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Octogenarians recall following the hunt on foot

"I HAVE never seen so many people in Bramham," remarked an 86-year-old Bramham man describing the Boxing Day meet of Bramham Moor Hunt in the village. Mr. Herbert Tindall, of The Square, and Mr. Walter Lock, also aged 86, of Town Hill, Bramham, watched the meet together with the same keenness they have felt for the major part of their lives.

For the two octogenarians have followed the hunt since they were boys and since Mr. Lock came to live in Mr. Tindall's native village 27 years ago they have followed the hunt together. As boys they would run on foot but at times Mr. Lock has ridden with the hunt and in later years the two used cars to pursue the riders.

Mr. Lock's interest in hunting began at his former home in Aberford where he would watch the hunt passing through. He later came to live at the Windmill in Bramham. "We used to run about eight miles at a time behind the hunt but with a bit of intelligent cutting of corners we could keep up without too much effort," he explained.

On a few occasions he had been "in at the kill," and recalled "In the early days they used to throw the fox into the air and the hounds would tear it to pieces but they dare not do that now with all the people that are against it."

He thought that the people who were against hunting did not understand the sport. "It does more good than harm," he said. "It keeps the foxes down and provides employment. There are still a lot of foxes about."

Mr. Tindall's interest grew from the work of his father who was stud groom at Bramham House,

MR. H. TINDALL (left) and Mr. W. Lock enjoy a chat about old times.

Legendary Huntsman

They recalled they were the only two left who saw the legendary Huntsman Tom Smith receive his testimonial in 1908 after 30 years' service. "We were working as joiners on the rebuilding of Bramham Park," said Mr. Tindall. "We were not involved in the ceremony but were on the roof when Lord Bingley made the presentation."

Mr. Lock explained that Bramham Park had burned down and had been an empty shell for some 80 years before rebuilding began in

At that time the Lane Fox family was living in Hope Hall, the family dowager home. As soon as rooms were made ready in Bramham Park the family returned. Tom Smith lived in outbuildings that had not been touched by the fire. These included stables and kennels, and the gardeners house. The gardens had been kept up throughout the 80 years the house had been empty.

Tom Smith was quite a character, recalled Mr. Lock. "I remember seeing him at Aberford when a local man joined in with a race horse. Of course he raced off after the hounds but Tom Smith would not have it and sent the man away."

Things were different now. The hunt was becoming an expensive pastime for businessman and farmers rather than the sport it was. "They turn up in their cars and horse boxes now instead of riding to a meet," remarked Mr. Lock. "Aye and only one or two wear pink now," added Mr. Tindall. "But I have never seen so many people in Bramham as there were on Boxing Day."

Rode with hunt

During the 1914-18 war Mr. Lock joined the Yorkshire Hussars Yeomanry and for that reason he was allowed to ride with the hunt. "Lord Bingley always allowed the Yeomanry to ride with the hunt," he explained.

Mr. Lock lives on his own and Mr. Tindall lives with two bachelor sons, two doors away from a married son,

Sons: Arthur & Bill Tindall Harry (married)

Parents' 'one-in-three' representation on