

# Genesee Valley Hunt Bible

BY  
MAJOR W. AUSTIN WADSWORTH, M.F.H.

## OF THE FARMER.

You have no business on a man's land but are there by his sufferance and he is entitled to every consideration. It is no excuse that you are in a hurry. It is much better for the Hunt that you should be left behind than that a farmer should be injured. If you take down a rail you should put it back. If you open a gate you should shut it. If you break a fence or do any damage that you cannot repair, you should report it at once to the responsible officers of the Hunt that it may be made good. Although you may feel convinced that it improves wheat to ride over it, the opinion is not diffused or popular and the fact that some fool has gone ahead is no excuse whatsoever, but makes the matter worse. The spectacle of a lot of men following another's track across a wheat field and killing hopelessly the young plants, which the first had probably injured but slightly, is too conducive to profanity to be edifying to any community.

You may think that the honest farmer deems it a privilege to leave his life of luxurious idleness and travel around half the night in the mud for horses which have got out, or spend days sorting sheep which have got mixed by your leaving his gates open or fences down. You are mistaken. He don't.

## OF THE MASTER.

The M.F.H. is a great and mystic personage to be lowly, meekly and reverently looked up to, helped, considered and given the right of way at all times. His ways are not as other men's ways, and his language and actions are not to be judged by their standard. All that can be asked of him is that he furnish good sport as a rule, and so long as he does that he is amenable to no criticism, subject to no law and fettered by no conventionality while in the field. He is supposed by courtesy to know more about his own hounds than outsiders and all hallooing, calling and attempts at hunting them by others are not only very bad manners but are apt to spoil sport.

As a general rule he can enjoy your conversation and society more when not in the field with the hounds, riders, foxes and damages on his mind.

N.B. The proffer of a flask is not conversation within the meaning of the meaning of the above.

## OF THE FOX.

Don't tag after the first whip and make one of a line of sentries around a covert. How can a fox break if you do?

Keep your mouth shut when you see a fox until he is well away and you are between him and the pack. Then if you are sure it is the hunted fox, stand still as nearly on his line as possible and yell for all you are worth. Don't cap on the first hounds but let the huntsman bring up the pack. Don't gallop after the fox by yourself. If you caught him alone he might bite you.

Don't "give tongue" on a woodchuck. It will cause you humiliation. There is a difference in the tails.

## **OF THE HOUNDS.**

Keep away from them at all times and every time. No body but the huntsman and whips have ever any business near the hounds at any time and particularly, near them in front or behind. Moving in front of them leads them on. Moving behind them frightens them and drives them.

Give them space to work without being in terror of their lives, and don't keep crowding up on them when they are casting.

Don't get between the huntsman and whips on the road. Keep ahead of him or behind them. The space between them belongs to the pack.

## **OF THE RIDER.**

Don't say "Ware horse!" to the hound. Say "Ware hound!" to the horse.

It is never any excuse that you cannot hold your horse. You have no business to bring out a horse you cannot hold any more than a biter or kicker. If you cannot hold him, go home.

Never follow a man closely, particularly over a jump. If he should fall when landing you might kill him while helpless. Take your own line and keep it. Everybody is supposed to be entitled to the panel in front of him. If you don't like yours you must not take another man's until your turn.

## **SIGNALS ON HORN.**

An occasional short note in covert ( ~ ) shows where the huntsman is. Keep behind it so as to give him room to turn. If it comes toward you stop till he passes on.

A long steady blast ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) calls the hounds to the huntsman.

A long steady blast followed by a short note ( \_\_\_\_\_ ~ ) calls in the whips as well.

Three short notes repeated ( ~ ~ ~ ) means "hurry up" or "come along quicker".

A long wavy blast with short toots ( ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ) and much vocal accompaniment means GONE AWAY!

## **DRESS.**

*Field* Dark blue Melton coat, buff waistcoat, buff breeches and black boots.

*Evening* Scarlet coat with green facings, white waistcoat; hunt buttons.