



Stag Hunt

Codford

WESTBURY

GOOD SPORT WITH THE BATH STAG HOUNDS

On Tuesday, the 15th inst., this celebrated pack met at Westbury, As usual the deer was uncarted on the adjoining down, and he at once took the line to Battlesbury, and thence to Middleton, where he was soon followed by a field of upwards of fifty. Here a rest became necessary, as the run up to this point was at racing speed. The hounds on being again led on took the direction of Norton Lime Kiln, over the hill to Heytesbury Park, where there was a check for some time. After a few casts, the hounds ran through the plantations over Upton Hill to Codford Firs, crossing Chittern meadows (here the stag was in view), straight to Mr Nottley's Farm, Codford, through the belt of firs to the meadows. The pace up to this time being good, and most of the field having taken the down at Codford, only a few were left with the pack. The scene now became exciting, in consequence of the stag crossing the river Wily about midway between Codford and Fisherton, leaving those hounds the choice of a two miles extra gallop to Fisherton or to plunge into the water, and only two were found bold enough to swim the stream. The stag then made for Chilmark (where about half a dozen more of the field came up), skirting Rudge and on to Chilmark Quarry, and back again to Sutton Mandeville, when night brought this capital run to a close without taking the stag. But Captain West and his hounds found a hospitable reception at the residence of F. King, Esq. On the following morning, they proceeded in search of their lost friend without success, no tidings having been heard of him in the neighbourhood: the hounds were therefore taken home the same evening. Information, however, having been conveyed to Captain West, that the stag had been seen in Fovant Wood, a "meet" was accordingly announced for eleven, at Chilmark, on Monday last. Here a select few of the right sort were again cordially greeted, and proceeded in company with one of the fair sex admirably equipped, in pursuit of the fugitive, which they soon found in Fovant Wood. He at once gave the unmistakeable evidence of his love of liberty, and that the brief sojourn in his natural state had not diminished his mettle, by giving chase through Compton over the Salisbury Race Course, passing Coombe, onwards at a spanking pace to Longford Castle, near which he took the river, the master of the hunt and a few others following down the heavy water meadows to Charlton, near Downton, where he was at last secured, having led the hounds upwards of forty miles from home. The dreary moonlight return was cheered by another warm Wiltshire reception at Mr Pinniger's of Coombe, and the Captain and his pack did not reach Heytesbury till ten o'clock, where a conveyance was in waiting to enable him to reach home that night, to keep an appointment at Corsham the following day. Yet it is rumoured that this will be the last season of this fine pack – the lovers of sport in the neighbourhood of Bath not having sufficient spirit and liberality to retain the services of such a gallant sportsman.

(Salisbury and Winchester Journal – Saturday 26 March, 1853)