



# The Great Hound Match of 1905: Alexander Henry Higginson, Harry Worcester Smith, and the Rise of Virginia Hunt Country

*Martha Wolfe*

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In November 1905, the peak of foxhunting season across the Midlands of England and up and down the east coast of North America, two tiny towns in Virginia's Piedmont, poor and nearly forgotten after the Civil War and a recent depression, saw the coming of illustrious and wealthy foxhunters to raise their hopes. There was to be a contest, a Great Hound Match, between two packs of foxhounds, one English and one American. The English hounds carried, on their great stout forearms and deep chests, the monumental weight of centuries of foxhunting in England and were expected to make their hound dog ancestors proud of their New World conquest. The American hounds were expected to show those stodgy old Brits how it was done over here—with spunk and intuition, individuality, drive, and nerve. This book, the story of an audacious contest between men cut from very different cloth and their hounds carved from very different stock, chronicles a metaphorical battle in America's coming of age—her psychic independence from Britain's lingering shroud at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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