

Pocasset Heights, Mass.,  
July 19, 1955.

Miss Grace M. Mayer,  
Museum of the City of New York, New York,  
Dear Miss Mayer,

My sincere apologies for not answering your letter of May 6, sooner. I delayed, trying to find a photograph of the silver set given William Cammeyer by the members of the Union Skating Club, and at the beach cottage, I am afraid that summer listlessness has got hold of me.

I have the film of the set, and when I return home in the fall, or sooner, I will send you a print; I expect to leave the silver set to your Museum in my will, possibly after a cousin has had use of it. Also two large pastels ( by William Hunt) of John and Catherine Cammeyer , parents of William Cammeyer.

The silver set consists of a large pitcher, two goblets, and a tray engraved with a skating scene. Mother said that it was a Tiffany set.

In regard to the lithograph, The seven figures at the foreground,- the extreme right is William Cammeyer, The couple on his right, friends of the family. As to the four in the center foreground,- a lot depending on the date of the lithograph,- the man on with the tall hat and the cane could be William Cammeyer, Jr., who died a short time ago in New Jersey. The girl with the red scarf, Ella, his sister, behind her, Francinia, her sister and my mother. The girl in brown doubtful.

Mother used to say that the man skating alone in a circle of spectators was the professional, who, incidentally, taught her to do some very fancy skating.

In the stand in the center of the rink, the band was stationed to play during the skating; my Aunt Florence used to say that the baseball uniforms were hung here during the winter.

She used to play with her dolls among them. Possibly this was the home grounds of the Union Baseball Club of Brooklyn; there was another Union Baseball Club at Morrisonia, N.J.

According to "The Book of American Pastimes" by Charles A. Peeverelly, -possibly a rare book, owned by William, Sr. and by me, pub. 1868( I am willing it to your Museum), the grounds were used from 1861 to 1866 by various teams for baseball; the set of silver given to William by the Union Skating Club was dated Feb. 2, 1862. Probably the baseball grounds and the rink existed before and after these dates. My sister says that before the rink, etc. Union Pond used to be a popular swimming pool for the neighborhood boys( see Henry Collins Brown Book ?). She also says that each year(?) a grand skating carnival was held on the rink.

William's father, John E. Cammeyer was a prominent civic minded citizen of New York. His father, William, came from Waldorf, Germany. John E. was a leader in combatting the yellow fever epidemic in New York and as a result was given a set of silver by the citizens, and asked to run for Mayor, which honor he declined. He had a tannery on the East River side of New York; that is how, probably his son, Alfred, got into his well known Cammeyer shoe business.

My sister knows the location of the Union Pond Rink; I will get it from her.

According to ~~and~~ an ad. in the above book, there was another skating rink, The Fifth Avenue Skating Park, bet. 58th & 59th Sts. and 5th & 6th Aves., N.Y. City; Hugh Mitchell, Prop. (400ft. long, 200 ft. wide); hdqtrs. of the New York Skating Club. ~~a~~ I enclose a copy of the Ad. of the Union Grounds.

I think it is understood that the rink was a baseball field in summer; my Aunt Ella could give the names of all the occupants of houses in the background of the picture.

There were <sup>evidently</sup> ~~evidently~~ a great number of baseball teams in and about

New York, as well as in other parts of the East; ~~see~~ some also in the Northwest League, about Chicago. Near New York were the Knickerbockers, Union(2), Actives, Resolutes, Atlantics, Eckfords, Hurakas, Mutuals, Empires, Eagles, Jeffersons, Yorkvilles, Alpines, Gothams, and many others. Most of these seem to have been organized in the 1850s.

There were other baseball grounds in and near New York at this time, such as the active one at Hoboken, (Elysian Fields), the Capitoline Grounds in Bedford, etc.; very many were the home grounds of the various teams, and some may have been only "vacant lots", perhaps somewhat improved.

At least two games mentioned in the above book were played on skates, "for a silver ball".

The living descendants(1955) of William (Prop. of Union Pond) and Margaret Cammeyer are:

Fred C. Alexander, Newtonville, Mass.

Florence M. Alexander, Newtonville, Mass.

Mrs. Josephine (Erick S.) Anderson, Manchester Depot, Vermont.

Mrs. Evelyn Weldon, 345 Bay Ridge Parkway, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Son and daughter of Eugene Cammeyer( whereabouts at present unknown to F.C.A.) ( Eugene Cammeyer was the son of Charles Cammeyer, son of William H. Cammeyer, Sr.)

I enclose, on another sheet the advertisement of the Union Grounds.

Please let me know if I can be of further help.

Sincerely,

*Fred C. Alexander*

(Winter address, after Oct. 1st, - 87 Fair Oaks Ave.,  
Newtonville, 60,  
Mass. )

UNION  
BASEBALL GROUNDS  
and  
SKATING PARK  
BROOKLYN, L.I.

WM. H. CAMMEYER, Proprietor.  
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These grounds are too well known to the Base Ball fraternity of Brooklyn, New York, and the country to need any long description. They are the most prominent grounds in the United States, and are occupied by the most distinguished clubs, such as the ATLANTIC, MUTUAL, ECKFORD, etc. etc. For several years the most important and exciting games for the Base Ball Championship have been played on these grounds.

In the winter season the Union Grounds are converted into a Skating Park, which is the favorite resort of the lovers of skating of the cities of Brooklyn and New York.

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( The above is an advertisement in " The Book of American Pastimes" by Charles A. Peeverelly( 1868)

" Who has been engaged in the reporting of Out-Door Sports for several New York Journals for more than twenty years . "

Pub. by

The American News Company  
119 and 121 Nassau Street.  
1868.

( Note by F.C.A.: This book also contains records from the beginning of other sports such as rowing, yachting, cricket, etc. as well as complete scores of all early games of baseball played in the East, etc.)