

International Sport

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Year
Jahrgang 1928-1929

**His Excellency
Count Franz Clam-Gallas Vienna**

The original home of the Counts of Clam was in Hohenberg in Kärnten; its castle was for a long time in the possession of the ancient noble house of the Pergers of Hohenberg. A distinguished member of this family named Christof Perger acquired in 1424 the earldom of Clam at Grein in Austria. Being raised to the peerage in 1655 the new owner of Clam became subsequently a hereditary Count of the Austrian realm. In the middle of the 18th century the family divided itself into two branches, the Clam-Martinitz line and the Clam-Gallas line. Being highly in confidence of the Royal House of Habsburg several members of this aristocratic and rich family did distinguished diplomatic and, above all, military services for the up-building of the Austrian Empire. Also the latest descendant of this highly noble house, His Excellency Count Franz of Clam-Gallas has remained true to this tradition.

His Excellency Count Franz of Clam-Gallas is the son of Excellency Count Edward of Clam-Gallas, Privy Councillor and Knight of the Theresian-Cross of the Golden-Vliess, and was born on the 26th of July, 1854, at Reichenberg in Bohemia. After finishing his studies he accepted services under the Gouvernement, became Privy Councillor and Chamberlain and was honoured with the title of "His Excellency". His military term he served under the Royal Dragoon Regiment where he rose to the rank of a Captain. Since his retirement from the army Count Clam-Gallas has taken upon himself the management of his extensive estate in Bohemia. On account of this he bears the title – Lord of Friedland, Reichenberg, Grafenstein and Lämberg. Besides possessing numerous distinctions of the highest and most celebrated Orders, Count Franz Clam-Gallas is also a Honorary Member of the Supreme Order of the Knight of Malta. Above all, he has been and still is a veteran and distinguished sportsman of rare abilities. In spite of his advanced age (he is now 70 years old) the Count is still considered to be one of the most prominent personalities in the sport and social life of Austria as well as of Vienna. Count Franz of Clam-Gallas is not only the founder and for several years President of the Vienna Riding Association; to him also belongs the great

honour of calling into existence the Riding and Polo Club of Vienna. Moreover this Austrian aristocrat founded the first tennis club in Vienna which was at that time the meeting place of the elite of the town, and acted as its President from the beginning to the end. At the same time the Count is also a life-member of the Jockey-Club of Austria, the Golf Club of Vienna and the Automobile Club of Austria. It is also to the initiative of the Count that the golf Club of Vienna owes its well-known and beautiful club house in the Krieau. For several years President of the Club for Gentleman Riders in Vienna (Club der Wiener Herrenfahrer) he is since a long time member of the "Campagne-Reiter-Gesellschaft".

No doubt His Excellency Count Clam-Gallas owes all these honours partly to his high social position but that which is chiefly responsible for these rare distinctions is his great merit as a sportsman. Not only a passionate but also a very brilliant rider from his youth this Austrian aristocrat has been engaged in sports since 1872, i. e. for over 50 years, and took part in the famous Pardobitz Parforce Hunts till their end.

Even at present His Excellency Count Clam-Gallas maintains a stable containing most thorough-bred saddle and carriage horses which are exclusively used by himself and his 7 daughters who are

also passionately inclined toward sports. A part of the ladies already rides in tournaments and some of them even train and take care of their horses themselves.

The Count's interest for tournament sport has been equally great. With carriages with two and four horses as well as in foursomes and fivesomes he succeeded in winning several valuable prizes. Also Count Franz of Clam-Gallas possesses an international name as a first class hunter. Before the expropriation he owned extensive big game preserves in his estate in Bohemia. Moreover he enjoys a high reputation among the prominent huntsmen of England where he with his English friends took part in many fox-hunting and deer-chasing excursions. The fact alone that His Excellency Count Clam-Gallas was a guest of Empress Elizabeth of Austria, one of the most well-known and best Parforce riders of her time, in her English hunts is a most convincing proof of the versatile genius of this great personage.

The Count has also been considerably interested in open-air sports, and since the very beginning of their introduction not only took an active part in them but also did much with word, deed and money for their promotion and their popularization among the younger generation. He particularly loved skating and was one of the founders of the winter

sport in Austria. Specially he took an important part in the organization of the icesliding sport on the Semmering, and the modern arrangements which have at present converted the Semmering into a sport El Dorado are also mostly due to his initiation.

Also during the war, although over sixty, he did splendid service for his country. Under the Maltese Order he served as Inspector of the field-hospital on the Tirol front where also one of his daughters was engaged as a sister. Moreover the Count willingly took upon himself the no less dangerous task of escorting the Maltese trains to the Dobruzza. This indefatigable man put himself under similar strains also in his services under the Red-Cross, in exchange of prisoners and as delegate of the Committee for the Welfare of Prisoners in Bohemia. The organization of the Red-Cross Hospital in Bohemia bore excellent results.