of Liberty. There are no featured reviews for because the movie has not released yet (). See Movies in Theaters. Land of Liberty Quotes. There are no approved quotes yet for this movie. Movie & TV guides. Best Horror Movies. Top 200 of all time. 150 Essential Comedies. The funniest movies ever. Land of Liberty. In 2014 on average three pubs in Britain are closing down every week, one pub that is not only surviving but also growing during this time is the Land of Liberty, Peace and Plenty, the site of an ale-house for almost two hundred years situated on the edge of Chorleywood, Hertfordshire, and an important centre to the local community. Regular local and county winner of the Campaign for Real Ale Pub of the Year award, the pub is a popular meeting point for friends, colleagues as well as a source of information Land of Liberty. 75 likes. Land of Liberty is a full-length documentary on homelessness. Facebook is showing information to help you better understand the purpose of a Page. See actions taken by the people who manage and post content. Page created 3 March 2010. Land of Liberty is a 1939 American documentary film written by Jesse L. Lasky Jr. and Jeanie Macpherson. The film tells the history of the United States from pre-Revolution through 1939. The film was released on June 15, 1939, by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.[1][2]. There is a creature in southern land's, that is nearly as old as the nation of Equestria. Once referred as the queen of the forbidden jungle, later imprisoned in Tartarus. Now it's free to roam the land once more. Human. Crossover.